

One Family's Mission: Bring Awareness to Bipolar Disorder

By *iUniverse*

Dated: Mar 11, 2008

New book shows the pain and despair of mental illness

More than ever, society is recognizing the prevalence of mental illness in today's world. While treatable, many are unable or unwilling to get help until it's too late. With over 30,000 suicides reported in the United States in 2007, many as a result of mental illness, it's clear something need to be done.

The Smith family is out to do just that. They have experienced the pain and anguish of mental illness on a personal level. In their new heartbreaking book, *The Tattered Tapestry*, the Smiths recount the anguish and pain they went through during daughter Karla's bipolar disorder and eventual suicide at age 26.

In *The Tattered Tapestry*, the Smiths describe the shocking manic episodes that Karla went through leading up to her suicide. These devastating experiences were put to paper shortly after her death to help sort through their own pain while hoping to someday use it to help others in the same position.

"I wanted to capture the raw feelings of that early grief and the experience of illness before it was filtered by time and too much reflection," father Tom Smith said.

"The book has a purpose. It invites the reader to follow up be seeking help through the Karla Smith Foundation or some other mental health agency. We want to keep others from having to deal with the pain like we have."

To learn more about *The Tattered Tapestry*, visit iuniverse.com. To learn more about bipolar disorder, the Smiths' mission and the Karla Smith Foundation, visit their website at www.karlasmithfoundation.org.

About the Authors

Tom Smith is a father, activist and full-time director of the Karla Smith Foundation where he oversees and develops the goals and programs meant to help others suffering through bipolar disorder. Kevin Smith also works tirelessly to bring awareness to the illness that claimed the life of his twin sister, Karla Smith. The Smiths live and work in Illinois.

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Category	Arts, Entertainment, Publishing
Tags	bipolar, mental illness, suicide, family coping with mental illness, twin of bipolar sister, parents, depression
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