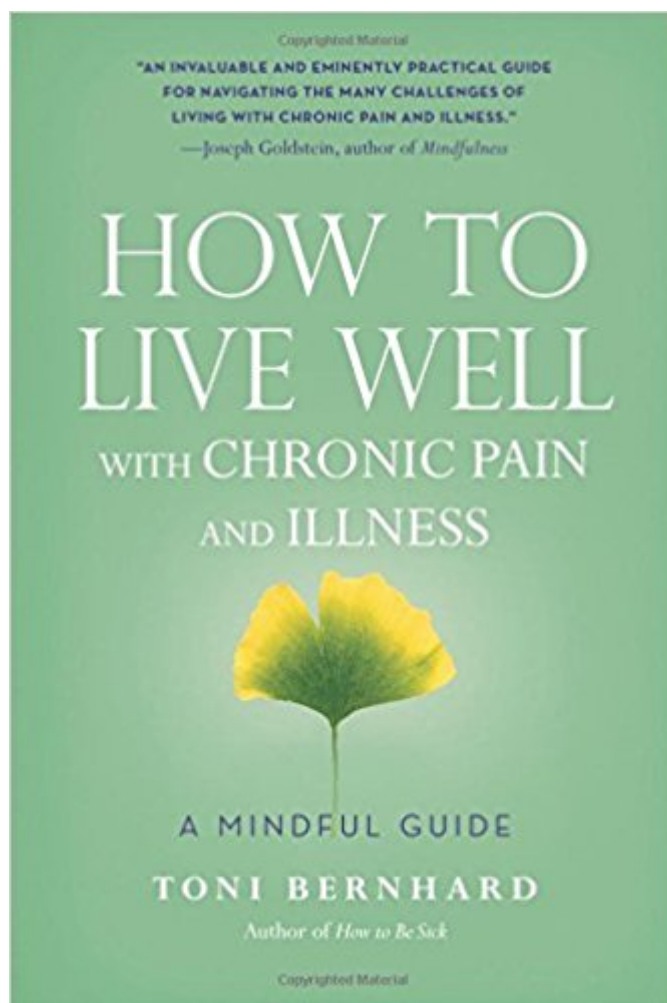


The book was found

How To Live Well With Chronic Pain And Illness: A Mindful Guide



Synopsis

Comfort, understanding, and advice for those who are suffering--and those who care for them. Chronic illness creates many challenges, from career crises and relationship issues to struggles with self-blame, personal identity, and isolation. Beloved author Toni Bernhard addresses these challenges and many more, using practical examples to illustrate how mindfulness, equanimity, and compassion can help readers make peace with a life turned upside down. In her characteristic conversational style, Bernhard shows how to cope and make the most of life despite the challenges of chronic illness. Benefit from:

- Mindfulness exercises to mitigate physical and emotional pain
- Concrete advice for negotiating the everyday hurdles of medical appointments, household chores, and social obligations
- Tools for navigating the strains illness can place on relationships

Several chapters are directed toward family and friends of the chronically ill, helping them to understand what their loved one is going through and how they can help. Humorous and empathetic, Bernhard shares her own struggles and setbacks with unflinching honesty, offering invaluable support in the search to find peace and well-being.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“In this comprehensive book, an empathetic Bernhard offers guidance to those whose lives have been turned upside down by illness. Excellent firsthand instruction for anyone dealing with a debilitating illness.” (Booklist)

“This book is so honest, so real, and so practical, it is a must have for everyone, patient and caregiver alike.” (American Chronic Pain

Association)“An invaluable and eminently practical guide for navigating the many challenges of living with chronic pain and illness.” (Joseph Goldstein, author of Mindfulness)
“Toni Bernhard shares her own powerful experience of how mindfulness practice can deeply support anyone with chronic illness.” (Sharon Salzberg, author of Real Happiness)
“Let Toni Bernhard be your guide in this life-changing journey.” (Larry Dossey, MD, author of One Mind)
“Immensely practical and infused with warmth, wisdom, and unflinching honesty.” (Dr. Alice Boyes, author of The Anxiety Toolkit)

Toni Bernhard is the author of the award-winning *How to Be Sick: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide for the Chronically Ill and Their Caregivers* and *How to Wake Up: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide to Navigating Joy and Sorrow*. Until forced to retire due to illness, Toni was a law professor at the University of California Davis, serving six years as the dean of students. She has been a practicing Buddhist for over twenty years. Her blog, “Turning Straw Into Gold,” is hosted on the website of Psychology Today. She can be found online at www.tonibernhard.com.

