

*Warrior Mother: Fierce Love, Unbearable, Loss, and Rituals that Heal* is the true story of a mother's fierce love and determination, and her willingness to go outside the bounds of the ordinary when two of her three adult children are diagnosed with life-threatening disease. At a dance workshop, held to address the threat of the pandemic AIDS, the author admits she doesn't know how to be the mother to her gay son. With the help of women in her spirituality group, she learns to say yes to what life is asking of her son, and of her, as his mother.

The author's best friend, dying of breast cancer, asks the author to accompany her through what turns out to be, fourteen days of her dying, ironically preparing this mother for what lie ahead with her own children. Five years later, the author and her family confront again, a life and death circumstance – her 40-year-old daughter's diagnosis of breast cancer. When the customary treatments fail, her daughter decides on a bone marrow transplant and the author visits a healer in Brazil on her behalf.

Experience as a professional social worker and family therapist doesn't always help the author to cope, but her familiarity with improvisational song, dance, and storytelling, and women's spirituality rituals carry her through. The book follows the family through memorials and celebrations of lives well lived, the impact of grief on those left behind, and the rituals that help them heal.