



See Me Young People's Reading List

1. All the Bright Places - Jennifer Niven

Theodore Finch is fascinated by death, and he constantly thinks of ways he might kill himself. But each time, something good, no matter how small, stops him.

Violet Markey lives for the future, counting the days until graduation, when she can escape her Indiana town and her aching grief in the wake of her sister's recent death.

When Finch and Violet meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school, it's unclear who saves whom. And when they pair up on a project to discover the 'natural wonders' of their state, both Finch and Violet make more important discoveries: It's only with Violet that Finch can be himself - a weird, funny, live-out-loud guy who's not such a freak after all. And it's only with Finch that Violet can forget to count away the days and start living them. But as Violet's world grows, Finch's begins to shrink. How far will Violet go to save the boy she has come to love?

2. Am I Normal Yet? - Holly Bourne

Evie, Amber and Lottie: three girls facing down tough issues with the combined powers of friendship, feminism and cheesy snacks. Both hilarious and heart-rending, this is Evie's no-holds-barred story of struggling to live a "normal" teen life in the grip of OCD, from the acclaimed author of *The Manifesto on How to be Interesting*.

3. The Art of Happiness - HH Dalai Lama

In this unique and important book, one of the world's great spiritual leaders offers his practical wisdom and advice on how we can overcome everyday human problems and achieve lasting happiness.

The Art of Happiness is a highly accessible guide for a western audience, combining the Dalai Lama's eastern spiritual tradition with Dr Howard C. Cutler's western perspective. Covering all key areas of human experience, they apply the principles of Tibetan Buddhism to everyday problems and reveal how one can find balance and complete spiritual and mental freedom.

For the many who wish to understand more about the Dalai Lama's approach to living, there has never been a book which brings his beliefs so vividly into the real world.

4. An Apple Day: A Memoir of Love and Recovery from Anorexia - Emma Woolf

"I haven't tasted chocolate for over ten years and now I'm walking down the street unwrapping a Kit Kat. Remember when Kate Moss said, 'Nothing tastes as good as skinny feels'? She's wrong: chocolate does."

For Christmas I'm giving myself a fresh start. I have to get some extra pounds of weight under my belt; I want to make next year the year that everything changes.

At the age of 32, Emma Woolf decided to face the biggest challenge of her life: to let go of her addiction to hunger, exercise and control, and finally beat anorexia. Having met the man of her dreams (and wanting a future and a baby together), she decided it was time to stop starving and start living. And as if that wasn't enough pressure, Emma also agreed to chart her progress in a weekly column for The Times.

Honest, hard-hitting and yet romantic, 'An Apple a Day' is a compelling and life-affirming true story of love and recovery.

5. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time - Mark Haddon

Christopher is 15 and has Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism. He is obsessed with math, science and Sherlock Holmes, but finds it hard to understand other people. When he finds a dead dog on a neighbour's lawn he decides to solve the mystery and write a detective thriller about it.

6. Dear Stranger - A Collection of Short Stories

Dear Stranger is a collection of inspirational, honest and heartfelt letters from authors, bloggers and Mind ambassadors to an imagined stranger. Insightful and uplifting, *Dear Stranger* is a humbling glimpse into different interpretations of happiness, and how despite sometimes seeming unobtainable happiness can, in the smallest of ways, become and achievable goal.

No one should face a mental health problem alone. Whether it's on a doorstep, on the end of a telephone or online, Mind is there for everyone who is experiencing a mental health problem.

7. Girl, Interrupted - Susanna Kaysen

In 1967, after a session with a psychiatrist she'd never seen before, eighteen-year-old Susanna Kaysen was put in a taxi and sent to McLean Hospital. She spent most of the next two years in the ward for teenage girls in a psychiatric hospital as renowned for its famous clientele—Sylvia Plath, Robert Lowell, James Taylor, and Ray Charles—as for its progressive methods of treating those who could afford its sanctuary.

Kaysen's memoir encompasses horror and razor-edged perception while providing vivid portraits of her fellow patients and their keepers. It is a brilliant evocation of a "parallel universe" set within the kaleidoscopically shifting landscape of the late sixties. *Girl, Interrupted* is a clear-sighted, unflinching document that gives lasting and specific dimension to our definitions of sane and insane, mental illness and recovery.

