

MY God, My LYME

Discovering Success in Life Through the Storms of LYME



Janice Fairbairn

“This book has got something important to say and work for God to do in it. Janice is a true Lyme Evangelist!”
Cindy A.

“You are AMAZING. I read your book and it’s amazing. You’re my hero like no joke. I hope that one day, I can be as strong and as inspiring and positive as you.”
Caity B.

There are so many people in the world that need to hear this hope. It’s a story that can encourage and uplift, and not just for people with Lyme, for anyone struggling in chronic illness.
Rose K.

“A new day dawning and realization Thank you SOOOOOO MUCH!!!! I am telling you, I can never repay you for your kindness, encouragement and prayers for my daughter.”
Joni B.

“Living the way you do isn’t easy to jump into, but its healthier and I am NOT getting sick again. Thank you for all the information and guidance to living and surviving this thing.”
Jennifer S.

“All these natural products and methods can sure be confusing, thanks for being someone I can talk to about it and get experience and knowledge from.”
Tamara A.

How can we “walk in the light,” when our journey through life has taken such a horrible detour, such as the many people experience, who are suffering from the extreme life-altering effects of chronic Lyme disease?

The struggle to trust and love God, and to follow His lead in regaining your health, in spite of the symptoms that are affecting the entire body, mind, and spirit, is not just a day-by-day thing with Lyme disease, but a moment-by-moment decision.

Janice Fairbairn’s book, “My God, My LYME: Discovering Success in Life Through the Storms of LYME” is a testament to God’s faithfulness. Janice poured the very essence of her heart into this book. I am reminded of the lamentations of suffering and the ultimate glorifying of God that King David did in the book of Psalms. Indeed this book is a modern day book of Psalms.

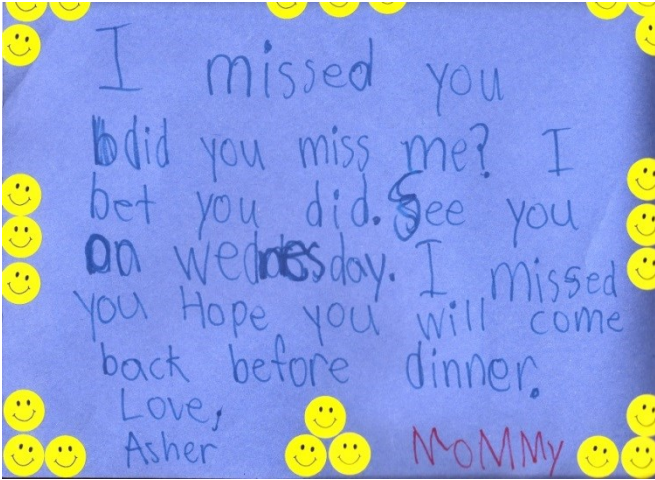
I encourage you to read this book. The hard won lessons that Janice learned in her moment-by-moment physical and spiritual battle are a lifeline for anyone struggling through the many and varied storms that life may bring.

Take the journey with Janice through her discovery of deeper spiritual awareness and truth that lead her to successfully conquering her inner and outer struggles through years of debilitating illness.

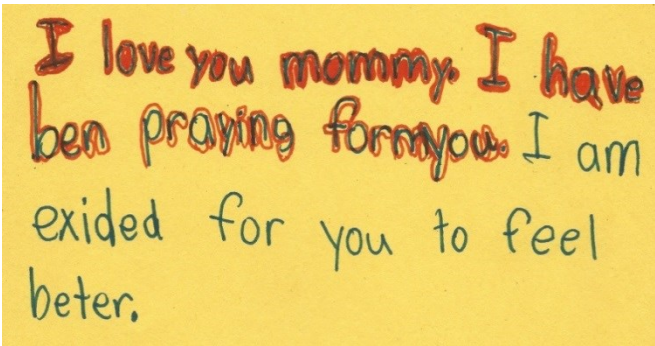
~David A. Jernigan, D.C.

I missed you
Did you miss me? I
bet you did. See you
on Wednesday. I missed
you. Hope you will come
back before dinner.
Love,
Asher

MOMMY



I love you mommy. I have
been praying for you. I am
excited for you to feel
better.



