



When Blushing Hurts: Overcoming Abnormal Facial Blushing

Enrique Jadresic

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A fine teaching tool full of compassionate studies and insights, this work on blushing is a hopeful step forward for chronic sufferers.

English naturalist Charles Darwin deemed blushing “the most peculiar and the most human of all expressions.” In *When Blushing Hurts*, psychiatrist Enrique Jadresic sheds rare and compassionate light on an often trivialized phenomenon that causes suffering among nearly six percent of the population.

Blushing is a normal fact of life and a common response to an embarrassing situation. But for those who suffer facial reddening disproportionate to the cause, such pathological blushing (PB) can become physically and emotionally tormenting.

Blushing, the book reveals, can become a “serious problem” beyond adolescence, often hindering personal relationships and careers. Jadresic emphasizes just how much people are suffering from PB, and his book proves to be a fine teaching tool.

As Jadresic himself experienced this unusual affliction, he writes from both a professional and personal perspective. This blended view brings an empathetic spirit to the book, which is divided into two parts. The initial scientific and medical exploration examines human emotions and how they affect physical responses.

Jadresic offers his own testimony and the successful treatment that helped him overcome his condition. Various options are discussed, including drug therapy, cognitive behavioral techniques, and surgical procedures. The information is clear and easily discernible, though at times lengthy footnotes distract from the text.

The highlighting of individual case studies in later chapters enhances the personal dimension of this work. Though pointing to the similarities of patients’ sense of isolation, insecurity, and hopelessness may seem redundant, Jadresic works to explore the common threads between sufferers.

With much insight, Jadresic also stresses proper patient evaluation and the importance of asking key questions to determine the best course of treatment. Throughout, he interjects interesting points of view and raises valid questions rooted in compassion.

Patient correspondences bring a sense of humanity to the more scientific side of the subject matter, with many stories indicating positive outcomes in response to treatment. As one patient concludes: “I don’t have the PB anymore that depressed me so much; now I can live a completely normal life.”

When Blushing Hurts is a solid and well-researched study of a seemingly benign condition that wreaks emotional havoc on its victims. Compassionate and informative, it offers knowledge and hope for those who have felt their lives put on hold by the burden of spontaneous blushing.

CAROL DAVALA (July 14, 2017)

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