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# Maps To The Other Side: Adventures Of A Bipolar Cartographer (Real World)



## Synopsis

Part mad manifesto, part revolutionary love letter, part freight train adventure story &#151; Maps to the Other Side is a self-reflective shattered mirror, a twist on the classic punk rock travel narrative that searches for authenticity and connection in the lives of strangers and the solidarity and limitations of underground community. Beginning at the edge of the internet age, a time when radical zine culture prefigured social networking sites, these timely writings paint an illuminated trail through a complex labyrinth of undocumented migrants, anarchist community organizers, brilliant visionary artists, revolutionary seed savers, punk rock historians, social justice farmers, radical mental health activists, and iconoclastic bridge builders. This book is a document of one person's odyssey to transform his experiences navigating the psychiatric system by building community in the face of adversity; a set of maps for how rebels and dreamers can survive and thrive in a crazy world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"DuBrul takes the non-conformity and anti-authoritarian sentiments of punk rock past the level of mere social criticism, and into the realm of applied and meaningful social change." — Kelly Pflug-Back, Fifth Estate "There's black pride, and gay pride. And if 32-year old Sascha DuBrul has his way, "mad pride" will become equally ubiquitous. That's mad, as in mentally ill. DuBrul's Icarus Project believes that part of the problem with mental illness is the words we use to describe it.

Diagnosed bipolar when he was 18, DuBrul says he could have dealt better with his diagnosis if it had been framed differently, not in clinical terms but as a "dangerous gift." Now Sascha and others are going across the country giving workshops to change the language around mental illness." *Weekend America, Public Radio*"How did the New York underground of punk rock music, squatting, and homeless protest give rise to a thriving and innovative peer-run mental health community? Are there creative gifts to be found in the depths of madness? Does the future of Mad Pride lie in the joining of activism with spirituality? Icarus Project co-founder Sascha Altman DuBrul discusses his escape into apocalyptic visions and psychiatric hospitals, and how he was inspired to challenge the identity of bipolar disorder." *Madness Radio*"DuBrul's focus on both the danger and the gift gives his book its most powerful moments. These dangers are literally matters of life and death." *T. K. Dalton, latenightlibrary.org*"Take a first-hand ride into a history no one else is talking about, but probably should." *Karen Walasek, Elohi Gadugi Journal*"Despite being derailed at times by bipolar disorder, DuBrul offers a unique perspective on what it's like to lose one's mind, yet still manage to make a difference." *Brian Blueskye, Coachella Valley Independent*"A necessary document of a place where several vital scenes overlapped." *Tobias Carroll, Vol 1. Brooklyn*

Sascha Altman DuBrul is an activist and the cofounder of the Bay Area Seed Interchange Library and the Icarus Project, a radical community support network and media project for those suffering from mental health illnesses. He lives in Berkeley, California.

"An excellent book, written with a deep sensitivity for all of us, wounded psychically, in some ways, and struggling to come through the whirlwinds we call life. Altman DuBrul writes of these complex matters with remarkable clarity of prose and moral force. Why moral? because, he envisions these problems not as just individual but interwoven and emergent....emergent from social, economic, political structures of human societies. ...of our selves and of our experiential worlds. Crucially and repeatedly, the book demonstrates how intertwined are both psychic woundedness and psychic creativity. For instance, the description of The Icarus Project, an radical online educational and support community, which he co-founded with Jacks McNamara over a decade ago (in 2002. Accessible to all, internationally, it is a rich resource for those seeking to navigate the eruptions of disturbing mental states in themselves or others. Pathological symptoms are redefined as dangerous gifts. Ones that require, understanding, mentoring, and a home in the hearts of others

who provide varieties of friendship experiences. A relational home can often do what medications cannot. How to strengthen communities of those who share similar psychic experiences while deftly pulling on the threads of the brilliant resources that those often are called mad have, is the strongest suit of this book, I believe. There are friendship "maps"- demonstrated through the personal telling of his own evolution. There are Dubrul's vision of 'T-Maps, Transformative Mutual Aid Practices,' which empower people to take better care of each other; there are workshop formats; and, also, how Dubrul thinks of the use of medication and alternative treatment modalities. ...all practical and accessible ideas. It is a "horizontal" communal model, rather than a vertical, top-down, healthy doctor, sick patient model. Dubrul demonstrates convincingly that, as H.S. Sullivan writes, we are all more human than otherwise and that, with the sorts of personally-experienced guidance DuBrul offers, we, all, potentially, can sustain and come through, seemingly unbearable mental states. Bravo!

Barbara S. Kane, PhD, LCSW  
Psychoanalyst Psychotherapist  
New York City

I was informed about this book by someone who has been a roommate of the author, and with a recommendation from my son, who is a very close friend of the informer and has had a lot of personal contact with the bi-polar experience. The beauty of the language was what entranced me at first, and then the insights took over, together with the power of the author's personal explorations of his mental architecture and learning to use it as a gift to make things better for everyone, rather than a curse threatening to destroy himself. Brilliant window into the world of those with these challenges, fascinating solutions offered to very basic problems of society, uplifting affirmation of the possibility that we can actually change the big picture for the better, by changing the small pictures every day. Only reason for not 5 stars is that it gets a bit repetitive about 75% through; however, it picks back up again after that and takes us right to the finish (and the future.)

I wish this book was given to every high school student as they begin their junior year. DuBrul's passion for life and courage to live a life he wants to live is inspiring. I've already given 4 copies as gifts to family and friends. Debating a career change or wishing you could do something but don't have the resources... read this book. DuBrul affirms the saying "If there's a will, there's a way." Sascha, thank you for taking the time to write this book! I hope it's made into a movie! On a serious note, I love DuBrul's storytelling and interweaving about BiPolar Disorder and Gardening. The way the book is structured, I was able to savor each chapter and reflect before reading the next chapter.

I started it and couldn't put it down. He has a style that is clear, economic, honest, and wholeheartedly true. The world would be much brighter with more people like Sascha Altman DuBrul. He's fabulous. I've learned so much from his candid wisdom. He's a sage for the 21st Century. Bravo.

Our world has been begging for this book. When Sascha writes, he takes his readers on a journey with him and, whether you have been down a similar road or not, you cannot help but stand in his shoes and ask yourself, "how could i have not seen it this way?" Through personal stories, he paints the picture of what it really is to be "mad" to be blessed and cursed with a mental difference. But this book is not only for those who have experienced some sort of quantifiable madness. It is also an idea of what real life is. What it means to be living in today's world with all its craziness and beauty. To be fighting your fight - whatever that may be. It is a book for those of us who are done with pretending, who are done with buying more stuff or taking more pills to feel better. Among many things, our culture lacks storytellers. We need, all people of all time periods and locations, need stories. We learn and grow through stories. Sascha is an incredible story teller. If you receive nothing else from this book, let it at least help you to tell your own story in as raw and true a way as this book does. I highly recommend this book.

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