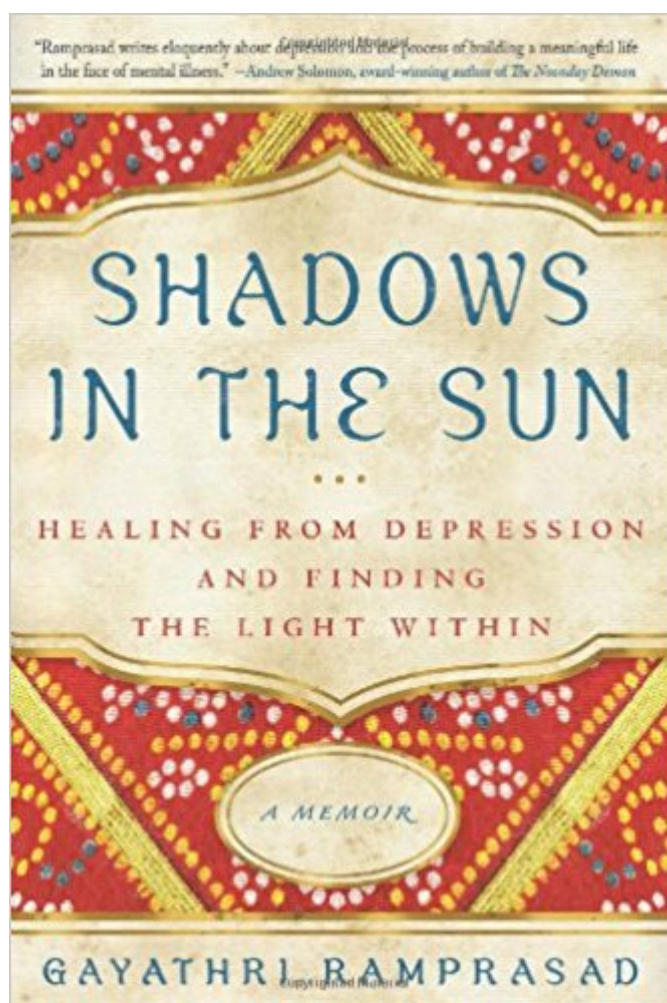


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# Shadows In The Sun: Healing From Depression And Finding The Light Within



## Synopsis

A first-of-its-kind, cross-cultural lens to mental illness through the inspiring story of Gayathri's™ thirty-year battle with depression. This literary memoir takes readers from her childhood in India where depression is thought to be a curse to life in America where she eventually finds the light within by drawing on both her rich Hindu heritage and Western medicine to find healing. As a young girl in Bangalore, Gayathri was surrounded by the fragrance of jasmine and flickering oil lamps, her family protected by Hindu gods and goddesses. But as she grew older, demons came forth from the dark corners of her idyllic kingdom--with the scariest creatures lurking within her. The daughter of a respected Brahmin family, Gayathri began to feel different. "I can hardly eat, sleep, or think straight. The only thing I can do is cry unending tears." Her parents insisted it was all in her head. Because traditional Indian culture had no concept of depression as an illness, no doctor could diagnose and no medicine could heal her mysterious malady. This memoir traces Gayathri's courageous battle with the depression that consumed her from adolescence through marriage and a move to the United States. It was only after the birth of her first child, when her husband discovered her in the backyard "clawing the earth furiously with my bare hands, intent on digging a grave so that I could bury myself alive," that she finally found help. After a stay in a psych ward she eventually found "the light within," an emotional and spiritual awakening from the darkness of her tortured mind. Gayathri's inspiring story provides a first-of-its-kind cross-cultural view of mental illness--how it is regarded in India and in America, and how she drew on both her rich Hindu heritage and Western medicine to find healing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Ramprasad admirably offers an honest depiction of depression as an ongoing struggle. She reminds readers that not all cultures deal with mental illness in the same way, and her hard-won triumph makes it easy for readers to support her crusade of hope."--Publishers Weekly

"A well-written, novel-like story offering hope for recovery for families in the throes of mental illness."--Kirkus Reviews

"Mental illness recognizes no borders, yet few books have explored the difficulties of individuals dealing with cultural differences and none has done it better than *Shadows in the Sun*. Beautifully written, Gayathri Ramprasad chronicles the devastating impact that depression wreaks on an entire family and then brings us into the light with her inspiring story of recovery. This book is a true gift to all those struggling with a mental disorder and those of us who love them. In writing it, Gayathri Ramprasad establishes herself as an international voice of hope."--Pete Earley, author of *CRAZY: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness*

"Gayathri Ramprasad writes eloquently about depression, and about building a meaningful life in the face of mental illness."--Andrew Solomon, National Book Award-winning author of *The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression*

"Everyone who struggles with a mental illness, or who knows anyone with depression, anxiety, or any other mental illness, must read this engrossing true story of courage in the face of heartbreaking adversity."--Dilip V. Jeste, M.D., President, American Psychiatric Association

"Gayathri's story of self-transformation is a marvel and inspiration for all of us--those who suffer, those who serve--that even at the darkest moments, hope, recovery and peace are possible."--Christopher Gordon, MD, medical director, Advocates Inc.; Associate clinical professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

"She has broken the silence for Indians across the globe and makes it possible for all of us, and especially our children, to embrace their most powerful experiences as opportunities for extraordinary transformation."--Chacku Mathai, STAR Center director, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

"*Shadows in the Sun* is an excellent source for any clinician, patient, or family member to understand the disease of depression and the cost that keeping the disease hidden is having on all family cultures."--R. Murali Krishna, MD, president, INTEGRIS James L. Hall, Jr. Center for Mind, Body & Spirit

"Her unflinching honesty is a powerful weapon against the experience of depression which so often eludes language and is shrouded in silence."--Clare Miller, director, Partnership for Workplace Mental Health, American Psychiatric Foundation