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DISCOVERING SUCCESS IN LIFE
THROUGH THE STORMS OF LYME

JANICE FAIRBAIRN

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For my husband, thank you for bailing water to keep our family from sinking when I was so sick. Thank you for encouraging me to do this project and helping me overcome the difficult obstacles along the way. Thank you for believing in me.

For my children, thank you for your precious prayers and countless notes of love and encouragement. Thank you for carrying a load that most kids don't and shouldn't have to emotionally process. May this serve as a memorial for what God can do.

I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD.

(Psalm 27:13-14)

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Introduction

This book targets the Lyme patient who feels abandoned, desperate, and alone in this illness. Beyond the physical ravages this illness leaves in its wake, God alone knows your pain, loneliness, agony and discouragement. I want to show you how He can meet you in this dark place with the light of hope.

We all have felt and are feeling your pain quite literally:

- Insomnia for almost a decade coupled with seizures and joint pain that rendered her entire body inoperable

- Entire nervous system felt like it has the constant jitters and tingles

- Hot burning coals are dripping down or being pulled from the brain constantly

- From me, whose chest and throat were constricted, whose nausea was so intense I dropped over 25 lbs to well below 85 lbs

Are you a parent of a Lyme sufferer? Are you a parent suffering through Lyme while trying to raise kids? Maybe you are married to a loved one suffering immensely in Lyme. I pray this book offers you the one thing we all need in this “valley of the shadow of Lyme”, a rod and a staff of comfort and hope.

David lamented this phrase in his struggle with sin. Jesus himself from the cross cried out with the same words, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? Oh my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night and am not silent.” (Mark 15:34) The hope God intends for you comes as

His grace in this valley, a hope this book attempts to reflect. Be assured, He hears our cry and he answers.

You are not alone. You are not an island left to desolation in this terrible storm. I have felt what you feel; I have met dozens and know there are thousands upon thousands that feel what you feel. The pain, the uncertainty, the desolation, the discouragement, the “no one is listening”, and the “no one can fix this” – you have company where you are and where you have been. Most importantly, you have company where you are going, because God is in your tomorrow.

He promises that he will never leave you or forsake you.

1

What in the Lyme is this and how did it get here?

The soul knows what to do to heal itself, the challenge is to silence the mind. - Caroline Myss

Before this chronic illness began, I had incorrectly classified Lyme in with the flu. I defined Lyme as something you could “catch” or “get” and then after a round of antibiotics and a short rest period, you would be back on your feet. Where did this misconception come from? I couldn’t have been more wrong. Dead wrong.

Imagine Lex Luther (classic bad guy from the Superman series) has invaded your body; he has drilled into organs, your brain, heart, and liver and set up shop. He has used his cunning “villain powers” to determine if any other bad guys have passed through before and have not completely been evacuated. Any ruffians who have been hiding in dark corners waiting for the opportune moment to strike are found and he alerts them that a strike is indeed eminent and that he has organized it and will be in charge.

Lex Luther is a commanding, in-control villain and he knows how to create the environment in which all like-minded minions will thrive. He pays them well, feeds them well and knows that they will set up shop at his beck and call. You just envisioned the wicked power of Lyme disease as Lex Luther.

Now visualize that Lex Luther is also smart enough to recruit. Before he entered your body, he spent years recruiting other famous bad guys like Mr. Freeze and The Joker to hang out with him so closely that when he entered your body, they came with him. Silently, they lay in wait--poised for the perfect opportunity of weakness when they will launch their stealth approach. Using your own genetics -- a bad heart, early onset para-menopause -- they create a wave of destruction. A scattershot of symptoms becomes their unilateral smokescreen that virtually defies diagnosis. Lex and company are in residence before you know what hit you.

Doctors are baffled and patients are left perplexed. The Lyme continues this approach shifting the front of the war all around rendering the audience confused. Lyme laughs and delights as it takes another victim. Watches as the spiral of symptoms spin both the victim and the doctors into a dizzy state of cluelessness.

Meet Lex Luther under a microscope, your Lyme spirochete medically called borrelia, his wicked partners: babesia and bartonellis. The other ne'er-do-wells? They are usually known as mycoplasma and sometimes also Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, West Nile Virus and a multitude of parasites. The internal villains? They can be parasites, viruses like Herpes or the flu, bacteria like the common cold. They all join forces and work their collaborative efforts for this commander of the troops.

