

[PDF] Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide

Kay Redfield Jamison - pdf download free book

Books Details:

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Author: Kay Redfield Jamison

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Description:

"Suicide is a particularly awful way to die: the mental suffering leading up to it is usually prolonged, intense, and unpalliated," writes Kay Redfield Jamison. "There is no morphine equivalent to ease the acute pain, and death not uncommonly is violent and grisly." Jamison has studied manic-depressive illness and suicide both professionally--and personally. She first planned her own suicide at 17; she attempted to carry it out at 28. Now professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, she explores the complex psychology of suicide, especially in people younger than 40: why it occurs, why it is one of our most significant health problems, and how it can be prevented. Jamison discusses manic-depression, suicide in different cultures and eras, suicide notes (they "promise more than they deliver"), methods, preventive treatments, and the devastating effects on loved ones. She explores what type of person commits suicide, and why, and when. She illustrates her points with

detailed anecdotes about people who have attempted or committed suicide, some famous, some ordinary, many of them young. Not easy reading, either in subject or style, but you'll understand suicide better and be jolted by the intensity of depression that drives young people to it. --*Joan Price*
--This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Providing historical, scientific and other helpful material on suicide, Jamison (*An Unquiet Mind*), a Johns Hopkins psychiatry professor, makes an excellent contribution to public understanding with this accessible and objective book. There is, she asserts, a suicide every 17 minutes in this country. Identifying suicide as an often preventable medical and social problem, Jamison focuses attention on those under 40 (suicides by those who are older often have different motivations or causes). Citing research that suicide is most common in individuals with mental illness (diagnosed or not), particularly depression and manic depression, she clearly describes the role of hormones and neurotransmitters as well as potential therapies, including lithium and other antidepressants. Jamison presents fascinating facts about suicide in families and in twins, gender disparities, and the impact of the seasons and times of day. She also provides poignant portraits of those who have committed suicide—from the explorer Meriwether Lewis to a high-achieving Air Force Academy graduate—as well as stories from her own experience. Historical perspective on how different societies have viewed suicide gives context, especially on methods and common locales (in the U.S., San Francisco's Golden Gate bridge is the most popular spot). Critical of her profession for not recognizing suicidal tendencies more readily, Jamison scolds the media and firearms industry as well. The book effectively brings suicide out of the closet, gives general readers insight into symptoms and should increase national awareness of the problem. (Oct.)
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