



The Reality of Caregiving: Anna Konkle on Love, Conflict, and Loss

Brief Episode Summary:

Caregiving for someone with lung cancer is one of the most profound – and least talked about – roles in the cancer journey. In this episode, host Annabelle Gurwitch sits down with actor and writer Anna Konkle, who cared for her father through his lung cancer diagnosis and death. Together, they get honest about the loneliness, the conflict, the guilt, the unexpected healing, and the feelings no one permits caregivers to have.

Timestamps

- 00:00 Welcome & Introduction
- 02:08 Anna Konkle's caregiving story – how it began
- 04:57 Her father's diagnosis and the first days
- 06:32 Five years of estrangement – and showing up anyway
- 10:28 LCFA caregiver resources and community
- 12:46 The loneliness of being a sole caregiver
- 15:43 Conflict between caregiver and patient – and why it's inevitable
- 20:10 Recognizing the limits of your role
- 25:02 When a loved one resists treatment
- 32:39 Stepping into the care plan while respecting autonomy
- 34:33 The transition to palliative care – and unexpected healing
- 40:37 Strategies for living with uncertainty
- 43:45 The caregiver-patient relationship as a living, changing thing
- 47:03 Humor as a survival tool
- 47:47 Closing reflections and resources

Guests

Anna Konkle – Actor, Writer, and Director

Anna Konkle is best known for her work on the critically acclaimed series *PEN15*. She cared for her father through his lung cancer diagnosis and death, navigating the experience as his only child – without a partner or sibling to share the weight. She speaks openly about the emotional



complexity of caregiving, the role of humor in surviving hard things, and what she wishes someone had told her at the beginning.

Annabelle Gurwitch — Host, Author, and Patient Advocate

Annabelle brings compassion and candor to every conversation on *Living With Lung Cancer: Ask Me Anything*, creating space for the honest discussions that patients, caregivers, and families need most — from the medical to the deeply personal. She draws on her own experience as both a patient and a caregiver to meet guests exactly where they are.

Links and Resources

LCFA Caregiver Resources

Everything caregivers need in one place — guidance, community, and tools for every stage of the lung cancer journey.

lcfamerica.org/living-with-lung-cancer/caregiving-resources/

LCFA's The First 7 Days Podcast Series

A practical roadmap for the critical first week after a lung cancer diagnosis — for patients and caregivers alike.

lcfamerica.org/living-with-lung-cancer/first-diagnosed/first-7-days-podcast/

Imerman Angels

One-on-one peer mentoring that connects caregivers and patients with trained mentors who have been through a similar cancer experience.

imermanangels.org

CancerCare Caregiver Support Groups

Free online support groups led by oncology social workers — a space for caregivers to talk openly about stress, grief, and the challenges of supporting a loved one through treatment.

cancercares.org

Cancer Support Community

Free online and local support groups, counseling, and educational programs for people affected by cancer, including caregivers.

cancersupportcommunity.org

EGFR Resistors

A patient-led community for people living with EGFR-positive lung cancer and their caregivers.

egfrcancer.org/



Full Episode Transcript

<https://lcfamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/LCFA-AMA-Reality-of-Caregiving-Transcript.pdf>

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