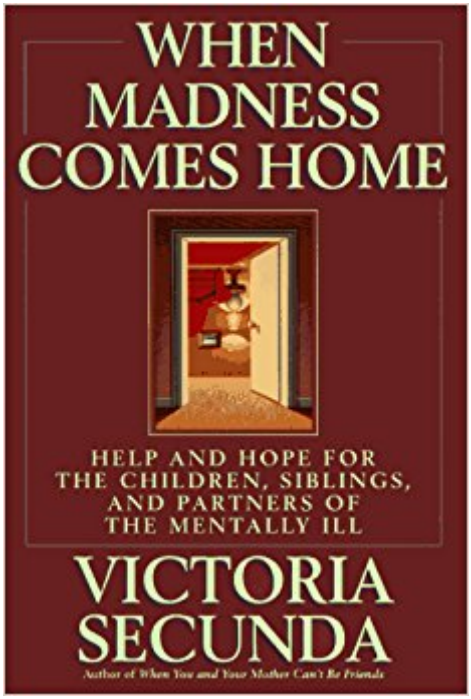
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When Madness Comes Home: Help And Hope For Families Of The Mentally Ill



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Synopsis

Providing a firsthand look at the effects of mental illness on families and friends, a compassionate resource provides emotional support and guidance for friends and family of the mentally ill.

Book Information

Hardcover: 384 pages

Publisher: Hyperion; 1st edition (May 8, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0786861711

ISBN-13: 978-0786861712

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.1 x 9.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #705,349 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #82 inÃ Â Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Health #274 inÃ Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Mental Illness #1461 inÃ Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Pathologies

Customer Reviews

When Madness Comes Home is a beautifully written, meticulously researched, well-organized book that is inflected by the author's special empathy as the sister of someone with schizophrenia. Its subtitle, Help and Hope for the Children, Siblings, and Partners of the Mentally Ill, is an accurate description of what a reader will find in its pages. She introduces herself with a painful passage about committing her sister for treatment, and then begins at the beginning: "Telling someone that there's mental illness in your family, and watching the reaction, is not for the fainthearted." Secunda has interviewed scores of sisters, brothers, sons, daughters, and spouses of people afflicted with schizophrenia, manic-depressive disorder, debilitating depression, and other serious afflictions. She allows them to speak for themselves, while gently guiding the reader toward insights, coping strategies, knowledge, and compassion. Tactfully avoiding criticism of parents or medical professionals, Secunda nonetheless makes it clear that her concerns lie elsewhere. Her only misstep is billing hers as the first "major" book to address "these other victims," when Julie Tallard Johnson, founder of the Sibling and Adult Children's Network of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, wrote the groundbreaking book, Hidden Victims: An Eight-Stage Healing Process for Families and Friends of the Mentally Ill, more than 10 years before. Secunda's own extensive

bibliography and her many useful quotes amply recognize those who have examined this territory before her. Her book is wonderful, but we can be thankful that it is only one of a growing number written for those whose lives are often shattered but whose pain is still largely ignored. --Margaret Moorman

This book deals primarily with those whom the author calls the "other victims"?the siblings and offspring of the mentally ill person (the chapter on the special problems of spouses seems to be an afterthought). While most other titles on dealing with a mentally ill relative do mention in passing the problems of other family members, journalist Secunda's (Women and Their Fathers, Dell, 1993) focus sets it apart. However, like the many other "adult children of dysfunctional families" books, it is completely unscientific. Everything from "codependence" to "inability to commit" is described as a result of growing up with an unstable relative?all based on nonrandom, anecdotal evidence. Nevertheless, there is an audience for this kind of book, so large and medium-sized public libraries may want to purchase.?Mary Ann Hughes, Neill P.L., Pullman, Wash.Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I read this after the death of a close family member with schizophrenia. I wish I had read this book when the family member was first diagnosed! It did an excellent job of describing the heartbreak and hope of living with someone afflicted with a chronic brain disease. Very validating!

This book has been very helpful to my patients who deal with family members who are severely disturbed. It helps them to know they are not alone and describes the disturbed person's behavior and how to deal with it.

By far the best book of its kind.

