



Dancing with Monsters

Chronic Illness as Creative Transformation

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Chronic Illness Can be Invitation to Creative Transformation

Ten years after being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), artist Kate Wolfe-Jenson realized that what she knew about creativity could help her live with chronic illness. By imagining that the physical and emotional ups and downs she meets while dealing with MS are part of a creative process, she gains energy and compassion for the journey. She chronicles that journey and invites others to join her in living life as a creative experiment in her book, *Dancing with Monsters: Chronic Illness as Creative Transformation*.

In *Dancing with Monsters*, Wolfe-Jenson uses memoir, essay, and fanciful stories to describe her experience. Among the monsters in Wolfe-Jenson's life are depression, stubbornness, ambition and analysis. They are countered by the angels of trust, surrender, vulnerability and faith. Wolfe-Jenson explores the challenges of living with chronic illness, including:

- dealing with negative thoughts
- asking for help
- the relationship of mind and body
- the definition of healing

Wolfe-Jenson invites readers to identify and work with their own monsters and angels through exercises included in the book. Incorporating writing, drawing, drama, sound and movement, the activities are designed to shift people beyond places they have felt stuck in dealing with life's challenges. *Dancing with Monsters* includes descriptions of environments, attitudes and activities that can promote healing.

"We all have monsters," Wolfe-Jenson says. "We do such a good job of hiding them from each other that we feel like we're the only ones who struggle. I hope this book will help people feel less alone and give them some tools to turn the battle into a dance."

About the Author

Kate Wolfe-Jenson was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1981. She has a Masters degree in Human Development with an emphasis in creativity. She is a painter, poet and award-winning video artist. Her jobs have included secretary, mental health counselor and Web designer. She lives in Woodbury, Minnesota with her husband and daughter.

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