

IACFS/ME Newsletter

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Book Review

The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating

By Elisabeth Tova Bailey

This is a remarkable book written by a woman with CFS/ME about her experiences at a time when she was severely ill. She was bedridden, living alone and in need of almost total care. She received a gift of a live snail from a friend. She wonders initially "Why would I want a snail?" but it quickly becomes obvious that this small creature could provide a fascinating interest. She is inspired to watch and listen, and in so doing discovers much about the life of the snail. She also discovers she has a worthy living companion to whom she becomes devoted. She is further stimulated to study snails in detail so that she is able to fully nurture her companion. This book is beautifully written with many meaningful quotations throughout. It is very easy to read, and it is the sort of book one cannot put down. It also gives tremendous insight into the author's illness with the accompanying feelings of trapped loneliness. To be able to care for a snail may seem trivial to some, but it demonstrates the restraints of the illness, coupled with the joy of being able to love and nurture another being. One can only be inspired. I thoroughly recommend this book to those with the illness, their families, doctors and all those involved in their care.

-Ros Vallings, MB BS