

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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Are You My Guru?: How Medicine, Meditation & Madonna Saved My Life.

Shanker, Wendy (Author)

Sep 2010. 320 p. NAL, paperback, \$15.00. (9780451229946). 362.196.

The second book from the author of *The Fat Girl's Guide to Life* (2004) finds Shanker at peace with her weight but battling a far more serious problem: an autoimmune disease called Wegener's granulomatosis that attacks the vascular system. Shanker's life is completely changed by the disease, which gives her agonizing joint pain and breaks down the cartilage in her nose. When Western medicine—which offers steroids and chemotherapy to treat symptoms and control flare ups—proves to be insufficient, Shanker attends a healing retreat in New Mexico to detox her body and hopefully receive spiritual guidance she can believe in. Throughout it all, Shanker holds to the words of her idol, Madonna (whom she meets professionally on several occasions), who tells her before an interview to “be brilliant.” Whether she's describing giving herself an enema or the pain and frustration of a Wegener's flare-up, Shanker doesn't hold back. Her candid, introspective look at her battle with the disease, as well as the way she keeps her spirits up, is downright inspiring.

— *Kristine Huntley*