THRIVING IN THE WORKPLACE WITH AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE

Companion Guide & Resources

Holly Bertone, CNHP, PMP

Having an autoimmune condition or any other kind of invisible illness can be isolating. You may look and act totally fine on the outside, but you feel like your insides are slowly killing you and all you ever want to do is crawl under the covers and go to sleep.

It's difficult enough for your family and spouse to understand what you are going through. It's especially difficult in the workplace when your employer can't "see" your condition and doesn't understand why you are asking for flexibility or accommodations. You feel like no one understands. You feel like you have no voice.

This eBook is a companion guide to the #1 Amazon bestseller, *Thriving in the Workplace with Autoimmune Disease: Know Your Rights, Resolve Conflict, Reduce Stress.*

If You Have Already Purchased *Thriving in the Workplace*:

Use this eBook as a secondary resource. It provides copious resources, links, and a clickable bibliography.

If You Do Not Have *Thriving in the Workplace*:

This eBook can be used as a standalone resource. You do not need to have read *Thriving in the Workplace* to gain value from this eBook. You will find copious resources and links to help you along your journey.

A Note of Introduction from the Author

According to the American Autoimmune Related Disease Association (AARDA), autoimmune (AI) diseases occur in 75% of women compared to men, and predominantly during childbearing years. If your AI disease has become too tough to deal with and your financial situation is in order, you may be fortunate enough to leave the workplace altogether, or to find a less stressful part time job. But for many individuals, quitting your job is not financially prudent or possible.

For many women, in addition to working a full-time job, we also have responsibilities outside of work such as taking care of our home, our spouse, our children, and even our parents. There are not enough hours in the day to accomplish everything we have to do, and being sick on top of everything makes it near impossible. Stress is a huge factor in all AI diseases that we need to keep at a minimum level. When all of these responsibilities are stacked on top of each other, our career/job is the one place we look to for flexibility and understanding.

Several years ago, I had to navigate the EEO process at my job in the federal government. My first action was to research the process online and learn what my rights are and how others have fared. My second action was to reach out to my Facebook groups and ask for help and guidance. I came up completely empty handed.

Now what? Do I file for a reasonable accommodation? Do I even qualify as having a disability? What forms do I use? How should my doctor complete the forms? Am I being discriminated against? What is legal? Who can I talk to? Why does it seem like no one understands or cares?

If this is you, please know that you are not alone. I wrote *Thriving in the Workplace* and created this companion eBook to help you navigate this complicated process. In my darkest hour, I knew in my heart that I wanted to write these resources for YOU. To let you know that you are not alone.

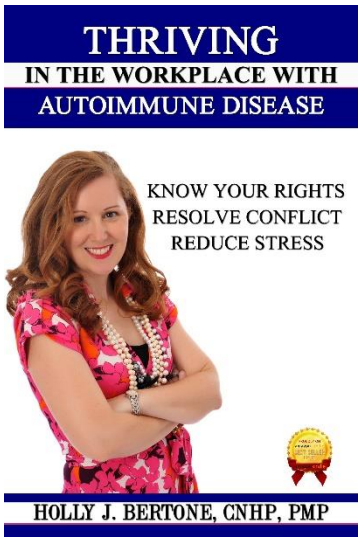
I love feedback, so please drop me a note. You can reach me at holly@pinkfortitude.com or hit me up on social media @PinkFortitude

Thank you for letting me be a part of your quest for a healthier you.

Holly Bertone, CHNP, PMP

About Thriving in the Workplace with Autoimmune Disease

The #1 Amazon bestseller, *Thriving in the Workplace with Autoimmune Disease: Know Your Rights, Resolve Conflict, Reduce Stress* is the first book ever to educate individuals specifically with autoimmune disease on their legal and disability rights in the workplace. The book was born out of author Holly Bertone's personal and painful experience and lack of resources available specifically for individuals with autoimmune diseases.



She walks you through the basics of navigating FMLA, EEO, reasonable accommodations, working with your boss, and then provides much needed resources to help you find that critical balance between taking care of your health and managing your symptoms at work.

This book is not going to tell you to give up and become a victim. The mission of this book is to empower you with knowledge so that you can rise above your illness and challenges and thrive both at home and in the workplace.

PURCHASE HERE

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All content and opinions are my own and are not necessarily the opinions of anyone else mentioned in this book.

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Reasonable Accommodations for AI Conditions

Reasonable Accommodations

The following are reasonable accommodations that may be useful for those with AI:

- Work from home
- Allow flexible hours and leave schedule
- Allow periodic and/or longer breaks
- Reduce job stress
- Reduce or eliminate physical exertion
- Provide parking close to work site
- Switch to an ergonomic chair
- Keep work environment free from dust, smoke, odor, and fumes
- Implement a "fragrance-free" workplace policy and a "smoke free" building policy
- Avoid temperature extremes
- Use fan/air-conditioner or heater at the workstation
- Redirect air conditioning and heating vents
- Provide sensitivity training to coworkers
- Allow telephone calls during work hours to doctors and others for support
- Provide information on counseling and employee assistance programs
- Restructure job to only include essential functions
- Control glare by adding a glare screen to the computer
- Move workstation closer to the restroom
- Provide access to a refrigerator
- Allow for workstation to minimize distractions
- Allow a self-paced workload
- Provide ergonomic workstation
- Install low wattage overhead lights
- Use computer monitor glare guards
- Avoid infectious agents and chemicals.