8. Finding Audrey - Sophie Kinsella

Finding Audrey is Sophie Kinsella's first novel for teens, sure to appeal to her legions of adult and young adult fans all over the world.

Audrey can't leave the house. she can't even take off her dark glasses inside the house.

Then her brother's friend Linus stumbles into her life. With his friendly, orange-slice smile and his funny notes, he starts to entice Audrey out again - well, Starbucks is a start. And with Linus at her side, Audrey feels like she can do the things she'd thought were too scary. Suddenly, finding her way back to the real world seems achievable.

Be prepared to laugh, dream and hope with Audrey as she learns that even when you feel like you have lost yourself, love can still find you.

9. It's a Kind of Funny Story - Ned Vizzini

Ambitious New York City teenager Craig Gilner is determined to succeed at life—which means getting into the right high school to get into the right college to get the right job. But once Craig aces his way into Manhattan's Executive Pre-Professional High School, the pressure becomes unbearable. He stops eating and sleeping until, one night, he nearly kills himself.

Craig's suicidal episode gets him checked into a mental hospital, where his new neighbors include a transsexual sex addict, a girl who has scarred her own face with scissors, and the self-elected President Armelio. There, Craig is finally able to confront the sources of his anxiety.

Ned Vizzini, who himself spent time in a psychiatric hospital, has created a remarkably moving tale about the sometimes unexpected road to happiness.

10. House Rules - Jodi Picoult

Teenage Fiction

Jacob Hunt is a teenage boy with Asperger's syndrome. He's hopeless at reading social cues or expressing himself to others, and like many children with Asperger's, Jacob has an obsessive focus on one subject - in his case, forensic analysis. He's always showing up at crime scenes, thanks to the police scanner he keeps in his room, and telling the cops what they need to do - and he's usually right. But then one day his tutor is found dead, and the police come to question him. Reluctance to make eye contact, stimulatory tics and twitches, inappropriate gestures, all these can look a lot like guilt. Suddenly, Jacob finds himself accused of murder.

House Rules looks at what it means to be different in our society, and at the extremes of love and loyalty a family must call upon to help each other overcome impossible circumstances

11. Just Checking - Emily Colas

Emily Colas -- young, intelligent, well-educated wife and mother of two -- had a secret that was getting in the way of certain activities. Like touching people. Having a normal relationship with her husband. Socializing. Getting a job. Eating out. Like leaving the house. Soon there was no interval in her life when she was not just checking.

This raw, darkly comic series of astonishing vignettes is Emily Colas' achingly honest chronicle of her twisted journey through the obsessive-compulsive disorder that came to dominate her world. In the beginning it was germs and food. By the time she faced the fact that she was really "losing it," Colas had become a slave to her own "hobbies" - from the daily hair cutting to incessant inspections of her children's clothing for bloodstains.

A shocking, hilarious, enormously appealing account of a young woman struggling to gain control of her life, this is Emily Colas' exposé of a soul tormented, but balanced by a buoyance of spirit and a piercing sense of humour that may be her saving grace.

12. When Mr Dog Bites - Brian Conaghan

Young Adult Fiction

Dylan Mint has Tourette's. His life is a constant battle to keep the bad stuff in - the swearing, the tics, the howling dog that seems to escape whenever he gets stressed ... But a routine visit to the hospital changes everything. Overhearing a hushed conversation between the doctor and his mother, Dylan discovers that he's going to die next March. So he decides to grant himself three parting wishes, or 'Cool Things To Do Before I Cack It'. Number one on the list is to have 'real' intercourse with his stunning and aloof classmate Michelle Malloy. Secondly, Dylan pledges to 'fight heaven and earth, tooth and nail, dungeons and dragons' so that his best friend Amir can find a new 'best bud'. And finally he has to get his dad back from the war so that mum can stop crying so much. It's not a long list, but it's ambitious, and he doesn't have much time. But as Dylan sets out to make his wishes come true, he discovers that nothing - and no-one - is quite as he had previously supposed.

