



## Bipolar Disorder and Depression: Acquainted with the Night (Book)

Est. Time: 2 Weeks Reading/45 Minutes Class Time

### Synopsis

Paul Raeburn's account describes his painful journey to find diagnoses and treatment for his son and daughter. He experienced initial relief when his children were correctly diagnosed. However, Raeburn soon found himself in an uphill battle when he began seeking appropriate mental health treatments for his children. This calamity filled memoir exposes the realities of mental illness.

### Activity

Read the following book and be prepared to discuss the questions below in class:

Title: Acquainted with the Night: A Parent's Quest to Understand Depression and Bipolar Disorder in His Children (2004)

Author: Paul Raeburn

Publisher: Broadway Books • New York

### Questions/Discussion Topics

1. What diagnoses were finally given to the children? What was Alex's original diagnosis?
2. How many children and adolescents are diagnosed each year with a mental illness?
3. Discuss the effect that Alex and Alicia's illnesses had on their home life.
4. What changes in their home life would have been helpful?
5. What qualities did the author and his wife possess that were helpful to Alex and Alicia?
6. Why do you think there is such a stigma attached to mental illness?
7. Why do you think the mental health system has done a poor job of responding to children with mental illness? What could be done to change the system?