

# LIVING with a BLACK DOG



How to take care of someone with depression  
while looking after yourself

Matthew and Ainsley Johnstone

# LIVING with



# How to take care of while looking

Matthew and



# Living with a Black Dog

How to take care of someone  
while looking after



*By Matthew and Ainsley Johnston*



Dedicated to 'man's best friend', the careg

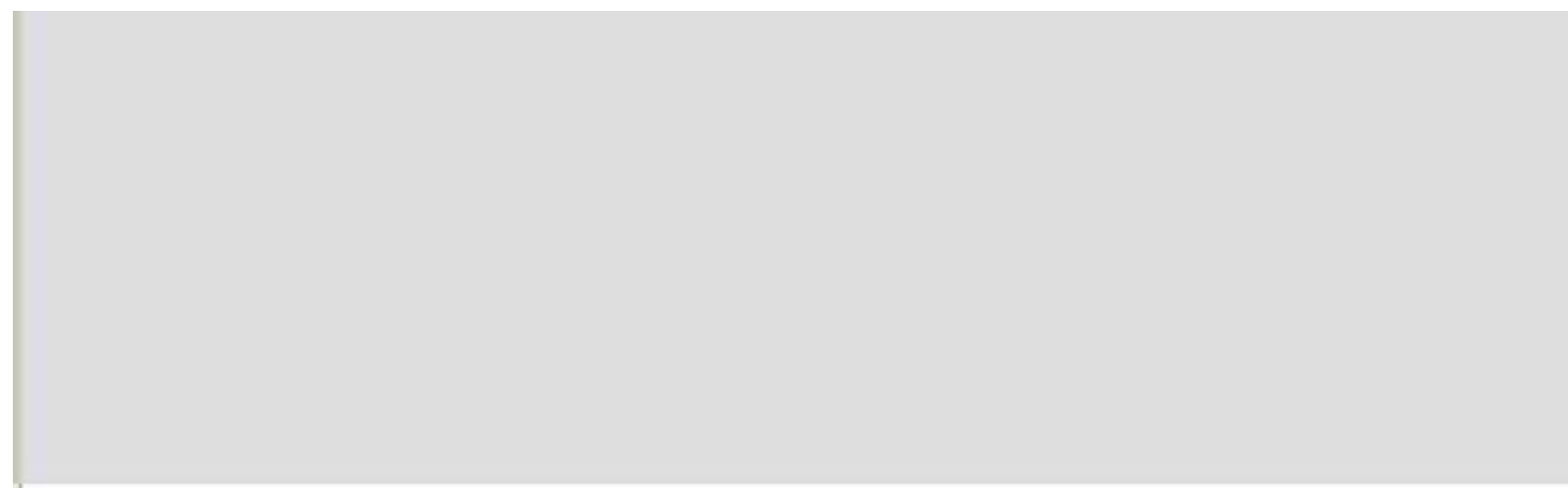


# Living with a Black



*By Matthew and*





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#### Important Note

This book is not intended as a substitute for medical advice or treatment. Any person with a condition requiring

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PRAISE FOR I HAD A BLACK DOG by M

‘What a fascinating book. It is both instructive and accessible. I am sure it  
Dr Rosemary Leonard, resident medical adviser for BBC

‘It’s very accurate – I should know

‘ Describing the hell of depression to other people, even those who really want  
sufferers find it impossible to reach out. Matthew Johnstone’s cartoon book and  
befriending his own black dog cuts through the taboos in a simple, effective  
Sarah Stacey, Health Editor, YOU magazine

‘Truthful, touching and hopeful.’ Dr James Le Fanu, medical columnist

‘His highly original mix of genres – autobiographical/self-help in picture-book  
doctor ordered.’ Spectrum, Sydney Morning Herald

‘This brilliant, disarming book about depression is quick to read  
Australian Financial Review



# Foreword

When Matthew initially said, 'I have depression', I really had no idea what that meant. We were in love, the future looked bright, and I just thought we could face whatever came our way.

I had never dealt with depression and I certainly didn't know how it could and would affect us.

Which, in many ways, is exactly why we decided to create this book.

Caregivers live in the shadow of the Black Dog. As with any illness they take turns and what to do. Often they feel like they are walking on eggshells which can be a very stressful and isolating experience.

However, the caregiver's role is a vital one. It can have an immeasurable impact on the sufferer's recovery. It is often the caregiver who is able to monitor the sufferer's healing process outside doctor visits.

