A personal, cultural, and scientific exploration of chronic, untreatable pain. At the age of twenty-four, journalist Paula Kamens life changed in an instant. While putting in her contact lenses, the left lens set off a chain reaction, igniting a constellation of nerves that radiated backwards from behind the surface of her eye. The pain was more piercing than with any other headache she had experienced. More than a decade later, she still has a headache-the exact same headache. From surgery to a battery of Botox injections to a dousing of Lithuanian holy water, from a mountain of pharmaceutical products to aromatherapy and even a vibrating hat, All in My Head chronicles the sometimes frightening, usually absurd, and always ineffective remedies she—and so many like her—was willing to try to relieve her pain. Beleaguered and frustrated by doctors who, frustrated themselves, periodically declared her pain psychosomatic, Kamen came to understand the plight of the millions who suffer chronic pain in its many forms. Full of self-deprecating humor, and razor sharp reporting, All in My Head is the remarkable story of perseverance, acceptance, and patience in the face of terrifying pain.

My Personal Review:
Hi Paula,

I just finished your remarkable book, All In my Head. Thank you, thank you, thank you a zillion times for writing it. Pretty much everything you describe: your daily experience living with constant head, face, neck pain and your exhaustive (and exhausting) trials with doctors and quacks, endless experimentation with alternative medicine, every neurological drug known to mankind, the odd effectiveness of pseudoephedrine, running
smack into the blame game . . . all of it, I've also lived with for the past 33 years. Yet somehow, functioning despite it all.

Your book jolted me, like seeing myself in the mirror and not expecting to. I found your words enormously comforting and soothing, seeing my life mirrored so eerily has been a magical balm for feeling isolated.

I loved your analogy about having a finite number of marbles everyday and having to pay with them. I could not have described it better.

You are a gifted writer--it can't be easy to pack so much humor in a topic that's so bleak.

Your work touched my heart and the planet is a better place for having you in it.

Thank you again, for putting one deliberate step in front of the other, one day at a time, which is what it surely must have taken for you to write a book of this magnitude. (I can identify because it was the one step at a time method that got me through high school, college, and grad school).

With Warmest Regards and Bushels of Gratitude,

Ranjan

p.s. The best way I know of to thank you as an author, is to buy your book, which I'm promptly about to do through Amazon! :-)

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