

EXCERPT from *WRITING OUT THE PANDEMIC* by PJ Colando

During crises, all of us find a way to survive. That's what humans are programmed to do: save the species.

Stories help us cope by design. Storytelling is a specific writer tool. I wrote as catharsis during the protracted pandemic, but the war to suppress COVID took longer than anyone expected.

The toughest part, we can all agree, was not knowing the end date. This problem was exacerbated by squabbles within the nation's people and its leaders as well as medical and scientific experts. Their chaos is what put the panic in pandemic.

Everyone who knows me is aware that I am a social butterfly. Prevented from being among people—especially being unable to hug, a skill for which I'm known—my spirit began to wither rather than thrive.

I felt as if I were back in my six months of active treatment for cancer, yet I was determined to survive this eighteen-month of sidelined life, too. I wrote out my feelings, thoughts, opinions, and fears and compiled them into this anthology.

It's likely that you, as a pandemic survivor, too, will relate to one or all of these tales. Enjoy, emot! Pat yourself on the back! We survived! There are some blank pages at the end of this book, so you can record your feelings, fears, opinions, and thoughts.