

# Resilient: Surviving My Mental Illness

## Reasons to Use in Professional Health Programs

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By Liz Grace

### Why Use *Resilient* in Professional Health Programs?

*Resilient* is a valuable text for professional training programs in nursing, occupational therapy, social work, and mental health disciplines. Written by an occupational therapist with lived experience of severe mental illness, it offers a rare and compelling voice for modern health education. As a recent and emotionally accessible memoir, it resonates with today's students and bridges personal narrative with the real-world complexity of trauma-informed and recovery-oriented care.

#### 1. Authentic Lived Experience with Professional Insight

*Resilient* provides a rare dual perspective on care: the firsthand account of a patient who has spent nearly 20 years navigating the mental health system, paired with the clinical insight of a practicing occupational therapist who continues to manage her illness in daily life.

#### 2. Aligns with Key Curriculum Goals

The text supports many key learning areas for students and continuing education:

Contemporary models of care:

- Trauma-informed
- Recovery-oriented
- Client-centered care

Critical exploration of:

- Power dynamics
- Systemic failures
- The complex nature of recovery

#### 3. Provincially Recognized Literary Merit

*Resilient* was named a finalist for the 2024 Ontario Legislative Assembly Speaker's Book Award, shortlisted alongside works by established authors, historians, and academics like Steve Paikin and Ken Dryden. Its inclusion reflects the growing value placed on lived experience narratives as vital contributions to public discourse and literary culture. While it did not win, its selection affirmed that stories of survival—when crafted with depth, structure, and authenticity—deserve a place not only in clinical and educational settings, but also in our broader civic memory.

#### 4. Fosters Critical and Ethical Reflection

The memoir explores topics such as communication barriers, emotional misinterpretation, institutional trauma, and family dynamics in mental health care. It also examines the influence of workplace culture and professional norms—how shared beliefs, biases, and informal practices within care teams can shape whether patients are believed, supported, or dismissed. *Resilient* invites clinical learners to

reflect on how both systems and individual attitudes contribute to care outcomes, and encourages ethical engagement with the lived realities of those accessing services.

## 5. Flexible for Course Use

*Resilient* is adaptable to undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education settings. It integrates well into a wide range of formats and course types, including:

- Lectures with participation or breakout discussion
- Seminar-style classes
- Clinical ethics and professional judgment case studies
- Reflective writing or journaling assignments
- Courses in mental health, disability studies, and applied professional practice

## 6. Free Teaching Resources Available

A full set of complementary teaching materials is available at [www.lizgraceauthor.com](http://www.lizgraceauthor.com), free of charge. These resources are specifically designed to support instructors in healthcare education programs and include:

- Curriculum support documents
- Voice and style guidance
- Discussion guide for course use
- Thematic breakdown aligned with learning outcomes

These tools help faculty integrate *Resilient* into diverse pedagogical formats with minimal prep time.

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## For Questions, Support, or Bulk Orders

If you're considering *Resilient* for your course or program and would like help adapting materials — or are interested in guest speaking or additional resources — I'd be happy to explore how I can help.

Inquiries about **bulk book orders** for academic or institutional use are also welcome.

Contact: [lizgraceauthor@gmail.com](mailto:lizgraceauthor@gmail.com) | Website: [www.lizgraceauthor.com](http://www.lizgraceauthor.com)

## Resilient: Surviving My Mental Illness

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Published by **Sister's Ignited Media and Publishing**, 2023

Paperback: 279 pages | Available in eBook and Audiobook

ISBN-10 (Paperback): 1990533116

ISBN-13 (Paperback): 978-1990533112

