

Out of Hours Books

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delay. Put aside time to share these feelings with a trusted colleague, a loved one, or your GP. Reflect on where this is heading if things don't change. Early recognition and an action plan may restore your happiness and relationships, enable you to avoid complaints, and even save your career. If you don't act it will probably get worse, so don't wait until you reach the point of no return.

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Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the members of the RCGP's overdiagnosis e-mail discussion group for their comments and advice on earlier drafts of this paper.

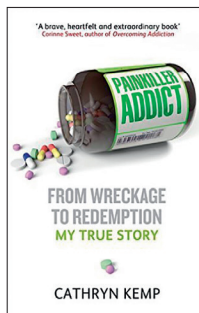
DOI:10.3399/bjgp16X687385

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Painkiller Addict: From Wreckage to Redemption — My True Story Cathryn Kemp

Little, Brown Book Group, 2012, PB, 320pp, £13.99, 978-0749958060



NEVER ENOUGH

As a GP trainee, I find opioid prescribing a particular challenge. This is especially the case for patients with chronic pain, where the distinction between analgesia and addiction can become increasingly blurred. It can be extremely difficult to maintain a therapeutic relationship with a patient who is dependent on the painkillers that they are being prescribed.

In her book *Painkiller Addict: From Wreckage to Redemption*, author Cathryn Kemp chronicles her own descent into fentanyl addiction, and her harrowing journey through recovery.

Previously a successful journalist, Kemp was diagnosed with idiopathic pancreatitis, and spent more than 2 years in and out of hospital. She was eventually discharged to the care of her GP with chronic abdominal pain and a prescription for fentanyl lozenges. Kemp initially adhered to the prescribed dose of eight lozenges per day, until a difficult break-up triggered her to think 'one more won't hurt ...'

This book provides a brutally honest account of Kemp's escalating use of fentanyl, peaking at 60 lozenges every day. It is a vivid depiction of how addiction insidiously grows to dominate every realm of a person's life, and how the ravages of withdrawal are a terrifying, ever-present threat. Kemp says, 'there never seems to be the feeling that I've had enough. I am always wanting the next lozenge. The craving follows me around all the time, like a lost puppy.'

Kemp describes an increasingly fraught relationship with her GP, whom she calls her 'dealer'. Her GP attempts to limit the lozenge

prescription on many occasions, giving the reader a unique insight into the patient perspective of the classic 'drug-seeking' interaction: 'I nod with a compliant smile. He signs my prescriptions. I'll do anything, agree to anything, as long as he carries on signing.'

Painkiller Addict: From Wreckage to Redemption provides a gripping and realistic narrative of prescription medication addiction, and I was left with a much better understanding of why those addicted to painkillers behave as they do.

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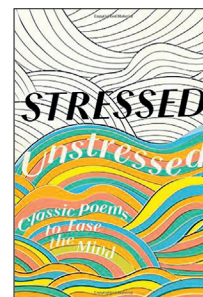
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DOI: 10.3399/bjgp16X687397

Stressed, Unstressed: Classic Poems to Ease the Mind

Edited By Jonathan Bate, Paula Byrne, Sophie Ratcliffe, and Andrew Schuman

HarperCollins, 2016, HB, 224pp, £14.99, 978-0008164508



CAN YOU BE RE-LIT BY POETRY?

This recently published volume is an anthology of new and old poems — some familiar and some less so, but all chosen by the editors, who include an NHS GP, to 'speak to us when we are processing worries or when we simply want to fill our minds with different, more positive thoughts'. The book is designed to serve as an introduction to the ancient art of 'bibliotherapy': reading for wellbeing. Does it succeed in its stated intent? The short answer is yes. How does it do this?

The book itself is divided into 12 sections, each of which contains a number of poems chosen to address some of our most troubling moods such as 'grieving' or 'feeling alone'.