Let me confess that I am not an expert in Lyme disease, its origination or its life and eradication. What I am an expert in is

surviving it. There are many books out there to give you a scientific history and explanation on how this wicked spirochete works. Many are listed in the resource section at the back of this book. When I fell severely ill and found out I had Lyme disease, I could care less how it worked and where it came from. I wanted it gone. I wanted to survive.

I didn't want to hear how effectively it worked and what it could do to my body and why I felt what I did. I didn't want to make eye contact with the bad guy that I was going to assassinate. The Most Wanted in my body just had to be conquered and kicked out.

The most important thing I did learn, however, was that it does not leave quietly. It does not like to be kicked out and because it has been working in stealth slowly organizing over time, it takes layers and time to remove. The leaving of the Lyme was actually harder than the catching it and living with the symptoms that had appeared. The evacuation required stamina, courage and a strength that I didn't possess. It required a supernatural strength that only Jesus could provide.

Journal entry: *I tell you some days I just want to kick this Lyme disease's "a\$\$" I get such an anger and meanness that wells up inside of me when I watch my kids suffer because I suffer. When I watch mom's suffer because their children suffer from this disease, I want to take up arms and fight against it and destroy it. It is in these moments that I begin to recite things like "in Him we are more than conquerors". Okay God then let me conquer it and be more than this disease.*

I lay in my detox bath and I cast it out. I have been speaking to my body and to the disease, asking it in no uncertain terms to vacate. I am speaking to the Holy Spirit himself indwelt in me and CASTING IT OUT. Thanking God in advance for already working. Today, as I prayed and wept, I pictured myself as the woman who reached out to just touch the edge of His robe because she knew that simple act would heal. I believe and I recognize that the Holy Spirit lives in me. This indwelling, which is even more powerful than touching cloth as the robe of Jesus, and just by that one touch she was healed instantly. I pray that the Holy Spirit will use that same power, and similar to a light switch, heal me entirely.

“If anyone says to the mountain go throw yourself in the sea, and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore, I tell you whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.” Mark 11:23

Lord I pray that you rid me of all unbelief from this flesh and mind and renew my heart to your promises that my belief may remain strong and steadfast. I have been saying to his mountain of Lyme – go to the sea, go to the sea, go to the sea. I will not ask nicely, I will not plead; I will just command and YELL – GO TO THE SEA.

You oh God, to you be the glory and praise for its departure and my complete healing and that of my children.

A full frontal battle against Lyme disease becomes a 5 alarm fire, all hands on deck – flank them from every direction. The battle plan involves multiple doctors, a willing insurance company, family members, friends, a church community, money, patience, time, energy and a spiritual strength that is only supernatural. The warning label should read: Do not try this stunt at home on your own.

2

How in the Lyme did you get in here?

*To name a thing, in other words, is to bless God for it and in it.
Ann Voscamp*

I had no ground zero bull's eye rash or bite that I remember. Over 50 percent of Lyme patients don't either. My stealth season grew slowly through increased weird skin reactions, diminishing tolerance to foods that I could eat, a miscarriage, early Perimenopause, chest pain, shortness of breath, angry days and other uncontrolled emotions. All were most likely over a period of 10 or more years, maybe longer.

After my symptomatic explosion and first ER visit 10 years into this, I did receive a positive on a blood test for Lyme – surprisingly. Most do not. The IgenX lab test is the most reliable, but unless your immune system has launched a counter attack, then it will go undetected. Now please, do not take that to mean that you should launch an attack. Some say, take antibiotics for a few weeks, take some herbals (i.e. Cat's Claw), to set things in motion to prompt the immune system to react and therefore get a positive on the test. I have to ask you why? Why would you cause yourself undue pain and suffering. The ammonia and neurotoxin release cannot be “controlled” and you have no idea how much will be dumped onto your system and how strong your system is to handle it.

Why do you feel you must have the positive on the Lyme test to begin treatment? Do your symptoms register on the list? Are there any other mysterious illnesses that could explain what is going on with you? There are forms of testing available that are non-invasive and do not require this blood test. Muscle strength, kinesiology or bio-resonance testing are incredibly reliable to detect Lyme and all its components. (See the resource page for more Information).

