This is what people are saying about “Through the Withering Storm”

[*5.0 out of 5 stars*A Courageous and insightful work](https://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-reviews/R1RB96GADLXA3P/ref%3Dcm_cr_arp_d_rvw_ttl?ie=UTF8&ASIN=1480205346)

By[Stephanie Sorrell](https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/amzn1.account.AG5QVBHWONPBMBORZ4S7FYPP4HHA/ref%3Dcm_cr_arp_d_pdp?ie=UTF8)on February 12, 2015

[Format: Paperback](https://www.amazon.com/Through-Withering-Storm-History-Illness/product-reviews/1480205346/ref%3Dcm_cr_arp_d_rvw_fmt?ie=UTF8&formatType=current_format)

Through the Withering storm, Leif Gregerson
The Canadian author, Leif has written a searingly honest portrayal of his struggle with bipolar disorder from the ages of 14-20 years old. His writing is both intelligent and erudite and, despite his landing in psychiatric institutions throughout these years for reckless and sometimes violent behaviour, his descriptions are reflective rather than condemning. Set in the1980s, the lack of understanding of his condition was far from it is now. I was struck by his sheer determination and persistence Leif had at holding down a job, despite being mentally and emotionally destabalised by his condition. Although his burning ambition is to be an air cadet and most of the time gets brilliant marks in his studies, his honesty in admitting he has an illness lets him down. His jobs range from being a truck driver, to delivering pizzas, working in garages, stacking shelves and I found myself admiring his sheer determination and will in the midst of a corrosive illness. In short, Leif never gives up, at least not without a fight.
Although his mother is in and out of psychiatric care throughout these formative years, he is able to admire her courage and the vast reservoir of her intellect. Additionally, his father, an alcoholic can be merciless and frustrated by his son’s reckless behaviour, yet still supports him as best as he can. There is nothing self pitying or maudlin in this autobiography only a, admirable will which runs through the bedrock of his life to hold down a job, be a good air cadet and finish his studies. In retrospect he writes:
“ I didn’t realize that an illness was eating away at my psyche and that the damage would surface one day like the great leviathan in Herman Melville’s Moby Dick. What it came down to was the choice of go in after him or let the leviathan destroy me. My life wasn’t all bad, I had some good times, some great times, family trips, drinking sessions with my dad, and some friends who watched out for me no matter how crazy I got. In many ways, I was an extremely lucky kid.”
Ofter being locked in a room for a 100 days in some hellish psychiatric institution in the 1980s he reveals the stigma that has been around for sufferers of mental health where the one who is ill finds themselves further demoralised by people who are supposed to help him and instead, give the wrong medications which exacerbate the condition.
Finally he finds a drug, Depekote, that not only works for him but returns him to normality and learns how absolutely vital it is to get the right medication. Leif’s mission is to bring awareness to bipolar disorder by educating people about it. His life experience has served him well:education is absolutely paramount for the right treatment of bipolar disorder or any mental illness. And by his work, Leif has lit a torch to carry forward into the world.
Stephanie Sorrell(MA in psychosynthesis psychology)

[*5.0 out of 5 stars*A real look at life with a mental illness](https://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-reviews/R10OK6A9VQ7KBM/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_rvw_ttl?ie=UTF8&ASIN=1480205346)

By[Jennifer](https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/amzn1.account.AGYHW56263OYXOFG6BCUGRMDNFRQ/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_pdp?ie=UTF8)on May 18, 2013

[Format: Paperback](https://www.amazon.com/Through-Withering-Storm-History-Illness/product-reviews/1480205346/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_rvw_fmt?ie=UTF8&filterByStar=positive&pageSize=10&formatType=current_format)

Even before I started reading this book I was drawn to it. Being someone who suffers with depression I like to hear other's stories. It makes me not feel so alone in the world. Even when you're surrounded by family and friends when you're dealing with depression you still feel very alone. So having these stories is somewhat therapeutic for me. It's like the light at the end of the tunnel. Someone else has been there and look where they are now - you can get there too. It was comforting to see some of what I have experienced over the last few years also be a part of someone else's life. So I have to thank Leif for sharing his story with the world. I hope that it brings about the awareness you are striving for.