13. The Perks of Being a Wallflower - Stephen Chbosky

Shy, introspective, intelligent beyond his years, caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it, Charlie is attempting to navigate through the uncharted territory of high school. The world of first dates and mixed tapes, family dramas and new friends. The world of sex, drugs, and music - when all one requires to feel infinite is that perfect song on that perfect drive. Standing on the fringes of life Charlie has a unique perspective of the world around him, but there comes a time to stop being a wallflower and see what it looks like from the dance floor.

This haunting novel about the dilemma of passivity vs. passion has become a modern classic. Charlie's letters are singular and unique, hilarious and devastating and through Charlie, Stephen Chbosky has created a deeply affecting story that will spirit you back to those wild and poignant roller coaster days known as growing up.

14. Prozac Nation - Elizabeth Wurtzel

Full of promise is how anyone would have described Elizabeth Wurtzel at age ten, a bright-eyed little girl who painted, wrote stories, and excelled in every way. By twelve she was cutting her legs in the girls' bathroom and listening to scratchy recordings of the Velvet Underground. College was marked by a series of breakdowns, suicide attempts, and hospitalizations before she was finally given Prozac in combination with other psychoactive drugs, all of which have worked sporadically as Elizabeth's mood swings rise and fall like the lines of a sad ballad.

This memoir, both harrowing and hilarious, gives voice to the high incidence of depression — especially among America's youth. "Prozac Nation" is a collective cry for help, a generational status report on today's young people, who have come of age fully entrenched in the culture of divorce, economic instability, and AIDS. "This private world of loony bins and weird people which I always felt I occupied and hid in," writes Elizabeth, "had suddenly turned inside out so that it seemed like this was one big Prozac Nation, one big mess of malaise. Perhaps the next time half a million people gather for a protest march on the White House green it will not be for abortion rights or gay liberation, but because we're all so bummed out." Writing with a vengeance (Nirvana, Joni Mitchell, and Dorothy Parker all rolled into one), Elizabeth Wurtzel will not go gentle into that good night. She wants off medication, she wants a family, and most definitely, a life worth living.

15. Reasons to Stay Alive - Matt Haig

Autobiographic

Like nearly one in five people, Matt Haig suffers from depression. *Reasons to Stay Alive* is Matt's inspiring account of how, minute by minute and day by day, he overcame the disease with the help of reading, writing, and the love of his parents and his girlfriend (and now-wife), Andrea. And eventually, he learned to appreciate life all the more for it.

Everyone's lives are touched by mental illness: if we do not suffer from it ourselves, then we have a friend or loved one who does. Matt's frankness about his experiences is both inspiring to those who feel daunted by depression and illuminating to those who are mystified by it. Above all, his humor and encouragement never let us lose sight of hope. Speaking as his present self to his former self in the depths of depression, Matt is adamant that the oldest cliché is the truest—there is light at the end of the tunnel. He teaches us to celebrate the small joys and moments of peace that life brings, and reminds us that there are always reasons to stay alive.

16. Shoot the Damn Dog - Sally Brampton

A searing, raw memoir of depression that is ultimately uplifting and inspiring.

A successful magazine editor and prize-winning journalist, Sally Brampton launched *Elle* magazine in the UK in 1985. But behind the successful, glamorous career was a story that many of her friends and colleagues knew nothing about—her ongoing struggle with severe depression and alcoholism. Brampton's is a candid, tremendously honest telling of how she was finally able to "address the elephant in the room," and of a culture that sends the overriding message that people who suffer from depression are somehow responsible for their own illness. She offers readers a unique perspective

of depression from the inside that is at times wrenching, but ultimately inspirational, as it charts her own coming back to life. Beyond her personal story, Brampton offers practical advice to all those affected by this illness. This book will resonate with any person whose life has been haunted by depression, at the same time offering help and understanding to those whose loved ones suffer from this debilitating condition.

17. Silver Linings Playbook - Matthew Quick

The Silver Linings Playbook is the riotous and poignant story of how one man regains his memory and comes to terms with the magnitude of his wife's betrayal.

During the years he spends in a neural health facility, Pat Peoples formulates a theory about silver linings: he believes his life is a movie produced by God, his mission is to become physically fit and emotionally supportive, and his happy ending will be the return of his estranged wife, Nikki. When Pat goes to live with his parents, everything seems changed: no one will talk to him about Nikki; his old friends are saddled with families; the Philadelphia Eagles keep losing, making his father moody; and his new therapist seems to be recommending adultery as a form of therapy.

