

Bright Spots & Landmines: The Diabetes Guide I Wish Someone Had Handed Me

Reviewed by Gloria Yee



Bright Spots & Landmines: The Diabetes Guide I Wish Someone Had Handed Me

BY ADAM S. BROWN

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I have lived with diabetes for over 30 years, including more than 25 years spent as a certified diabetes educator. Here in San Francisco, I see a wide spectrum of people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Some get on the latest technology the minute it comes out; others can't access even the most basic medications and supplies. The advice I give must be adapted to the person in front of me, and rarely is it the same from one appointment to the next.

However, for the past 4 months, there has been a near-constant piece of advice I've shared with many patients: "Read *Bright Spots & Landmines* by Adam Brown."

This is a diabetes book unlike any other I've encountered. I've read it three times already, and it remains a constant companion on my nightstand.

Bright Spots & Landmines shares not only author Adam Brown's personal experience of living with diabetes, but also hundreds of imme-

diately useful food, mindset, exercise, and sleep tips. This is a book focused on action: what can someone with diabetes do today to spend more time in the target blood glucose range, navigate the next meal, feel less stressed and burned out, or improve exercise and sleep? The guidance helps people with type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes, or even prediabetes—an impressively wide range for one book to tackle.

What makes it so compelling and universal? For me, it starts with Brown's "mindset" approach to living with this 24/7/365 disease.

My favorite line comes on page 217 in a boldface, all-cap font: **DON'T DO DIABETES ALONE.** I help facilitate a diabetes support group, and I've seen firsthand how this message can change lives. When people realize that there is "no badge of honor for doing diabetes alone" (as Brown puts it in Chapter 2), and they bring their partner or a friend to the support group, it changes their world.

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For those feeling shame, blame, and negativity, this book's thesis is also a breath of fresh air. Brown believes we should place more focus on replicating what he calls "bright spots" (what's actually working), rather than avoiding "landmines" (problems and mistakes). This paradigm-shifting perspective puts wind in my patients' sails, rather than tearing them down.

As an educator, I also appreciated each chapter's concluding question guide, which helps readers identify what works for them. Interactivity is

a hallmark of engaging diabetes education, and this book nails it.

Refreshingly, Brown also acknowledges the real-world struggles of implementing his advice each day. He discusses the negative thought loops, the unrelenting nature of diabetes, and moments of enormous frustration. But there is always a path forward, a better question to ask, a lesson to learn, or a new experiment to try.

Great education is one thing, but access to it is another. *Bright Spots & Landmines* is available as a free down-

load at diaTribe.org/BrightSpots and costs only \$6.29 in paperback.

I'm elated that The diaTribe Foundation could support Brown, a diaTribe employee, in sharing his optimistic, altruistic vision in this book. In a disease with so much darkness, *Bright Spots & Landmines* provides some much-needed light. I'm so grateful it exists, and I cannot recommend it highly enough.

Duality of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest relevant to this article were reported.