

VOLUNTARY ADMISSION



ANTHONY BAYSS

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ADMISSION

“Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.”

– William Ernest Henley, Invictus

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BY
ANTHONY BAYSS

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this book to all those suffering in silence. You must know you are not alone.

Millions of others have experienced the pain you are enduring and there is no stigma in asking for help to treat your agony.

You have to know depression and anxiety are illnesses, not weaknesses.

Family, friends, and a multitude of healthcare professionals are willing to listen to your needs and instigate the appropriate treatment. Being unable to speak to loved ones about your situation is not a stumbling block. I sought help from people I had never met before – so can you.

On seeking assistance you will not be judged by the questions you ask; rather you will be handled with dignity and respect by specialists who treat these illnesses daily.

There are always solutions to the problems on which you are fixated. All you need to do is offer those three words – “I need help.”

TO MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The decision to write this book was motivated by your reaction to my hospitalization.

I experienced your unwavering encouragement from the moment you received that heart-stopping phone call.

Every day I am gifted with your love and support.

It was not until after I was discharged from the Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre that I began to understand how my suicide would have left you with much pain.

Your persistent inspiration for breaking my negative observations of life have provided me with a new beginning.

A start I am keen to not look back on.

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PREFACE

So how does a 34-year-old male, who is shy, depressed, and suicidal, handle life's issues?

At the time of writing this Preface I had just been discharged from a twelve-day voluntary visit to the Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC) at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney.

If I had not walked into the emergency department of the hospital and asked for help almost two weeks earlier I am sure that the thoughts of suicide would have rapidly returned to finish me off.

The doctors and nurses started listening to my worries within minutes of me presenting to hospital. And not one of those who were involved in my care judged me for my illness.

Looking back on my decision to ask for help, I now realize reaching rock bottom was not a precarious position to be in. My life to date had not taken me to where I envisaged all my hard work would; however, in stepping back from suicide and seeking assistance I acknowledge my journey can now start again.

On leaving the hospital I was warned that the treatment for major depression and attempted suicide was not going to be a quick journey, or one of linear direction.

INTRODUCTION

I want to make it very clear that this book does not outline cures for depression and should not be read as a way to self-diagnose any mental illness.

This book is deliberately short so no one has an excuse for not reading the contents.

This book is primarily written for those who are living with an undiagnosed mental illness. You will learn how asking for help can truly save your life. More importantly you will be encouraged to seek answers from loved ones and professionals after you discover the incredible treatment I received while as an inpatient and also after my discharge from hospital.

Voluntary Admission is also a fantastic eye-opener for those in the community who have had no experience or exposure to someone with a mental illness. You will uncover the insidious and indiscriminate nature of major depression. My personal encounters with mental illness are chronicled so you can understand how quickly these types of illnesses can spiral out of control.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates

there are three hundred and fifty million people worldwide suffering from depression, but only fifty percent are receiving treatment. Moreover, one million people commit suicide every year and about twenty million people attempt to commit suicide every year.

I wish for teenagers, young adults and mature aged groups to discover how mental illness can touch anyone, at any time in their life, and how it can rapidly become an uncontrollable illness.

We can talk openly about sports injuries, having the flu, or even some of the major health battles like cancer. If we have a headache, are feeling stressed, or have a pain in the stomach, all of which are not necessarily visible, we still can volunteer our painful experiences to others.

However, those experiencing depression, anxiety and suicidal tendencies are less likely to offer details of this illness to family and friends.

I believe the eradication of the stigma associated with depression and anxiety can only start after society acknowledges that we are dealing with an illness, not a weakness.

I want this book to be left on the coffee table, on the kitchen bench, or around the office for all eyes to view. The reluctance to include depression or anxiety in an open conversation with family or friends has to be broken.