When Pat meets the tragically widowed and clinically depressed Tiffany, she offers to act as a liaison between him and his wife, if only he will give up watching football, agree to perform in this year's Dance Away Depression competition, and promise not to tell anyone about their "contract." All the while, Pat keeps searching for his silver lining.

In this brilliantly written debut novel, Matthew Quick takes us inside Pat's mind, deftly showing us the world from his distorted yet endearing perspective. The result is a touching and funny story that helps us look at both depression and love in a wonderfully refreshing way.

18. The Bell Jar - Sylvia Plath

The only novel by Sylvia Plath, one of America's most famous and significant female authors. Based on her own struggles, it chronicles a young woman's descent into depression and eventually into suicidal behaviour, coupled with her quest to discover herself at a time when self-discovery, for a woman, meant navigating traditional models of social propriety on one side and new ideas of freedom and self-determination on the other. It is widely cited as one of the 20th century's greatest novels.

19. Too Close to Home - Susan Lewis

Jenna and Jack Moore have moved their family to Wales for a fresh start. For vivacious, happy-go-lucky fifteen-year-old Paige the future is full of promise.

But suddenly everything changes. Paige becomes more and more withdrawn. The closeness she once shared with her mother a distant memory.

It then becomes clear that Jack has secrets too. Preoccupied with her younger children, her husband's fidelity and their fledgling publishing company, Jenna doesn't realise the extent of her eldest daughter's unhappiness until the unthinkable happens.

20. Unbearable Lightness - Portia De Rossi

Portia de Rossi weighed only 82 pounds when she collapsed on the set of the Hollywood film in which she was playing her first leading role. This should have been the culmination of all her years of hard work—first as a child model in Australia, then as a cast member of one of the hottest shows on American television. On the outside she was thin and blond, glamorous and successful. On the inside, she was literally dying.

Portia de Rossi captures the complex emotional truth of what it is like when food, weight, and body image take priority over every other human impulse or action. She recounts the elaborate rituals around eating that came to dominate hours of every day, from keeping her daily calorie intake below 300 to eating precisely measured amounts of food out of specific bowls and only with certain utensils. When this wasn't enough, she resorted to purging and compulsive physical exercise, driving her body and spirit to the breaking point.

From her lowest point, Portia began the painful climb back to a life of health and honesty, falling in love with and eventually marrying Ellen DeGeneres, and emerging as an outspoken and articulate advocate for gay rights and women's health issues.

In this remarkable and beautifully written work, Portia shines a bright light on a dark subject. A crucial book for all those who might sometimes feel at war with themselves or their bodies, *Unbearable Lightness* is a story that inspires hope and nourishes the spirit.

21. The Shock of the Fall - Nathan Filer

While on vacation with their parents, Matthew Homes and his older brother snuck out in the middle of the night. Only Matthew came home safely. Ten years later, Matthew tells us, he has found a way to bring his brother back...

What begins as the story of a lost boy turns into a story of a brave man yearning to understand what happened that night, in the years since, and to his very person. Unafraid to look at the shadows of our hearts, Nathan Filer's rare and brilliant debut shows us the strength that is rooted in resilience and love.

22. I had a Black Dog - Matthew Johnstone

One in four women and one in six men will suffer from depression at least once in their life. Few are immune. It was the greatly admired Winston Churchill, a depression sufferer for much of his life, who nicknamed this human condition "Black Dog."

In simple text and strongly supportive illustrations, this slim volume examines, explains, and demystifies one of the most widespread and debilitating problems afflicting modern society.

Matthew Johnstone, a sufferer himself, has written and illustrated this moving and uplifting insight into what it is like to have a Black Dog as a companion, the book shows the strength and support to be found within and around us to tame this shaggy beast and ultimately bring it to heel.

Johnstone's book doesn't pretend to have all the answers. It doesn't resort to simple "dog tricks" for dealing with depression. But *Living with a Black Dog* does deliver understanding, hope, and the assurance that Black Dog days are not forever.