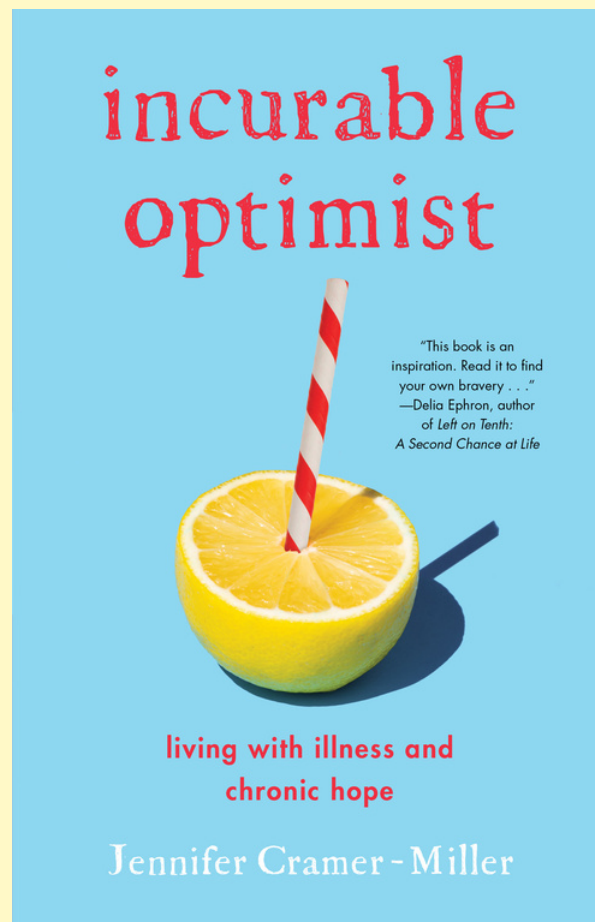
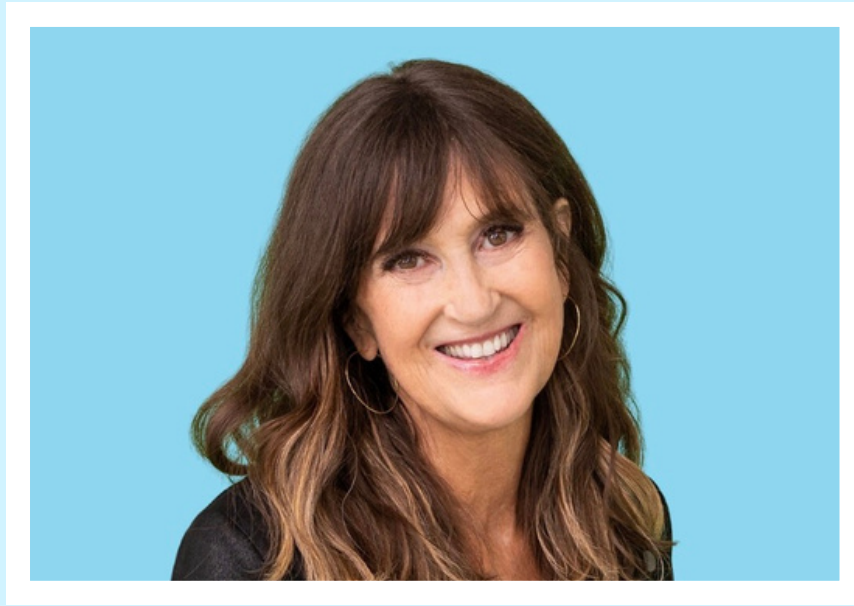


