

Our Hometown Authors

by Kathleen Conroy



Writing is a healing act for Ashland author Alissa Lukara. Her new memoir, *Riding Grace: A Triumph of the Soul* (Silver Light Publications, 2007), tells the story of her journey of healing from both childhood abuse and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

“At first, I was so resistant to writing about these painful experiences – I felt too vulnerable,” she says. “Then, a healer I consulted asked me, ‘When do you feel most alive?’ The answer: ‘When I write.’ Her prescription was to write my own story, from my soul.” The result, *Riding Grace*, is “my story and what I learned from it,” Alissa says.

Living with CFS left her little energy or concentration when she first decided to tell her story. “But I knew I had to do it anyway. Twenty-four hours after I said ‘yes’ to doing the book, I attended a healing workshop with the same healer who’d encouraged me to write the book. I experienced a spontaneous healing and have remained healthy for the past 8 years.”

Alissa describes *Riding Grace* as a no-holds-barred look at her 12-year quest to reclaim her life from illness and abuse. In the process, she upends ancestral patterns, explores uncharted frontiers of healing, learns to accept the unacceptable, and opens to compassion, miracles and grace.

“Ashland is a very supportive writing and creative community,” says Alissa, who moved here in 1993 and was part of a local writing group while writing the book.

Alissa, who is managing editor of *Ashland Magazine*, hosts the award-winning local television show, *Transcending Life Challenges*, on Rogue Valley Community Television (RVTV). “It’s part of my nonprofit foundation and website, Lifechallenges.org, which currently reaches 97 countries with articles, self-help tools and inspirational stories that help people creatively face and transcend adversity.”

Riding Grace, which has been endorsed by Naomi Judd and other best selling authors, is available online and in bookstores in February.

For information: www.ridinggrace.com and www.lifechallenges.org. Alissa will do a reading at *Bloomsbury Books* February 8 at 7 p.m.

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