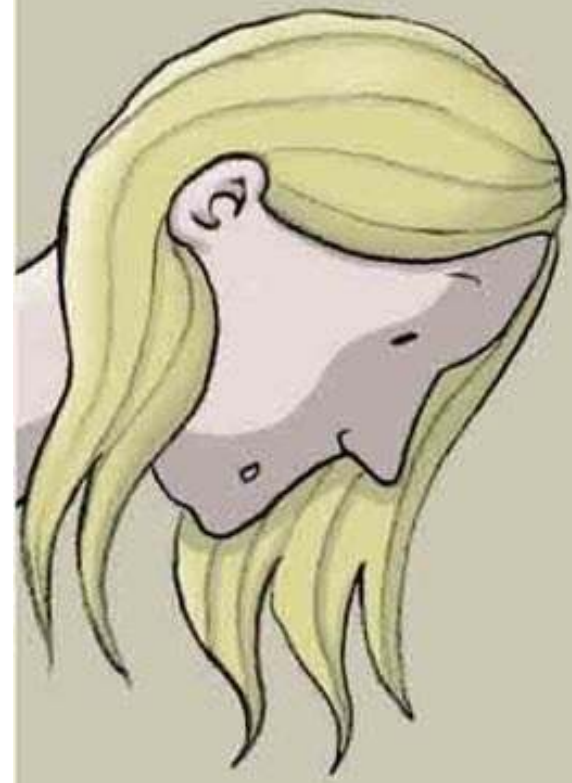
They also have a better understanding of the sufferer, their situation and circumstances.

Talking to people who shared a similar path to mine while researching this book was incredibly comforting to know you are not alone.

Recovery is all about acceptance and management by both the sufferer and the caregiver through honesty, diligence, compassion and as much humour as possible.

It certainly put the old marital saying 'in sickness and in health' to the test but it led to a path of a deeper and more meaningful relationship.

We hope this book will shed some light into what your loved one's Black Dog illness, not a life sentence. It does pass.



