



Telling is Risky Business: Mental Health Consumers Confront Stigma

Otto F. Wahl

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Individuals with a mental illnesses—such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression—have a double burden, Otto Wahl writes. Not only must they cope with disabling disorders, but they also must contend with the negative attitudes of the public toward those disorders. To truly understand the full extent of this stigma, we need to hear from the consumers (the term used in this book for people with mental illness) themselves. *Telling is Risky Business* is the first book to examine what these people have to say about their own experiences of stigma.

The center of Wahl's research was a nationwide survey in which mental health consumers across the United States were asked, both through questionnaires and interviews, to tell about their experiences of stigma and discrimination. The research comes to life as many of the over 1,300 respondents' acute observations are reported directly, in their own words.

Telling is Risky Business vividly covers topics such as isolation, rejection, discouragement, and discrimination. Consumers also offer perceptive observations of how our society depicts people with mental illness. The book ends with suggestions for strategies and coping; an invaluable section on resources available for fighting stigma guarantees its place on many bookshelves. As Laura Lee Hall writes, "This book will likely open your eyes to a topic that you probably did not understand."

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