



Expectation Hangover: Overcoming Disappointment in Work, Love, and Life

Christine Hassler

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This engaging work offers strategies for coping with contemporary anxieties.

The intriguing *Expectation Hangover: Overcoming Disappointment in Work, Love, and Life* is a modern-day instruction manual for fighting the letdowns associated with reality that fall short of expectations, or as author Christine Hassler calls them, “expectation hangovers.” Hassler makes the key point that such a condition “is never just about the issue we are currently feeling hungover about—it triggers all kinds of juicy stuff from our past that has not yet been resolved.” As a result, an individual can quickly spiral downward, becoming distracted, depressed, and even suicidal.

Hassler walks the reader through a three-part strategy designed to explore and understand the various kinds of expectation hangovers, to demonstrate a treatment plan that operates in holistic fashion, and to offer techniques for preventing expectation hangovers from occurring in the future. Included in each chapter are a variety of therapeutic tools and exercises—from self-assessment forms to “guided visualizations” to writing assignments—all centered around assisting an individual in coming to terms with the demons associated with failed expectations.

Particularly helpful are the numerous stories Hassler tells about her own and others’ struggles. Often poignant, these tales enrich the book by adding a personal element, reassuring the reader that those who have gone through painful expectation hangovers can recover and move on. The author’s “Transformational Truths” are also illuminating, as they provide wonderfully perceptive explanations of key concepts. For example, in the Transformational Truth about “Expiration Dates,” Hassler writes, “Having the expectation of forever ... puts us at risk of judging ourselves as failing if something ends. ... [J]ust as we moved from one grade to the next in school, we often move from one relationship, job, or other situation to the next in our lives.”

Hassler’s writing style is nonthreatening and soothing throughout. She explains concepts thoroughly but keeps jargon to a minimum. While she presents a thorough treatment plan, she also offers some “quick fixes,” which she holds until the end of the book because, she writes, “you had to milk your disappointment first!”

Well organized and well written, *Expectation Hangover* addresses a particular and widespread form of contemporary anxiety, providing actionable coping strategies for anyone who needs them.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Winter 2015)

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