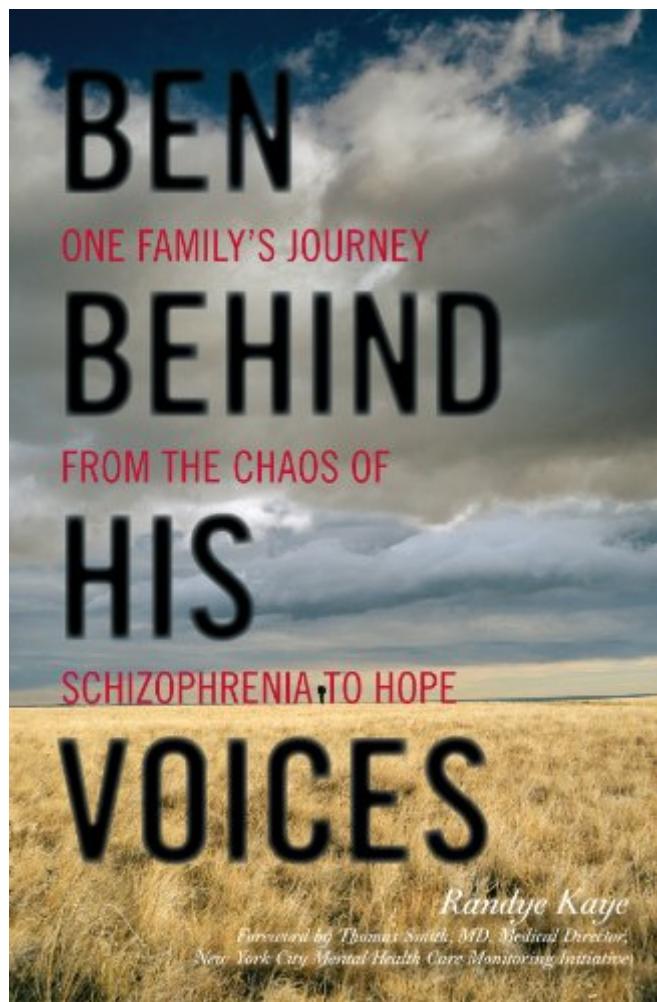


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# Ben Behind His Voices: One Family's Journey From The Chaos Of Schizophrenia To Hope



## **Synopsis**

When readers first meet Ben, he is a sweet, intelligent, seemingly well-adjusted youngster. Fast forward to his teenage years, though, and Ben's life has spun out of control. Ben is swept along by an illness over which he has no control—“one that results in runaway episodes, periods of homelessness, seven psychotic breaks, seven hospitalizations, and finally a diagnosis and treatment plan that begins to work. Schizophrenia strikes an estimated one in a hundred people worldwide by some estimates, and yet understanding of the illness is lacking. Through Ben's experiences, and those of his mother and sister, who supported Ben through every stage of his illness and treatment, readers gain a better understanding of schizophrenia, as well as mental illness in general, and the way it affects individuals and families. Here, Kaye encourages families to stay together and find strength while accepting the reality of a loved one's illness; she illustrates, through her experiences as Ben's mother, the delicate balance between letting go and staying involved. She honors the courage of anyone who suffers with mental illness and is trying to improve his life and participate in his own recovery. Ben Behind His Voices also reminds professionals in the psychiatric field that every patient who comes through their doors has a life, one that he has lost through no fault of his own. It shows what goes right when professionals treat the family as part of the recovery process and help them find support, education, and acceptance. And it reminds readers that those who suffer from mental illness, and their families, deserve respect, concern, and dignity.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

Let me begin by saying that this is one of the best books I've read this year. It touched me deep inside both as a parent and as a professional. I'm a Special Care Counsellor, and I have encountered mental illness both in my extended family and in my field. I quickly realized as I began reading that this is an important book, which is one of the reasons I made a request to the author to review it. I had no idea what to expect when I received it, but I didn't think it would be so good, so well-written, and so insightful. Although non-fiction, it is a highly readable book and almost felt like I was reading a novel. It gripped me from the first page and I was riveted throughout. The pace, the dialogue, the added information boxes, and Randye Kaye's own writing is amazing. She builds a portrait of her son, Ben, from early onset when no one really knows what is going on with him to his diagnosis and subsequent recovery. The flow of the story is smooth and I easily had a mental picture of the progression of the illness. I appreciated the fact that although the author is a well known radio personality, she did not stray from the story of Ben and how schizophrenia affects a person, their family and their lives. This book is not about her, but about a mother trying to help her son who is eventually diagnosed with schizophrenia. It is a story any person, whether a sufferer or a relative, can relate to. It made me appreciate the role of family in helping a person recover from mental illness and it made me love my children more. It raised my empathy for families who deal with mental illness. Most importantly, it raised my awareness of schizophrenia, a mental illness that still has a stigma attached to it and is little understood.

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