



# **Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness: How to Stay Sane and Live One Step Ahead of Your Symptoms**

*Ilana Jacqueline*

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“An important antidote to the dogmatic ‘kale and vitamins’ tone of most ‘self-help’ literature.”

—Alexa Tsoulis-Reay, senior writer, *New York magazine*

**Popular blogger Ilana Jacqueline offers smart and savvy advice, humor, and practical tips for living with an invisible chronic illness.**

Do you live with a chronic, debilitating, yet *invisible* condition? You may feel isolated, out of step, judged, lonely, or misunderstood—and that’s on top of dealing with the symptoms of your actual illness. Take heart. You are not alone, although sometimes it can feel that way.

Written by a blogger who suffers from an invisible chronic illness, *Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness* offers peer-to-peer support to help you stay sane, be your own advocate, and get back to living your life. This compelling guide is written for anyone suffering with an illness no one can see—such as postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), Lyme disease, lupus, dysautonomia, or even multiple sclerosis (MP).

This book will tell you everything you need to know about living with a complicated, invisible condition—from how to balance sex, dating, and relationships to handling work and school with unavoidable absences. You’ll also learn to navigate judgmental or skeptical relatives and strangers and—most importantly—manage your medical care.

Suffering from a chronic illness doesn’t mean you can’t live an active, engaged life. This book will show you how.

## **Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness: How to Stay Sane and Live One Step Ahead of Your Symptoms Details**

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Author : Ilana Jacqueline

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# **From Reader Review Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness: How to Stay Sane and Live One Step Ahead of Your Symptoms for online ebook**

## **?Dani? ?Touch My Spine Book Reviews? says**

This was an absolutely amazing book! This story was a magnificent work of art!!! I was completely blown away with how much this story hit home! It's like the author knew everything that I needed to hear with my chronic invisible illnesses! As a person that battles fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, severe mental health issues and much more, I wake up crying in pain most days and am stuck in my bed from the inability to even walk at the age 29. I feel like giving up most days. I have lost many friends and many family members don't talk to me because of all of my problems but like the author I found solstice in blogging and other things. The author describes things that people go through perfectly! I literally highlighted 4/5s of this book because of how amazing it was! I also added so many notes that it was unbelievable!!! I found hope within the pages of this book. I guarantee you that this story is first class and I recommend it to anyone suffering any kind of invisible illness or any family of those who suffer! Hands down a five star read that I will buy for my family and friends, recommend to my manager at the bookstore I work at and will recommend to the blogosphere! I can't wait to see what this author comes out with next!!!! Just, WOW!

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## **Jennifer says**

The author of this book lives with multiple chronic conditions and writes the Let's Feel Better blog. It would be a great resource for a young person just starting their journey with a chronic illness, but it also has things to offer for those of us who aren't new to the chronic life. You will find this a well-written and well put together book with resources, ideas, inspiration, and facts about living with chronic illness, the diagnosis process, disability, working or going to school with chronic illness, living alone with chronic illness, and so much more. There is a lot to chew on here, and I was impressed with Ilana Jacqueline's achievement. 4.5 stars.

I received an advanced copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for my honest review.

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## **Danielle says**

Disclaimer: I was given an ARC of "Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness" through NetGalley in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

This is the perfect guide book to help new patients survive and thrive with chronic illness! Well written and covers a wide range of road blocks we face throughout our lives. I even found helpful tips for myself, even though I've been living with chronic illness for 10+ years.

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### **Alexis says**

As someone who has been accused of using her grandmother's handicap sticker, and been stared at using the motorized wheelchair at Wal-mart, this book struck home. The author is not a doctor, or a researcher or a well wisher. She has been through this, fighting in the trenches like the rest of us. My own illness is different from the author's, but it is sad to see how universal my experiences are.

This is a helpful guide for anyone with a chronic illness and it deals with it in a very realistic way. It talks about feelings I haven't seen addressed in other books, such as the stress of getting a diagnosis or when you finally do, the complicated mess of feelings that comes along with it. Reading this sort of felt like talking in a support group that I didn't know I needed. The author is blunt and honest, and if you are the loved one of someone with a chronic illness, this will likely put you in their head space and reveal some of the doubts, fears and irritants they may never be able to voice. I highly recommend it.

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### **Leann says**

I don't know any higher praise for a book than to say I cried in recognition while ready most of it. This is THE book I wish I had so many years ago.