While this book was therapeutic for me to read I think that it's something the loved ones of a mentally ill person could benefit from. I think if you've never been the one to deal with depression it's really hard to understand what it's like. What kind of struggles occur on a daily basis. And those of us with depression can't always explain what we're going through, because in all honesty you don't really know what's going on sometimes. Now my depression has never gotten to the point of hallucinations, like Leif's does, but I still have dealt with many of the things he has dealt with. He explains what he was going through so well. I think that's the biggest benefit a mentally healthy person could get from this - he explains so well what depression is like.

The book is well written. Even though it's a biography it doesn't read like a biography. It's easy to follow and isn't monotonous. The adventures that Leif has in his life are the things that fiction is based on. There's even a few times where he makes reference to "that's how they did it in the movies." And even though depression and Leif's story are not happy topics, it's not a heavy story. I don't think I would have been able to make it to the end if it were a heavy book. Yes it's great to read someone else's story, but it really made me look at some of the things in my life that were similar to Leif's.

So it's an exciting book in that there's a lot going on. It's a learning tool in that it spells out pretty accurately what a depressed person is going through. And it's also a comfort to someone with depression to be able to see in writing that they aren't the only one. Given how common mental illness is becoming in the world I think this is one that just about anyone would benefit from reading. If it's not you, it's likely someone you know that is going through something similar.

I was provided a copy of this book in exchange for a review. This review is my truthful honest opinion.

[*5.0 out of 5 stars*Unforgettable!](https://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-reviews/RP3EAS9MSQNSA/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_rvw_ttl?ie=UTF8&ASIN=1480205346)

By[Richard Van Camp](https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/amzn1.account.AFJTSTUPHIGOHG2WC2ZRZICW2LBA/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_pdp?ie=UTF8)on January 27, 2013

[Format: Paperback](https://www.amazon.com/Through-Withering-Storm-History-Illness/product-reviews/1480205346/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_rvw_fmt?ie=UTF8&filterByStar=positive&pageSize=10&formatType=current_format)

Every once in a while, a book comes along that astonishes you with its courage and vulnerability. I couldn't put Through The Withering Storm down and read the entire story in 4 hours. Leif has a natural voice. You follow him growing up and he starts to collect military uniforms; he stops bathing; he does not trust illness; he wants to be a machine. One day, he is frustrated by his brother always walking around without his shirt on so Leif takes the red hot iron that he's been using to get ready for Air Cadets and he scalds his brother's back. The thing is, Leif thought it would be cold for his brother. Things start to compound for Leif with his frustrations and anxieties and then the discovers alcohol. He starts to lose friends after he breaks one of his buddy's collar bone in a black out. Things start to spiral.

This is a true account of someone with mental illness and I hope everyone who reads this review reads this book. I'm proud of Leif for sharing this and I can't wait to read his novels. What a writer!

I believe this book will shine a lot of light into mental illness for family members, spouses, caregivers and for those grappling with mental illness themselves. This is a story of hope and Leif's story is proof that with the right support and medication (if need be)the best is yet to come.

[*4.0 out of 5 stars*Great for a caregiver or family member of someone with a mental illness](https://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-reviews/R30ZMLDVNQVJBI/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_rvw_ttl?ie=UTF8&ASIN=1480205346)

By[Simone Lilly](https://www.amazon.com/gp/profile/amzn1.account.AFXPBLTGUZCG4UTI2MD4ZFHLHKZA/ref%3Dcm_cr_getr_d_pdp?ie=UTF8)on May 20, 2013

I received a free copy of this novel in exchange for my honest review. This is the story of Leif Gregersen, a young man suffering from mania and bipolar disorders. His story hit home for me because I suffered silently with anxiety and severe depression for years before I was diagnosed and treated. I loved Leif's writing style, the way this was written you don't feel like it's an autobiography. He had many ups and downs before he finally realized that he needed help. My heart broke for him the first time he was placed in a psychiatric hospital, no one told him what his diagnosis was. I think that would have helped him come to terms sooner. Throughout the story, he'd do some ridiculous think and say "that's how they do it in the movies", so his reality was rather delusional. His story gives us great insight from the patient's point of view. This is a good book for a caregiver or family member of someone mentally ill, to finally understand the internal battles that we struggle with everyday.