"A tremendous contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the evolution of depression, in the context of culture and the impact among cultures."--David Satcher, MD, PhD, Director, Satcher Health Leadership Institute Morehouse School of Medicine, Poussiant-Satcher-Cosby Chair in Mental Health, 16th Surgeon General of the United States

States "Gayathri pens a memoir about an anguishing mental illness that ends in redemption and grace."--Therese Borchard, author of *Beyond the Blue* "A testament to the power of perseverance, and a must-read for anyone looking for living proof that all things are possible."--Jeff Bell, author, *Rewind, Replay, Repeat: A Memoir of OCD*; Founder, The adversity 2 advocacy alliance "Living proof of the healing power of understanding."--Brandon Staglin, schizophrenia survivor and Communications Director, International Mental Health Research Organization (IMHRO) "Anyone reading her book will gain valuable insight into what it is like to struggle with serious emotional and mental disorders, as well as receiving a most precious gift--reason to believe that such a harrowing journey can lead to hope and healing."--John Head, author of *Standing in the Shadows: Understanding and Overcoming Depression in Black Men* "Shadows in the Sun illuminates us all with fierce truth and beauty, and inspires us to our core."--Janine Francolini Founder, The Flawless Foundation "Shadows in the Sun fights the stigma and cultural misunderstanding of mental illness on a global scale. A must read, even if mental illness has not touched your family."--Jessie Close, *BringChange2Mind* "Highly recommended--You don't have to be depressed or have experienced depression or mental illness to read *Shadows in the Sun*. It is an utterly fascinating, compelling, passionate memoir that also offers a great cultural perspective on life in India and what it's like to be an immigrant."--[Bookfoolery.blogspot.com](http://Bookfoolery.blogspot.com) "The struggles that [Gayathri] and her family underwent through will help others feel less alone as well as isolated and perhaps this book can help break barriers down so people who suffer won't be treated badly."--[Svetla-randomblog.blogspot.com](http://Svetla-randomblog.blogspot.com)

Gayathri Ramprasad is the founder and President of ASHA International, a non-profit organization promoting personal, organizational and community wellness. She has received undergraduate degrees from Bangalore University, India, and George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon, from where she also received an MBA. A Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), she is also a member of the Global Speakers Federation, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (past Board member, NAMI Oregon), and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance. Gayathri is the winner of the prestigious Eli Lilly Welcome Back Award for Lifetime Achievement and the Voice Award for Consumer Leadership sponsored by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Gayathri lives in Portland, Oregon.

Could not put the book down, but I read a few pages at a time. The colors of India come alive, its bells ring gently and the aromas waft a little longer. Whether you read this book as a fellow traveller on this long and yet beautiful journey of constant healing or someone with a blessed heart that

wants to know more about those amongst us to whom the gods gave mansions to own but light bulbs that occasionally didn't work in dark nights. Buy it, read it. This book is a must read for South Asians, for it will wash away the layers of prejudice that may have been accumulated inadvertently. There are few words in hindi, hold on to them they reveal their meaning to you.

Gayathri's passion as a professional advocate for mental health is grounded by her genuinely personal life story, first as an adolescent, then as a wife and finally as a parent. As she unwinds the gut wrenching depth of her despair in the face of social norms and inability to articulate a shadowy sickness, the reader is her co-traveller across the east west cultural divide. It leaves one in awe of the power of the mind to imagine and overcome. A must read for the sociologist and humanist in all of us.

This is an amazing journey that anyone who has experienced depression will resonate with. If you feel alone in your suffering, read this book! If you know someone suffering with depression and need insight into what they are experiencing, read this book! It is beautifully written, painfully honest, and I swear, I could not put it down. And layered beneath the story of one woman's struggle to cope with recurrent, debilitating depression, are the sights and sounds and smells of the Indian culture. The imagery is rich and colorful and the story is inspirational. I loved this book.

Gayathri takes us on a beautiful journey from her life as a young girl in India, to her eventual inability to cope with the depressive disorder which almost derailed her life. However, she amazingly triumphs over adversity and heals herself from the darkest of dark corners that depression can bring. She has become a tireless advocate for others like her who suffer from mental illness. Her book will inspire and motivate anyone who has ever dealt with clinical depression. It is well written, and takes the reader on a spellbinding journey through life in both India and the U.S., and the difficulties faced from stigmatizing attitudes. This is a real page turner, and will give you hours of reading pleasure. I couldn't put it down. Whether you are a mental health provider, a family member, or a consumer, you will be riveted and informed by this memoir!-- Selina I. Glater, Mental Health Advocate, Speaker & Author

I'm hoping to find more copies for my students - I want to assign the whole book to them to read and think about - its perfect for my International Psychology course - and also dove-tails with issues related to sexism - it informs the reader of so much about another culture and given today's need for

global cultural/ethnic awareness - it's a jewel! The information the author shares about her own journey through mental illness and recovery is extremely valuable to anyone. I'm so glad I found it!

This book is the author's personal account of her struggle with depression. As a South Asian woman, I know all too well the stigma associated with mental disease. It must have taken tremendous courage on the author's part to tell her story. And what a story it is - filled with sadness, love, courage and hope. The author's words are rich, honest and compelling. At the same time the book is beautiful and simple, making it an easy read (I read it in one sitting). This is a must read for anyone interested in mental health.

Interesting and moving story about a young woman learning to cope with serious, clinical depression, with the expectations of family and culture and coming through. Depression is misunderstood by many people. I think it gives hope and inspiration to the patient, that it is possible to overcome and feel better. It also helps their families to realize what their loved one is going through and shows them the importance of their role and support in this difficult situation.

Beautifully written-different slant on depression-worth buying.

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