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Stacy Nottle

Author Bio



About Stacy

Stacy grew up out west on a remote sheep station west of Cunnamulla, Queensland. ‘I was most fortunate,’ she says. ‘I got to get up close and personal with Mother Nature from an early age and revelled in her profundity and her whimsy. I also had parents who instilled in me a love for words, reading, big ideas and art.’

At age six, Stacy went away to boarding school in Cunnamulla, and later in Toowoomba, where she discovered the world of people and she began to pay attention to what they did and how they interacted. While she was learning about the ways of the world, a committee of voices began to form inside her head, and they started to advise her on what to do in order to fit in.

She got on with the business of life—she studied science and education at university; got married to Richard; had three children and lots of pets; travelled; lived in Toowoomba, Brisbane, north Queensland, Perth; worked as a shearers’ cook, waitress, scientific research assistant, high school teacher; more study; careers counsellor ...

Life got busy. Her early love of words, reading, big ideas and art was still there but the committee in her head told her to just ignore them. ‘You haven’t got time,’ they said. ‘Best do it our way, otherwise no-one will like you.’

Then cancer!

Her carefully constructed world turned upside down and the words, reading, big ideas and art she’d kept hidden for so long started to drop out of her pockets. Not even the committee could contain them any longer. Her debut novel, *After the Flood*, was published in 2019 and her memoir, *Breastless*, is due for release in 2021.

Book Bio

Stacy Nottle thought she was okay! She thought she had her act together!

That was before she ran face first into a cancer diagnosis and her carefully constructed sense of identity shattered and fell to pieces at her very large feet.

‘After my cancer diagnosis,’ Stacy says, ‘I figured that in order to give myself the best chance of surviving, I had no choice but to take a long, hard, uncomfortable look at my baggage. That’s what I do in *Breastless*.’

In her deeply moving and inspiring memoir, Stacy shares the physical aspects of her breast cancer story; but more importantly, she shares what was happening inside her head. What were her thoughts and emotions as she travelled that dark road? And who were the committee who kept saying she wasn’t good enough or strong enough or loved enough to survive?

Delving back to her earliest experiences—she went to boarding school at the age of six—Stacy examines her life with humour and candour. She tackles hard questions about self-worth, femininity, friendship and grief; and she uses magical quotes throughout to underline each step in her journey.

Whether you have been given a cancer diagnosis, are supporting someone who has, or have found your way here for some other reason, Stacy’s beautifully told story is sure to uplift and inspire you. It might even challenge you to ask the same age-old questions she asked—*Who am I? What do I want from my life?*

BREASTLESS



STACY NOTTLE

Target Audience

- Women
- Cancer patients and those who care for them. (This is the book I wished I had when I was going through my breast cancer treatment)
- Health organisations
- Mental health organisations
- Anyone who went to boarding school in the 60s and 70s
- Anyone bothered by the committee in their head
- Anyone who dreams of living a more creative life
- Lovers of words, reading, big ideas and art.

Book Benefits



Stacy's first book, *After the Flood*, has now been followed by *Breastless*; this book is a wonderful journey where Stacy takes the reader along with her, through every frightening, funny, reflective and powerful step of her journey. She uses beautiful quotes throughout which encourage and inspire the reader to seek answers about their own lives.

Breastless is a wonderful tool for anyone wanting their own journey of self-reflection and discovery. Its readers will be reminded that they are beautiful, amazing, strong, and braver than they think.



Testimonials

I ADORED this book. I was with Stacy through every frightening, funny, reflective, and powerful step of her journey; at the same time, I was on my own journey of self-reflection and discovery. This is a wonderful tool for people who are going through or have been through cancer but regardless of a person's circumstances, I think it is a great read for just about anyone.

—Sue Dymond
Author, CEO/Founder of iDareU

I LOVED *Breastless*. It is addictive, like chocolate, and I read it in two days. Now I want to go back and read it more slowly and savour every minute. I think I might have purposely 'deleted' my own experience of having cancer because I kept reading bits that made me go 'oh yeahhhh, I remember that'. Stacy's honesty is a real treasure. She not only gave us the story of this time in her life but her backstory as well so that by the end of the book, I felt I knew and cared about her. This is what makes it such an easy but fascinating read. And then, the quotes added another element.

The chapters about her experiences at boarding school were amazing. Stacy would have terrified me back then, so it's weird that I just loved her in the book. How did she manage to be so brave? I also loved how she talks about the 'committee in her head'; which got me thinking about my own 'committee'. All day, I have been listening to them and laughing.

—Loma Tonnochy

Breastless allows you to step inside the head of a breast cancer patient and go along for the ride. Stacy searches for the answers of how & why and takes you on her journey of self-discovery. A great insight into the cancer world & well worth the read.

—Kate Gale
Author, speaker, and breast cancer survivor

Raw Organic Emotions—ROE—that's how I see this book. I've cried, done a WTF, smiled, and LOLed. You brave woman for putting all that has been, is, and will be for you, down in words. How honoured I feel.

