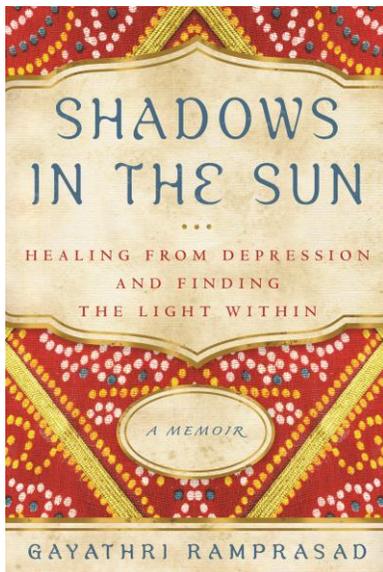


NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



SHADOWS IN THE SUN

Healing from Depression and Finding the Light
Within

By Gayathri Ramprasad

“Dear Mother Earth,” I plead, “please take me back into your womb.” I clear the ground around me and start digging furiously with my hands. I don’t remember how long I sat there digging my grave. As the evening light fades, so does my memory. I vaguely recall Ram and my friend Latha carrying me forcibly into the house.

Americans have become immune to the terms, drugs, and behaviors associated with depression even as its reputation has grown as a debilitating and sometimes fatal mental illness. But in India and elsewhere the stigma associated with this condition is cultural and runs deep. In a sweeping narrative that spans the globe from Bangalore to Portland, Oregon, Gayathri Ramprasad shares her harrowing journey through depression to recovery in a new memoir entitled **SHADOWS IN THE SUN: Healing from Depression and Finding the Light Within** (Hazelden Publishing; March 4, 2014; \$14.95). Her story shows how denial and ignorance about mental health issues, especially among those who love us, can be deadly.

Gayathri Ramprasad was a blossoming, young Indian girl being raised by a loving family steeped in tradition. But as she grew into an adolescent, she found it more and more difficult to cope with the routine ups and downs of life. The “tipping point” came after Ramprasad failed a class at college and became inconsolable. Unlike a reasonably healthy person, who might be upset at first but come to a place of acceptance and a rational state of mind, Gayathri could not stop herself from obsessing over her failure and what this would mean to her future and her family.

This event is one of many that Gayathri shares in **SHADOWS IN THE SUN**. Her arranged marriage, move to America, and the birth of her first child all led to suicidal ideation and attempts, along with varying degrees of fear and chaos for her growing family. At her lowest point, she was found digging a grave for herself in her backyard with her bare hands, mumbling unintelligibly.

Hospitalized for a second time, Gayathri met the people she needed in her life—people who delivered the messages she desperately had to internalize and believe. Finally, her life began anew as she drew on both her rich Hindu heritage and the best of Western medicine to find “the light within,” an emotional and spiritual awakening from the torture she had felt inside for nearly thirty years. Overtime, she learned how to respect her illness without letting it dominate her existence. She also realized she wasn’t alone. Having grown up in a family and culture that initially thought her illness was a curse, she was surprised to learn that her father, brother, and sister all struggled with mental illness.

Today Gayathri Ramprasad is the president of ASHA International, a nonprofit organization she founded, whose mission is her calling—to promote personal, organizational, and community wellness around the world. She knows that even in India today, there is little tolerance for people with mental illness and that the stigmas are almost too much for tormented individuals to bear. With the support of family, community, faith, and knowledge, she believes that people can overcome their mental health issues and lead healthy, thriving lives. **SHADOWS IN THE SUN** illustrates how troubled a person can become and how wonderful it is when she can walk out of the darkness and into the light of recovery.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Gayathri Ramprasad is the founder and president of ASHA International (myasha.org), a nonprofit organization promoting personal, organizational, and community wellness. Gayathri received her first undergraduate degree in science from Bangalore University in India. At George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon, she earned a second undergraduate degree in Management and Business Information Systems and a Master’s in Business Administration. She is a member of the Global Speakers Federation and winner of the prestigious Eli Lilly Welcome Back Award for Lifetime Achievement and the Voice Award for Consumer Leadership sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

ABOUT HAZELDEN:

Hazelden Publishing is part of the Hazelden Foundation, a national nonprofit organization founded in 1949 that helps people reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction. With over 60 years of knowledge and experience, Hazelden offers a comprehensive approach to addiction that addresses the full range of patient, family, and professional needs, including treatment and continuing care for youth and adults, research, higher education, public education and advocacy, and publishing. It has facilities in Minnesota, Oregon, Illinois, Florida, and New York.

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Gayathri Ramprasad

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