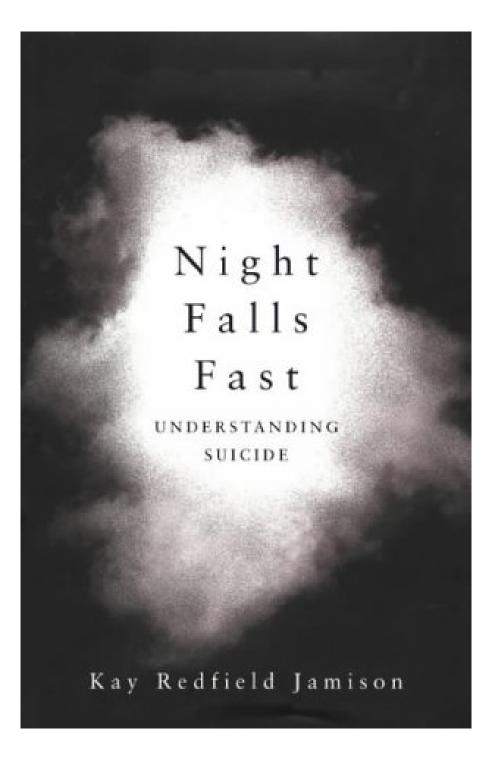


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Amazon.com Review

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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 suicideAfrom the explorer Meriwether Lewis to a high-achieving Air Force Academy graduateAas 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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From Library Journal

Jamison--herself a manic-depressive who has attempted suicide and now a professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine--brings a special urgency to this study. The personal and the professional blend seamlessly here, allowing Jamison to illuminate the darkest recesses of the human mind. The result is forthright, moving, and impressively unsensational.

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Suicide is the third major killer of young people in the Western world, and in the closing decades of the twentieth century it reached epidemic proportions: around the world there has been a frightening surge in suicides committed by children, adolescents and young adults. Kay Redfield Jamison is herself a survivor of a nearly lethal suicide attempt which came after years of battling manic depression. Her survival marked the beginning of a life's work to investigate mental illness and self-inflicted death, and she is now an internationally recognized authority on the depressive illnesses. In "Night Falls Fast" Dr. Jamison dispels the silence and shame that surround the subject of suicide and provides a better understanding of the suicidal mind and a chance to recognize the person at risk. She brings to the book not only wide scientific knowledge and clinical experience but also great compassion. In tracing the network of reasons underlying the phenomenon, she gives us astonishing examples and a startling look at the journals, drawings and farewell notes of people who have chosen to kill themselves. She also provides vivid insight into the most recent findings from hospitals and laboratories across the world; the critical biological and psychological factors that interact to cause suicide; and the new strategies being evolved to combat them. "Night Falls Fast" is a sensitive and penetrating analysis that helps us to comprehend the profound and disturbing sense of loss created in those left behind. It is the first major book on the subject in a quarter of a century and stands to become a classic account of one of the most devastating and destructive causes of death of our time. 'An important, moving and informative book' - "Guardian". 'For anyone in any way connected with a potential suicide this book is essential reading: that means all of us' - "The Times". 'This is a lyrical, beautifully argued, deep and deeply troubling book' - "Evening Standard". 'A profound and impassioned book which will stand as the authoritative study of suicide for many years' - William Styron.

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Most helpful customer reviews

28 of 29 people found the following review helpful.

I found it helpful, but months after my daughter's suicide

By Rhonda Elkins

I lost my brilliant 23 year old daughter who had just started her 3rd year of medical school to suicide 4-11-13. At first, I read as many books as I could written by people who have lost children to suicide and what they went through and how they survived. Once you are able to read, these books are very helpful in making you realize all the horrible things you are thinking, going through, and experiencing, while the most horrible experience of your existence is in fact, a normal reaction to losing your child. Normal. Nothing about losing your child to suicide is normal. But at least you know you are not alone.

My daughter, never in her 23 years, showed one single sign to me or any of her friends of depression. I found out after her death, that she had confided in one friend that she was depressed very soon before she died, but that person thought we knew and did not know she was suicidal. Other than that, her life was filled with success that came very easily to her. She was brilliant, sweet, loving, an artist, a writer, and succeeded at everything she set out to do. She never seemed depressed or stressed out. She was doing extremely well in medical school. I saw her the week before she died and she seemed totally normal, her sweet, happy, normal self. One week later I was called at work by the police that lived over 3 hours away where she lived and went to medical school that she was dead from suicide. Only in her suicide note did I find out that she had been

depressed all her life and hid it from us to protect us from it. She said she would have took her life years ago but could not bear to do it due to the pain it would cause us, but to forgive her that she could no longer go on due to the weight of the sadness she has lived all her life. This seemingly happy child from the day she was born, sad?? I won't go in to the depths of my pain since and what it is now and will forever be. But I needed answers. This book provides answers in part, because it has in it the many instances of brilliant people taking their own lives.