I was unknowingly testing my immune system. I had been taking Cat's Claw for my high cholesterol in quite high doses. Dangerous if you have Lyme. That is what actually caused the crash and, to God's glory, that I did not perish from it, but He used it to guide me.

When I received my positive on a Lyme test, it was an answer to prayer. I never thought I could say that knowing I had something so terrible could be an answer to prayer, but it was. It had a name. Ann Voscamp describes a similar experience in her book "1000 Gifts" where, through her husband's research, they thought they found what she had been struggling with. They both felt relief as well, from the finding, and from identifying the enemy. She says "when you don't have a name for something, you're haunted by shadows, it ages you." She goes on to say:

"Now, in the Bible a name.....reveals the very essence of a thing, or rather its essence as God's gift....To name a thing is to manifest the meaning and value God gave it, to know it is coming from God and to know its place and function within the

cosmos created by God. To name a thing, in other words, is to bless God for it and in it.”

How is it possible to name this thing, put a target on its back to destroy it and thank God for it at the very same moment?

Trying to chase the causing of my angry and tired days, a naturopath doctor attempted to balance my hormones, stimulate my adrenal glands and lower my cholesterol simultaneously. Oh, you want a symptoms list? Early symptoms were the hormones and flat out adrenal failure/crashes. Also, I had been registering very high eye pressure with my eye doctor for over five years with no glaucoma anywhere in the family and no high blood pressure. Though a recent cholesterol test came back elevated, I countered with exercise and eating. We had been eating organic, gluten free, dairy free for years. My body struggled – in what should have been my healthiest season of my life – and I wanted to know why.

The “perfect storm” in my body exploded from a combination of stress, some of the “natural” remedies and supplements, para-menopause, older pregnancies, and some genetics. Those supplements actually started killing the Lyme and my “crash” that happened was actually one big crazy giant herx explosion.

Understanding a “herx” will help you recognize it and give you the ability to name it on this journey. A herxheimer reaction is defined as a bacterial sepsis – which means a toxic dump on your body that puts it into shock. You know when you jam all

the potato peels down the drain and have a momentary slowing and backing up - that is your body's immune system in a herx.

For Lyme sufferers, though, the bad news is that Lex Luther, upon his death, planned in advance and has set deadly traps to explode in order to exact posthumous havoc upon you when he exits. He releases deadly neurotoxins into your bloodstream. Those neurotoxins flood the body's systems and cause a "sepsis" in all the filtering organs – the liver, kidneys, and bowels and invade the brain causing what we call "brain fog".

By comparison, the venom of a poisonous snake bite contains neurotoxins. That tiny amount in the bite of snake venom has the power to paralyze and kill within hours. Lead poisoning and the destructive effect of tetanus are all similarly an attack of neurotoxins.

That crash, or giant herx explosion, began a series of events in my body that set the stage for all the Lex Luther invaders to have a party. A party that flooded my system with enough neurotoxins to give me brain fog, hindered vision, and vertigo and began to start shutting down my filtering organs one by one.

Questions blare into your conscious thought like "where did I get this?" and "how did it take over?" Let's address the noise and move on. It's pointless to focus on it.

A wise doctor asked me in turn, how does a tornado form? You have to understand that in Kansas, this question is so appropriate. Well, a tornado forms because the conditions have to be just right. Pressure, moisture, fronts – all have to be in synchronicity and in the perfect setup for a tornado not only to

form, but to have power and destroy. The same is true of how and why Lyme disease explodes; the conditions have to be right. Genetics, eating habits, stress, physical weaknesses, exercise, pregnancy, etc. can all be part of the “conditions” that are formed to allow Lyme to get a foothold.

If faced with Lyme, the conditions in your body were there, whether we like to face it or not and most of those conditions are likely out of our control. Stop berating yourself and trying to solve the “ground zero” question. That question cannot be answered – not today and maybe not ever. “How am I going to conquer this illness?” becomes your new focus. Shift all your mind’s attention to beating this thing. The past is the past and your future lays wide open. We’ve named it, looked it in the eye and wondered where it came from. Now, where do we go from here?