Mrs. Secunda, I found your hardback volume of 'When Madness Comes Home' at a Good Will store. I have always found some of the very best, authoritative, and well-written books in such stores! (A secret that many people are unaware of!) I immediately connected with your wonderfully researched, immensely interesting, and tremendously helpful book as I know several people who fall within its arena of discussion. I simply wish to thank you for your courage in writing this volume, and your deep heart commitment to helping all those people who suffer so terribly from living with, and/or taking care of a severely mentally ill person. Your book is a masterpiece in helping anyway to

understand the often extremely difficult-to- understand thinking and behaviors of the mentally ill, and most importantly, how to maintain one's identity and sanity while, and after, what are often long-term associations. I thank you with all my heart for your beautiful book. I know of none that surpass it! Sincerely, Mack W. Ethridge, President and Founder, New Frontier Health Research, Inc.

The author is a therapist, has a twin who suffers from a mental illness, whom she cares for deeply and was involved in the book. Traditionally, the field of mental health has research and support for clients, mothers and fathers and has tended to primarily represent only that point of view. This book offers support, comfort, information, and addressed issues related to siblings, children and partners--the people who often suffer in silence, frustration and confusion as all the focus is on the parent-child relationship, where much of the services and research has been done. If you are not a parent, or a mental health consumer, yet have a loved one who suffers from illness--You are impacted. This is a rare book which will speak to your personal experience and offer information helpful to you.

I have been frustrated in my attempts to find help for my teenage daughter in understanding my mental illness. I found information for spouses and parents of the mentally ill but nothing for the children being raised by people like me. When I found this book I started reading to see if I thought it might be helpful to my daughter, it wasn't long however until I started seeing my own childhood in it and gained much insight for myself. One way that was helpful was to take away some of the guilt I carried about the kind of mother I had been. There are two areas in particular that I feel this book addressed very well that I were just the kind of help I was seeking for my daughter. First was to help relieve some of her fears about "turning out crazy" because mom did. Second was to get across the point to her that she is not responsible for me. That she has every right to go forward with her own life and let me attend to mine. That alone has helped our relationship immensely. I did not realize how much anger and resentment she was feeling about feeling that she had to be so careful with me. I was abusive to her when she was a small child and as I worked on stopping the abuse, I always stressed to her that the abuse was my fault. That she was a good little girl, that mommy had problems that I had to take care myself. I think that now she understands better what made me the way I am and that I am responsible for myself. I am extremely grateful for this book, not only for my daughter, but for the understanding I gained.

As the daughter of a mentally ill mother, I found this book incredibly helpful in understanding the

effect my mother's illness has had -- and continues to have -- on my family and on myself. I'd recommend this book especially if you find that even as an adult, you're still not at peace with your relative and your past, you can't bear to revisit your childhood, or you feel isolated, emotionally numb, and frightened for what the mental illness may mean for you and your own children._When Madness Comes Home_ shows how all these things are common patterns among the children and siblings of the mentally ill. Many of the same feelings, patterns of behavior and unresolved issues are shared by the children and siblings; yet most have never received any attention or guidance in coping. It's shocking that as far as the mental health system has progressed in treating the mentally ill, it has utterly failed to provide help for their *families*. This book may be the first step on the long, painful road to acceptance.This book and _How to Cope with Mental Illness in Your Family_ by Diane T. Marsh, Ph.D. and Rex Dickens both offer good reading lists (the latter also has suggested reading for adolescents and children currently trying to cope with a mentally ill relative)...

This book is beautifully written and indispensable help for anyone affected by a loved one suffering a familiar *DIAGNOSED* illness that is being treated. But if you'll look down below at the first reader's review from June 1, 1997, I too have to stress that if you are trying to cope with loving someone who has borderline personality disorder, especially *UNDIAGNOSED* and untreated BPD (as it usually goes undiagnosed and untreated), then this book will not only not help you, it will only make you feel even more misunderstood and crazy yourself. The book that *will* help you more than you can imagine is STOP WALKING ON EGGSHELLS by Randi Kreger and Paul Mason. Undiagnosed BPD is common to the point of epidemic, and high-functioning BPD sufferers are extremely unlikely to get help while enjoying destroying your life. If that is the help you are looking for, Kreger's book is the one to get.

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