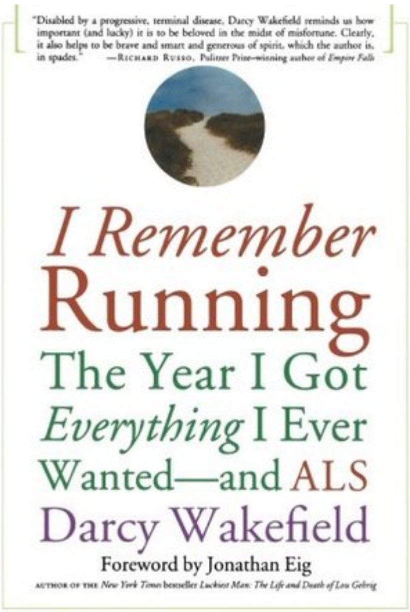

I Remember Running: The Year I Got Everything I Ever Wanted - and ALS

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A little over a year ago, Darcy Wakefield was a single, 33-year-old, athletic, workaholic English professor, a vegetarian who had never had a serious health problem or injury. Then she was diagnosed with ALS, and her world turned upside down. I Remember Running is Darcy's story of change and loss and challenges during her first year with ALS, as she struggles to make sense of her diagnosis and redefine herself in the face of this terminal illness. With unflagging courage, wit, and eloquence, Darcy shares what she calls her "fast-forward" life, a life in which she applies for disability, leaves her job, and plans her own funeral as well as meets and moves in with her true love, buys a house, and gives birth to her first child in less time than it takes most of us to accomplish even one of these things. Beautifully written and wholly inspiring, I Remember Running proves that it is possible to live a rich, meaningful life after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. This book will move readers to see the world in a different light.

I Remember Running: The Year I Got Everything I Ever Wanted - and ALS Details

Date	:	Published August 29th 2006 by Da Capo Press (first published 2005)
ISBN	:	9781569242797
Author	:	Darcy Wakefield , Jonathan Eig (Foreword by)
Format	:	Paperback 208 pages
Genre	:	Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Disability

From Reader Review I Remember Running: The Year I Got Everything I Ever Wanted - and ALS for online ebook

Bex says

The book ended before her life did so I was left with a feeling of needing closure and more information. She did a great job of documenting her illness in its early stages though. Great read. Wish an epilogue with more detail were added at the end to help us readers fully understand the grasp Als had on her till the disease took her.

Kathleen says

A series of essays written by an active, athletic young woman who learns she has ALS. She gets married shortly after her diagnosis and becomes pregnant. Very moving, very poignant book.

Please, readers, do what you can to help find a cure and support your local ALS chapters so families living with ALS can cope and have the medical equipment they need to make their lives easier.

Alicia says

This book made me cry. A LOT. But I learned about my own illness and am working towards a new perspective because of what Wakefield writes. I only hope that I can face my disease like she faced hers.

Abby says

I've put off reading this book, but I'm glad to have read it today. Written as she is living with a terminal and horrible illness, going through pregnancy, becoming dependent, I appreciated wakefield's reflections on joy amidst sorrow, on past pleasures and regrets, and on living life in fast forward. It made me sigh, cry and hug my little people a few more times today.

Debbie says

The author died in late 2006 of ALS, a year after this book was published. Ten years later Darcy's story continues to change lives. Ms Wakefield shows us how to live victoriously, no matter what challenges come our way.

TL Sumner says

Let me start of by saying - ALS SUCKS. Like SUCK - SUCK - SUCK - SUCKS! My mother-in-law died after an incredibly short battle with ALS. I was with her during her last days and hours and let me just say again - ALS SUCKS.

So... I've had *I Remember Running*, and another memoir about ALS on my bookshelf for almost a year, emotionally not ready to read them.

I was certain *I Remember Running* would be a heart wrenching story about 33 year old Darcy Wakefield's struggle with this horrendous disease. I mean - the title says it all... Finally, I cracked it open, fully prepared to put it back on it's shelf after a couple pages. But I read the book in two days, immediately engrossed by the beautiful writing and poignant way Ms. Wakefield approached her story of being diagnosed with ALS. I was refreshingly surprised to find the book to be a heartwarming, uplifting story of accepting the bad but appreciating the good.

My latest YA novel features a supporting character with ALS. For the better part of the first draft, I struggled with the delicate balance of accurately portraying the struggle she faces with ALS, but not having the book be a deeply depressing read. Ms. Wakefield's memoir gives me exactly the perspective I want to show. That we shouldn't take for granted being able to go for a run, to button a shirt, to brush our teeth, to breathe... But more than anything else - to appreciate that despite what challenges are thrown our way, life is a gift to be cherished.

This is an exceptional book that I urge everyone to read. It will truly make you appreciate all the good in your life.

Pam says

ALS is a horrible, terrible disease. However, this book about a woman who is a mere 33 years old when diagnosed, is an uplifting book. It's about slowing down and finding joy in the simplest things. When disability forces Darcy's previously well-toned athletic body into a wheelchair, dependent on others, she learns to be thankful for how she has lived and how she can continue to find beauty in things that others take for granted--tasting every bite of food, walking on two strong legs, holding a pen and writing.

This book is a series of sort essays and is a quick and easy read, but with a lovely message. I would have given it four stars, but was left wanting with what happened after the birth of her child. I realize that her illness progressed very quickly and she probably couldn't finish the story, but I wish that her husband or family had (other than the post word).

