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A Funny Book About Life-Threatening Accidents, Emotional Abuse and Depression?

Author Uses Humor to Fight Depression, the Stigma Associated with Mental Illness

Dubbed a “serial entrepreneur” by the *Kansas City Business Journal*, successful businessman and educator, John Shuchart shares his remarkable life story and battle with depression in an entertaining new book, “*You are not the brightest of my four sons*” ... *and other depressing things that have been said to me*. Shuchart details the incredible, traumatic events of his life, how he uses humor to reframe those events, and how he, and many others, can lead a productive, fruitful existence while in recovery with a mental illness.

Leawood, Kansas - April, 2015 – John Shuchart, a successful entrepreneur, educator and author, has penned a new book, “*You are not the brightest of my four sons*” ... *and other depressing things that have been said to me*. Shuchart wrote the book after recently going public with his own battle with depression. He wants readers to understand that mental illness is a biological disorder, a disease like cancer – and that there is no reason to be embarrassed about having the illness. He also wants readers to laugh and feel better when experiencing a depressive episode, and Shuchart provides plenty to laugh about in the book.

The book’s title is a quote from Shuchart’s mother, who regularly informed the young John that he wasn’t very bright. In addition to the emotional abuse that Shuchart endured from both parents, he faced a ridiculous number of astounding, traumatic events in his life: from being forced as an 11-year-old to spend the summer on the east coast in a camp that prohibited him from using his right hand (because his mother felt he should be left-handed) to life-threatening accidents, 15 surgeries, an addiction to prescription painkillers, and his father’s multiple suicide threats to extort money.

“Earnest Hemingway once said, ‘*A man’s got to take a lot of punishment to write a really funny book,*’” Shuchart stated. “I laughed when I saw that quote. Trust me, based on what I’ve been through, this book should be *hilarious!*”

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Shuchart uses humor to reframe the traumatic events in his life that can trigger depressive episodes. He provides examples of the reframing technique in *You are not the brightest*, and encourages readers to make laughter a part of their approach to mental wellness.

While the book is at the core of Shuchart's personal effort to help fight the stigma associated with mental illness, he is also a board member with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – Kansas, and an active participant in the Greater Kansas City Mental Health Coalition. By sharing his story of overcoming a life filled with obstacles while building a number of successful businesses, he hopes to encourage others to talk openly about their mental health issues and get the care and treatment they need.

About John Shuchart

John Shuchart began his career as a middle-school teacher before entering the insurance industry and developing a breakthrough product that made it possible for parents to insure their mentally handicapped children. He later sold his thriving insurance business to return to the classroom, where following the September 11th terrorist attacks, he worked with students to create a unique curriculum that eased the anxiety of young people impacted by those horrific events. That led to two books, *Kids' Letters to Terrorists*, and *Israeli Kids' Letters to Terrorists*, a book that includes a foreword by Israeli President Shimon Peres. In between, John has served on a dozen nonprofit boards, and started several successful businesses as well as a charter school in Kansas City.

For more information about "*You are not the brightest of my four sons*" ... and other depressing things that have been said to me, please contact Jim Blasingame, marketing director at The Shuchart Foundation for Mental Health Awareness, at 314-610-2170 or jim@theshuchartfoundation.org. Book cover image and author photo are available.

"*You are not the brightest of my four sons*" ... and other depressing things that have been said to me is available at www.notthebrightest.com. Shuchart is also using the book as a fundraising tool for nonprofit groups who will earn \$5 for each book sold.

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