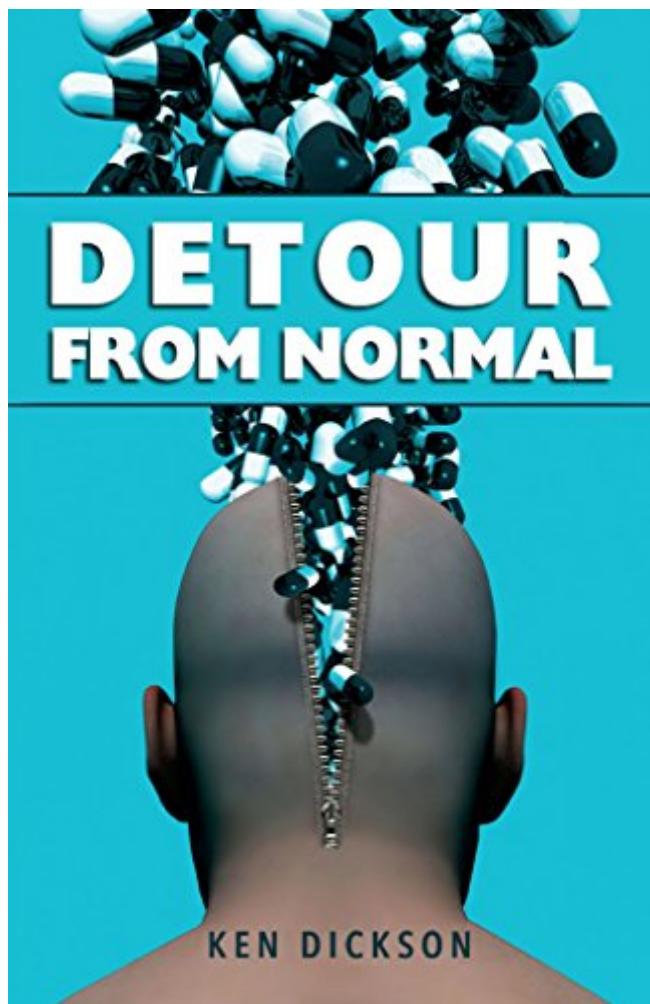


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Detour From Normal



Synopsis

Despite access to the greatest healthcare in the world, U.S citizens are not immune to medical horror stories. Such was the experience of Ken Dickson, a beloved husband and father and respected engineer, with no history of mental illness. What should have been an ordinary surgical procedure changed that, propelling him into a high security psychiatric ward where psychiatrists branded him a danger to himself and others. This gut wrenching novel is leaving readers shocked at the author's treatment, and appalled by how quickly a medical situation fell through the cracks, sending the patient spiraling uncontrollably into medically induced madness. This novel is not, however, only about Ken. It is the story of two people deeply in love, but torn apart by fate, an eye-opening introduction to the stigma of mental illness, and a personal run-in with the poor broken souls trapped in psychiatric care. It is a rich and varied exploration of our humanity written from the unique perspective of someone suffering from mental illness. Detour from Normal is a novel that you cannot afford to ignore, with a message that you will not want to dismiss: tomorrow, next year, or five years from now, this could happen to you.

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Customer Reviews

Rarely do I read a book from start to finish without putting it down. This is one of those books. Very well written and wholly engaging, it took me on a surreal and yet easily understandable journey though the mind and experiences of someone marginalized by society as insane. That he is able to describe with such incredible attention to detail his delusions and how he was made to suffer so much cruelty and injustice at the hands of those we trust with our lives, including medical doctors, peace officers, guards, emergency medical technicians, nurses, psychiatrists, lawyers and even a judge, is amazing. What a great book! It is sad how so much of our society is prejudiced against the mentally ill, regarding them as unthinking and unfeeling, and therefore undeserving of any compassion. The author does a great service to us all by correcting this misunderstanding. With this book, he has not only prepared me for what may be my experience should something similar happen to me, he has also taught me how to show more patience and love towards those who suffer as he did. His book has the power to make the world a better place. It should be required reading for all those who are preparing themselves for any type of work involving the mentally ill. By the time readers finish this book, they will understand themselves better and learn to get more out of life, regardless of where they fall on the scale of fully sane (is anyone fully sane?) to insane. If they have friends or family members who are mentally ill, they will love them more and have more joy in their relationships with them. If they work with the mentally ill, their work will take on a whole new meaning; it will be more fulfilling and more satisfying. The author's summary towards the end of the lessons he has learned through all of his experiences described in this book are beautiful and inspiring. His conclusions resonate as true with me and have given me a brighter hope for the future of humanity.

I work as a psychiatric nurse for children ages 5-12. I hate to admit it but we as professionals become immune to the individual's needs and often assume that the behaviors of our patients can all fit in a box. We are told this is their behavior and we think we know the answers to what they need to do to fix themselves. Thank you Ken for reminding me that circumstances can trigger how our mind is going to try to protect us. I feel God has led me through various situations in my life to provide me with empathy. It has helped me treat each child in my care as a special individual. Reading your book reinforces my desire to look beyond the presentation and see each child as God sees them. Not the broken person that stands in front of me but the potential each of us has inside to be whole and healthy with the right care. Very insightful read.

I met Ken and his wife recently when he purchased my used van. He seemed like a normal very intelligent guy. When he told me his story, I could not connect the man with what he was telling me. Having had a tonsillectomy gone bad myself from which I almost died at the age of 30, and subsequent health problems for which I have seen 34 different health care professionals just since 2007 with little positive results, I had to read this book. For someone who had never authored a book, Ken's story is very well told, and a real eye-opener to the practice (an appropriate word) of modern medicine. Pharmaceutical companies push their products in numerous ways to providers and patients with more regard for their bottom line than the patients welfare. The FDA is staffed by former and future pharmaceutical employees, so the fix is in with respect to new drugs until horror stories like Ken's become common. As one author of a book I read says, " How many parts do you have to remove to make a healthy person?" I believe the same could be said for the use of prescription drugs in this country. This book is a clear wakeup call as to what can happen when any patient is subjected to botched surgery, ingested with numerous drugs, and run through a mental health system that cares little for his/her welfare. As Ken himself told me, without his wife, Beth, acting as his advocate, he likely would not be here to tell it.

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