Beyond ADHD: Overcoming the label and thriving

Jeff Emmerson, Robert Yehling 2017
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A gift or a curse? Jeff Emerson masterfully portrays his life struggle with Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in his book Beyond ADHD: Overcoming the Label and Thriving. Through the use of personal anecdotes and the opinions of various medical professionals, Emmerson takes a critical look at the diagnostic process. Most notably, Emmerson looks at the underlying issues with the current DSM-V. Are we over- or under-diagnosing 3 million people every year with the tool that has only a 50 percent chance of correctly diagnosing someone with ADHD? And what comes after the diagnosis? Is it a diagnosis or a label that allows our educational system to shut down children’s creativity and make them comply with the accepted norms of class discipline? Emmerson discusses his personal battle and the ways he has helped countless patients live with ADHD.

To treat or not to treat? The ramifications of the cookie cutter tactics that we tend to apply to a person diagnosed with this mental illness are tremendous. Does Adderall treat all? The author analyzes the damaging effects of the current drug-oriented approach of treating ADHD and points to a less pharmaceutically-centric methodology. How about proper diet, more exercise and sleep, and less exposure to electronic devices? Will this more effectively combat this mental disorder? Emmerson advocates for a massive overhaul of the current diagnostic process and a more personalized treatment of people with ADHD. How big is the burden of the psychiatric diagnosis stigma? Through his personal story, the author sheds new light on the effects that the disease can have on one’s family and friends. Jeff Emmerson’s book is about self-discovery that takes the reader on the painful journey of understanding one’s mind.

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