Finding a qualified doctor or Lyme treatment program addresses the most important thing you can do as a Lyme patient. Make sure the doctor listens and if he tries to put you on antidepressants, run for the door. If he can help you get rid of the neurotoxins in your brain, then you won’t need antidepressants – tell him you will happily dance a jig instead. Believe in your symptoms, do your research, pray and find that doctor or team of doctors who believe in you and believe in healing. If the doctor knows about herxing, neurotoxins, detoxing the body, and Post Lyme Syndrome, then you have found a good place.

Journal entry:

Am I going blind? My new level of acceptance is praying that this is not to be my plight in this illness, but that His will be done. I continue to feel like my vision is failing me, the eyes are not acting right, I can't focus to read anymore. I struggle to read the devotional with the kids in the morning and my Bible in my quiet time. Everything is not necessarily blurry, although at times I experience double vision, it is more like that it just hurts to look at things, hurts to focus at all and my mind just cannot decipher the words on a page. The worst times are going into a big store like Lowes or Target or going to church – looking at something farther away, in bright lights. I squint but my legs still go weak and I feel like I am going to throw up or pass out.

I literally haven't been to church in months because I cannot stand to look at anything in the church without getting physically ill and weak. I tried again to go to church for Christmas Eve thinking I was doing better and spent the whole service sitting staring at my lap or looking at the lady's sweater right in front of me to prevent further nausea.

Why Lord would you prevent me from corporate worship when I need it most? As a trained painter, the artist in me screams in desperation about losing my eyes. Losing the ability to see the world of color and beauty, and on top of that I love to read. Completely love to read. Losing that ability in this illness has been beyond devastating. I have so much time on my hands to just lie and I can't sleep and can't read.

The wonderful thing you Lord have helped me discover in these times is how much more time I have to spend with you. When I get caught in the grip of a "fear" like this going blind one, I have to pray scripture then start vigorously praying for others. It's the only way my focus will turn from me and back to you and rid this fear.

In the vacuum of chronic Lyme, try not to focus on yourself. Self-focus only exacerbates the pain and agony, loneliness and pity party. Don't spin your wheels wondering, use all your energy to live and survive. When you are left to your own thoughts, take them captive and redirect your attention on praying for others. The mind shift from your load to others' needs eases the burden and gives rise to a healthy prayer life.

3

To Name a Thing

Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

St. Francis of Assisi

Getting discouraged creates a commonplace event during this valley. Sitting in front of doctor after doctor who won't listen and can't help feeds the hopelessness. Take heart, because I have yet to meet a Lyme who hasn't run through the gamut of doctors – I think the highest count is 42. Yep, a sweet little 14 year-old girl who had been to 42 doctors who could do nothing and had done nothing to help her, until I met her at the same clinic where they actually heal Lyme.

Being around other Lyme patients on the journey can be the light you need in the storm. Other people who know it can be beat that will cry and pray with you through your deepest part of the valley. My husband and parents and friends all loved on me and prayed for me, but they don't know what it felt like and what and how I struggled. But my doctor (a former Lyme himself) and the patients I met turned into a lifeline. Their gift to me: a ray of hope in this present darkness. This monster would not get the best of me.

It was 3 months into my treatment for Lyme and I was doing better, recovering, eating, and putting on weight. I went with a

girlfriend to Wal-Mart to buy Easter stuff for our kids. Now at this point in my life, I didn't go anywhere alone. I still wasn't driving; my eyes were still terrible, no reading, no driving, and no church. I barely had the energy and strength to walk in to the store from the parking lot – probably weighing in still way less than 95 lbs at 5'4".

I was also a mother, who wanted to bring some joy into the house after all the devastation. My kids needed normal – they needed a mom who could fill Easter eggs and hide them. They needed something in their world to be predictable and normal. So off we went to Wal-Mart that day.

Well, we did get through a few aisles before the nausea wave hit hard. The weakness in my legs and body hit with such a vengeance, the cart was my only hope of remaining standing. We quickly made it to the registers, paid and got to the car.

Functioning as a mother still seemed nearly impossible. My household barely held together by the help of family and friends. I felt I was constantly drowning by the lists of things to do and what hadn't been done and all I wanted to do was get better. It was about this time in my treatment that I got hit with a truth: my kids have Lyme too.