PRESS KIT

JENNIFER
CRAMER-MILLER

AUTHOR OF





JENNIFER CRAMER-MILLER

about

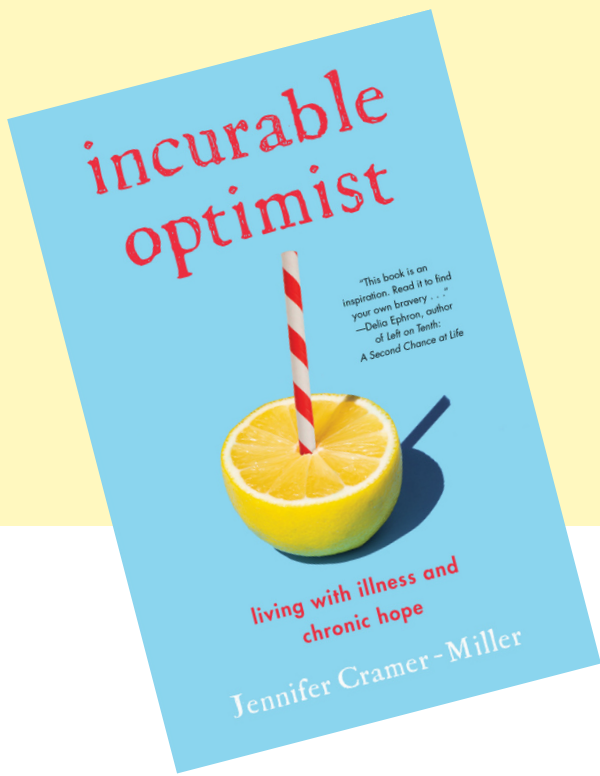
Jennifer Cramer-Miller is an author, speaker, and joy seeker. Her memoir, *Incurable Optimist: Living with Illness and Chronic Hope*, will be widely available on August 15th. As a patient advocate (called Joy Scouter) and a four-time kidney transplant recipient, Jennifer helps others manage uncertainty, move forward with hope, and find joy. She's also thrilled to serve as the 2023-2026 Board Chair for the Minnesota National Kidney Foundation, spreading awareness of kidney health and living donation. She lives in a suburb of Minneapolis with her witty, golf-obsessed husband, and her waggy, treat-obsessed pup.

website

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About the Book



“...a knockout memoir on living with a life-threatening kidney disease.... openhearted... There’s plenty of wisdom in these pages.”
—***Publishers Weekly, starred review***

At twenty-two, Jennifer Cramer-Miller was thrilled with her new job, charming boyfriend, and Seattle apartment. Then she received a devastating autoimmune diagnosis—and suddenly, rather than planning for a bright future, she found herself soaking a hospital pillow with tears and grappling with words like “progressive” and “incurable.”

That day, Cramer-Miller unwillingly crossed over from wellness to chronic illness—from thriving to kidney failure. Her chances of survival hinged upon on the expertise of doctors, the generosity of strangers, and the benevolence of loved ones. But what kind of life would that be?

Spanning two-plus decades, this family love story explores loss and acceptance, moving forward with uncertainty, and forging a path to joy. Four kidney transplants later, Cramer-Miller is here to shine a bright light on people helping people in difficult times with a story that will make you want to hug the humans you love. Because sometimes it’s the sorrows that threaten to pull us apart that ultimately unite us in hope.



Selected Praise for *Incurable Optimist: Living with Illness and Chronic Hope*

"This book is an inspiration. **Read it to find your own bravery and to salute the bravery of Jennifer Cramer-Miller.**"

—*Delia Ephron, author of Left on Tenth: A Second Chance at Life*



"...**a knockout memoir** on living with a life-threatening kidney disease.... openhearted.... There's plenty of wisdom in these pages."

—*Publishers Weekly, starred review*



"If you ever want to read an **inspirational** book, and occasionally laugh out loud, I encourage you to read Jennifer Cramer-Miller's memoir. It is uplifting and **gives new meaning to the word 'hope.'**"

—*Herta Feely, author of 2018 National Indie Excellence Award and 2016 New Apple Award winner of Saving Phoebe Murrow*



"**A raw, heartfelt, and transformational read for anyone needing levity in the face of adversity.** I love how Jennifer's humor-laced resilience beautifully encourages the reader to always make room for joy and hope!"

—*Julie Burton, author of The Self-Care Solution: A Modern Mother's Must- Have Guide to Health and Well-Being and owner of ModernWell*



"**This book! Omg! The triumph of this journey! ...a JOYOUS story...**"

—*Linda Sivertsen, author, co-author, and ghostwriter of eleven books including two NYT bestsellers, and host of the Beautiful Writers Podcast*



"Jennifer's optimism is born of living with reality, with the operative word being *living*. **Anyone dealing with disappointment, hopelessness, or fear will be inspired by Jennifer's infectious optimism.**"

—*Betsy Graziani Fasbinder, author of three books including **Filling Her Shoes: A Memoir of an Inherited Family**, and podcast host of the **Morning Glory Project***



Wonderful! I started crying so many times as I read . . . **engaging, moving, funny.**"

—*Kate Hopper, author of **Ready for Air: A Journey through Premature Motherhood and Use Your Words: A Writing Guide for Mothers***