Where to Purchase

There is no comprehensive list of accommodations that MUST be provided under the ADA. Click on the following links for additional information and purchase options.

Ergonomic and Adjustable Office Chairs

Adjustable Workstations for Office Settings

Stand/lean Stools

Anti-fatigue Matting

Resources from Thriving in the Workplace

Americans with Disabilities Act

Due to the nature of this specific legal information, all information was taken directly and verbatim from the Americans with Disability Act and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

- https://www.ada.gov/
- https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html
- https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm

Definition of Disability and Disability Discrimination

Due to the nature of this specific legal information, all information was taken directly and verbatim from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and U.S. Department of Justice:

- https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/index.cfm
- https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/disability.cfm
- https://www.justice.gov/crt/disability-rights-section

Family Medical Leave Act

Due to the nature of this specific legal information, all information was taken directly and verbatim from the U.S. Department of Labor: https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/

Disability Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodations

Due to the nature of this specific legal information, all information was taken directly and verbatim from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

- www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/accommodation.html
- https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html

Resources at Pink Fortitude

All articles and resources dedicated to managing autoimmune disease in the workplace for both employees and employers can be found at Pink Fortitude on our Thrive with Autoimmune Portal.

#1 Amazon bestseller *Thriving in the Workplace with Autoimmune Disease: Know Your Rights, Resolve Conflict, and Reduce Stress*

Autoimmune Health and Wellness Articles

Who to Contact

Job Accommodation Network

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

For information on how to accommodate a specific individual with a disability, contact the Job Accommodation Network at:

- https://askjan.org/
- (800) 526-7234 (voice)
- (877) 781-9403 (TTY)

The following JAN resources are useful for learning more about the process of requesting and negotiating reasonable accommodations:

- JAN's Employees' Practical Guide to Requesting and Negotiating Reasonable Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at https://askjan.org/publications/individuals/employee-guide.cfm
- JAN's How to Request an Accommodation Under the ADA at https://askjan.org/media/accommrequestltr.cfm

For a general list of impairments, visit Accommodation Information by Disability: A to Z at https://askjan.org/media/atoz.htm. Examples of JAN accommodation resources related to autoimmune conditions include the following:

- Diabetes
- Fibromyalgia
- Gastrointestinal Disorders
- Grave's Disease
- Guillain-Barre Syndrome
- Lupus
- Lyme Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Myasthenia Gravis
- Raynaud's Phenomenon
- Sarcoidosis
- Skin Disorders
- Thyroid Disorders

Government Resources

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

For the appropriate EEOC field office in your geographic area, contact:

- https://www.eeoc.gov//
- https://www.eeoc.gov/contact/index.cfm
- http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html
- http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/jobapplicant.html
- (800) 669-4000 (voice)
- (800) 669-6820 (TTY)
- info@eeoc.gov

Family and Medical Leave Act

For more information contact:

- https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/
- http://dol.gov/whd/fmla/employeeguide.htm
- https://www.dol.gov/whd/contact_us.htm
- 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243)
- TTY: 1-877-889-5627

Additional Resources

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, Inc

For more information contact:

- https://www.aarda.org/
- https://www.aarda.org/contact/
- (586) 776-3900
- aarda@aarda.org

Invisible Disabilities Association

For more information contact:

- https://invisibledisabilities.org/
- https://invisibledisabilities.org/about/contact/

Patient Advocate Foundation

For more information contact:

- http://www.patientadvocate.org/
- (800) 532-5274

Bibliography and Sources

Interviews:
Buer, Megan, CECP, Founder of Harmony Restored: https://go.harmony-restored.com/free-giftl9l0a6qo

DeFreitas, Tracie, MS, CLMS, Lead Consultant, ADA Specialist at the Job Accommodation Network: https://askjan.org/

Websites:

American Autoimmune Related Disease Association: https://www.aarda.org/

Americans with Disabilities Act:

- https://www.ada.gov/
- https://www.ada.gov/enforce_current.htm
- https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adaaa.cfm
- https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm

United States Department of Justice: https://www.justice.gov/crt/disability-rights-section

United States Department of Labor:

- https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ydw.htm
- https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

- https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/
- http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html
- http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/jobapplicant.html
- https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/performance-conduct.html
- https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/disability.cfm
- https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adaaa.cfm
- https://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/accommodation.html

Job Accommodation Network:

- https://askjan.org/
- https://askjan.org/topics/discl.htm

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About the Author

Holly Bertone, CNHP, PMP, is a #1 Amazon.com bestselling author, inspirational speaker, and wellness expert. She is the President and CEO of Pink Fortitude, LLC and runs the health and wellness website pinkfortitude.com. Holly is a breast cancer and Hashimoto's survivor and turned these two significant health challenges into a passion to help others. She inspires others with her quick wit, brutal honesty, and simple ways to be healthy in real life.

Holly is a Certified Natural Health Professional, holds a Masters Degree from Johns Hopkins University, a Bachelor's Degree from Elizabethtown College, and is a Project Management Professional (PMP).

Holly is passionate about reaching out to cancer and autoimmune survivors, and also volunteers for organizations supporting our military veterans. In her free time, she loves to garden, and hit flea markets and yard sales. Holly is married to a retired Green Beret, is a stepmother, and lives in Alexandria, VA.

Follow Holly on Social Media:

Other Books by Holly Bertone

Thriving in the Workplace with Autoimmune Disease: Know Your Rights, Resolve Conflict & Reduce Stress

Coconut Head's Survival Guide: My Journey from Diagnosis to "I Do."

My Mommy Has Cancer