

KNOWLEDGE CENTRAL

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B O O K S

**Facing the Mirror With Cancer: A Guide to Using Makeup to Make a Difference.**  
Lori Ovitz. Chicago: Belle Press, 2004, 202 pages, \$24.95.

Quick Moderate In-depth Softcover



The purpose of *Facing the Mirror With Cancer* clearly is achieved by providing a simple but comprehensive guide to using makeup. The intended audiences are male and female cancer survivors who

want to enhance their physical appearance. A major strength of the book is that it addresses the needs of cancer survivors. Other strengths include (a) simple and precise, step-by-step facial makeup techniques with vivid photographic presentation, (b) unique discussions of skin and nail care basics as well as choosing and caring for a hair piece using an illustrated question-and-answer format, and (c) heartening tales and experiences shared by cancer survivors that promote support of and encouragement for others during the journey through cancer.

Each chapter discusses possible areas of concern that survivors may have. The most critical steps, important cues, and potential pitfalls are stressed with highlighted words. Care is taken throughout the book to provide thorough professional explanations in a concise manner.

However, one area for improvement is the overall organization of photos (other than illustrative photos associated with a particular makeup), survivors' tales, fonts, and colors, which seem confusing and jumbled in some cases. For instance, full-page photos, before and after makeup photos of survivors, and some other decorative images were printed

at different places in each chapter using a variety of colors and font sizes. Also, a different background color was used on almost every page of the book. The organization style could overwhelm readers, particularly those who may have lower literacy rates. One potential solution would be to reorganize the pictures, quotes, and stories of survivors in each chapter so that the flow of the material being presented is consistent among different sections. Furthermore, the use of a consistent background color, font style, and font size would strengthen the book. Additional material could be included in an appendix if needed. The content also could be indexed to facilitate the search for a specific topic. Another minor issue is the location of the table of contents; it appears on page 23 rather than at the beginning of the book.

As a whole, *Facing the Mirror With Cancer* contains a wealth of information for men and women who want to address appearance issues. The succinct verbal illustration of the beauty techniques makes the book stand out because readers should be able to achieve similar results with minimal time and effort. The book could be recommended to cancer survivors at any point along the cancer experience but would be especially relevant as nurses discuss possible effects of cancer treatment. Survivors also should be referred to other resources that may provide makeup at free or reduced cost and address hair care needs. In addition, nurses should ensure that the book and other recommended resources meet the needs of people of color.

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**Lessons From Joan: Living and Loving With Cancer, a Husband's Story.** Eric R. Kingson. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005, 224 pages, \$19.95.

Quick Moderate In-depth Softcover

Editor's note. *This book was reviewed by Karen A. Eggers, MBA, who is a cancer survivor. Her heartfelt review is strengthened by her honesty in relating this book to her own experiences as a cancer survivor and mentor.*



*Lessons From Joan* is the poignant, yet inspiring, story of Joan Kingson, who lost her battle to cancer after a 32-month fight. Written by her husband, the book immediately draws readers into their story, which discusses careers, families, and friends. A diary of sorts, the book follows Joan's family from diagnosis to her death. Several photos of family and friends and letters are included, creating a more personal journey journal.

As nurses know, caregivers have a job that encompasses financial, physical, medical, and spiritual issues. In the book, Joan's husband, Eric, was a superior caregiver in every way possible. I hope that he has continued to be proactive in the cancer community. His honest, open-hearted story will inspire other surviving caregivers in their pursuit to go on living after losing a loved one.

Joan was truly blessed to have a loving and supportive network of family and friends and to be financially stable. Many patients lose their support system, jobs, and even their homes when battling cancer. As a mentor to patients with cancer, a 4.5-year breast cancer survivor, and former caregiver, I had difficulty picking the book up and diving into it because I knew what the 32 months would bring and how Joan's story would end, and that it could have happened to me—and still could.

Struggling through Joan's journey with each page, I recalled countless other cancer warriors I have known in recent years and saw in Joan what mentors see in most terminal patients—a sincere will to live, coupled with the gut knowledge that they will not have "normal" anymore, just more

| 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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