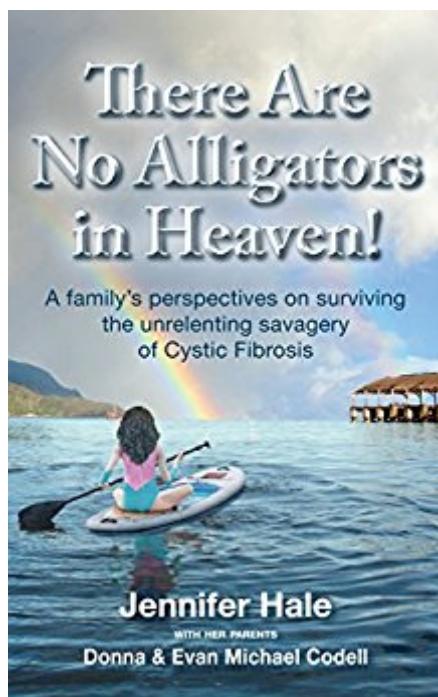


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# There Are No Alligators In Heaven!: A Family's Perspectives On Surviving The Unrelenting Savagery Of Cystic Fibrosis



## **Synopsis**

Jennifer Hale was 2Â  when she was diagnosed in 1974 with Cystic Fibrosis (CF), an incurable genetic disease. At that time, children with CF had a life expectancy of just 15 years. But Jennifer had a special passion for life, and her parents â “ Donna and Evan Michael Codell â “ had the determination and fighting spirit to enrich and extend Jenniferâ ™s life in every way they possibly could. This combination produced an amazing young woman who, later with the steadfast support of her husband Mark, beat the odds and lived fully for 43 years while continuously battling the unrelenting savagery of this ultimately fatal disease, until her death in December 2015 that came as she was awaiting a lung transplant. *There Are No Alligators in Heaven!* is a moving story of an unheralded hero. It is a first-hand account of Jennifer and how she and her parents â “ united in unwavering love and commitment â “ followed their instincts, pieced together solid guiding principles, and took decisive action, some counter to prevailing medical practices of the time, to wrestle the alligators of Cystic Fibrosis day after day after day. The book features Jenniferâ ™s own writings, along with the personal accounts of her parents, presented in an easy, engaging conversational style. The story that the three of them tell together is one of optimism, courage, and hope that inspires others to find joy in life and to never give up the fight â “ whatever the battle happens to be. The extraordinary story of Jennifer moves to another level when her father, Evan Michael, found that he needed to draw strength from Jennifer when he was diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer in 2012. In an ironic twist of fate, Evan experienced first-hand so many of the horrific effects of lung disease that Jennifer bravely battled her entire life, and he realized directly how strong and courageous his daughter really was. While Evan was fully involved in the development of *There Are No Alligators in Heaven!* he himself passed away in December 2016, just before the book was published. It was his dying wish for others to know Jenniferâ ™s story and how she set the bar for her life. Jennifer challenges all of us: â œBe the light that stays on even in the darkest of moments. Keep fighting your battle with a light heart, a smile on your face, and a spark in your eye. This will feed your soul and spirit and give you strength to battle on.â •And, in the end, thank God, there are no alligators in heaven.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is a story of tragedy faced with courage, honesty and humor. So real, it feels like you are on this journey yourself. A quick read that leaves you more aware and empathetic. It's hero's journey!

A moving story of a loving and supportive family as they raise their amazing daughter. Inspiring and well written.

I love this book. It is a real story and I highly recommend it. It is easy to read and the story is touching and encouraging. You will find strength, joy, and love from this wonderful book.

Amazing story of love, strength and attitude. If you want to learn how to deal with adversity I urge you to read this book Michael p

Very touching and emotional journey.

As a past critical care, ER and hospice nurse RN the messages in the book are powerful. If you know of a person or family struggling with a challenging diagnosis, get this book and read it and then give it to them. It's an honor and privilege to write my review of Donna's book.

The purpose of Donna's book is to bring hope to those challenged with a health challenge, for Donna's daughter it was Cystic Fibrosis, (CF) and her husband, Cancer. Sadly, Donna not only lost her daughter to CF but during the same struggling time she lost her husband to Cancer. To hear how Donna, Jennifer and Evan Michael maneuvered the roller coaster ride of both Jennifer and Evan Michael's health challenges is a miracle in motion; in addition their health challenges brought forth Donna's health challenges. A roller coaster ride that continues today as Donna brings forth her message of inspiration, love, faith, family, hope, gratitude, attitude, wisdom and the power of nutrition and self-care. There are many messages and words of wisdom throughout the book that can only come from someone who is on their journey seen through the eyes of a terminal illness. The ability to face the daily challenges of a terminal illness and see the power of looking at the glass half full as opposed to half empty is powerfully inspiring and healing. One of the best words of advice (there are many more so get this book) is on page 144 from Donna's now deceased husband. He talks about how to talk to a person who is struggling on their journey and what it's best to NOT to say. Don't ask "How are you today?" Instead ask, "Who do you want me to be for you today?" Then shut up and listen and do what they tell you. They may need a hug, they may need you to listen and they might want you to just be silent. Jennifer, Evan Michael and Donna are amazing people and now it's Donna's mission to carry forth the message of hope and the power of nutrition for bringing the body into balance so that it can heal itself. I know you might be thinking, but Jennifer and Evan still died. Yes they did, but knowing what I know from a clinical and nutrition perspective I believe they had many more years of better health than they would have if they had stayed with the SAD (Standard American Diet). Blessings to you Donna on your passion and commitment to bring hope and nutrition awareness to everyone. Joan Zietlow, RN, BSN, CHHC, MBA

This is a beautiful story of love, perseverance and survival. A beautiful family who never gave up hope, yet lived each day to its fullest. Everyone needs to read Jennifer's story. You will laugh, and cry, and then hug your loved ones not once but twice.... Loved every work of this amazing book.

For people who are medically ill, keeping an optimistic outlook can be tough. This book shows how an extraordinary individual, Jennifer, coped and remained hopeful while dealing with Cystic Fibrosis. It was uniquely written to help the reader understand how her parents dealt with her diagnosis as well. Anyone who is facing a health challenge, or a family member of someone who is suffering from

a chronic disease, would benefit from reading this book. Jennifer demonstrated with grace how to maintain a positive attitude and live life to its fullest potential.

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