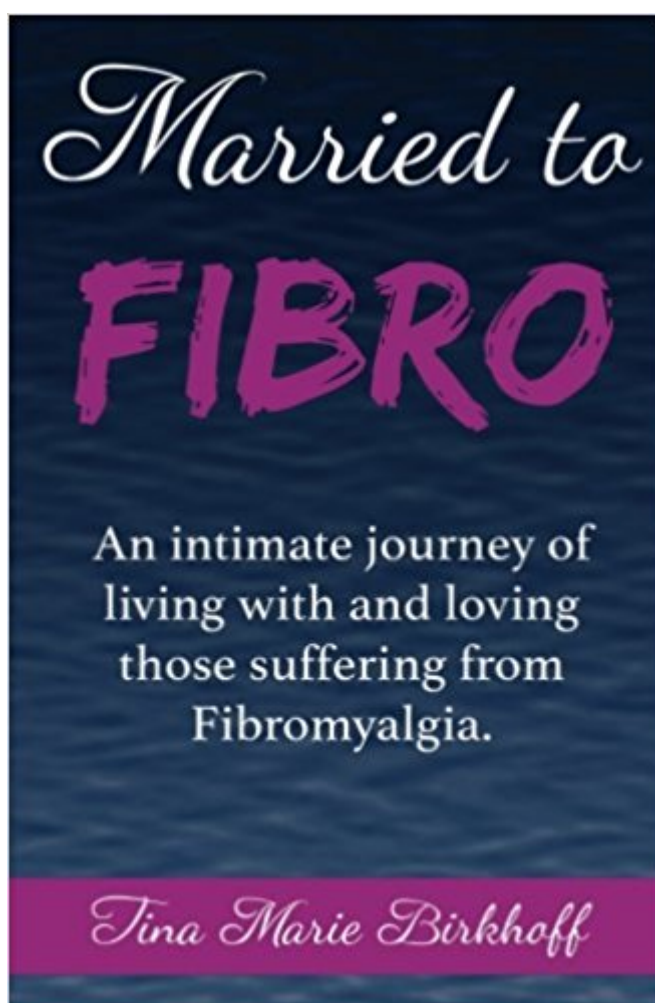


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Married To Fibro: An Intimate Journey Living With And Loving Those With Fibromyalgia



Synopsis

There is hope. We are the support systems for the loved ones suffering from Fibromyalgia. I have lived with Fibromyalgia in my house for almost two decades. Several of my friends have fibro and look for support within their friend or family circles. I've seen the frustration, sadness, lost hope and despair that affects the sufferer, the spouse, and the rest of the family. My article published in Fibromyalgia Life and Chronic Pain Magazine; Issue 5 • "In My Shoes" was the beginning of my awareness of the need for support. We, the family and friends, are a silent group hurting on the inside with little direction. Married to Fibro is that direction, the support group for help. Over 5 million people have been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia in the United States alone. Ten percent of those diagnosed with fibro are men. That means ninety percent of the sufferers out there are moms, wives, daughters, sisters, aunts, grandmothers, and girlfriends with Fibromyalgia and chronic pain. Through my experiences and successes, Married to Fibro is a book of learning, education and hope. I am proof! Today is the day you and your loved ones start living a new life after the diagnosis of Fibromyalgia. Dive into my life, my findings and new found hope. As you learn more about the disorder and find that there is support, you will become a better, stronger, more joyful you in the light of supporting someone living with Fibromyalgia. Start loving and living today!

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Customer Reviews

Tina Marie Birkhoff is an artist from birth, a designer by trade and a health enthusiast at heart. She has studied at great lengths the necessity of eating, living, and praying for greater health. After

having a brush with death, a scare with cancer and a husband who has been challenged with Fibromyalgia for over ten years, researching a healthy lifestyle became a necessity. Her husband is no longer suffering from the debilitating characteristics of Fibromyalgia thanks to her extensive research and successful application of healthy living. As a successful organic gardener and preserver her family and friends reap the benefits of great food, uplifting conversation and wholesome living. Tina graduated from Northern Illinois University with a BFA and continues to be creative with many forms of artistic medium. Her art work has been displayed in several galleries and online viewing and purchases at www.TinaMarieGallery.org. Tina and her husband live in Prescott AZ and return to the Midwest often to visit family and friends.