If you have been newly diagnosed with any number of chronic and invisible illnesses, from cancer to diabetes, to mental illness, you will want to read this book. It focuses on the thoughts and emotions we experience with a chronic illness. You will \*not\* be lectured to or told to believe in something ridiculous. Instead, Ilana holds your hand and offers comfort and hope.

I wish I could give this book 6 stars! A truly remarkable and heartfelt book!

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### **Taylor says**

This book is an incredible resource for anyone dealing with a chronic illness, or for someone who loves a person with a chronic illness and would like a look inside what it's like. The author talks about everything from the realities of dealing with a chronic illness, relationships and dating, and the pain and frustration. However, this is not your typical self-help book. This is a journey with the author through her life's experiences and is perfect for the person who feels left behind and unseen due to their chronic illness. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is looking to feel understood, or gain empathy for those of us who are walking this path.

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### **Allison Alexander says**

"I've been living with a chronic illness since birth and throughout my journey I've found myself twisted by embarrassment about my disease and shamed about being unable to lead a normal life."

Yes. This is an author who intimately understands chronic illness and how it can impact day-to-day life. Ilana Jacqueline offers practical advice on how to accept your illness, combat feelings of worthlessness, and navigate work, relationships, and a social life. It's a valuable read for people who suffer from an invisible illness and feel alone or misunderstood.

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### **Amber says**

Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness was an absolutely wonderful (and humorous) look into what it's like living with a chronic illness not everyone can see. I received a copy of this book in exchange for a honest review. This book offers not only ways to deal with the many questions but also reminds that people with chronic illness are not alone. I can honestly say that it is nearly 100% accurate as I have autoimmune disorders and deal with a lot of the same things the book mentions. I felt it was accurate and authentic. The book also touches on things like what SSI/SSD are, other support programs that may be available, how to advocate for yourself when no one else will and how to stop self-depreciation.

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### **Diane says**

Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness: How to Stay Sane and Live One Step Ahead of Your Symptoms by Author Ilana Jacqueline is a well-written book for support and learning to cope with a chronic illness. It is written to encourage the reader to be proactive about learning all they can about the illness and symptoms. When I say "illness and symptoms", that is exactly what the author is writing about because you can be ill for years without receiving a correct diagnosis of your illness. The author also explains how disappointing it can be to finally get a diagnosis, but then there may not be a clear path to resolving the illness and symptoms.

As a personal experience with having three different autoimmune illnesses and all the varying symptoms which tag along with each one, I can verify what the author is relating. It took over six years for my diagnosis of the major illnesses.

This author has helped put into perspective the choices a person with a chronic illness can make to help deal with the inconveniences and daily aggravations. My rheumatologist told me I would find the handicap license for my car to be of great help as I aged with my illnesses. I would have debilitating flares even though you would never know of the pain and stiffness of my joints which would cause falling because I looked perfectly healthy!

Thank you, Ilana Jacqueline, for your insight and sharing information to encourage people to stay ahead of the many pitfalls of living with conditions which will not go away. Even if your friends or family do not fully understand or if they doubt your pain and discomfort, the author has tips for this too! The emotional consequences of invisible illness can be devastating, so learn all you can and find the peace you need for each day.

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### **Leigh Jemmett says**

As someone who suffers with chronic illnesses this book was a must request!

Invisible diseases are the worst, they isolate sufferers who can find it difficult to explain to those who are unaffected, that just because their symptoms and pain can't be seen, that they are massively, hugely debilitating. So many suffer in silence, feel judged, shame, isolation, and feel misunderstood and unaccepted, and that's on top of the dreadful symptoms, pain and side effects so much medication can bring.

This book offers a little bit of comfort to those people, it makes you realise you aren't alone and offers some great advice on living within your limits, dating, relationships, friendships, work and many other topics. The fact that it is written by someone who lives with two autoimmune diseases, who has experienced first

hand the hell and the isolation chronic illness brings, a fellow fighter, makes it all the more engaging and relatable.

This book will appeal to sufferers and their loved ones alike.

Thank you to the author, publisher and Netgalley for allowing me to read in return for an honest review.

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### **Beth says**

This is the book that everyone just diagnosed with a chronic illness NEEDS. There are tons of books with advice on medicines, therapies, vitamins, diet changes, etc. - but this is the first one I've read that addresses those big, scary issues: how can I cope with how my life changed? What can I do to help my friends and family understand what's going on? How can I get over the anger and guilt I feel when I can't do the things I used to? These are super important because, unlike most illnesses and injuries, chronic illness is NEVER GOING AWAY. So we have to learn to cope with not only the illness and havoc it wreaks on our bodies, but also the havoc it can wreak in our lives. This book is a great start.

