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# Help Me Live: 20 Things People with Cancer Want You To Know

BY KATHY LATOUR

This is not a new book, but I'm glad someone sent it our way because I needed it. Even though I am a 20-year survivor, I needed to be reminded about what people in the throes of cancer need, and Lori Hope's book is perfect.

Hope wrote the book after her own lung cancer experience to help caretakers and friends understand more fully that a thoughtless word or gesture—innocent as it may be—can cause remarkable pain. She interviews survivors and professionals about specific issues of cancer, such as the cancer patient's right to decide when and how to tell people.

Each of the 20 chapters starts with a quote, making the book read very personally. In each chapter she tells the stories of survivors and the issues they confronted with partners, family, friends and coworkers. My favorite chapter quote—"I am more than my cancer; treat me kindly, not differently"—was a wake-up call for me as I helped a friend who suffered a recurrence. I was gently reminded that my friend values her independence and my insistence to do things for her is not helping. But asking her to call me when she needs me is helping.

This book is not just for its intended audience of friends and caregivers, but for cancer patients too. In part, it affirms the cutting comments we made when Uncle Jack said something tasteless and painful. But in addition to reminding me of many challenging people in my journey, the stories also revealed ways I could have handled them a little better.