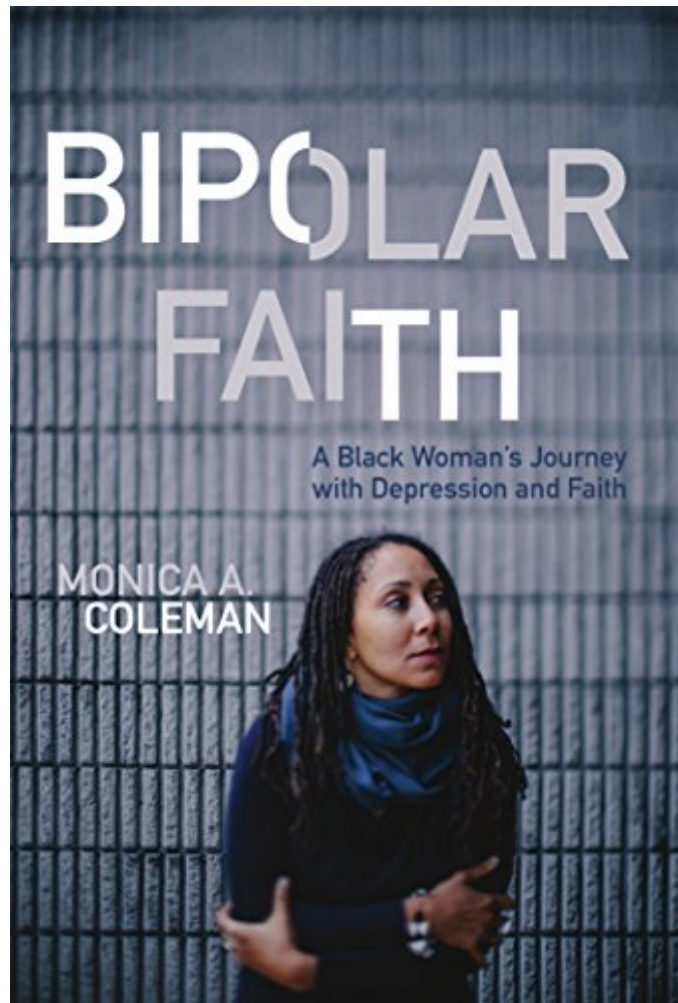




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Bipolar Faith: A Black Woman's Journey With Depression And Faith



Synopsis

Monica A. Coleman's great-grandfather asked his two young sons to lift him up and pull out the chair when he hanged himself, and that noose stayed in the family shed for years. The rope was the violent instrument, but it was mental anguish that killed him. Now, in gripping fashion, Coleman examines the ways that the legacies of slavery, war, sharecropping, poverty, and alcoholism mask a family history of mental illness. Those same forces accompanied her into the black religious traditions and Christian ministry. All the while, she wrestled with her own bipolar disorder. *Bipolar Faith* is both a spiritual autobiography and a memoir of mental illness. In this powerful book, Monica Coleman shares her life-long dance with trauma, depression, and the threat of death. Citing serendipitous encounters with black intellectuals like Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Angela Davis, and Renita Weems, Coleman offers a rare account of how the modulated highs of bipolar II can lead to professional success, while hiding a depression that even her doctors rarely believed. Only as she was able to face her illness was she able to live faithfully with bipolar.

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Customer Reviews

"I was so busy trying to stay alive that I didn't know that I had died." -Dr. Monica A. Coleman

above quote is one of my 'ah-ha moments' while reading #BipolarFaith: A Black Woman's Journey with Depression and Faith by Dr. Monica A. Coleman. Coleman's accessible memoir style cracks the silence which surrounds the all too familiar Black church ethos regarding mental health. Coleman gives language to the once considered indescribable and invites the reader into the intimacy of her thoughts. You will laugh, cry and at times want to walk away from the text and say, "Ooo chi'le. I can't"---- but as with all well written books, it will call you back and you will journey to the end. The journey to mental & emotional wellness, regardless of the incident(s) that beset us, is long. I consider this book a necessary read towards this end.

Rev. Dr. Monica A. Coleman courageously offers her life as an open book. From moments of deep and dark despair to discoveries of faith and fortitude, *Bipolar Faith* chronicles her journey of becoming. Coleman is a masterful storyteller who has written a definite page-turner that is hard to put down and yet this memoir is more than a good book. More significantly, *Bipolar Faith* is a prophetic witness inside the shame and secrecy often associated with mental illness and sexual assault. Coleman dares to unveil the trauma of rape, the crisis of living with a depressive condition, the hurt of isolation, the risks of faith, and the challenges of balancing this all while pursuing vocational goals, navigating life, supporting family and pursuing her own healing and wholeness. Subsequently, in reading *Bipolar Faith* the reader not only grows in awareness but also hopefully in activism to build communities of support for those who suffer. In the end, Coleman puts a face and voice to issues that are often obscured and ignored. This makes *Bipolar Faith* a leading liberative work of advocacy and justice in the 21st century that uniquely addresses the confluence of mental illness and faith in the black community based on firsthand accounts of lived realities. I strongly recommend *Bipolar Faith* as recommended reading for the classroom, church and community.

Bipolar Faith was a great book. Theologians are the true rock stars in our society. Looking for the God factor in every experience and knowing how to assist others with their trials is in no way a easy task. Monica has opened her life for others to understand a journey that doesn't have to be a death sentence. This work is inspiring at best. There are many people hurting because of being misunderstood. Monica does a good job of translating her crises as a opportunity for hope and life beyond the empty tomb.

Excellent testimony. I can relate and believe this is an essential read for faith leaders.

A healing, lovely account of what it's like to be in the black church and also struggle with what many of us see as demons, but are not. If anything, read this book and know you're not alone, it's ok to get help and you don't have to be super woman or super holy all the time. Great to read this kind of memoir and from an author who's already taken her faith and struggle and brought us great, healing literature.

In this powerfully honest memoir, Dr. Monica Coleman shares her struggle with experiencing bipolar depressive disorder before she was diagnosed, the challenges of being properly diagnosed, how her experiences impacted her faith, and how churches can be helpful or not to people on their journey with mental health diagnoses. Transparent, moving, funny, and insightful.

A great read.

As a fellow theologian, I can relate to Dr. Coleman's struggle with depression, life's challenges and the spiritual walk with God. I was glad to find this book and confirm that I'm not alone. Her candor and honesty really put it out there. I highly recommend this for anyone struggling with depression.

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