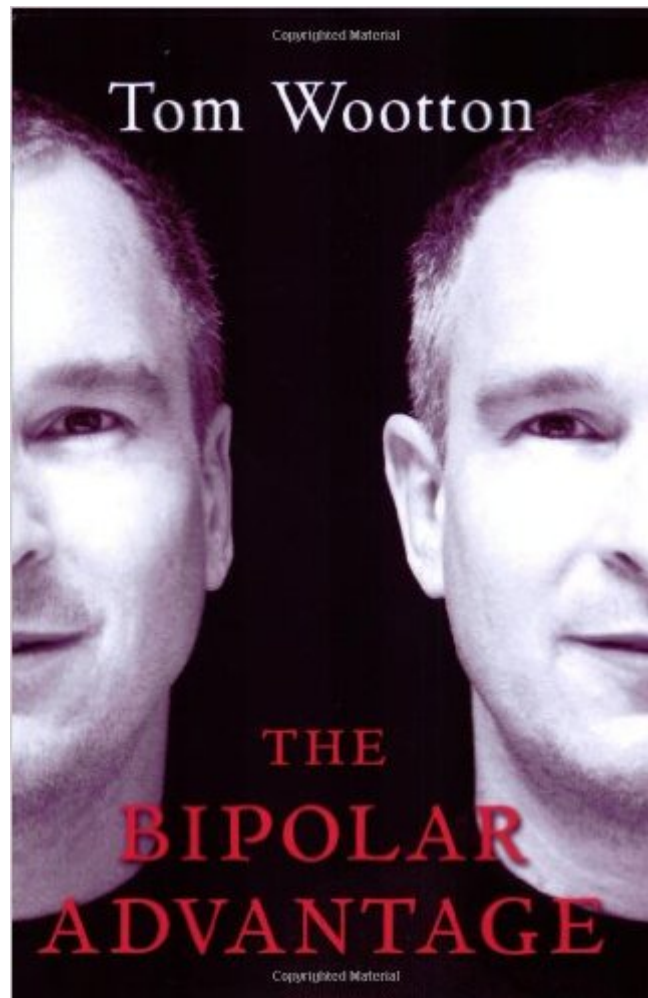


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The Bipolar Advantage



Synopsis

The Bipolar Advantage is about recognizing all of the aspects of the bipolar condition. Wootton readily admits that "Advantage" is not the typical interpretation of bipolar. Based on his Bipolar in Order Seminar that he has developed over the past two years, it focuses on the positive approach to the bipolar condition. It is about coming to an acceptance of yourself while striving to become a better person. Learning to use Introspection to become aware of who you REALLY are and learning to change your habits in order to accentuate the positive aspects of the bipolar condition while minimizing the negative. Turning bipolar into an advantage is accomplished by creating a vision of who you want to be and putting together a plan to follow that will get you there; as is done by every successful business in the world. As a successful professional and someone who was misdiagnosed for years, Wootton has personally experienced the good and the bad of this condition. Leading a DBSA group and teaching the Bipolar in Order seminar has put Wootton in touch with the personal stories of many bipolar people and their families. This positive approach with tools and skills for improving life will be of help to everyone, both those with bipolar and those who love and support them.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (66 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Having enjoyed the "bipolar advantage" for more than 25 years now, I'm always looking for a positive slant on this nasty, destructive, incurable condition. Unfortunately, it is not to be found in this worthless book. I've read a lot of self-help over the years, and this is the worst yet. Tom Wootton

seems to have a very idiosyncratic form of manic-depression, to use the older, less euphemistic term. Apart from anything else, he seems to think you can use the "advantages" of mania - accelerated thoughts, boundless energy, wild imagination - by switching it on and off like electricity. Anyone who is really living with it will know it doesn't work like that. For instance, he says mania will make you a great brainstormer. Possibly, but only if you happen to be brainstorming in the brief moment between the sudden onset of all that energy and the arrival of a man in a white coat with a syringe full of something to knock you out. I suspect that what Wootton really suffers from is rampant egomania. At one point, he tells us he is so good at sex - and he's very interested in sex - that he can render his lovers (victims?) unconscious. Then there is his fascinating resum?: "prostitute, drug dealer, factory worker, traveling waiter, health club manager, corporate vice president, male stripper, truck driver, monk, teacher, public speaker, trade show hawker, car salesman, body builder, computer programmer, realtor, creative director, tech guru, porn star, this list goes on and on". And so does he... Those of us whose aspirations run more towards a normal career and a happy family life would do better to look elsewhere for guidance.

While this book does offer some unique insight into the galaxy of activities and emotions of bipolar people such as myself, it seemed more of a rough outline than a fully fleshed approach to coping with this spasmodic condition of the mind. The author does offer his own life as a revelation to both those diagnosed with, living with, and wondering about this condition. He begins to offer real glimmers of information about how creativity, sex, drugs, verbal abuse, and work are intertwined with bipolar behaviors and lifestyles; the importance of learning coping skills, adapting a healthy weight and exercise program, and getting and listening to a psychiatrist, doing your own research and asking questions about medications, and finding a counselor you can trust and be honest with. Wootton talks about the importance of finding a spiritual path, meditation, setting goals and prioritizing, and gives very helpful, specific activities and descriptions of what all of these suggestions feel like when they're working for you. I've read a lot of books on bipolar "disorder" written by doctors, researchers, other bipolars, and laypeople, and this is one of the most directly useful articulations of how this feels, what it looks like, and what can be accomplished with self awareness, education, introspection, and a non-judgemental attitude towards oneself and others. I would give a higher rating, but just felt the book was too superficial in too many places - I wanted Mr. Wootton to stop skimming over information because it really verges on being spectacular. There is a lot more that could have been said, for example, to explain creativity, passion vs. skill, and how to see to it that our infinite ideas materialize. This is one of the crucial dilemmas of my life.

This is the worst book I've ever read. So bad it inspired me to write my first review. I have bipolar I, and I do believe it has its advantages. But that does not save this book. This book is a poorly organized autobiography of a man with extreme delusions of grandeur. Perhaps he isn't bipolar at all, just an extreme narcissist with depression, anger issues and LSD flashbacks. The only reason I continued reading is because I could relate to the guy... But I really don't want to. It begins with an introduction on how great the author is. Then there is a couple chapters explaining bipolar disorder in the same way a 5 page introduction pamphlet on the topic would. Then there's 8 chapters on how awesome the author is. Throw in a few basic chapters about meditation, diet and exercise (Tom used to be a stripper so he knows everything there is to know about diet and exercise) that are not even on topic... He even admits that meditation is actually a disadvantage to bipolar people, but since it's something he knows a little about (being an enlightened monk and all) it deserves its own chapter in his autobiography (this book). Wrap it up with a few chapters on how great the author is and how amazing he is for writing this horrible joke book in 6 days. End with a chapter thanking himself, and you have this book. Essentially the only bipolar advantage he mentions is creativity and its forms. Let's get a show of hands of who needs to read this book to find out that bipolar people are blessed with creativity. He doesn't even follow this basic assessment with factual examples like Kay Redfield Jamison does, and he isn't a quarter of her genius, even though he spends an entire book trying to prove he is.

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