

It's My Crisis evokes humor, hope and compassion. Coping mechanisms in the book are safe, sound, can-do strategies. Whoever the reader, no matter their medical crisis, this book addresses their needs in a proactive manner. Share it with loved ones.

**It's MY Crisis! And I'll Cry If I Need To: EMPOWER Yourself to Cope with a Medical Challenge**

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# **It's MY Crisis! And I'll Cry If I Need To:**

EMPOWER Yourself to Cope with a Medical Challenge

Second Edition

By Yocheved Golani

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ISBN: 978-1-60145-278-8

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Booklocker.com, Inc.  
2011

Printed in the United States of America.

First Edition 2007

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Formatting and Cover Design: GVI Media [www.gvimedia.com](http://www.gvimedia.com)

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Read the book's companion blog at <http://itsmycrisisandillcryifineedto.blogspot.com>.

See Yocheved's website, [www.yochevedgolani.com](http://www.yochevedgolani.com).

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Preface</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Power to the patient .....	3
It's <u>MY</u> Crisis! And I'll Cry if I Need To .....	4
<b>Action Alert</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Shape Your Mind for Survival Mode.....	8
Develop a Survival-Mode Mind .....	8
Create an Attitude of Acceptance.....	9
Move Beyond Your Sense of Shock: More About Acceptance.....	10
<b>Remain Emotionally, Spiritually, and Physically Strong</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>It's Hard to Cope</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Kol Hatechalot Kashot</i> , All First Steps are Difficult. ....	19
Find Ways To Smile. ....	20
Boredom!.....	21
<b>Make Your Moods Work for You</b> .....	<b>24</b>
You Need To Develop A Treasure-trove of Mood Savers. ....	25
<b>Choose Your Vocabulary</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Words Mean What They Imply.....	27
Turn Lemons into Lemonade.....	29
<b>Take a Breath and Review Some Important Points</b> .....	<b>31</b>
Three Easy-to-remember Things You Can Do to Preserve Your Health: .....	31
<b>Coping with Pain</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Spend Time on Spirituality</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Shore-up your Spiritual Life in Practical Ways.....	36
Make a Medical Metaphor .....	38
List those inspirational things here or in that keepsake notebook: .....	39
Refining Silver .....	41
<b>Listen to the Person Before You - Lessons for Caregivers</b> .....	<b>42</b>
Empty Well Syndrome .....	46
<b>Organization</b> .....	<b>48</b>
Here are some storage ideas: .....	51
<b>Preparing to be Hospitalized</b> .....	<b>53</b>
Bring:.....	53
Do Not Bring: .....	53
Additional Ideas:.....	54
Walk a Mile in My Shoes.....	54
Bedsores.....	55
Reward Yourself.....	56
Count Your Blessings .....	58

<b>Employment with a Disability .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>RSD: Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy a.k.a. CRPS – Complex Regional Pain Syndrome .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Afterword .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Global Resources .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Postscript .....</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>On the Road to Recovery-An Address .....</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>Post-Postscript .....</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>Comments from a few of Yocheved’s friends .....</b>	<b>165</b>

## Action Alert

### Shape Your Mind for Survival Mode.

*Actions, ideas, and emotions are very important realities to suffering people if they are physically ill or emotionally out of order.* I went through an ordeal that could have broken the bodies and spirits of many people. I understood that I needed to take positive, life-saving actions, to think of positive ideas that strengthened me, and to take positive control of my emotions on many levels.

My medical team and I did not know if I would live past the surgical effort to save me. We knew that the tumor, left untreated, could kill me within the next two years. So, we needed to make our joint rescue efforts as rapidly and as effectively as possible. I needed to respond to every frightening, negative thought with an upbeat, healing thought. You do too.

The worst thing that could have happened to me back then is that I would have failed to save my life. The BEST thing, however, was that if I succeeded I would have a life. One I wanted to live. You or your loved one may be in the same boat.

### Develop a Survival-Mode Mind

In order to have the best happen, I needed to develop a plan of action to save my life and/or the quality of my remaining life. You need to do that too.

*Anyone with a medical crisis is in the same situation: you need to save a life. Yours or the life of someone you love.* The quality of that endangered life is just as important as preserving it.

**Write the name of the person whose life needs saving in the space provided here or in a keepsake notebook:**

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**List the important actions, ideas, and emotions that can have a positive effect on that person** (You and your loved one can prepare this list together):

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If you need more space, add a clean piece of paper to the workbook and fill it out or use a keepsake notebook for these fill-in-the-blank exercises.