Fibromyalgia is a life changing autoimmune disease. I work in the health care industry and see patients suffering from the symptoms of Fibromyalgia on a daily basis -- it is very commonplace. I also have four extended family members who live with the pain, fatigue and depression that Fibromyalgia causes. I was interested in this book as a way in which to better relate to those patients and my family members and to find out how one family worked through the difficulties of living with someone suffering with Fibromyalgia. It was very clear in her book, that Tina Marie Birkhoff understands all aspects of the condition and that she and her husband have, over the years, turned a negative situation into an opportunity for growth in their relationship and commitment to each other as well as including the children in the ways they had to learn to handle their father's illness. Their path to finding answers and getting results took persistent diligence, trial and error, hope, faith in God's marriage contract and love. Letters from their two daughters at the conclusion of the book were filled with love and understanding of the difficult times they faced as a family but also addressed the misperceptions and misunderstandings that any child might develop because of illness in the home. Both letters reflected great love, respect and appreciation of the effort their parents made to keep everything together. Tina Marie Birkhoff presents many aspects of the disease and how it impacts the different members of a family dealing with the presence of Fibromyalgia on a daily basis. She bravely opened up her life to the reader with its fears and difficulties and the stressful interpersonal dynamics between the loved one suffering through their day with the individual family members and how each one learned to interact with the patient. After reading *MARRIED TO FIBRO*, I feel a greater ability to relate with individuals who struggle with this disease as well being better able to discuss the life-style and food choices necessary to bring the type of resolution that the Birkhoff family has achieved and been very successful with implementing. As Tina Marie attests to, life is a journey and does not include the "EASY BUTTON" for navigating

difficult circumstances. Her message is clear: a family needs to function in unified determination and that is what will create the winning resolution in the end.

Married to Fibro is an intimate look inside life with a spouse that has fibromyalgia. The feeling that you just want to take the pain away, but can't, is overwhelming. Tina Marie Birkhoff writes with honesty, heart, and introspection. She mentions what works for her husband, and tips she picked up along the way. A friend of mine lives with Fibro and I downloaded this book to learn more about this disease. The author's emphasis on growth, the explanation of what the pain feels like, what stress does to the body, and the letters at the end were some of the highlights for me. There is no sugarcoating, but heaps of understanding... and a few escaping llamas.

This is a difficult story. Difficult because it is essentially an edited diary or narrative of how Fibromyalgia has affected the authors' family. From before diagnosis through today, all is laid bare for you to read and learn from. Fibro is a difficult problem not just for the sufferer, but for the entire family. That is made absolutely clear. And not just the physical symptoms her husband fights through daily are illustrated, but the emotional and psychological stresses this has brought to the entire family. Fortunately, this story has an upbeat resolution. Committed changes in their lifestyle, their home, their jobs and their eating have allowed a nearly pain-free and manageable truce with Fibro. And in a very honest, revealing and loving twist, each family member has a letter (chapter) at the conclusion of the book that tells readers a few important revelations from each person's perspective. This is a difficult story due to the aggressive and difficult subject. But it is a story I'm happy I got to read. I learned an incredible amount about Fibro, and how it and diseases or ailments like it can be approached, especially by the supporting spouse.

This is a personal story about a living with Fibro. It's not only a difficult problem for the sufferer, but for the entire family. The emotional and psychological stresses brought on by daily living with the disease affects everyone. Positive and necessary changes to lifestyle their environment and stress levels from work provided a pain-free, manageable solution. It is apparent by the beautiful letters included in your book, that each of you have had your own emotional journey of discovery. A journey that's although painful at times, has become a source of strength and a path to letting go of past emotions. Bravo to you for being their beacon of light in sharing your writing process with them by writing this book. Thank you Tina for sharing your heart and soul, your honest, personal, loving truth in an effort to help others gain a better understanding of living with Fibro. Thank you for

showing us a positive and healthy approach to making the best of a difficult situation. A recommended read!

Being a good wife is normally a lot of work. Add to that a husband whose needs are often being put ahead of your own. A wife who would normally be loving and nurturing has to step up her efforts when her man is in pain. There is no easy answer to how to make life better for a husband with Fibro. Except one word: Love. Tina's touching story of love and endurance through tough and confusing times opens eyes to what happens when someone you love has Fibro.

A touching tale of suffering and some honest advice about what you can do to live with someone who has fibromyalgia. Life is not over, but things have changed for this family. See how they deal with the big problems and the day to day, to manage living with Fibro. There is a helpful section in here showing what fibromyalgia is, and then contrasting what fibromyalgia is not.

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