

proud of the eloquent yet powerful ways my sisters have spoken, humbled by their experience, and inspired by their passion. Most of all, though, it left me with hope—hope that this book and the journal from which it was drawn will continue to be a place where mothers’ many voices can be heard, their lives and experiences known—a place where writers can continue to “destabilize, dismantle, and deconstruct the normative discourse of motherhood that both denies the complexity of mothering and demonizes its diversity” (25), where, as Tepperman writes in her poem, “We are screaming, / we are flying, / laughing, and won’t stop.”

Another Morning: Voices of Truth and Hope from Mothers with Cancer

Linda Blachman.
Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006.

Reviewed by Kimberly Bonia

Linda Blachman writes of a mother’s worst nightmare—living with cancer while raising a child. This inspirational, emotionally charged, witty, and heart-wrenching book is based on Blachman’s 70 interviews with mothers living with cancer. While recovering from a back injury, Blachman formed a group of remarkable women, Mother’s Living Stories, whose aim was not only to support each other through a diagnosis of cancer while raising their children, but to also leave a message for their children (www.motherslivingstories.org). This book fills a gap in the literature around the darker side of mothering—how mothers construct their worlds when facing the possibility of death and how they reconstruct the hopes and dreams of their children.

In each chapter, Blachman describes a mother’s story of her wishes, fears, and understanding of her illness and its impact on her family life. Blachman uses narrative not only as a way of telling a story, but also as a way of changing the way we think about and understand ourselves. She refers to such narratives as “teaching stories.” Blachman successfully attempts to preserve the voices of the women she writes about. She writes in the first person so as to maintain the truthfulness and meaning of each of the mother’s stories. Throughout the book, Blachman’s reactions and interpretations are printed in italics, so as to easily identify her own reflections and thoughts on the stories shared. In Blachman’s words, “The willingness to face what another’s story elicits in us, including the fear and pain, is a key requirement of being a good listener” (9).

Intended for mothers who are living with cancer or are living through a difficult time, this book may be a source of comfort and inspiration for those experiencing the unpredictability of serious illness, coping with the possibility of death, and hoping to leave a legacy for their children.