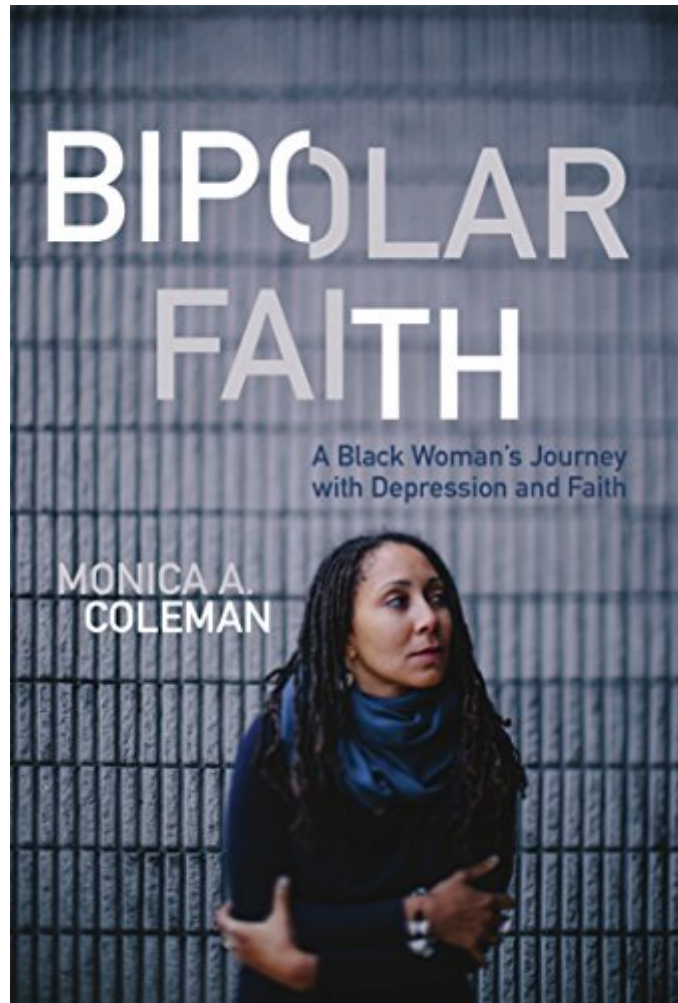


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# Bipolar Faith: A Black Woman's Journey With Depression And Faith



## Synopsis

Monica A. Coleman's great-grandfather asked his two young sons to lift him up and pull out the chair when he hanged himself, and that noose stayed in the family shed for years. The rope was the violent instrument, but it was mental anguish that killed him. Now, in gripping fashion, Coleman examines the ways that the legacies of slavery, war, sharecropping, poverty, and alcoholism mask a family history of mental illness. Those same forces accompanied her into the black religious traditions and Christian ministry. All the while, she wrestled with her own bipolar disorder. *Bipolar Faith* is both a spiritual autobiography and a memoir of mental illness. In this powerful book, Monica Coleman shares her life-long dance with trauma, depression, and the threat of death. Citing serendipitous encounters with black intellectuals like Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Angela Davis, and Renita Weems, Coleman offers a rare account of how the modulated highs of bipolar II can lead to professional success, while hiding a depression that even her doctors rarely believed. Only as she was able to face her illness was she able to live faithfully with bipolar.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"I was so busy trying to stay alive that I didn't know that I had died." -Dr. Monica A. Coleman

above quote is one of my 'ah-ha moments' while reading #BipolarFaith: A Black Woman's Journey with Depression and Faith by Dr. Monica A. Coleman. Coleman's accessible memoir style cracks the silence which surrounds the all too familiar Black church ethos regarding mental health. Coleman gives language to the once considered indescribable and invites the reader into the intimacy of her thoughts. You will laugh, cry and at times want to walk away from the text and say, "Ooo chi'le. I can't"---- but as with all well written books, it will call you back and you will journey to the end. The journey to mental & emotional wellness, regardless of the incident(s) that beset us, is long. I consider this book a necessary read towards this end.

This book is a benediction because it tells the truth of her experience; it is thought-provoking, gut-wrenching, and narrated with such proximity to the sight, sound, and sensations of her struggle as bring them dangerously close to our own. Deeply moving and beautifully conceived, one cannot come away from it unchanged. And what greater gift do we have as a species than bearing witness to one another--to our grief, to our self-care, to our joy? Thank you, Monica, your scholarship and activism; thank you for making this journey with us!

The best books are those that touch our heart and soul, affirm our lived struggles and triumphs, journey us through the immense range of human emotion from laughter to tears to fist pumps, inspire us to persist in the journey, and are so captivating in these qualities that we just cannot put them down! Rev Dr Monica A Coleman's Bipolar Faith was most certainly that book for me and I know it will be that book for so many!! From mind-body health, to spirituality, to healing complex trauma, to intersecting identities of a black woman of faith living and loving with mental health issues, and more! Coleman connects deeply and authentically with her audience, sharing her journey, drawing us in, and inspiring our own journey and healing. Reading Bipolar Faith is like engaging in a good conversation between dear friends. It was most certainly a page turner, but more than that it was a conversation of compassion, faith, and realness! Thank you, Dr Coleman for your courage and passion to share your journey!

This is an excellent account for any person who has ever suffered from depression, abuse, or any other process that causes prolonged periods of sadness. Her accounts of going through bipolar depression are so real and relatable. I couldn't put this book down!

Rev. Dr. Monica A. Coleman courageously offers her life as an open book. From moments of deep

and dark despair to discoveries of faith and fortitude, *Bipolar Faith* chronicles her journey of becoming. Coleman is a masterful storyteller who has written a definite page-turner that is hard to put down and yet this memoir is more than a good book. More significantly, *Bipolar Faith* is a prophetic witness inside the shame and secrecy often associated with mental illness and sexual assault. Coleman dares to unveil the trauma of rape, the crisis of living with a depressive condition, the hurt of isolation, the risks of faith, and the challenges of balancing this all while pursuing vocational goals, navigating life, supporting family and pursuing her own healing and wholeness. Subsequently, in reading *Bipolar Faith* the reader not only grows in awareness but also hopefully in activism to build communities of support for those who suffer. In the end, Coleman puts a face and voice to issues that are often obscured and ignored. This makes *Bipolar Faith* a leading liberative work of advocacy and justice in the 21st century that uniquely addresses the confluence of mental illness and faith in the black community based on firsthand accounts of lived realities. I strongly recommend *Bipolar Faith* as recommended reading for the classroom, church and community.

This is the second book I've read from Monica Coleman and I greatly enjoyed learning more about her and her faith journey. I met Monica at a book signing and she is a gracious, inspiring woman who obviously has great courage in writing about her family and personal history with mental illness and faith. I would recommend this book to anyone struggling with how their family history affects them today.

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