### **Create an Attitude of Acceptance**

I accepted the very real surgical risk that I might survive with some physical or mental deficits. I did not want to live as a miserable cripple. But, if becoming crippled were to be my fate, I decided that I would be the most with-it, upbeat cripple I could be. I intended to be Yocheved Golani LIVE, not dead. Misery and bitterness are not for me. They cancel out survival and quality of life.

*You have to make a similar decision.* The Torah tells us to choose life. Mental health practitioners and their clients know that misery is spiritual death. Life is productive, spontaneous, and as happy as you can make it.

Make happiness a hobby. Respond to every frightening, negative thought with an upbeat, healing thought. On purpose.

Pretend that you're willing to explore new opportunities and methodologies until that willingness becomes a natural impulse. Repeated actions can teach you to react in creative, productive ways.

All of us have challenges to overcome. Georgia O'Keefe said it well: "Where I was born and where and how I have lived is unimportant. It is what I have done with where I have been that should be of interest."

**Make a list of the difficult ideas and situations you must accept in order to go forward to as much health and dignity as possible** (You and your loved ones can prepare this list together. Another person can make you aware of important ideas you haven't thought of yet.):

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If you need more space, add a clean piece of paper to the workbook and fill it out or use a keepsake notebook for these fill-in-the-blank exercises.

Here's a thought you might want to cling to as you groom yourself and others to promote your coping successes:

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great ones make you feel that you too, can become great." – Mark Twain, beloved American author

## **Move Beyond Your Sense of Shock: More About Acceptance**

Dr. Judith Guedalia is a neuropsychologist at Shaarei Tzedek Hospital in Israel. She specializes in treating victims of terrorist acts. One of her healing techniques is to place her hands around the head of someone lying on a bloody stretcher in the Emergency Room and to ask the person to describe things. She asks them to tell her what they see, hear, and feel as she gently turns their head to face her, to look at the bustling lifesaving activity in the emergency area, and to examine the food she places in their mouths. Dr. Guedalia likes to give *Bamba* to terror victims. It's a treat with a commonly recognized flavor, associated with pleasant memories. She does all this to help the terror victim realize that they survived the bomb, knifing, or other danger to life. "Victims need to realize that they're alive, not dead," Dr. Guedalia says. "They need to leave their state of shock. Otherwise, it can last forever and they will never again feel joy, never heal."

We need to leave the state of shock that our medical crises give us. That frees us to be happy in the future, and to heal.

*Use your senses to the fullest.* Tap your feet, clap your hands, smile, walk, smell flowers or a baby's sweet scent, touch textures you enjoy, and eat and drink things you desire in moderation. Listen to sounds you like, such as birdsong, music, laughter, babbling brooks. Dance if at all possible. Giggle on purpose. Decorate your home along Feng Shui principles if you wish. They focus on and promote all kinds of health.

If you want help to remain positive, to pass from a state of shock to a state of active life, I suggest materials by:

Dr. Abraham Low, founder of the Recovery Method and author of *Mental Health Through Will-Training*. Participate in Recovery meetings if you can. These can be enormously helpful not only to recovering psychiatric patients, but anyone willing to work on improving their mental state.

Dr. Judith Orloff and Dr. Miriam Adahan's book *Emotional Maturity Established Through Torah* (a manual for spiritual and psychological survival). Certified leaders around the world conduct EMETT meetings. Read the book, attend local meetings if you can, and learn successful techniques for managing your emotions.

Here's a simple positive action you can take: become the director of your life. Pretend it's a movie, a book, or stage play. Create an appealing setting to convince the main character that he/she is healing. Music can be part of that setting. I suggest that you actually play the following composition, and to keep reminding yourself that it is helping in every possible way: Beethoven's *String Quartet in A*

(Opus 132), the one with the movement expressing thanks for recovery from an illness.

Ask trustworthy friends to help you to cope. Confide in a mental health therapist if you need or want one. Any of these actions can help you avoid compounding a medical crisis with a crisis of mental torture. All of your positive actions can build you up from the inside out.

**Prepare your list of upsetting ideas that you need to accept in order to pursue health** (You and your loved ones can prepare this list together. Another person's perspective might be helpful now.):

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**Now list the actions you can take to accept those ideas as you free your focus to concentrate on improving your health** (You and your loved ones can prepare this list together for added brain power):

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If you need more space, add a clean piece of paper to the workbook and fill it out or use a keepsake notebook for these fill-in-the-blank exercises.

It's My Crisis evokes humor, hope and compassion. Coping mechanisms in the book are safe, sound, can-do strategies. Whoever the reader, no matter their medical crisis, this book addresses their needs in a proactive manner. Share it with loved ones.

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