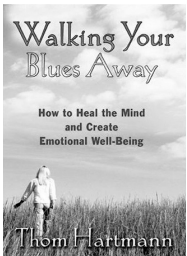


B O O K S

**Walking Your Blues Away: How to Heal the Mind and Create Emotional Well-Being.** Thom Hartmann. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 2006, 112 pages, \$12.95.

     Softcover



The title of this book is enticing in that it suggests that the benefits of walking go beyond the physical. However, *Walking Your Blues Away* takes a different direction from what the title implies or what the reader initially may expect to find. The author introduces the concept of “bilateral movement,” also called bilateral therapies or rhythmic side-to-side, which is not specific to cancer. In that movement, the “stimulation of the body causes nerve impulses to cross the brain from the left to right at a specific rate or frequency” (p. 4). The author suggests that if one recalls a persistent emotional issue while performing those movements, the process will reframe or put the issue into a different context. So immediately in the introduction of the book, the reader starts to see that “walking,” as defined by the author, is one way of achieving bilateral movement.

The book is divided into 12 easy-to-read chapters. The first 53 pages of the 112-page book are devoted to discussions of the development of bilateral theories and the physiology and psychology of the mechanism. The author ties in the works of many notables from Darwin to Freud to support the theories. Chapter 6 depicts the five steps to performing a “walking your blues away” session: Define the issue, bring up the story (or issue), walk with the issue, notice how the issue changes, and anchor the new state. A brief description of each of the steps is

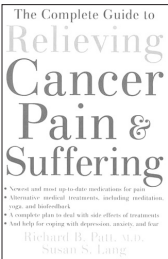
provided. A therapist helps facilitate the steps in a chapter on walking for individuals who may have difficulty maintaining their focus. The last three chapters discuss walking for creativity and problem solving, to create a motivational state, and to improve health. The chapter on walking to improve health is essentially a recap of the physiologic benefits of exercise on cardiovascular health and other disease states.

Patients may find this book entertaining because it provides a different interpretation of walking and what occurs in the brain during the process. The steps to “walking your blues away” are almost intuitive for those who walk as a method of stress relief; however, they may benefit patients who have not been introduced to the potential psychological benefits of walking. This book could be enhanced by providing more depth and breadth on the psychological effects of walking and condensing the information on bilateral therapies.

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**The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering.** Richard B. Patt and Susan S. Lang. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 464 pages, \$18.95.

      Softcover



Patients with cancer often fear the pain and suffering associated with the disease and its treatments. *The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* offers a wealth of information for patients, caregivers, and health-care professionals to help them understand and manage often distressing symptoms. The book provides a comprehensive discussion on cancer pain, including etiology,

assessment, and management. Detailed information is given on the management of cancer pain, as well as nausea, weight loss, fatigue, breathing problems, and numerous other symptoms associated with disease and treatment. Management strategies include pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions.
















The important message conveyed is that *cancer pain and suffering can be relieved*. Information is provided to empower patients with cancer and caregivers to effectively participate in the management of symptoms associated with cancer. The authors also offer insight into barriers that lead to the undertreatment of pain, with suggestions for overcoming obstacles.

*The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* is an excellent resource for patients and caregivers who are struggling with managing pain or other symptoms associated with cancer. Reading the book cover to cover might be overwhelming for some individuals. I recommend that readers take the time to look at the preface to review the purpose and content of the book, which may guide them in locating specific information of interest. The boxes and tables throughout the text highlight information. The appendixes also provide more detailed information on available resources, relaxation exercises, and advance directives.

The one caution to note when using this reference guide is that new drugs have become available commercially since publication in 2004, which is a challenge for any published text because of the dynamic nature of health care. Hopefully the authors will consider revised editions or a password-protected Web site providing updated information on a regular basis for those who purchase the book.

Overall, *The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* is a wonderful reference to include in a patient library and recommend to patients suffering from cancer pain or other associated symptoms. The book also may serve as a resource for healthcare professionals, particularly those new to oncology or hospice care.

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Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Media Size
 Quick, on-the-spot resource	 Basic	 Pocket size
 Moderate time requirement	  Intermediate	  Intermediate
 In-depth study	   Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required	   Desk reference

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