

My Mysterious Son



A Life-Changing Passage
Between Schizophrenia and
Shamanism

Dick Russell

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After spending the ensuing years trying to build some semblance of a normal father-son romantic relationship, Dick was invited along with his son, out of the blue, to witness the annual wildlife migration on Africa's Serengeti Simple. That's the question that haunted Dick Russell in nov 2011, when his son, Franklin, was thirty-two. At age seventeen, Franklin have been identified as having schizophrenia. Seizing this potential opportunity to repair the damage that both experienced struggled with, after going right through two perilous nights collectively in Tanzania, eventually the two-week trip transformed both of their lives. A mixed-race child, Franklin was handsome, intelligent, and sensitive until his mental illness abruptly took control. What does a father carry out when hope is fully gone that his just son can ever lead anything near a "normal" lifestyle? For a long time he spent amount of time in and out of varied hospitals, and even experienced intervals of adamantly denying that Dick was in fact his father. Dick discovers Franklin's psychic features behind the apparently delusional thought patterns, in addition to his creative talents. Desperately seeking an alternative to the medical model's medication regimen, the author introduces Franklin to a West African shaman in Jamaica. Theirs becomes an ancestral quest, the journey finally taking them to the sacred lands of New Mexico and an indigenous healer. For individuals who understand the pain of mental illness aswell the relationship between a mother or father and a child, My Mysterious Son shares the intimate and gorgeous story of a dad who will perform everything in his power to repair his romantic relationship with a young guy damaged by mental disease.



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A powerful journey This memoir can be an honest, complete, and moving account of a father's journey to get help and answers for his son Franklin, who was identified as having schizophrenia in his late teens. More importantly, it becomes a father's journey to know his boy as he really is, instead of imposing his own hopes, fears, disappointments, and goals. Russell initially hopes that medications will have the ability restore his son to "normal" functioning, yet after more than a decade of hospitalizations and relapses, he realizes that the medical model falls short in both its explanations and its remedies. I could feel the deep love he feels for his son, but also the center wrenching fight within himself in how exactly to connect with this boy who lives in a world which can be so disconnected to your own every day fact. Franklin's diabetes, pounds gain, lack of motivation, and extreme fatigue all seem to be triggered or worsened by the medicines intended to calm his flights into paranoia. Although Franklin seems to function the best on a moderate dose of clozapine, Russell can be involved about the long-term effects of this medication, and seeks alternative remedies." Being nonjudgmental in thought, phrase, and deed may only take you so far. There are no easy answers on this quest, no miraculous "cures" for Franklin. With Franklin shifting between group homes, flats, and occasionally also homeless shelters in Boston, Russell seeks different ways of helping his son find a place in the globe. Yet I soldiered on. Along the way, numerous spiritual guides point out that Franklin's thinking, that is filled with vivid archetypal symbols and often seems to listen in nearly psychically to those around him, is common of the techniques shamans from many ethnic traditions go through the world. Magic can happen anywhere, also in suburbia, it appears. Unfortunately, this sort of high-quality humanistic care, despite appearing to be the most organic, intuitive, and simple way to help re-integrate people with severe mental illness, is certainly incredibly expensive, not really covered by insurance, and not feasible as a long-term solution for most middle-class families. Each trip creates both breakthroughs and setbacks. The book can be interspersed with excerpts from Franklin's journals, which vividly and poetically explore Franklin's feelings of otherness, both with regards to his racial identity and his different perceptions, along with frequently profound and eloquent general statements about life, appreciate, loneliness, and the search for meaning. Had the author not really met James Hillman, it could have taken him quite a few years to stumble onto an extremely basic treatment modality -- namely, people in extreme states respond well when others treat them kindly and respectfully and try to build relationships, not "appropriate" their delusions, which are not really so delusional if you pay interest to this content of what's being stated and enter into the spirit of engagement. Though it may not be easy for another person to seriously crack the "code" of schizophrenic speech, Franklin's mind does not run into as broken so very much as tuned directly into a different frequency. It isn't fully known why about 1% of people across all occasions and places have observed schizophrenia-like symptoms. Generally in most indigenous societies, nevertheless, their differences are accommodated and respected. At the higher-functioning level they become shamans, and in more extreme disorganized states they're protected and sheltered, but not expected or pressured to improve their fundamental natures. There is absolutely no doubt that people like Franklin suffer from loneliness and frustration because they feel so different. They often have very real complications in making a full time income, forming human relationships, and accomplishing the most common developmental jobs of adulthood. Franklin's wealthy, nonlinear imagery reveals amazing soul-level insight into the symbols, fears, wishes, and mysteries that suffuse every tradition and language, and that make us fundamentally individual. However, Russell's book illustrates just how much we can learn from meeting this "otherness" alone conditions, and how familiar it could seem on closer evaluation. I admire the author for being willing to stretch his belief system, something that many parents aren't prepared to perform.