"...reminds us of the incredible power of positivity, hope and never giving up. **No matter what challenges one faces in life, readers of *Incurable Optimist* will be moved to find a path forward, no matter the odds, and embrace each and every day.**"

—*Jessie Diggins, Olympic gold medalist and author of **Brave Enough***



"... energetic, well-observed prose . . . Her account of her journey through illness and healing is **unfailingly entertaining . . . A touchingly personal memoir of a young woman facing a grave illness.**"

—*Kirkus Reviews*



Ask Jennifer

1. What your book is about?
2. Why did you write your memoir?
3. What do you hope readers take away from the book?
4. Was it hard to relive your painful experiences while writing?
5. Can you tell us about your publishing path?
6. Parts of your memoir are funny, which might surprise readers. What makes humor important to your continued journey and this story?
7. A key theme in your memoir is the importance of people supporting others, from family to friends to donors. Why is giving back important to you? How do you support others?
8. How did you stay positive through your transplants? How do you keep a positive outlook now?
9. You also write essays. Do you write in other genres as well? Are you working on another book?
10. In the U.S. right now, do you know how many people need kidney transplants?
11. What upcoming innovations in kidney health show promise?
12. You've said measuring the glass as half-full or half-empty is the wrong question. What do you mean by that?



From INCURABLE OPTIMIST



The following Monday, Mom, Dad, and I sat in the lobby of Dr. Brown’s clinic. It appeared far more polished than the doctor’s office in Seattle, and I stared trancelike at the bronze-toned wallpaper.

A nurse escorted us back to a clinic room. The hard edges of the plastic chair mirrored the discomfort of my mind and body. Dr. Brown sported a bow tie and tweed suit, greeted us curtly, and sat down. He adjusted round wire-rim glasses and ruffled through the pages in my chart.

My dad leaned forward on the edge of his chair like a take-charge CEO ready to tackle an issue. I saw a focused anticipation in his brown eyes. Coarse dark hair topped his round face, which made him look younger than his fifty-two years. My mom’s eyes were deep wells of blue, reflecting worry. She rested her hand on mine. Dr. Brown set the papers on the desk and delivered six words: “You have a progressive kidney disease.”

For a moment, I considered myself a character in a cheesy soap opera who gets bad news—the words reverberated inside my mind while my face registered a melodramatic pause. But I was not a character, and this was not a script.

Progressive disease.

Progressive disease.

Progressive disease.

What?

Dr. Brown explained a condition called nephrotic syndrome was causing inflammation in the tiny filters of my kidneys. The three of us sat with dazed expressions as he continued to educate us about my problem. I was grateful to have my parents in the room because I had trouble focusing. As we sat together vested in my outcome, I felt like a middle school student receiving negative feedback at a teacher conference.

“The biopsy indicates focal segmental glomerulosclerosis.”

“That’s a mouthful,” I said, stunned.

“Also known as focal sclerosis or FSGS,” Dr. Brown explained.

“How does this happen?” Dad asked.

“Larry, I can’t answer that. Jennifer has an autoimmune dysfunction, and we don’t know the cause.”

“Do you know the cure?” An excellent question, Dad. But the word itself seemed surreal. Cure. This was uncharted territory—sitting in a small clinic room conversing about a progressive disease that had afflicted me out of the blue.

“What we need to do now is monitor the kidneys and try to stop the damage with a medication called prednisone.”

“Will prednisone fix it?” I asked. I wanted a simple answer and did not realize how complicated the question was.

Dr. Brown told us there is a child-onset nephrotic syndrome that responds well to treatment. “It’s unclear, Jennifer, at twenty-two, if you are experiencing a late child-onset case, or if your case will be more advanced. I would like to consult with some colleagues and see you back here in a few days.”

The child-onset route seemed the better of the two syndromes. So I pinned my hopes on having the kid version. That scenario could make this condition go poof and evaporate with prednisone. I planted this idea firmly in my mind.

Child onset. Please. Child onset.

I wasn’t alone with this diagnosis, and my parents’ concern somehow diluted my own. Deep in my inner-child self, I believed my parents could shield me from outside harm. Later, I’d learn the extensive truths and limits of that belief.



corporations/non-profits/ inspirational speaking

Jennifer welcomes the opportunity to share her story and speak.

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book clubs:

Jennifer is happy to meet with book clubs.

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book details:

***INCURABLE OPTIMIST:
LIVING WITH ILLNESS AND CHRONIC HOPE***

by Jennifer Cramer-Miller

She Writes Press

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Memoir

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