

The Secrets to Recovery from Mental Illness
A Mother's Guide

by Linda Santini, MEd, www.BookSurge.com, Seattle, 2008

What can readers learn from the mother of two boys who had mental health problems? Author Linda Santini, MEd shares difficult experiences as well as helpful information, scientific and medical research, reference books and tips for (1) monitoring episodes and symptoms, (2) surviving misdiagnoses and mistreatments, (3) navigating the healthcare maze and (4) finding quality care. Linda teaches us the secrets to recovery.

What could be secret about medical care for a brain condition? Most growing kids have bad moods and episodes of depression, anxiety, attention deficits and borderline behaviors. Don't doctors know how to help? Yes and no. Linda and her family trusted several physicians who seemed competent but only offered shortcuts - quick labels and easy prescriptions, then more pills and talk therapy sessions. Did these doctors mention that the practice guidelines of psychiatry recommend how psychiatrists can make an accurate diagnosis and plan safe and effective treatments? No.

For years, Santini saw her two boys get sicker; eventually she learned that patients can suffer and deteriorate while safe, effective and restorative regimens are ignored by busy psychiatrists. Knowing that many families trust pills and talks, Linda wrote *The Secrets to Recovery from Mental Illness – A Mother's Guide*. She warns readers about substandard psychiatry and introduces a complementary dimension of care. Dr. Abram Hoffer wrote the foreword. As a psychiatrist, Hoffer co-founded orthomolecular medicine more than 50 years ago. He has written many books and papers for medical journals.

The more Linda Santini read about orthomolecular medicine, the more it fascinated her. She took one of her sons to see Abram Hoffer in Victoria, BC. Dr. Hoffer diagnosed him carefully, explained how overactive adrenalin metabolism can make some people sick, even psychotic, and recommended nutritional supplements to complement medications. Linda encouraged her son to cooperate with the restorative program. He recovered. When her other son got sick, she knew what tests to ask for and how to get help.

If you, your family or friends have episodes or mental health problems which get worse until you suspect substandard care, you can use Linda's book to find help. She shares references which explain how orthomolecular doctors identify biochemical patterns and diagnose carefully before they plan safe and effective treatments; she also outlines the restorative approach. Many patients can recover and live well, even after years of episodes and symptoms of depression, bipolar disorder, psychosis, schizophrenia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Doctors can complement the standard treatments – medications, talks and shocks - with restorative orthomolecular regimens. There are biomedical treatments for autism and Aspergers too. Linda's heartfelt book will inspire patients and caregivers to ask for accurate diagnoses and guideline-quality care.

Review by Robert Sealey, BSc (author of the *90-Day Plan for Finding Quality Care*)