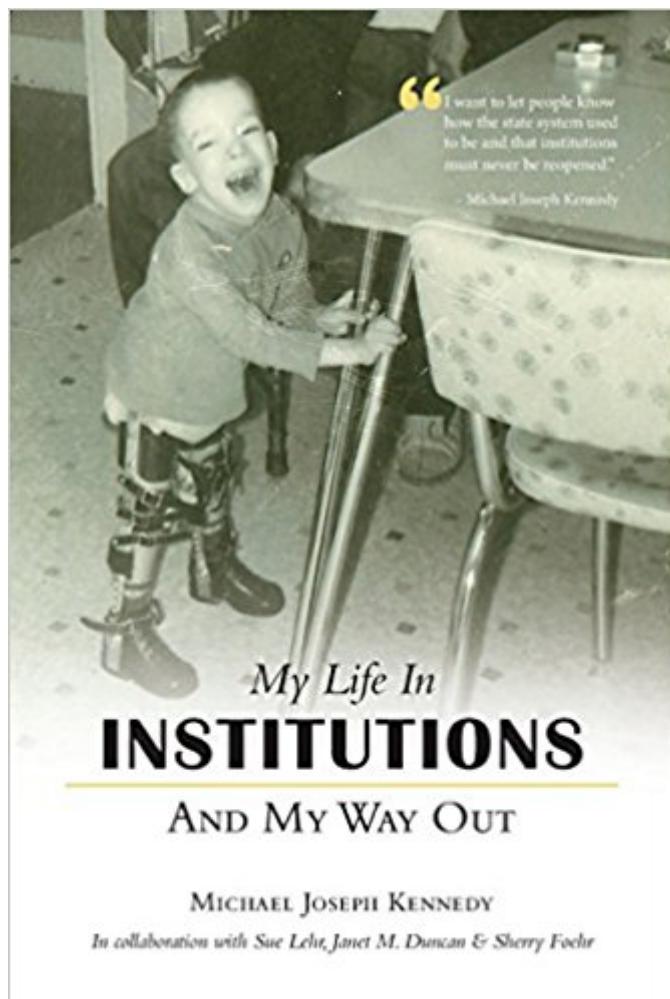


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My Life In Institutions And My Way Out



Synopsis

This is the story of Michael Kennedy's life. Born in 1960 with significant disabilities, he describes his early experiences living in three different institutions for the mentally retarded and how he had to become his own advocate if he was going to survive. He soon realized that, unlike most of the others in institutions, he could make his voice heard. He had to speak up to help himself and other individuals with developmental disabilities to learn about their rights, and how to prevent themselves from becoming trapped forever within complicated state bureaucracies. After moving out of the last institution into various types of supported living settings, Michael describes how he found new friendships, went to school, got a "real" job, and began to aspire to having full control of his own life. "I want to let people know how the state system used to be and that institutions must never be reopened." This is a book about hard work, resilience, and hope. It is an extraordinary life story, but told by an ordinary man with a clear mission to help others like himself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I downloaded and read Mr. Kennedy's book in an evening and was very glad I did. It talks about his life in NY State Schools in the 1970's and from my own experience (working in three) gives a very accurate portrayal of some of what he went through without lingering too long on the horrible details. It fascinated and saddened me that the "new" movements of today were actually started 30 years ago and took that long to be implemented state-wide. Kudos and many thanks to Mr. Kennedy for his book and especially for his role in making things what they are becoming today.

This book is riveting just for the information that is in it. However, at times it was difficult to follow what was being said, and sometimes the reader doesn't know who is stating the facts, the author, or the helper. It is very informative, however, for those who wish to learn about what life was like for people who had to go through institutional living.

Well done, Mike and company. I am impressed with how you survived your time in the institutions. Now you can devote yourself to your sweetheart of a wife, and perhaps write another book, about life after the institution..

It was a wonderfully written book about his life. Some parts were emotionally difficult to read due to his abuse when in institutions, but ultimately anyone working in the human services field NEEDS to read this. When you hear stories of Willowbrook and Rome it is enough to turn your stomach. But to hear actual accounts from a former resident is mindblowing. It is a blessing to so many that Mike has been such a strong advocate! He is truly the voice of many!

This book, complete with all the sad and disappointing truths that those with disabilities and their families have had to endure, is an excellent tool to educate others to the inequity that has and does exist in our country. I applaud the sincere, and personal honesty, that Michael, his family, and others have shared to help readers truly understand the purpose of sharing these experiences. Many might find this appalling and too sad to continue reading. Well that's tough!..Society does need to know what has and does go on in this country to certain individuals! We can't continue to ignore or believe that these things haven't existed. We can't change what we do not see or know about! Share this book, discuss this book, and use this book as a teaching tool.

Michaels story reminds us that the institutions are no place for people to live or work in. All people should have a rich and fulfilling life as they choose not dictated by rules and segregation.

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