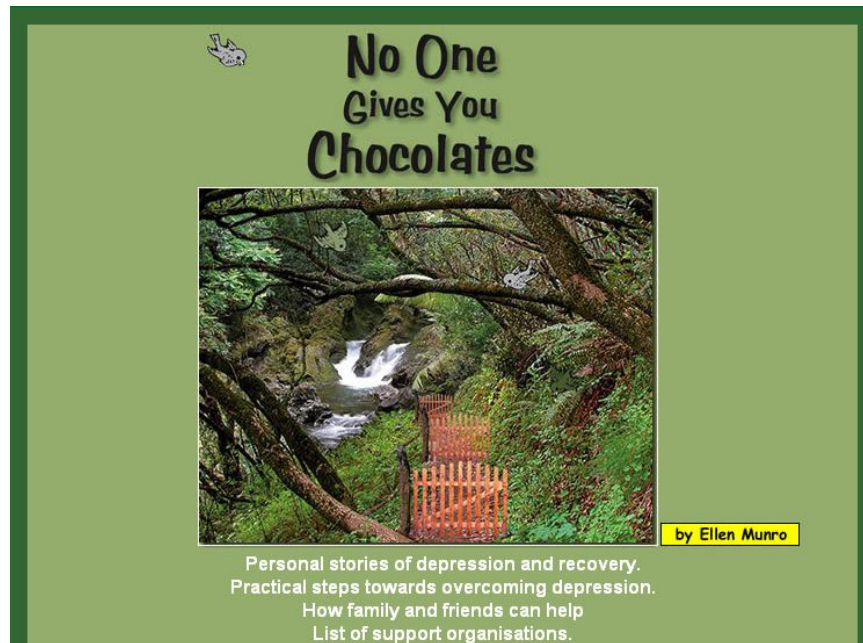


[NO ONE GIVES YOU CHOCOLATES](#)

Author: Ellen Munro

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Inspirational stories from people who have suffered depression and loss, revealing how the illness has affected their lives and of those around them and how they learnt to face their problems and overcome their debilitating symptoms. These stories show how the symptoms of depression can differ in severity. Chapters also reinforce suggestions on how to cope with depression including a chapter on how family/whanau and friends can help.

Chapter 6

Wanting To Be Normal Te Piraki kia Tau ano te Ahua

When depression strikes, feelings of inadequacy can also create feelings of guilt because you know you are unable to cope with life like your peers and you feel guilty about that. You

It's not what happens to you but how you deal with it

so want to be like your peers – you want to feel 'normal' - but at the moment you can't and that's frustrating. Sometimes too, when you think you 'are going mad' or 'losing your marbles', you feel afraid.

But, it is important to remember, depression is an illness that doesn't discriminate as it affects people from all walks of life and all ages – from rugby players, to artists and professionals like doctors and lawyers. It is a medical fact that depression affects people from the whole gamut of life styles.

So many people hide their depression because they worry about 'the stigma' attached to the illness. Thankfully, as I have already mentioned, that stigma is beginning to disappear and there's a lot more open discussion about depression. That's healthy for sufferers and also for carers.

So, rather than spending energy on feeling guilty and different, it is far more important to spend energy on taking control of your life, by thinking positively and by remembering that it can happen to anyone for whatever reason – depression does not discriminate according to your lifestyle.





Chapter 7

Making Plans Te Whakatakoto Mahere

I know how hard it is to look forward when you can see no purpose in life, when your self esteem and confidence are non-existent, when you have lost the motivation to succeed and when it is such a struggle to just get through each day.

At a time like this, it becomes easier to spend your life thinking about some past happier times than to look forward and feel total despair. So you have to use what you have learnt from the past to live in the present and plan for the future.

Looking forward

I can almost hear you asking, but how, as you simply can't imagine regaining an interest in life and feeling excited about life at the moment, even though deep down you know you want to feel excited about life again.

Part of the healing process is about looking beyond today, about setting small achievable goals and planning for tomorrow. It's about writing down your goals and about gaining huge satisfaction from achieving those goals. It's all about giving you confidence to plan for next week, next month and next year. It's about planning for some positive changes in your life.

THE AUTHOR:

Jocelyn McIlraith has been a freelance journalist since 1999 when she decided on a career path change to pursue her love of writing. Since then, her articles have been widely published nationally and she has also had some experience in radio programme production. 'No One Gives You Chocolates' is Jocelyn's first published book using the pen-name Ellen Munro - her maternal grandmother's name. Jocelyn is married and lives in South Canterbury.

Contact details:

Jocelyn McIlraith
(Penname: Ellen Munro)
Freelance Journalist
Hakataramea R.D.1
Kurow 8951
New Zealand
PH: 64 3 4360694
FAX: 64 3 4360696
Email: ellenmunro@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.munrobooks.co.nz