

# The Unchosen Path

*Reflections from the Inner Journey of Illness*



The Unchosen Path

Laurie Hope

How can we keep our hearts open in the midst of the innumerable losses and great suffering that we face as we live with chronic illness and pain? Illness challenges our lifestyles, emotional stability, relationships, and our sense of identity and purpose. It can also lead us to reprioritize our lives and decide what really matters. Through exploring the connections between our bodies, feelings, beliefs, and spirit, we gain insight into the nature of our suffering and develop greater compassion.

*The Unchosen Path* explores specific issues common to people who live with chronic illness. Short excerpts from interviews, personal journals, and writings from a variety of authors share what they have learned and what brings them healing. These personal reflections are touchingly honest, thoughtful, courageous, and wise. Their stories can help us feel uplifted and less alone. In these readings you will find that the path of illness, though arduous, can be a rich and honorable one.

**"These intimate sharings inspire us to look at our ideas about illness and wellness and to reach a deeper understanding of self-love and compassion."**

Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane Cirincione, Ph.D., authors of  
*A Mini Course for Life* and *Love is Letting Go of Fear*

**"This is more than a book. It is a healing conversation and I felt myself joining in. I especially appreciated the useful and practical exercises in the last chapter."**

David Richo, Ph.D., author of *Everyday Commitments: Choosing a Life of Love, Realism and Acceptance*

**"This book is a powerful witness to the integrity of the experience of suffering. In it, Wisdom has found her voice. She sings, laughs, cries, and gently touches the burden of woe. Don't just read this book, live with it."**

Rev. Christina M. Fernandez  
VP Spiritual Care, Catholic Healthcare West

**"An inspiring, comforting and even practical book. I only wish I had it when I was bedridden myself. I highly recommend this wise and generous book for treating the spirit and transforming the experience of pain."**

Darlene Cohen, Head Priest, Russian River Zendo, Guerneville, CA.  
Author of *Turning Suffering Inside Out*

**"Filled with wisdom and compassion, this book will be of immense benefit to anyone wanting to use illness as a path to awakening."**

Dale Borglum, Living/Dying Project

Laurie Hope is a teacher and psychotherapist with a background in comparative religions and Buddhist meditation. She has led numerous personal growth and support groups and taught courses in *Death and Dying*. She also creates relaxation and visualization CDs for healing. Her own journey with chronic illness began in 1982.

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