



# Myths, Madness and the Family: The Impact of Mental Illness on Families

*David W. Jones*

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"David Jones has written a compelling book about the complex issues entailed in being family members of sufferers from mental illness. The book provides us with a critical appraisal of the sociological and psychological conceptual layers and the policy context necessary for understanding these issues, all too often missing in other books written about this subject..."

Through in-depth interviews of forty carers, coached in a way which enables the carers to talk in their own voice, we get the rare opportunity of understanding the world of these carers...In letting the carers speak Jones is enabling all of us to listen to them with the respect they deserve...

All of us - but especially mental health professionals, policy makers and researchers - need to learn from the methodology utilised in this study, and the content of the rich experiential seam Jones exposes, as to how to listen better to carers, and on which themes to focus in our working partnership with users and carers."

- Professor Shulamit Ramon, Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge

This book fills a gap in our knowledge about the experiences of families of people suffering from severe mental illness. Original research material is used to support claims that families are struggling with complex feelings such as loss, anger and shame. It is also argued that the ideas families themselves hold about mental illness form an important part of the cultural world in which mental illnesses are understood.

This stimulating book challenges many conventional assumptions about family relationships by arguing that they have to be understood in terms of 'myths' that bring a certain amount of order to complex areas of emotional life. The author argues that families if properly understood, can provide significant support for people with severe mental illness.



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