This is the book I wish I’d had when I began my journey with chronic pain ten years ago. It’s practical, reassuring, and written by someone who’s traveled the journey. Toni Bernhard is a best-selling and award-winning writer of *How to Be Sick* and *How to Wake Up*. She also writes a popular blog on Psychology Today, *Turning Straw Into Gold*. Her readers adore her, as evidenced by her over 200,000 fans on Facebook. Previously a law professor, Toni became ill in 2001 while on a trip to Paris and has never recovered her health. Experiencing chronic flu-like symptoms and often being bed-bound hasn’t stopped her from leaving a full and rich life. As Toni writes in her introduction, *How to Live Well* is “one dose stark reality, one dose practical skills, and one dose humor.” Her books are inspired by her 25 years of Buddhist study and practice, but like well-known Western dharma teachers such as Sharon Salzberg and Tara Brach, she explains these concepts in a relatable way. As she wrote in her first book, she considers the Buddha not to be a god, but the greatest psychologist of all time. You definitely don’t have to be Buddhist or know anything about it to benefit from this book. In fact, *How to Live Well* focuses less on Buddhism per se and more on mindfulness and other proven cognitive practices. Each of the chapters is relatively short, and can stand alone. You can dip in and out of the book depending on your needs. For people with chronic pain and illness, who sometimes have short attention spans (like me) this is a great feature. I always like reading the Table of Contents before I buy a book. Here are the major sections in *How to Live Well*, with each section having anywhere from three to nine

short chapters. I. Skills to Help with Each Day II. Mindfulness: Potent Medicine for Easing the Symptoms of Chronic Illness III. Responding Wisely to Troubling Thoughts and Emotions IV. Special Challenges (includes topics such as sleep, uncertainty, dealing with doctors, relationships with caregivers, and young people with chronic illness) V. Isolation and Loneliness VI. Enjoy the life you have VII. For Family, Friends, Caregivers, and Anyone Concerned about Chronic Illness VIII. Last but Not Least (Including Toni's "true confessions" and heartfelt wishes for her readers) I've learned so much from Toni, but probably the single most important thing is the life-changing practice of being kind to myself. In a previous interview with her, she said: "I look at it this way. We control so little in our lives, but the one thing we can control is how we treat ourselves. I see no reason for us not to be as kind and gentle with ourselves as we can be. It's not our fault that we have health problems. We're in bodies and they get sick and injured. It will happen to everyone. This is how it happens to us." In her warm and wonderful way, Toni reminds us in her new book that "being kind to yourself is the best medicine."

I am only partially into this book but already it is presenting practical advice on dealing with pain and illness. The author explores the many very subtle difficulties encountered by those suffering from chronic conditions and how to use mindfulness to cope with them. Among the most important is being able to communicate openly so that people can help. Self-compassion and choosing how to expend one's energy are some of the tools she presents. She is a very good writer and the chapters are short and succinct.

A must read! Love this book!! Teaches people who live with pain and disability and chronic illness how to live happily in the moment and give compassion to yourself and those around you. Solid teaching for gaining acceptance and peace with a difficult life with chronic illness. The author is amazing. She lives with chronic illness and speaks from personal experience. So easy to understand and apply. Brilliant.

As with Toni Bernhard's earlier books, I have found this to be an excellent reference tool for myself and a great gift for other friends who are coping with similar issues. I especially appreciate her use of her personal story to teach and inspire. This will be a book that I will return to again and again.

This is a well written and extremely helpful book. I highly recommend this book for people with chronic pain or illness.

This an amazingly helpful and even guide to living with long term chronic illness, especially after you are done thinking you can will yourself back to being "normal". Toni is gentle with expectations and wise about realities.

Bernhard is a wise woman who's undergone 15 years of a difficult chronic illness, and used her deep engagement with Buddhism to stay sane and functional in the face of unimaginable loss. This, her third book, is eloquent and moving. It's useful not only to the chronically ill but to everyone who deals with the ill and the elderly, and to everybody else, since life is almost by definition a circumstance of constant loss. She's funny and sensible and leaves you full of hope.

Well written book. Having a chronic illness is so difficult. Toni has shown how to deal with this on a daily basis and with a more peaceful mind.

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