

Supplementary Material S1: **Interview Schedule**

1. Could you briefly tell me about your experience of living with cancer before using the book?
2. What interested you about the book?
3. Before using the book, did you have any expectations of it? If so, could you tell me about these?
4. How did you use the book? (Prompts: Did you read the book from beginning to end or read different sections at a time? Did you leave any sections out? Did you try the written and audio exercises?)
5. Could you tell me about your experience of using the book? (Prompts: How did using the book make you feel? Did any parts of the book stand out for you? Did any parts feel more or less relevant? What was your experience of the written exercises? What was your experience of the audio exercises?)
6. How did your experience of the book compare to your expectations of it?
7. How would you describe the book to someone?
8. Could you tell me about any changes that you have noticed or made since using the book (if any)? (Prompts: thoughts, feelings, behaviours, ways of coping, lifestyle changes)
9. How do you feel about using the book again in the future?
10. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the book?

Demographic Questionnaire

Participant Questionnaire

*The information provided for this questionnaire will be used anonymously in the study.
Please answer as many questions as possible. However, you do not have to
answer anything that you don't want to. Thank you.*

Today's date: ____/____/____ Participant Number [office use]: _____

Age: _____

Gender: Male Female Prefer to self-describe as _____

Are you currently in employment? Yes / No Are you retired? Yes / No

Current / previous work:

At what age did you leave education? _____

Highest level of qualification obtained? _____

Do you live by yourself? Yes / No Number of dependents _____

Do you have any physical disabilities: Yes / No

When were you diagnosed with cancer? _____

What type of cancer were you diagnosed with? _____

Have you been diagnosed with more than one type of cancer? Yes / No

If yes, what other types of cancer have you been diagnosed with?

Have you had treatment for your cancer? Yes / No

If yes, what treatment have you had? _____

Are you currently in treatment? Yes / No

Have you finished treatment? Yes / No

Have you been affected by psychological problems such as anxiety or depression since you were diagnosed with cancer? Yes / No

If yes, please tell us how you were affected:

Have you received any treatment/support for this? Yes / No

If yes, please tell us about the treatment/support you received:

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Supplementary Material S2: Sample from the analytic stages followed

P5 Interview

Code Annotations Edit

Q Find Done

Interviewer: Yeah. And now that you have read it, were there any parts that did stand out or that you remember particularly or that you used a lot more than others that were more helpful?

Respondent: Yeah, I think just the initial kind of idea of looking at your thoughts from a slightly detached space, you know, and oh, you know, I can't exactly remember how it had put it but that thing of, you know, I think I wrote down a thing of I noticed that I'm thinking about a certain thing. I can't remember exactly what that bit was called but just doing sort of little things like that actually did really work for me, you know, I did say out loud the thing that was worrying me or whatever and then I realised that when you then put in those other words before it and then the other ones, it actually does take away the power of it if you like and just gives it a... Because obviously when you're in amongst all this stuff it all just seems like it's the only thing that's happening in the world but when you realise, you know, oh just take a slightly different step from it you realise that it's something perhaps you can have more say over rather than it just controlling you if you like.

Interviewer: Yeah, definitely. Were there any other things that have stood out or that were particularly helpful?

Respondent: Well, I think that was just the sort of general thing with it that it made me feel that I could...

Interviewer: Yeah, the take away.

Respondent: ...yeah, I could actually stand back from the feelings and take them out as feelings and not just that they were the complete thing, the whole thing, you know, they're not the whole world they're just some feelings that are going through my head sort of thing that sort of has made a real conscious thing that I can think about that in a different way now.

Interviewer: Yeah, good. Were there any parts as you went through that you thought they didn't feel very relevant or they weren't particularly helpful?

Respondent: Yeah, the thing... well, just not that it wasn't helpful it just wasn't... the thing for me about, you know, committing to certain things going forward. In some ways obviously I can see that is a really good way of, you know, making you actually do things that are good for you and not just sort of wallowing around in how you're feeling at that time, you know, it's good obviously to have a... though I think I probably do that a bit anyway, you know, I tend to make lists anyway a bit (laughs) so I suppose that's why it didn't feel so important because I maybe do that a bit already. But it did reinforce that, you know, that it's really good to make a plan and make things happen because otherwise you can end up just making all the little things you have to do be the sort of be all and end all.

Interviewer: Yeah, so there were parts of the book that were perhaps new that you're going to take away and then there was other parts that you recognised you were doing already.

Expectations of book

Having to think about your own death

Previous psychological support

Benefits of bibliotherapy

Cancer diagnosis

Regaining control

Detusion

Coding Density

Committed action

P7 Interview
Code
Annotations
Edit

Q- connecting
Not found
Done

that kind of resonated with me. It made me feel actually, well, I've had a really hard time and I'm going to stop looking at what other people look at for myself. I think that was kind of a key message.

[0:36:20]

Interviewer: That makes a lot of sense, and it sounds like there was a lot of reading that stuff is normalising and reassuring and comforting perhaps in a way.

Respondent: Yeah, reassuring. That's probably the right word. It was almost like reassurance, that's probably the word I was looking for, reassurance you need to say, you know, you're going through treatment and this is what somebody else has felt, and I'm like, okay, I felt like that when I had chemo. Somebody else felt like this and I'm like, oh, I felt like that. That's why I was carrying on reading the first part of the book, because I related all of the first half of the book to my own experience. I thought nobody in terms of my patient journey has actually hit any of these spots. Had they done that when I was going through chemotherapy or surgery, then my mental recovery and my confidence would be a lot better.

