

# Beyond the Diagnosis: NLP as a Lifeline Through Cancer and Beyond



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**I**t's interesting how life can sometimes take an unexpected turn. There I was, happily ticking off my '50 things for 50' list, when I discovered I had breast cancer. To say I was shocked is an understatement. I was probably the fittest I had ever been, living my best life – and suddenly, everything changed.

Those who know me know that I'm all about the practical application of NLP. When cancer came along, I needed that practical application more than ever.

The journey was anything but smooth... I had two separate cancers – one was straightforward to remove, and the other took three surgical attempts. Looking back, if everything had gone smoothly, I'd probably have nothing to write about! Instead, I managed to fill a whole book – and could easily have written more.



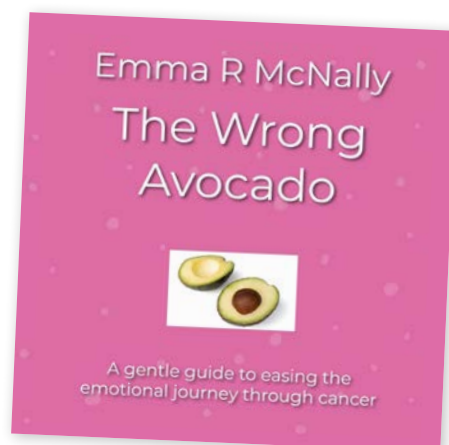
## Writing through recovery

Writing became a way to process what was happening while documenting the NLP tools and techniques I used to stay resourceful, resilient and emotionally steady during one of the toughest periods of my life.

I didn't want to write a glossy 'positive thinking' spin. I wanted to share the reality: the way I leaned on NLP every day. After my surgeries and radiotherapy ended, I put the manuscript aside.

A couple of years later, I met Esther Taylor, CEO of Lady McAdden Breast Cancer Trust, who committed to distributing the book through their charity. This was too good an opportunity to pass up – a chance to share NLP with a wider community and genuinely help those facing a similar journey.

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Six months later, the book is now published, and Esther kindly wrote the foreword, describing it as: "A vital companion for anyone seeking not just to survive, but to feel more whole, more grounded, and more in control through one of life's toughest journeys. It is practical, compassionate, and filled with wisdom."

I celebrated the launch with family, friends, and fellow NLP professionals at Wilkin & Sons on 12th September, and the Kindle version hit #1 in NLP, Self-help and Personal Transformation e-book categories that week.

## NLP in practice

The book is written as an honest, conversational account, like sitting on a sofa with a trusted friend who shares practical tools to help get through difficult times and also thrive.

During this time, I undertook extensive research into health,

mindset and the mind-body connection. Psychoneuroimmunology demonstrates that what we think about affects us physically and, in turn, impacts our immune system. This connection is crucial to understand when something like cancer or other health challenges occur, as focusing solely on the physical side is not enough. Our mental resilience becomes just as important, if not more so, because our thoughts influence how we feel, which in turn affects our physical wellbeing.

In the book, I share the NLP tools that supported me throughout the journey. Anchoring played a particularly significant role. I created a stacked resource anchor for calm, flexibility, confidence and peace, which I used repeatedly, especially before surgery.



Many years ago, I was due to have a minor operation that had to be cancelled because my anxiety was so high that my blood pressure prevented the procedure. The previous year, my father had undergone surgery that went wrong because of an overdose of anaesthetic, resulting in a heart attack. While he survived, the incident left me with a deep fear of operations and a belief that I might die during surgery. Thankfully, at that time I discovered NLP and I used it to shift my beliefs, release fear, and reapproach the necessary surgery with calm and confidence.

Fast forward to my recent cancer journey, and I was reminded of this powerful transformation. Our ability to change emotional states using NLP has a profound impact on physical experience. I observed a patient being half-carried into the operating theatre as she was so distraught and overwhelmed, and I knew NLP could provide her with tools to feel more resourceful, calm and empowered. After experiencing it myself, I felt compelled to share these techniques so others could benefit.

As I went through treatment, other hidden limiting beliefs surfaced. My father's early death from cancer had instilled not only a fear of dying from cancer but also a belief that I might inevitably face the same fate. NLP enabled me to shift these beliefs, release fear and find inner peace.

I applied a wide range of NLP tools throughout the journey. Coaching support was also invaluable – I like to use the analogy of coaching being like cutting your own hair: trimming the fringe is easy (for example, using anchoring and other techniques), but the back requires professional help. Similarly, professional NLP coaching guided me through the complex emotional and psychological challenges of cancer treatment.

## I choose to believe that my mindset, focus and NLP practice supported my body's natural healing.

In the book, I also share my 3L Stress Model, created during this time and rooted in NLP. I explore resilience, managing emotions, identity, coping with ongoing treatment, and navigating comparisons with others. Visualization, meditation and Core Transformation became my daily routine, focusing on emotional healing and recovery.

Each chapter weaves together my personal story with NLP, alongside practical tips and a simple toolkit for readers to use themselves. My aim is to provide accessible, actionable and effective tools, so that anyone facing health challenges can feel more confident, resourceful and empowered.

### What happened next

After my final operation, I received astonishing news: pathology revealed that the second cancer – the one they had been trying to remove for months – was now found to be benign. While explanations vary, I choose to believe that my mindset, focus and NLP practice supported my body's natural healing.

### Looking ahead

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month (this October), my vision is to make these tools accessible to as many people as possible – not just those facing cancer, but anyone managing the emotional impact of health challenges. Alongside the book, I've created QR code cards for hospitals, charities and GP surgeries, enabling patients to access the book and its

resources. I'm thrilled that my surgeon has welcomed it wholeheartedly and Broomfield Hospital is now giving a card to every breast cancer patient that goes through their unit.

If you'd like to join me in this mission, I would be delighted to send some cards for you to share locally.

I'm also running workshops for Lady McAdden Breast Cancer Trust, based on the book, providing practical NLP support to their community.

Two years on, I'm grateful not only for my own recovery but also for the chance to share NLP more widely than ever before. My hope is that this work continues to ripple outward, through hospitals, charities, practitioners and, most importantly, into the hands of those who need it most.

Thank you, my lovely NLP community, for being part of this journey with me. ■

