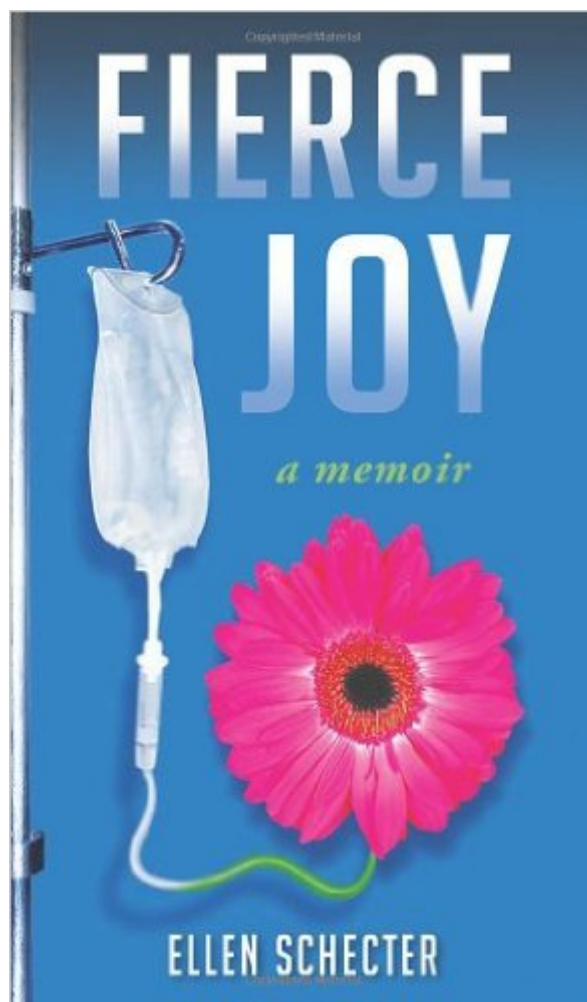


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# Fierce Joy



## Synopsis

*Fierce Joy: A Memoir* is a medical mystery, a spiritual adventure, and a love story. Ellen Schecter had everything she ever wanted: a loving marriage, two great kids, and her dream career writing children's books and television programs. Then her life shattered when she was diagnosed with a painful, potentially fatal disease. *Fierce Joy* tells the story of how Schecter found a way to be sick without suffering and transformed the loss of her place in the world of work into a quest for her soul. Propelled by illness into a search for new meanings, she learned to listen to her body and find healing even though a cure was impossible. Never asking "Why me?" she instead asked, "What's next?" and forged a new life paradoxically filled with joy.

## Book Information

Paperback: 276 pages

Publisher: Greenpoint Press (June 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0983237042

ISBN-13: 978-0983237044

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #905,565 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Lupus](#) #52 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Rheumatic Diseases](#) #284 in [Books > Medical Books > Basic Sciences > Immunology](#)

## Customer Reviews

"*Fierce Joy: A Memoir*" by Ellen Schecter is not just a book. It is an awesome journey into rediscovering the world of new hope and new meaning. Propelled by two devastating, life-threatening incurable illnesses, she enters into new worlds. Out of this devastation she shares, in brilliant style, her story of *Fierce Joy* discovered. Diagnosed with systemic lupus and CIPD (chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy), Ellen writes with a brilliant down-to-earth realism, sprinkled with lots of humor, while opening paths to the rediscovery of joy while chronically ill. It is a book for anyone who is seeking "healing" while hoping for cures. Eugene B Richardson, President,

"Fierce Joy" is a beautifully written memoir about the author's pain, suffering, and coping with two very serious, incurable, debilitating diseases: lupus and severe peripheral neuropathy. Schechter writes vividly and poignantly about her experiences with and anger at having such awful physically incapacitating diseases. She describes in detail the pain and humiliation these diseases have caused her, and her efforts to cope. But rather than being a didactic, dry, depressing medical memoir, "Fierce Joy" is a joy to read. Schechter also writes about the happiness and comfort she experienced because of the help of many physicians, therapists, family members, friends, flowers, music, and religion. She details her medical and emotional ordeals with a remarkable sense of humor and lack of self pity. "Fierce Joy" will inspire people not only suffering from lupus and peripheral neuropathy, but other painful, disabling chronic conditions. It should also be read by their physicians, caregivers, family members, and friends.

This is a truly magnificent book - unsparing in its fierce pain and unsentimental in its joy. Ellen writes of her journey from happy wellness to serious illness and, finally, to a place where she finds an even deeper, more meaningful kind of happiness, crafting with such beautiful words and sentences that the reader experiences, in a visceral way, it's fierce joy. I highly recommend it!

While Schechter's wonderful and important book describes her battle with a debilitating illness, the book makes great reading for anyone--especially for baby boomers facing the effects of aging. This is a narrative filled with humor and imaginative ramblings. For example, she creates characters who are part of her torn self--rational Ellen, scared Ellen, wise ass Ellen--and who interact with each other to animate the hopes and fears that co-exist when facing an unknown challenge. She grapples with the concrete, hateful realities of her disease, but mostly she takes on her psyche: "hate requires energy and attention better used embracing life."

FIERCE JOY IS so beautifully written and as compelling a read as a good mystery or a love story... I couldn't wait to see what happened. I dog eared and put asteriks on many of the particularly poignant parts that I will revisit often. I would like to thank the author for sharing her story. Ms. Schechter has remained elegant and graceful in the face of diversity, refusing to ever turn bitter or pessimistic. FIERCE JOY offers so much hope, but it is an active hope, not a passive one. I found it more than a "How to live with an illness book" but rather a primer on "how to live."

As a psychotherapist I can highly recommend this memoir for all those who are dealing with a

serious and debilitating health or life challenge or who knows someone who is facing this type of situation. Written by a courageous woman, and gifted writer, this book describes her personal journey battling an illness that challenged her in every way. Most impressive and inspirational, is how she builds and maintains her spirit, sense of humor and interpersonal ties while her body belies her emotional strength and courage.

This book is marvelously written and compelling to read. You will not want to put it down. The pages of FIERCE JOY are filled with poetry and elegance. In spite of physical and emotional pain, this book is full of hope and faith.

This superb memoir touched me deeply. We have all known pain to a greater or lesser degree, and it is impossible not to feel a blood connection with this author's journey through suffering to an emotional healing. Luminous writing, mystical touches, authentic thoughts and feelings brilliantly conveyed--I could not put the book down. I actually felt wonder as I read and found myself asking myself some difficult questions...could I be so brave? Could I urge myself forward as she did to new discoveries? I loved this book, and I expect it to stay with me. I hope you give yourself this immensely celebratory voyage where the darkest places become prisms of acceptance, joy and love.

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