—Hayley O'Dempsey
A fellow breast cancer survivor

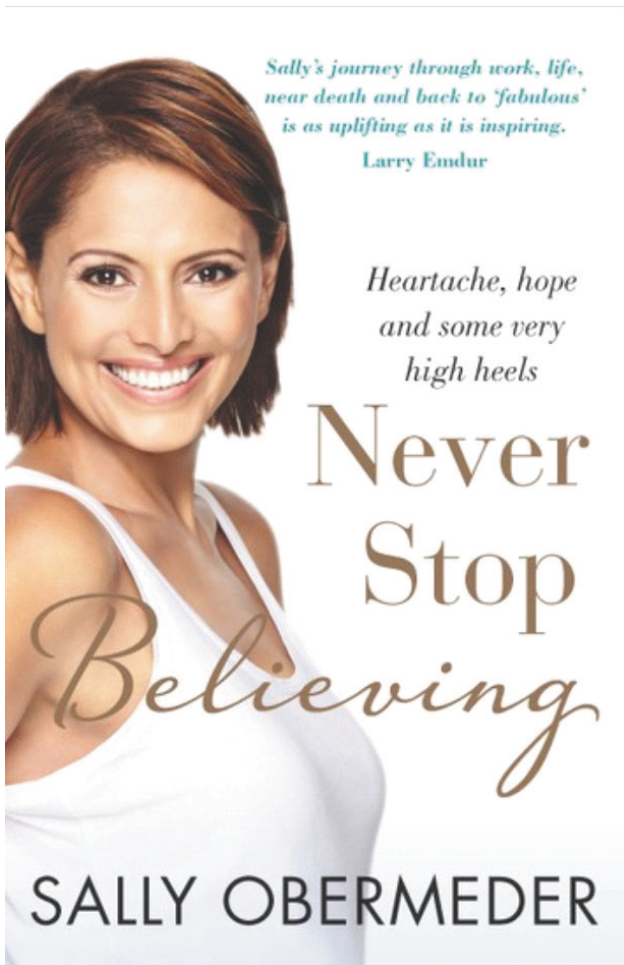
Stacy and I have a great deal in common, having shared the boarding school experience, and I found this part of her novel very affirming and, at times, quite painful. Reading Stacy's novel was a little like swimming in a lake or a dam ... at times, warm and welcoming, so that I could lie back and float away, sharing the joy of a long walk in nature, listening to the birds in the trees; then, sharp and cold, like hitting a cold patch which brings you sharply back to reality. I am fortunate that I have not shared her experience with breast cancer but am so grateful for her honesty. It helps us grasp the complexities of emotions, as many of our friends and families navigate this path in their individual way. Stacy's voice comes through strong and clear, as she realises that an essential part of her road to recovery is learning to love herself.

—Thérèse Eddy
Founder of Open to Success and Higher Education Coach

Breastless, by Stacy Nottle, witnesses the potency of taking a life-threatening experience, in this case, breast cancer, and harnessing it as a springboard into psychological growth. In particular, it reveals how powerful the use of reflective writing is in making sense of one's life leading to the construction of a life-affirming narrative. There are many aspects in this beautifully written book that will speak to diverse readers including those who have been to boarding school.

—Christine Jack
PhD, educational historian, author of *Recovering Boarding School Trauma Narratives: Christopher Robin Milne as a psychological companion on the journey to healing*

Celebrity Testimonial



This book is beautiful. It's raw, it's honest, but most of all—it's inspiring. Stacy shares the truth behind her journey, and I feel incredibly humbled that she found comfort in my words, as much as I have now found comfort in hers. This book connects us all. It's not only for those that have been through breast cancer but for anyone that just needs a reminder that they are braver than they think ... and Stacy shows us exactly that. A truly amazing read.

—Sally Obermeder,
Australian television host

Book Excerpt

When I was diagnosed with cancer, people—and the media—kept telling me how important it was to be optimistic and have a great attitude. Usually, I consider myself to be a positive, optimistic person but how was I supposed to have a great attitude when I had all these negative voices in my head telling me I wasn't enough—loved enough, lucky enough, strong enough? I began to think of these voices as the “committee in my head”, as described by Ann Bradford.

When the committee found out about my cancer, all hell broke loose. They started running around chewing on pencils, pushing spectacles onto their foreheads, and wringing their hands. Everyone was talking at once, throwing hands into the air, and trying to shout over each other. Some became so hysterical that their only contribution was to hold their face between their hands and moan, ‘You’re going to die. You’re going to die.’



Interview Questions

1. Why did you decide to write *Breastless*?
2. What do you hope your readers will get out of reading this book?
3. Your book is described as raw and honest and your description of your treatment for cancer is, at times, incredibly confronting. Do you think someone just starting out on this journey would want to read these details? Wouldn't this only increase their own anxiety?
4. There is a part in Chapter One where you talk about feeling as if you are in competition with all the other people who ever had cancer? What do you mean by this?
5. As well as describing the physical aspects of your breast cancer story, you write about what was happening inside your head. In other words, the psychology of breast cancer. Can you explain this a little further?
6. One of the recurring characters in your book is the 'committee in your head'. Who is the committee? Where did they come from and how did you deal with them?
7. What important themes does your book address?
8. What advice would you give someone who has a close friend or family member going through cancer treatment? What shouldn't we do or say?
9. In chapters 4 & 5, you talk about the twelve years you spent in boarding school as a child. How have these experiences affected you and why are they so relevant in this memoir?
10. You describe your book as a memoir, but it could also be described as a book of quotes. In the book, you use about 70. What was your motivation for including so many? Do you have a favourite? Did you actually read all the books from which you have taken the quotes?
11. You say that one of your favourite quotes is by Terri Windling. It finishes with: Community, friendship, art: stirred together, they make a powerful magic. Used wisely, it can save your life. I know that it saved mine. Why does this quote resonate with you so much?
12. Who do you take inspiration from?
13. Your book launch is/was a fundraiser for Blush Cancer Care, held on Valentine's Day, and the theme is Self-Love. Can you describe how and why you came up with this idea for a book launch?
14. How has breast cancer changed you?
15. *Breastless* is your second book. Can you tell me a little about your first?

Contact the Author

Ph +61427565039

Email: stacynottle1@bigpond.com

website: www.stacynottleauthor.com

facebook.com/stacynottleauthor