Mary says

The title caught me, as I used to be a runner, and am no longer. Sadly. This woman is an excellent writer. She details, in short short chapters, the saga of her finding the love of her life, and also being diagnosed with ALS. Kudos to her for writing this in the midst of a damaging disease.

Abby Hochhauser says

I didn't love the book but I'm grateful to the author for sharing so much of what it's like for her as a victim of ALS. It was well written and I appreciated her keeping her sense of humor while writing.

Cheryl says

If you think you are having a bad day, read this book. You'll never think the same again.

Laura says

I've read many books in which the author describes what their life is like since they became ill. I liked her approach - dividing into chapters describing how different aspects of her life are changing since being diagnosed with ALS. One word chapter titles - when the reader starts a new chapter, he/she is prepared to think about how this aspect of the author's is now affected. Wonderful to know that her baby is not affected but sad also to realize that as her baby develops and grows, simultaneously her condition progresses and she will become less and less able to function.

BHodges says

As a family member of a loved one who lost their life to ALS, I strongly recommend this book to people with ALS as well as their family and friends. I recognized so many pieces of my own experience here, and the experience of my loved one, clothed in Darcy's excellent prose. This book tells difficult truths about ALS without dwelling on them. If you're concerned that any book on ALS might be too much, given the frightening nature of the disease, I think Darcy struck a nice balance of acknowledging the difficulties of ALS without dwelling needlessly on them. She tells her story including many moments of humor, sorrow, regret, hope, despair, anger, frustration, and gratitude. As a family member who has not experienced ALS myself, but who has spent much time living with a person who had ALS, I especially appreciated Steve's addition to the book.

My one complaint is that the book is too short! I need to know more about her final year, her experiences with Sam and Steve, and perhaps even about her final days. I wanted to hear more from Steve, too.

Overall, Darcy's book provided me with some much-needed pathos, but perhaps even more importantly, it increased my awareness of and gratitude for my own miraculous and imperfect body. And it made me want to run.

Riley says

Before reading this book I knew a little background information about ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. I have seen stories about how it affect the loved ones around an ALS patient, but I had never seen what it was like to actually have ALS and what it did to a person, both physically and mentally.

Picking this book up caused me to see through the eyes of Darcy Wakefield, and what it was like to have a perfectly normal life and then have it "disappear" because you knew it wouldn't be normal again. My assumption was that when you got ALS, or any terminal illness, you knew it was over. That you had to take what you could get and try to live with it. That is not the case. I guess you could say that Darcy Wakefield's last few years were miracles, if you think about it that way. Or you could say that her life hit the "fast-forward" button. That year she got everything she ever wanted, she met her true love, bought a house and had her first child in a very short amount of time.

To sum it all up, this book was amazing. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to read it. :)

Catherine says

I gave this five stars because as far as I'm concerned, when someone is brave enough to write about their battle with an illness like ALS, who am I to judge the quality of their words? Truth be told, her writing is great anyway. The book is set up as a set of essays, each reflecting on an aspect of her life that is affected by her diagnosis and spans just over a year. She writes not just about the diagnosis itself, but about her adjustment to her constantly-changing life and body, her experiences in the healthcare system, to her decision to have a baby, to the loss of her ability to run--one of her true joys and passion. It is a good wake-up call for those of us who might be prone to taking virtually everything in life for granted every now and then.

Diana says

I enjoyed the book, as far as it went. It has a lighter tone than other books I've read by authors who had ALS. This book, however, seemed incomplete--it ends after the author gives birth to her son, who she conceived knowing she had ALS. The author seemed to have a rapidly progressing form of ALS, and we learn that she was weakened by the pregnancy, and was unable to care for her baby. The book abruptly ends there, and we aren't told how the family manages, what type of care the author receives, how she and her family cope with the progressing illness, what technology, if any, she uses to communicate, how she obtains intellectual stimulation, what are her decisions regarding a feeding tube and a ventilator, etc. Did the author end her story because she wasn't able to maintain her optimistic outlook? Did she fall into a deep depression from which she never recovered? These questions and more are left unanswered. In my view, the book would have been more compelling, if the author had continued her story. I was saddened to read that the author and her family did not obtain an automatic page turning device, so that she could continue to read--reading was clearly important to her, since she was a college professor of English. I wonder if they obtained a computer that she could write with that had an infrared component that would have enabled her to write, and thus communicate, with the tiniest movement of a facial or other muscle that she was still able to move. For those interested in another ALS author's story, one that doesn't spare the details, I recommend, "The Butcher's Daughter: The Story of an Army Nurse with ALS," by Sandra Lesher Stuben, RN.

Amy Richard says

This book is about a woman who grew up in my home town a few years ahead of me in school who battled with ALS. I knew her family well and the story is so heartwrenching yet so inspiring. PLEASE pick this up...you wont' regret it.

Allen Sockabasin says

This book was really slow at the beginning and I didn't like it that much, but towards the end it got to the point and it made a little better.

Lucy says

This is wonderful book and it's even more impressive when you consider that the author had ALS while writing it. But, what really struck me in this book is Wakefield's views on having a disability. She is very open open her feelings and doesn't want sympathy. She is also quite candid about how her views on disability changed as her disease progressed. She is able to appreciate life to the fullest, in part due to her disease. And truly, this is something we should ALL be doing since no one gets out of here alive. I highly recommend this book. It's a short read but very profound.

Randall says

Darcy Wakefield grew up across the street from me. Beautiful and intelligent and stricken with ALS in the prime of her life. This amazing autobiography shows her courage and positive attitude as she worked so hard to squeeze every drop from the rest of her life.
