

**1. It is interesting you chose Joan of Arc as the symbol for your book, can you tell me more about why you chose her?**

Certainly. Actually, Joan chose me. After my mother passed away, I had a very difficult time adjusting to just how I would live in the world without her and to be honest, I still struggle with the answers to that question. The truth is all I wanted and all that anyone who has suffered a tragic loss in their lives is to find the connection again. I spent long sleepless nights thinking about the amazing courage that she has during her ten year battle with cancer and I also thought about the many, many women I have worked with as an integrative medicine practitioner who also had extraordinary courage. My mother's journey was filled with unimaginable suffering and I thought about her amazing courage—it was humbling. I didn't like the mythology that people with cancer were somehow to be pitied and were weak which is often the prevailing wisdom, which in my experience was not true. My mother possessed enviable courage and it took my breath away just how strong she was. One day after she had passed, I tried to distract myself and visited a consignment store, something we had enjoyed doing together. I asked my mom to show me a “sign” that she was with me. Literally at my feet, there was a large painting face down on the floor and when I picked it up, there was a vintage painting depicting Joan on her horse with her head held high carrying a staff. I knew in that moment it was my mother's sign to me. I read all things Joan, deeply knowing that she would be the symbol to honor my mom and all the other women I have loved and lost.

**2. What do you think that Joan conveys to the reader?**

Joan of Arc is the ultimate symbol of courage, of strength and absolute certainty about how she wanted to live her life. I decided after reading about her that she would be the perfect choice for readers to guide them on their journey, a symbol that they could align themselves when they were seeking inspiration or just too tired to carry their burdens on their own. Joan can be their ally, an ally they can count on during a diagnosis with cancer, or any difficult life challenge.

**3. What impressed you the most about Joan of Arc?**

That's a difficult question to answer, to identify any one particular attribute. She was smart, unyielding, intuitive and most of all she trusted her experiences with the Divine no matter what. Even during her trial, she refused to alter one word of her testimony and she stood up to all authority who tried to discredit and embarrass her. This teenage girl answered only to her own authority, and the authority of her voices who she believed in and sustained her throughout her trial and ultimately even during her death. The ability to fight for what you believe in at all costs, even when it meant a death sentence is not only inspirational for women who are traveling a journey with cancer, but for all women struggling to listen to their own internal wisdom. It's a beautiful and honorable lesson for everyone and is desperately

needed, especially in this time when many people are not willing to fight for what they believe in.

**4. Some people think that the story of Joan of Arc isn't real—that she is only a myth.**

Well, when you read any biography about Joan, it is easy to dismiss her life as something of legend and not really real. She led an army of men in a century when women didn't venture out of the house, never mind lead armies. She wore men's clothing, crowned the rightful King of France, the Dauphin, and earned the respect of thousands of people during her time. And, we have to remember that Joan of Arc did live, and she was not just legend. When you think about a teenager dressed in men's armor, leading an army of thousands of men to victory, and defying every notion about what a young woman “should do”, her life was extraordinary. One can only imagine what accomplishments she would have offered the world if she was not burned at the stake.

**5. Your book, is very different than the biographies of Joan of Arc, can you explain a little bit how it is different and why you didn't choose to write a biography?**

When I write, I have to pay attention and listen to my inner promptings, and not only that, I have to honor the information that presents itself to be written. Any writer will tell you that although you may think your book needs to be written in a particular way in the beginning, the truth is that the book tells you, you are not in charge, it's not the other way around. That process of writing, at least for me is magical and I wanted to craft a book that would help women and give them actual tools during their illness. I have read many of the biographies of Joan of Arc and they are all terrific, especially, Mark Twain's book on her life, however, I knew that my book had to offer the women reading it, a guide so they too, could possess the qualities that Joan possessed and I had to offer the form that felt right to me during the writing process. The book includes passages from Joan's trial using her actual words and specific attributes that I selected that literally just spoke to me while I was reading those trial records. I also include an active meditation and a message from Joan in the first part of the book. The second part of the book explored each of those

stays in hospitals across the country. This is not to say there were not exceptions, but it is and continues to be disturbing to me that it is an accepted part of healthcare that physicians can be without proper bedside manner, or their bad behavior is excused. I don't know of any other profession especially a profession that is sacred and involved connection with other people's hearts, mind and bodies that would allow such lack of compassion. Studies prove that physicians who show compassion and empathy not only have better connections with their patients, but they are in the privileged position to offer hope, to offer o mi off \_ xof patient # during t and one's heart do s not m

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asks the reader to delve deeper into their own internal landscape to explore these Flames of Courage in an effort to recapture, restore and reframe their experiences in empowerment. Every woman will have their own story and experience and I hope that this book can rekindle their hope when they are in most need of it. Joan is a companion that one can count on and it's ok not to have enough courage, or faith or hope—that is why she is there as friend and ally.

## NOTES

If Joan of Arc Had Cancer: Courage, Faith and Healing from History's Most Inspired Woman Writer, New World Library, March 2015 release.

Available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [www.newworldlibrary.com](http://www.newworldlibrary.com).