Interviewer: Do you think it would have made a difference if the content in the book would have been covered in a face-to-face session, or do you think there's still merit to it being in a book that you can use by yourself?

Respondent: I think possibly half and half. I think you get to a point where sometimes when you're ready, you'd probably like to talk to somebody face-to-face. I think like half and half would be quite good.

Interviewer: Perhaps somebody going through the content of the book with you, guiding you through the content of the book.

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: Have you noticed since using the book that you've made any changes based on the information in the book, or that you've noticed any differences within yourself perhaps in terms of how you've been thinking or feeling, lifestyle changes or anything like that?

Respondent: I always find it difficult to give myself time mentally, and I think that book has reassured me you should give yourself that time. I think it's helped me to focus a bit more about moving on with my life and accepting my diagnosis, and the little things that I could do that are there available to make the little things better. For me, I went back to that treatment for three years and I literally didn't go anywhere because I was so poorly. My husband said to me, 'Look, you've come out. Before you start rehabilitation, you need to start building your confidence up, perhaps going to a family member's house or a friend's house to see how you are in a crowd'. One of his family relatives, cousins, was getting married, and it was a really small wedding and they're all really lovely people. He said to me, 'I've been to weddings and birthdays and everything without you for the last three years. It would be nice if as a family we could go to this wedding. You like them, they're lovely people and it's really small. It will get

Coding Density

Book would be helpful around the time of treatment
 Feeling heard
 Cancer treatment
 Normalised cancer experience
 Previous psychological support
 Relating to cancer experiences in book
 Benefits of bibliotherapy
 Impact of cancer

name	Files	Referen...
● Defusion	3	6
● Desire to connect with emotions and accept	1	1
● Desire to learn about cancer and self-help after treat...	2	5
● Did not enjoy all exercises	1	1
● Did not want to research or read about cancer in earl...	2	5
● Didn't want to complain because felt others worse off	1	2
● Diet	1	1
● Different approach to cancer	1	1
● Different people will get different things out of the b...	3	3
● Difficult to connect with feelings	1	6
● Difficult to hear other peoples' cancer experience	2	2
● Difficult to talk to others about cancer	2	2
● Distraction	3	4
● Diversity of cancer	5	8
● Diversity of coping	2	2
● Drawbacks of bibliotherapy	0	0
● Dropping anchor	2	4
● Eager to begin process of self-help	1	1
● Emotional response to book	1	2
● Emotional response to cancer	2	5
● Expectations of book	5	6
● Expectations of how to feel	3	6
● Experiences of stage 4 patients missing from book	1	4
● Fear of cancer spreading	2	6
● Feeling heard	1	3
● Fight flight or freeze	2	2
● Found book empowering	1	1
● Friends and family not dealing well with cancer	2	3
● Goal setting	1	2
● Having to think about your own death	2	4
● Healing emotionally and physically after cancer	1	2
● Healthy before diagnosis	1	1
● Impact of cancer	7	22

<p>acceptance</p> <p>accepting cancer</p> <p>coming in line with values</p> <p>openness</p> <p>reassessment of the book</p> <p>freely engaged in self-help</p> <p>pre-emption about not relating to cancer experiences</p> <p>info</p> <p>stratipilot</p> <p>avoidance</p> <p>voiding talking about cancer too much to others</p> <p>voiding thinking about cancer after diagnosis</p> <p>being in the present moment</p> <p>benefits of bibliotherapy</p> <p>better and worse times in cancer journey</p> <p>better than the book is aimed at the person with cancer</p> <p>bibliotherapy at different ages</p> <p>bibliotherapy during Covid</p> <p>bibliotherapy in conjunction with other interventions</p> <p>book image affected</p> <p>book as a support tool</p> <p>book caused reflection of whether living life by values</p> <p>book caused reflection</p> <p>book didn't acknowledge some cancer incurable</p> <p>book easy to read</p> <p>book exceeded expectations</p> <p>book has resulted in cognitive changes</p> <p>book helped to recognise loved ones are trying to help</p> <p>book helps with recognising/acknowledging emotions</p> <p>read book and use more in life than cancer</p>	<p>Complete list of codes from Nelson. Surprised at how many compared to initial expectations, after reading transcripts. Overwhelming to see them all listed!</p> <p>Only have very early ideas about themes, need to look through a few more times to pull out nuance as at the moment theme ideas are mapping on too questions too much.</p>
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Supplementary Material S3: **Themes, subthemes, and contributors**

Themes	Subthemes	Contributors
Theme 1: The value of bibliotherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Usability 	9
Theme 2: Timing is important	-	9
Theme 3: Resonating with cancer experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising elements of own cancer journey • Normalizing experiences • Validating experiences 	10
Theme 4: Tools of the book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactivity • Audio exercises • Written exercises 	10
Theme 5: ACT in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and Notice • Regaining control of my Values • Being present 	9

Note: Thematic analysis and its ability to identify nuanced patterns across meaning-rich data can be useful in facilitating a closer exploration of processes of change that may be occurring for service users because of engagement with interventions. Analysis was inductive and carried out at a semantic level to reflect the explicit content of participants' accounts.