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Writer Wants Schizophrenia and Depression to Be Better Understood

Vestal, NY — Sept. 18, 2012 — Filmmaker and musician Dave Elder makes his debut as an author with his new book *Expecting the Broken Brain to Do Mental Pushups: A Personal Journey to Understanding Schizophrenia and Depression* in which he tells a compelling personal story that took more than four decades to complete but which he condenses into a short space of a little over one hundred pages.

Elder's journey began well before his fourth birthday, when his mother started hearing voices in her head following the birth of his younger brother, and it continued until he reached two separate points of clarity, the first with schizophrenia in the winter of 1997 and the second with clinical depression in the winter of 2002. In both cases, he found himself in the position of caregiver, and the focus required by that role led him to a moment where he suddenly saw quite clearly the shape and substance of a mystery that had previously eluded him.

Having reached a point of definitional clarity with schizophrenia and depression, and by extension a basic grasp of bipolar disorder as well, Elder began to notice both the quality and quantity of confusion about these conditions that persisted in his personal circle, and in western culture at large, as evidenced by references in popular media. At some point he decided to write a book about his experiences as a caregiver, thinking that the publication might become a vehicle to help open up and widen the dialog about schizophrenia, clinical depression and bipolar disorder, for the purpose of bringing to others the kind of general insight that his own experiences brought him.

Expecting the Broken Brain to Do Mental Pushups takes the reader along the kind of side roads, detours and dead ends that a caregiver might encounter in the struggle to comprehend the complexities of a mental disorder. While some of those who suffer from such conditions have written significant accounts of their experiences, such as Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* which Elder mentions in his book, and some noted psychiatric professionals have shared their expertise, such as Dr. Nancy C. Andreasen's landmark *The Broken Brain* which Elder makes an oblique and respectful reference to in his own title, *Expecting the Broken Brain to Do Mental Pushups* stands out as a work produced from the point of view of the caregiver and non-professional observer of schizophrenia and depression.

Elder has crafted a compact and readable chronicle of lessons learned and mysteries finally explained, using an engaging and easily-accessible style that he hopes can help to guide others, particularly those who find themselves in the caregiver role for a family member or friend with one of these conditions, but also for anyone else who wishes to widen their own basic knowledge of mental difficulties.

Expecting the Broken Brain to Do Mental Pushups is available in paperback (\$9.99, ISBN: 978-1-4791169-0-4) or Kindle (\$6.99, ASIN: B009D822X5) at amazon.com and most other major online book retailers, and by special order at bookstores.

For more information, visit www.mentalphushups.com.

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