



Reading to Stay Alive

Tolstoy, Hopkins and the Dilemma of Existence

By Christopher Dowrick

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Explores how literary reading can enable people considering suicide to stay alive.

This book explores how literary reading can enable people considering suicide to stay alive. Written by an academic general practitioner with longstanding expertise in mental health, the book is grounded in the lived experience of patients, intertwined with perspectives from social psychology and moral philosophy. At its heart are reflective descriptions of the author's encounters with Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, and the Terrible Sonnets of Gerard Manley Hopkins, illuminating the therapeutic potential of recursive interactions between literature and experience.

Key selling points

- Provides critical inquiry into how literary reading may address the common and serious problem of suicide in contemporary society.
- Advances knowledge of the interplay between literature, psychology and philosophy in this field.
- Offers novel and practical approaches to suicide prevention for concerned health professionals and for people living with uncertainty of the value of staying alive.

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Christopher Dowrick is Emeritus Professor in the University of Liverpool UK, and past chair of the World Organisation of Family Doctors working party for mental health.

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