\*Thanks to NetGalley for the ARC, provided by the author and/or the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Joan says**

I requested this authoritative book because our son has three so-called 'invisible' diagnosed diseases, including fibromyalgia and bipolar disorder. He has other degenerative diseases as well. My husband and I have read widely about his illnesses and have a fair understanding of how he feels, but this book really added a different slant as well as knowledge.

There was a plethora of 'tips' arranged under different headings. There were personal anecdotes, case study stories, practical advice and more. The parts I found really illuminating were the insights into the emotional fallout that sufferers of chronic 'invisible' illnesses are constantly battling with. I should say that our son is a grown divorced man with two children. He lives independently, has friends and works full time at the moment. He has suffered disbelief, doubt and judgements that are not fair. He tries hard to be an advocate for his conditions, but none-the-less he is bewildered and hurt by certain attitudes. He takes loads of prescription tablets daily but he manages his illnesses well on the whole. His bosses are supportive and have tried to adjust his work load to help him manage his energy levels. His father is next in line to read 'Surviving and Thriving with an Invisible Chronic Illness: How to Stay Sane and Live One Step Ahead of Your Symptoms' and then hopefully our son will read it.

This is a well written and definitive book full of ideas, alternatives, suggestions, scenarios and more. It uses primary and secondary sources and the author Ilana Jacqueline herself suffers from multiple conditions. It is forward thinking and a little gem of a book for those who are sufferers, family, carers and friends who do not have personal firsthand experience of having an 'invisible' illness. It will help you recognise the signs of an oncoming flare up and how to support the individual who may well be fiercely independent or who may not know how to deal with what they are facing, particularly if they are newly diagnosed. I loved the humour and notice our son using similar strategies as well. Ilana Jacqueline is a well known American Blogger about these issues. She has shared her experiences and helped others in other ways than writing this 'guide' of advice and reflections.

I would like to thank NetGalley and publisher New Harbinger Publication for my copy, sent in return for an honest review. I hope many people read it and gain insight into 'invisible illnesses. It's a real shame some

people are ignorant and hurtful, because, through no fault of their own, sufferers are facing enough without unkindness and guilt.

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### **Fern Adams says**

Since becoming increasingly unwell with Dysautonomia I've been wishing there was some sort of guidebook or manual on how to cope with it and how to make sense of becoming chronically unwell. This book is it! Ilana writes in detail but also in an easy to read way. Covering everything from how to get the most out of a doctors appointment, living independently and how to tell others of your condition I wish I'd come across something like this sooner!

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### **Curious Reader says**

Book about surviving illness. Lots of tips. I don't know maybe but I thought it is a book about various chronic illnesses and how to tackle them. But it turned out that this is a book about overcoming overall illnesses. Not any particular illness. Nonetheless it's a good book.

Note: I received a free e-copy of the book via Net Galley in exchange for an honest review. Special thanks to the author and publisher for giving me a chance to read it.

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### **Meghan Doberstein says**

Over the years I've worked with people who had an "invisible condition", and I've had employers who didn't believe them. I've heard people called lazy, that they're faking being sick to get out of work, and "they looked fine yesterday so I doubt anything's actually wrong."

?This is the book to read if you want to prove them all wrong.

?I personally don't suffer from any sort of medical condition (although I do have some mental health issues), however I do enjoy broadening my horizons and learning about these things. I think it's important for everyone to learn about these sort of things because you never know who you'll meet in life who does suffer an illness that you've never even considered before.

This is a really, really good read.

Ilana Jacqueline does an incredible job of explaining her own "invisible illnesses" and those of people she's interacted with in life. It's written as almost a self help book for people who live with these diseases, but I don't believe it's written solely for them.

For me, this book gave me insight into a world that I've only caught glimpses of, and has taught me how best to approach the subject with people who do live this way.

You've got to love yourself first if you're going to expect someone new in your life to do the same.

Even though I don't suffer from any illness, I'm really really grateful that I read this. The self-help aspect of it mostly did not apply to my life, but there were still some aspects of it that are universal. All in all this was a

very informative read and a topic that I think everyone needs to educate themselves on.

3.8//5 Stars ????  

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