

'It's normal to feel terrified of cancer five years on...'

A PSYCHOLOGIST diagnosed twice with breast cancer has penned a book to give women the long-term emotional support she found lacking.

Dr Cordelia Galgut, from Eaglesfield Road, in Shooters Hill's "alternative handbook" shares practical tips for dealing with the disease from the shock of the diagnosis to feelings of terror breast cancer can give for many years after.

The book *Emotional Support Through Breast Cancer* has just been awarded "highly commended" in the popular medicine category of the British Medical Association (BMA) Book Awards 2014.

Dr Galgut who writes extensively on the emotional impact of breast cancer previously penned *The Psychological Impact of Breast Cancer* in 2010 which was aimed at health professionals.

She told the *Mercury*: "I have been through the shock of being diagnosed twice and having treatment for breast cancer in 2004 and I still feel affected by it.

"I did not have a clue then of how it could affect all kinds of things and the lack of emotional support available. I wanted to

BY MANDY LITTLE

write about it, to share my experiences and help other women."

The counselling psychologist said: "The aim of the book is to normalise a lot of the ways women feel about breast cancer as many feel they should have been able to get over it quicker. It's to show it can be normal to still feel terrified of it five years later or longer. It's to say to women that they are not alone."

My first book was for health professionals but then I realised there was a gap in the market for a book for the women affected."

She said: "The book has had a great response from readers but it is great to get the validation of highly commended from the BMA. I hope that women find it accessible but not patronising. It's cheap and handbag sized and so can be easily picked up and put down when needed."

The book is packed with quotes from women talking about their feelings and tackles a number of "myths" about breast cancer which make life harder for women

such as "It was a year ago now. You should be moving on by now."

The book has won a host of plaudits from high-profile people. BBC Radio 4's Women's Hour presenter Dame Jenny Murray said: "It is rare to find a professional in the field of healthcare who understands the psychology of such a frightening experience and who has been through it herself."

● **Emotional Support Through Breast Cancer: The Alternative Handbook** by Dr Cordelia Galgut is published by Radcliffe Health is priced **£5.99** and available via Amazon.



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