

Book review

Through the Eyes of Depression

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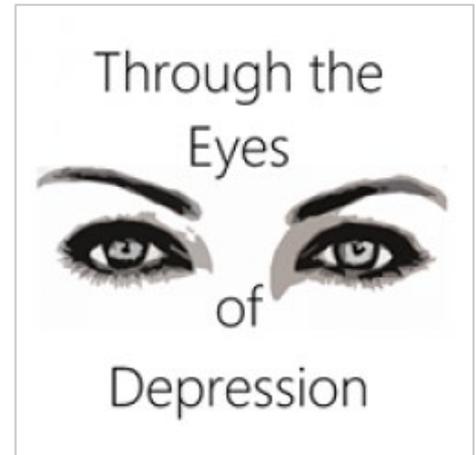
Author: Hayley Elliott-Kernot

Year: 2016

Publisher: Self-published

Audience: Supporting Myself, Supporting Others

Summary: A book on depression from the viewpoint of lived experience, with insights on how families and friends can support their loved one



I was drawn to read this book as I live with depression. I have read many medical books on depression which often only give an impersonal explanation of what depression is and how to manage it.

What I liked about this book is that it's designed to show through words, illustrations and poetry what depression is like from the viewpoint of those who have experienced it or live with it, and how families and friends can support their loved one. I wanted to read about the experience of others and was hopeful of finding some commonalities and perhaps some new information and ideas for treatment.

The author's inspiration for the book came from the fact that when she was diagnosed with depression, her family didn't understand what depression was, which caused her to feel extremely alone. She found it impossible to speak about what her depression was like. She started to write down what she felt, and sharing her writing signalled a turning point where her family began to understand her depression, which helped them also.

The author makes an important note that professionals haven't written the book, it's written by different people who have experienced depression. She raised money via a [Give-a-Little page](#) to self-publish the book.

Tolkien quotes throughout

Tolkien quotes are featured throughout the book and I initially wondered what the relevance was. The author explains at the end of the book that when she was low with depression she watched *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy hundreds of times. She likened the fights between the Middle Earth characters to the fight between light and darkness in her own life. I thought this was an excellent analogy.

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The book is an easy 94-page read and features a contents page which provides good structure. It flows from what depression feels like for those who live with it to tips and advice for managing depression, how to help your loved ones when you have depression, how to support a loved one with depression, stories from family members, triggers and warning signs, success stories, through to a conclusion and topics for discussion resource.

I certainly felt less alone in my depression by having read this book. I found myself relating to many of the feelings expressed such as cancer of the feelings, and not being able to snap out of it. I learnt about the Zentangle Method (a relaxing way to create images by drawing structured patterns), which I checked out and am keen to try. And I thought some of the ideas around how to support a loved one with depression were particularly valuable as often family and friends are at a loss as to how to support someone with depression.

The book costs \$15 (not including postage) and can be ordered at through.the.eyes100@gmail.com. Payment is through online banking.

Reviewed by Delia Middleton

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