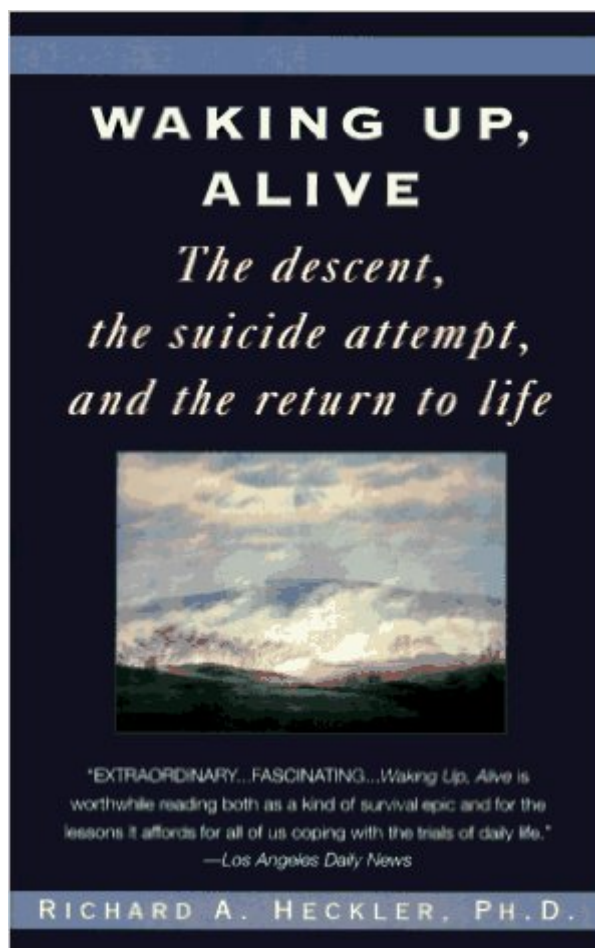


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# Waking Up, Alive



## Synopsis

"Sometimes I feel like crying, but the tears just don't come...." "I had no idea there was a state of mind like this. Everything turned black...." "It was a zombie place where I just couldn't be a part of anything...." These are the words of survivors who have lived through one of the most insidious conditions of our time: the desire to die. Five million Americans have attempted suicide. Every seventeen minutes, one of them succeeds. And the numbers continue to grow. Through fifty startling interviews with suicide survivors of all ages and backgrounds, psychologist Richard A. Heckler takes us into the very heart of despair, documenting the varied paths that lead to that crucial place where one's world seems to stretch, tear, and then break apart. In these intimate accounts we begin to understand the determination and clarity of that fatal choice. But after the failed attempt, healing is possible. For the first time, with great care and penetrating insight, Heckler traces the heroic patterns of recovery. By offering clear, profound portraits of hope, this extraordinary and unprecedented book attests to the resilience of the human spirit, by bearing witness to those who stood at death's door, and found the courage to live. "It's hard to imagine a hopeful or inspiring book on suicide until you begin reading the astonishing *Waking Up, Alive*." --San Francisco Chronicle "In this sensitive book, Richard Heckler brings compassionate light to a shadowy corner of our psyche." --Ram Dass Author of *Journey of Awakening* "These moving accounts, written with a great heart of compassion, have a deeply healing effect on the ocean of human tears. This is a wise and ultimately life-affirming work!" --Jack Kornfield, Ph.D. Author of *A Path With Heart*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Having the disorder of depression; and teetering in and out of suicidal thoughts; I went in search of a book which explained what I was going through. After reading several books, I came across this one. THIS IS IT ! It is the ONLY book I have found that "gets it". I have bought 5 copies - one by one - and have loaned them all out to friends and therapists whom I wanted to really understand what I was going through. This book was almost an obsession....I HAD to keep reading it. It also managed to give me some hope when I didn't think it was possible and wasn't looking for any. I'd buy a copy to keep for myself, but I can't find one....This one needs to be put back into print ! It may save lives.

Almost every book about suicide focuses on its causes, often chronicling the final descent of its victims. This heartfelt study does something different and long overdue - it examines the lives of "failed" suicides and lets them describe how they emerged from the seemingly bottomless darkness that nearly claimed them. Harrowing in its depiction of the pain that fills the suicidal mind, deeply moving in its stories of overcoming that pain and living beyond it, this book is an invaluable resource. By the time you turn the last page, hope will be even more tangible to you than despair. A book that should be kept permanently in print.

Only 6 weeks after my own suicide attempt I read this book in the hope it would help me to understand this enormous self destruction I had attempted. This book uses "real" people case stories (ones just like me!) and helped me understand that it wasn't my life I wanted to end but the pain and suffering I had been enduring. Nothing else I had read put the overwhelming feelings I had experienced in to a readable understandable format. Richard Heckler went one step further, he gave me hope, as I continued to read, he showed me how other people had restored their lives and returned to life. It was his words that encouraged me to seek the help I knew I needed. Now 18 months later I have completed my own trip - "The descent to suicide and the return to life".

A few weeks after a failed attempt at suicide, I found this book when searching for some understanding of suicidal feelings. When I read the stories and the quotes of those who have overcome the temptation, I felt that someone really did understand the way the mind narrows to the point where suicide is the only option. I bought copies for those who were surprised, and hurt, by my attempt. If you battle suicidal urges or want to know what it is like to enter the "vortex", I would recommend this very helpful book. I thank the author and all he interviewed.

After losing my brother to suicide a few months ago, this book was recommended to me to gain an

understanding of his mental state before he took his life. The author, Richard Heckler, articulates the suffering of one who is suicidal with great skill and insight. He also demonstrates a deep and clear understanding of the thought processes of those who have suffered long term and chronic pain, disfunction, and significant trauma. It was with terrible sorrow that I recognized my lost brother in these pages. It was equally painful to find myself in the accounts shared, but I was not left feeling hopeless. Dr. Heckler diligently presents the hopeful possibility of relief from such despair. This is a truly wonderful book, written with profound compassion for those who suffer. I would recommend it to anyone who has survived the death by suicide of a loved one, and to those in pain who seek a deeper understanding of themselves.

I scoured my local library's website several days after being discharged from the hospital after my 2nd failed suicide attempt. I was desperately searching for hope and a reason for living. This book came up in the results. I borrowed the book from the library, and wouldn't return it until I had my own copy. This book changed my entire life! I suffer from Schizoaffective Disorder - Bipolar Type and have gone through many seemingly endless depressions, suicidal thoughts and feelings, and 2 failed suicide attempts. I knew I just couldn't live like that any longer. This book is the ONLY one of its kind. I owe my life and the quality of my life to this author...no joke. It was 2006 when I first read this book. Since then, I have had many depressions. Once in awhile a stray suicidal thought may have crossed my mind. But this book has given me so much hope that I knew I could never act on those thoughts ever again. It introduced me to a whole other perspective, that of the survivors of suicide attempts. Other books about suicide blandly talk about statistics, possible scientific reasons of why suicide happens/exists...this book goes beyond that and recounts at least 50 stories of people who have attempted suicide and survived, and then found hope in their lives, and a renewed reason for living, which is what I was so desperately seeking. This book, combined with my stronger-than-ever-desire to find hope and meaning in life, is what I think helped me to reach the point I am at today...I still suffer from depression at times, but rarely do I get suicidal thoughts. I've made the decision that suicide is NOT an option. This book showed me how I love life; I just don't like the pain and suffering from depression, and when I attempted suicide, I wanted the pain and suffering to stop, but not life. I didn't realize that then. Now I do, and my life is drastically different today that it was in 2006 and earlier. Thank you soooo much, Richard Heckler!!!

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