Goddess Shift: Ladies Leading for a Change A New Perspective on Schizophrenia In this memoir, highly acclaimed author and journalist Dick Russell relates his and his son's harrowing journeys as they contend with the challenges of coping with the son's mental illness, diagnosed as "probable schizophrenia" by a western psychiatrist." As a mom of a gifted young man of 30 who provides been given the schizophrenia label, I, just like the author, found adopt a

more shamanic understanding of his purpose in life and went to great lengths to get present day shamans, or guides, if you will, who may help my child. It finally begins to delve into the topic at hand - Shamanism. "I mean . Shamans can work wonders, especially in tandem with parents who have the right attitude. Ought to be on every parent's and therapist's bookshelf This is a great book - schizophrenia's long awaited response to The Horse Boy (autism). The received wisdom of days gone by several decades tells us that schizophrenia can be an unsolvable issue and the problem is within the brain, not with the excess weight of ancestry or to find a spiritual path. "Schizophrenia" is mystical and mutli-faceted. By definition, treating it must be done with imagination. Humor, as well. Both father and son consult the famed African shaman Malidoma, who reminds the father of the upside of schizophrenia. The road is long, why not really enjoy it? You'll need plenty of that should you go the shaman path. . Warning: Many shamanic procedures involve engaging with the spirit of the ancestors. The quantum physics view is intrinsically the shamanic watch. I imagine it was challenging, as a fact-driven journalist, to embrace the original healing of shamanism and, way more to share those encounters publicly, but he renders it beautifully. Becoming with a person like Frank, there can not be a dull moment. It's all about shifting energy and outcomes in line with the viewpoint of the observer. In this case, the mother or father, Dick Russell, may be the observer who decides to change his viewpoint in what is normal after having many discussions with the observed psychologist, James Hillman. who do not desire to dilute the value of their time and expertise insurance firms families do the task they are paid to accomplish. This implies radically overturning the current medical strategy that insists that the delusions are meaningless and not to engage with them. In one incident, the author noticed that Franklin's delusional talk grew worse after the family pediatrician was impatient along with his ramblings and tried to correct his faulty thinking. Haven't we parents all completed that? It doesn't function and is demeaning throughout. While Franklin's way of communicating can audio bizarre on the top, his flight of tips is similar to dreams take evidently random components and combine them into a meaningful message that the conscious mind cannot fully procedure. My son's doctors were adamant that the delusions were to be ignored. Why is this simple concept of acceptance and engagement not really taught to family members, who are on the front lines of support? Reading about Franklin offers me reconsidering my own description of crazy, telling me that just how we treat each other often reveals a serious insufficient sensitivity for the wide spectrum of human experience. Accepting a new regular that validates spiritual and extra-sensory experience is the crucial component to gradually pressing your relative toward interesting normalcy, and should become the cornerstone of treatment. More folks would recover sooner if this information had been shared. Criticism makes the delusions worse. The National Alliance on Mental Disease, which started as an understandable reaction to the mother or father blaming of earlier decades, is also responsible for hiding this recovery tool. Better to blame the brain than blame the family by insinuating that how they connect to their relative can be improved upon. My son spent eighteen months per day plan, was hospitalized for three months on three separate occasions, and yet I had to find out these details by doing my very own research. Getting a solid footing on the recovery path may not just be limited to accepting and engaging in the new normal, especially when it involves a diagnosis of "schizophrenia. Franklin does well in a residential respite community called Earth House. If you believe, because the author does (and I do) that there are legitimate paranormal experiences at the job in schizophrenia, then feed the beast! Your kid is already dance in the realm of the spirits why not go the distance by bringing in guides who speak their vocabulary? . Are you willing to suspend your disbelief and brave enough to go there yourself? Inclusion of an array of Franklin's journal entries, poetry, and artwork lends the story a high amount of intimacy and clarity. Russell's knowledge of his son is also designed by the archetypal psychology of James Hillman, whose biography he is writing. My Mysterious Boy could have a powerful effect on what's considered acceptable "schizophrenia" treatment in the a long time. Read it. Appreciate it. Study from it. Rossa Forbes is a contributing author to The author/father fully "gets" how to understand and use the life passage that the Western world calls

