

The Hillside Diary and Other Writings

By Robert Gary Neugeboren

Edited and with an introduction by Jay Neugeboren

Every once in a while a book comes along that takes you some place you've never been. THE HILLSIDE DIARY AND OTHER WRITINGS does just that. It takes you inside the mind and soul of a bright, sensitive young man during his first psychiatric hospitalization at the age of 19 and continues for several decades and throughout numerous hospitalizations. Through his personal diary, poems, and letters, we see and feel Robert Neugeboren's life unfold from the inside out. We are witness to a poignant, inspiring struggle to survive.

Robert's story was first told in IMAGINING ROBERT, an award-winning book written by his brother Jay, and a documentary film of the same title that aired nationally on PBS. THE HILLSIDE DIARY AND OTHER WRITINGS tells Robert's story through his own words.

This first person account gives a vivid, personal perspective of psychiatric treatment over the years—more importantly, it provides an intimate and honest portrayal of one person's, and one family's, tenacious struggle to reach beyond the anguish and frustrations of living with mental illness.

Through these writings we begin to understand how Robert survived: he had hope, he had dreams, he loved, and he was loved. His humor, intellect, love of life, and resilience shine through his writing.

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That rare book that demystifies as it depicts mental illness from an insider's perspective. Collectively, Neugeboren's poems, letters, diary entries, and drawings reveal an individual who is honest, witty, idiosyncratic, and intelligent. THE HILLSIDE DIARY gives a gift to those of us who seek to better understand.

WALLY LAMB, author of I KNOW THIS MUCH IS TRUE

A valuable addition to the growing body of first person accounts that will lead the way to a deeper understanding of the struggles of psychiatric patients.

Joanne Greenberg, author of I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN

A collection of writings by an individual who has spent most of his adult life in and out of mental hospitals. The book is both sobering and exhilarating, and reveals in a most poignant manner the tragic lives of individuals with serious and persistent mental illness. It also reveals in dramatic form the inner thoughts and sufferings of such individuals, and at the same time, their hopes for a better life. This wonderful book should be required reading for anyone interested in severe and persistent mental illnesses.

Gerald N. Grob, Henry E. Sigerist Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University, and author of THE MAD AMONG US

A reflection on mental illness from the inside out: painful and happy, lost and discovering. Robert Neugeboren gradually becomes a new person, and we watch it all from his wonderfully poetic pages.

Moe Armstrong, NAMI National Board Member and Co-Founder of the Peer Educators Project, author of THROUGH THE SEASONS

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