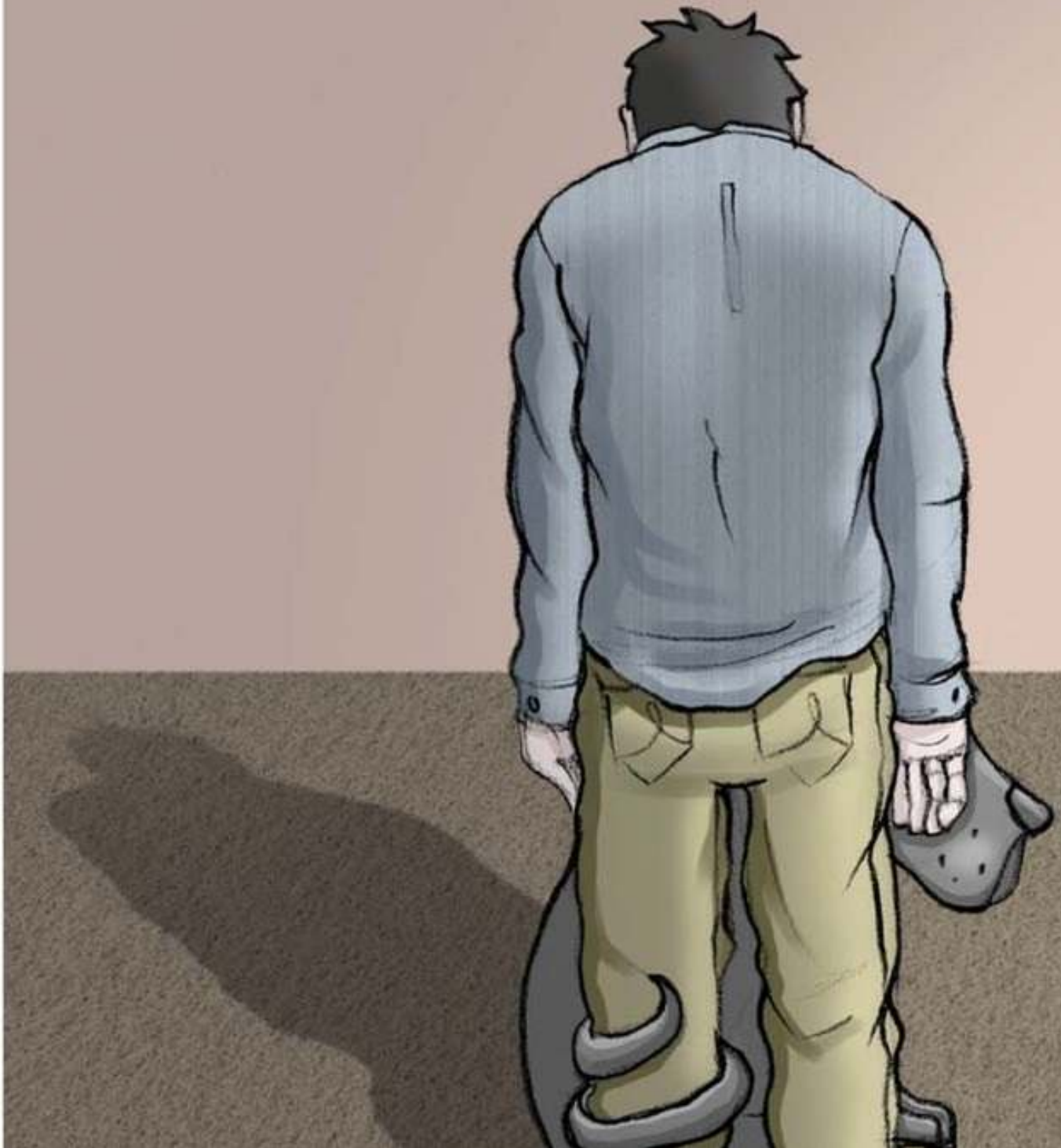
**The things you may have noticed**





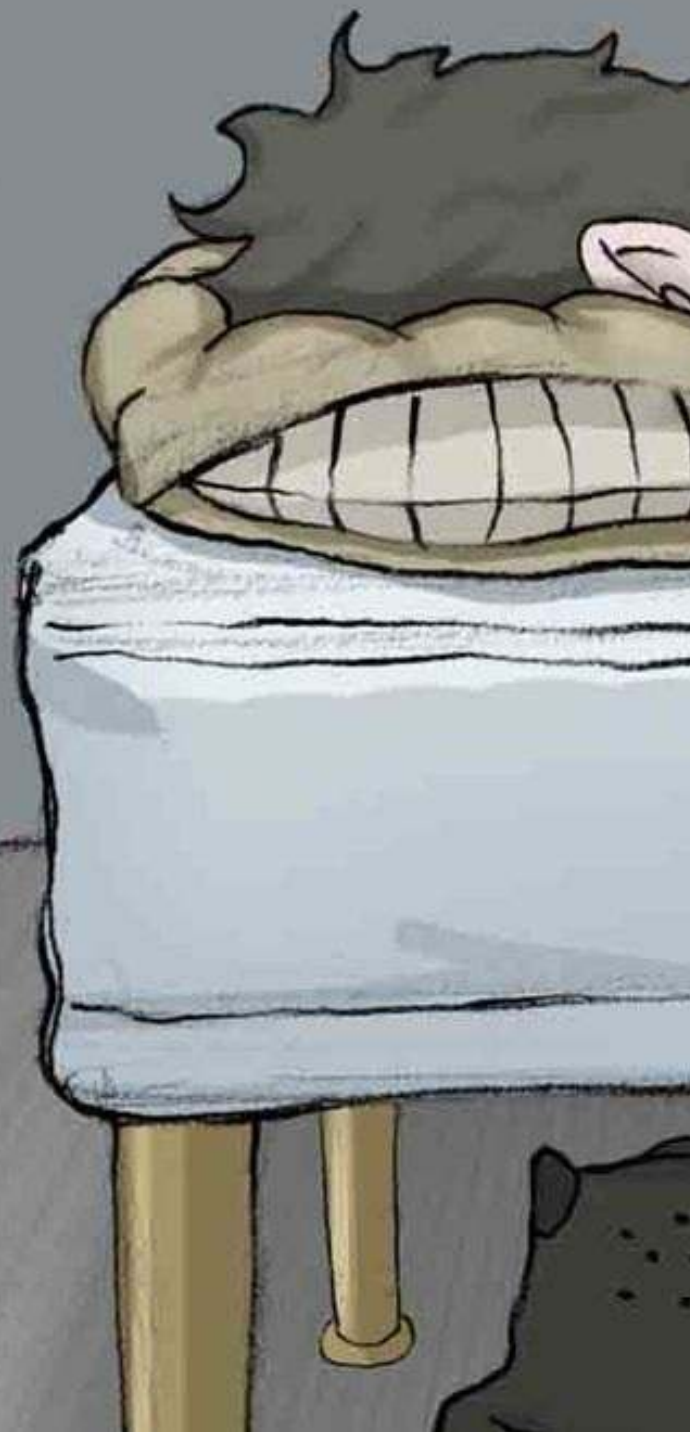


You may have noticed they've lost the





They may have an overwhelming sense of tiredness which no amount of sleep seems to cure.









They may have real difficulty in firing-up an

A gradual slip in personal appearance, hygiene and even memory is not uncommon





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