"schizophrenia. The non-public nature of the material is relatively of a departure for the author, who is first of all an excellent journalist. That comes through in his thorough analysis of the condition and its treatments, as well as his investigative approach to this case of his boy. Thank you Dick Russell. I was particularly impressed along with his treatment of the spiritual and shaman-related material." Therefore true, if you enter the spirit of it, as the author has done. He clearly has great respect for Malidoma Some, the West African shaman, who gives dad and son a new perspective on Franklin's "disease," suggesting that much of what he experiences can be attributed to his having a direct connection to the spirit globe. There is a wonderful scene in the book once the author's ex-wife (Frank's mom) invokes the spirit of her ancestors, not in a clearing in the center of the African jungle nor in a far flung corner of Siberia however in a typical suburban house in Maryland. I have read some of Dick Russell's other books previously and the amount of detail he offers can be extremely engrossing, while also sometimes overwhelming for a slow reader such as myself. I highly recommend this reserve to those employed in the any of the mental health areas, anyone interested in shamanism, and most especially those in the throws of coping with physical or mental disease that western medicine has failed to heal. Had to skip ahead I wrote an audible review that We am prohibited to edit. My stance upon struggling through the first two hours was that I was presented with most of these tiny little details, like living somebody else's lifestyle and I felt a bit trapped. Father and boy take several excursions together--one to Africa, the origin of some of Franklin's maternal ancestors, and another to visit a shaman, Malidoma Patrice Some, who was simply initiated in to the Dagara shamanistic tradition of West Africa. Russell's child, Franklin, were fairly amazing unto themselves and with Franklin and Dick, as we come to know them. THEREFORE I felt disappointed and enjoy it was a bait-and-switch. Also that the way that I didn't feel involved or engaged with the 'characters'. Several times in this story I came across myself weeping. Informative in understanding schizophrenia or even more importantly understanding the misconceptions about schizophrenia and in addition how different societies incorporate schizophrenia to their culture. Like considering a stranger's baby pics and listening to stories for hours. Also, this book therefore reminded me of Jay Neugenboren's many books about his brother. As a "recovering psychologist" I really was moved by the immense courage this journey into schizophrenia into shamanism needed. To chapter 21. I found this book incredibly moving and incredibly informative...To comprehend schizophrenia and find the right kinds of help, an excellent place to begin is by suspending disbelief. Above all else, that is a moving story about unconditional love. Likely, earlier on in the book will be good as well, I just have no idea what chapter really begins engaging the topics of Shamanism and Curing. A Lucky Son This was an excellent book that shed more light on "mental illness" than a carload of textbooks by the so-called experts. Congratulations to Dick Russell for listening to his common sense and loving his boy enough to keep him from being turned into a medication zombie. Very inspiring. The reason I made the decision counseling wasn't ... Very inspiring. The very reason I made a decision counseling wasn't prepared for me. There was no spirituality, just drugs. Not surprisingly, the intensely personal nature of the main story series made me feel like I was reading Russell's personal journal. Important and beautiful book for families with schizophrenics! This book moved me for the cast of characters assembled around Mr. Even though in those 2 hours, Shamanism hadn't even really come up.) --Now, the switch I wanted to create is that I did so indeed try skipping forward (one last shot before abandoning the publication). Yet the prose is indeed readable that certain does experience the anguish but also the better angels and the shamans. I am also very glad that Russell did not sugar coat the closing or anything written right here as his son is still on meds. I believe that simple truth is why this publication will be so hopeful to many other parents ready to take risks. (Once again, personal opinion. I loved this story. Five juicy stars! This part of the publication has been quite listenable and I rate it a solid 4. Even though the narrative still appears a bit loose/meandering and filled with info that appears unnecessary. it was just detail after details with no apparent thread tying it collectively. All of that I came across very interesting. I browse this memoir with

great enthusiasm for the topic, having caused indigenous shamans myself, and was amazed at how often the imagery and experiences resonated with my very own. But what I love mostly about Dick Russell's books is the tale he weaves just like a river through a mountain of otherwise difficult to absorb information. Some how this underlying tale brings life to a subject that could otherwise have already been very clinical to absorb in any other type.. Antipsychotic medications can mask symptoms, but often come at a high cost to overall health. I hope they read each other! It gave me hope that people as humans can get out of our very own way and become larger than we think we are. A different take on schizophrenia This book gives one hope that schizophrenia is today's diagnosis for people who travel in various dimensions in the mind and may possibly lend some truth to the rest of us who hardly understand or travel in those dimensions. An Amazing Journey Very Well Written The book is indeed rich, sensitive, disturbing and yet satisfying to me. My experience informs me that there is a mental disease industry made up of doctors, psychologists, sociable workers, etc. We keep a trail of tragic lives behind us the even more we lose touch with historic wisdom, and the even more harm we perform to some of our most gorgeous and sensitive souls. If by defining somebody as crazy, we mean they're cracked, the cracks may be openings to a knowledge of things the majority of us can't discover or hear. But does our Western culture's inability to worth the mysteriously ineffable show the experiences are a form of madness? Whatever "crazy" is certainly, it's in accordance with the tradition's expectation of regular, dependent on a way of measuring one's functionality within industry. I love this amazing book and especially loved the inclusion of so many of Franklin's journal entries.



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