I do want to let you know that this book is excellent. It is written by someone who suffers from bipolar disorder, has attempted suicide herself, but has continued on to lead a very productive life and is a psychologist. She has her own personal experience in this book as well as experiences of others. However, I would not suggest this book to anyone who has very recently lost someone to suicide. Your mind would not be able to grasp this book then. What you need then is something to help you through your pain as best you can. Though I still need this, I needed something to help me understand the mood disorders such as depression and bipolar. I don't know which one my daughter had, probably major depression. But I will never know because she never sought help.

Also, there is a lot of scientific information in this book such as the biology of a suicidal mind, history of depression in the past and how society dealt with it. This may be too much scientific information for some people it just depends on the person. For me, it helped knowing this.

The book is also filled with just so much that helped me and much of it is just too hard to put into words in this review.

I recommend this book highly for someone who wants to try to understand suicide (what we know so far anyway, we have much more to learn), but wait a bit after your loss.

No book you read will relieve the agony that one experiences after the loss of a loved one after suicide, especially if it's your child. But some books help you better understand things and that's about as much as any book can do with this horrible epidemic.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Outstanding, Compassionate Overview

By J. Jamakaya

Of the many books about suicide, this I the one I consider indispensable and always recommend. It's a tremendous overview that covers so many issues. It offers historical perspective on how suicide has been perceived by different cultures over the centuries. It describes the various methods of suicide and who (by gender, age, race, etc.) is more likely to choose specific methods. It reviews the various theories put forth by psychologists and psychiatrists to explain suicide. It includes detailed analyses of the various mood disorders and substance abuses that contribute to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. It delves into the old and new drugs aimed at alleviating mental illnesses and suicide ideation. It shares compelling stories of individuals who have succumbed to suicide and stories of family members and loved ones who struggle to go on with their lives afterward. It also addresses suicide prevention.

The author, Kay Redfield Jamison, is a professor of psychiatry who once attempted suicide herself. As such, her writing is informed with both professional expertise and personal experience. From the Prologue to the Epilogue, it's obvious that Jamison is someone who has "been there" and really understands the sadness and pain around suicide. The book is written in a clear and accessible style that all general readers should be able to grasp. It is suffused with compassion and hard-won wisdom that should benefit anyone searching for information about this tragic phenomenon. Highly recommended.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

So good I buy up used copies to give to others in my community

By Katy Murray

I began my quest to understand suicide when I was very young.... and in the late 60's/early 70's all I could find in my small town public library were things written by Freud. (No fun for a 12 year old to read, I assure you!) Nevertheless, I read everything I could find in hopes of understanding "WHY!?"

I could understand why someone might want to "give up" but I just couldn't comprehend how or why someone could go all the way through the act of suicide. What was going on within them that could make it possible to leave behind those they love with such a devastating, traumatic loss? Did they even begin to comprehend what their families, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and community members were left with?

Having experienced suicide in my own family, the reasons described in dozens of books from the 70's through the 90's just didn't ring true with what I knew of loved one's who had attempted or completed suicide. So I kept reading. Then Dr. Redfeld-Jamison's book came out. She writes with a compelling authority of intimate personal experience and professional expertise and insight. I was mesmerized by the book. As trite as it sounds, after reading it I realized that I had found the understanding and insight I was looking for. I no longer buy and read every book about suicide I can get my hands on.

Now, as a practicing psychotherapist and clinical consultant to other therapists, I hear of suicides in our town much too often. In addition to the normal clinical interventions you'd expect a psychotherapist to provide (including EMDR for the loved ones left behind) I donate a copy of Night Falls Fast to one person within each circle of those left in the wreckage of a suicide. I only ask that folks share it with others after they read it. I ask that they not return it to me, but instead, leave it "in circulation" with the hope that as many people as possible might be touched by its insight and wisdom.

Since the book was first published, I have probably given 40 to 50 copies of the book away. It is that good. It is a classic.

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Yeah, reading a publication **Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide By Kay Redfield Jamison** could include your close friends listings. This is among the solutions for you to be successful. As recognized, success does not imply that you have wonderful things. Comprehending as well as recognizing greater than various other will provide each success. Beside, the notification and also impression of this Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide By Kay Redfield Jamison can be taken and also chosen to act.

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