Patty Duke: A Brilliant Madness

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

Book Review

In “A Brilliant Madness”, Patty Duke shares her story of suffering from mental illness as hope for those who are suffering from the disease. This book is a complete and profound account on the challenges of mental illness because the author narrated everything from her experience of living with the disease to the latest findings along with the most effective treatments that are in practice nowadays. The disease that Patty suffered from was, “Manic Depression” and this book acts as a guide, a light of hope and a word to the feelings of the people who are suffering from manic depression. The author expresses and laments “living with Manic Depressive Illness"(Duke, 1993). In this book, she shared that she was nearly thirty-five years old when she was actually diagnosed with the disease. It took almost twenty years for the correct and complete diagnosis of the disease. However, Patty Duke has suffered from the episodes of manic depression since she was a teen but she was not aware of the actual disease or the idea that what she feels is a disease. The author shared the feelings of a patient when diagnosed that diagnosis of disease especially a mental one is necessary to ensure and let others know that you are not mad(Duke, 1993).

In this informative book, the author shared the symptoms that she got such as extreme euphoria, prone to delusion, attraction towards suicide attempts and experiencing panic attacks along with temper tantrums. All these symptoms are expressed in terms of age and the intensity of each symptom such as inability to make way back to home or staying at home for days due to panic attacks, accompanied by sleepless nights. After that, the author shares her married life which was an amalgamation of either extreme euphoria or sheer depression that resulted in a few suicide attempts. After a few years, the marriage was ended and ultimately her symptoms got worse. One of the examples of the severity of symptoms shared by author is of the “Invasion of White House by some external force and Patty thought she is the only who could stop it” (Duke, 1993). The mood swings were getting worse with every passing day and then, one day she came to now that she is pregnant. Under the impact of the situation, she married again and the marriage annulled thirteen days later. Here, the author start off with another version of her life where the last manic episode that Patty remembers was before marriage.

The author asserts that marriage and motherhood have the potential to calm some moods. Author married John Astin and took custody of John’s children from previous marriage. Patty shared that she again suffered from depression when they have to perform to earn a living and John was not getting work in Hollywood. After a few years, the marriage with John ended and the author came to know about her disease actually when she fell on a stage and Dr. Arlen, John's friend treated her (Duke, 1993).

Dr. Arlen gave her treatment and Patty started feeling better. She recognized the destruction in her life because of the disease and began to amend her life by learning to forgive and control. After sometimes, Patty was better enough to get into a marriage and adopt a child so that she could live a normal and familial happy life (Duke, 1993). It would not be wrong to say that this book is a literal and personal account of getting ways back to life despite manic depression. The book deciphers hope to live along with the idea that struggle can bring ease to life that will automatically restore peace, comfort, and love.

References

Duke, P. (1993). *A brilliant madness: Living with manic-depressive illness*. Bantam.