



Overcoming Turbulent Times: TEENAGE ANGST

by NATALIE DECENA

WHO: Natalie Decena is seventeen years old, born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is a senior in high school and will be heading off to college to major in psychology this coming fall. She hopes to take her studies to become an educator or therapist. Natalie is the daughter of Peter Decena, the chief of police of Los Gatos of Monte Sereno and Connie Decena, stay-at-home mom and a director with Midori Kai, Inc, a non-profit professional business woman's organization. She lives with her family: mom, dad, brother, and two dogs, and enjoys drawing, writing, and dancing.



WHAT: *Overcoming Turbulent Times; Teenage Angst* is a must-read book for teens, families, counselors, educators, and psychologists. Written through the lens of a teen, Decena engages the reader with captivating writing styles: narrative, journal entry, text stream, and reflective thought while intertwining a diverse group of characters faced with real-world struggles. These conflictual teen scenarios come alive, connecting with many of the personas and obstacles that teens can relate to today.

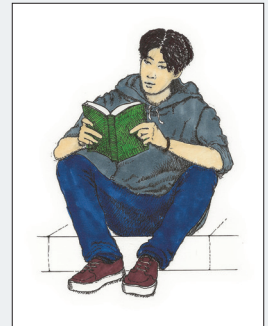
Natalie tackles strenuous issues such as loneliness, sexuality, body image, relationships, and social media. Her book narrates how the characters navigate the tricky journey through these problems to a healthy resolution. Each conflict resolves with a set of supports that help teens and families, as they work through these difficulties. This book is a vital resource for anyone who needs guidance during the turbulent times of the teenage years and beyond.



WHY: Being a teenager today is far more complicated than it was just a few generations ago: teens feel isolated and alone as they struggle with challenges, obstacles, and the dramas of growing up in a fast-paced, always "on", and 24/7 connected world. Natalie identifies key situations and areas that trouble teens. Through her writing, she reassured fellow teens that they are not alone in their trials, and offers well-researched solutions to their conflicts. With shelter-in-place orders, online classes, and cyberbullying, now more than ever, teens need a book they can read to see how others are dealing with similar situations.

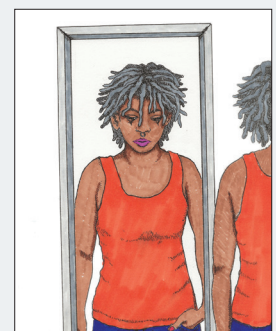
CHAPTER 1: LONELINESS Many teens doubt themselves; with doubt comes loneliness. This chapter chronicles the main character's experience of feeling alienated due to social media. But, things are not always as they seem. By accepting other characters' point of views, the reader is able to gain an awareness of multiple perspectives before assuming others' intentions and reacting in unhealthy ways. We learn through the characters that communication is vital and a positive way to deal with unresolved feelings, especially loneliness.


CHAPTER 2: TRUE COLORS Being true to yourself can be difficult. Will people accept me as I am, or will I change to fit others' expectations? The main character in this chapter questions his sexuality and struggles with sharing his new-found identity with family and friends. In his journal entries, he expresses his inner thoughts and feelings, turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms. We learn through his intimate writings that it is not easy to come to terms with a part of himself that others may not approve of. As the character realizes, in order to be happy, he needs to accept who he is and show his true colors.



CHAPTER 3: THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS PERFECT Pursuing perfection can be exhausting. The main character of this chapter finds out, it can be dangerous. Her childhood teddy bear has been her confidant since she was small. Through the observant eyes of her bear, we experience the pressures that she deals with as she enters high school: popularity, academics, appearance, relationships, and partying. These demands lead her to change and make some misdirected and unhealthy choices. We hope to see her resolve her unrealistic expectations of herself; perhaps with the help of her teddy bear, she can celebrate the REAL and unique person that she is.

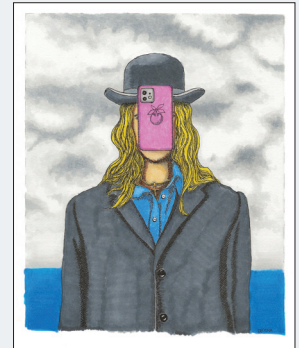
CHAPTER 4: MIRROR MIRROR Mirrors tell the truth, but as we see in this chapter, it all depends on perspective. The main character struggles with body image. Her story is told through her eyes and the intimate conversations that she has with her mirror. As she peers at her reflection, she distorts her appearance, compares herself unrealistically to the images of social media, and turns to troublesome ways to change herself. Through her struggles, she learns that appearances are not everything, whether it is physical, popularity, financial status, or more, especially when it comes to social media!



CHAPTER 5: FLAGS & BOUNDARIES Communication between teens is 24/7 and instant through the medium of texting. Via text conversations, this chapter provides the reader with an in-depth understanding of the varied relationship challenges facing teens. Relationships of any kind can be tricky and complicated, but even more so, as a teenager. Many characters in the book share their conflictual scenarios, delving into the diverse relationships that young people experience: romantic, platonic, and family. Each of these can cause turbulence, sometimes abusive and dangerous. This chapter assures readers that it is important to recognize the Red Flags  of an unhealthy relationship and understand that it is okay to set personal boundaries.

CHAPTER 6: SINISTER SOCIAL MEDIA Social media keeps everyone connected, but sometimes involves dangerous situations. This chapter tackles the sinister side of social media by focusing on specific discussion points, the inadvertent behaviors teens practice, and the dangerous consequences that entail. The scenarios represented are backed up with researched facts as well as personal connections by Natalie, that make the dangers more tangible to the reader.

Decena delves into some pressing topics: keeping up with false reality, oversharing information, jeopardizing your future, exposing yourself to online predators, being subjected to cyberbullying, disconnecting from family and friends, and changing the dynamics of intimate relationships to one of a hookup culture. Natalie reminds us that though social media has many benefits, you should not let it take over your life, as it can sometimes have permanent, negative consequences.



WHEN: *Overcoming Turbulent Times; Teenage Angst* was recently published in September of 2020, and is now available on Amazon. Psychologists who work with teens and high school administrators are reviewing her book. Her school, Archbishop Mitty High School, may make *Overcoming Turbulent Times; Teenage Angst* a summer reading requirement for their incoming freshmen.

GOALS: She hopes this will become required reading for all incoming freshmen students entering high school and also a coffee table book for psychologists who specialize in teen behavior. She wants this book to reassure anyone struggling that they can overcome anything if they ask for help and believe in themselves.

CONTACT:

Natalie Decena
(408) 284-9548
natode333@gmail.com