AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Melody Leclair

Melody Leclair is a counsellor, accomplished speaker and panelist. After raising a family, Melody returned to school to fulfill a life-long dream of pursuing a career in Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy. She has experience working in private practice and within community-based settings. Her real-life education in mental health came in 2013 when her eldest daughter was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, followed by her youngest son’s diagnosis of the same—four years later.

Melody’s writing began in response to the pain of her children’s diagnoses and after feeling inspired to share their story in hopes of helping other individuals and families who find themselves in similar situations. Her manuscript, *When Lightning Strikes Twice*, won the 2018 Women’s Journey of Faith Publishing Contest.

As a mental health professional with personal lived experience of mental illness, she passionately shares her family’s journey from these dual perspectives.

Melody resides with her family in Ontario, Canada where she enjoys connecting with her extraordinary community of church, friends and family. She enjoys her work as a therapist and is devoted to life-long learning and mental health advocacy for all.
BOOK DESCRIPTION

When Lightning Strikes Twice

“I cannot explain the pain of seeing your child look like themselves, but not act like themselves. If I took the time to overthink this, I might wonder which version was the truer one. That’s one of the frustrations of the disorder. Mania can be experienced as an unfiltered version of you. It’s the experience of observing the separation of a body and a mind, as though the essence of your child was temporarily displaced and you were merely left with his or her physical form.”

—excerpt from When Lightning Strikes Twice

When the doctor said those two crushing words—bipolar disorder—the only thing rolling around in Melody Leclair’s head was confusion. This could not be happening… not again. With no documented family history of mental illness, the Leclairs now faced the unexpected diagnosis of bipolar disorder in not one, but two of their three children.

When Lightning Strikes Twice is an unparalleled memoir with first-person accounts, family perspectives, and collective insights from an extraordinary community of friends and clinicians. Follow this family’s heart-wrenching yet hope-filled journey of finding their new normal. With three teenagers in high school, the Leclairs’ world now included hospitalizations, medication, self-care, and prayer on top of the typical hardships of raising teenagers.

Read this heartfelt and authentic family experience of mental illness, punctuated with honesty and humour. You will undoubtedly be captivated, informed, and inspired.

Format: 5.5” x 8.5”
Page Count: 248

Canadian Retail Price: $19.99

Print Availability: Chapters/Indigo, Amazon, Word Alive Press, and wherever fine Christian books are sold.

eBook Availability: Amazon’s Kindle Store, Apple iBooks, Kobo, Google Play, Scribd, and in Adobe PDF format for additional vendors.

Acclaim for *When Lightning Strikes Twice*

Melody Leclair and her family have created a very informative and beautifully written series of memoirs regarding their journey dealing with mental health issues. If you are a person struggling with a bipolar diagnosis, a family member or friend trying to support a loved one in need, or a professional who works with children and adolescents, read this book! The Leclairs’ candid thoughts and personal experiences will help you learn more about bipolar disorders and how to get help. Thank you for writing this amazing book, Melody! Also, thank you, Josée and Luke, for teaching me what being bipolar is like from a first person perspective.

—Karen Kelly-Miller, Teacher

This is a beautiful book. It is an honest, raw, and brave telling of one family’s experience with mental health challenges. The writing is accessible and natural. I think right now, more than ever, this is an important story. Reading about how this family and all who supported them came together to navigate the complex and unpredictable world of supporting children with mental health issues was eye-opening. As an educator, I have been part of this process quite a few times and the journey is not for the faint of heart. I am proud of the Leclair family for sharing their experience so openly. The book is informative, funny, captivating, and inspiring! Bravo!

—Heather Walker, Teacher

Melody’s book is a prophetic sharing of sacred story that every one of us needs to read. Through exquisite vulnerability, Melody offers us an in-depth journey into the darkness and light of mental illness within a family. When Lightning Strikes Twice provides a powerful opportunity for each of us to grow in understanding and the experience of suffering, struggle, grace, compassion, healing, love, joy, and transformation. I am deeply grateful to Melody and all of the people who shared their experiences in the making of this book. We, the readers, are deeply blessed to receive the bountiful harvest from the challenging journey of Melody’s family.

—April Snider, Spiritual Director

This book is a beautiful and holy gift for you to open and treasure. In its pages is the authentic story of a family that must change to deal with new realities. It is a story that can change the world. Their story can help to reduce the stigma around mental health. It is a raw story yet so filled with hope. As we follow this family through the tough issues that they face, we are drawn into a bigger human story of loss, of hope, and eventually of new life.

—Pastor Debra Nicholson-Elwell
ENDORSEMENTS

Acclaim for When Lightning Strikes Twice

Melody’s deep sense of love and her amazing strength have carried her and her children through the real world of the heart-breaking and heart-warming story she shares in this book. As a teacher closely associated with her children, I marvel at how she has supported and cared for each of them, and how she has shaped three wonderfully caring, genuine, and compassionate young people despite the struggles placed before all of them. This is a remarkable story.

—Joel Barr, Teacher

Melody knows whereof she speaks. The mother of two children who both had early onset of complicated mental illness, she tells the story of their family with humour and humility. Her vulnerability and authenticity reassure the reader who is struggling with similar issues, and promotes understanding and empathy in those who aren’t walking that road themselves but may know someone who is. As a care provider herself, she has the knowledge base to provide accurate information but does so in a format and language that are easy to understand. Her words of guidance for those who are living a similar story are helpful without being prescriptive. I would highly recommend this for any person who has children with mental illness in their world, whether among family or friends, in the classroom or congregation.

—Jan Young Baker, M.D.

When Lightning Strikes Twice is a masterpiece in navigating the mental health maze of the unthinkable, unbelievable, and untouchable. Melody brilliantly and sensitively opens our eyes to the uniqueness of bipolar disorder through each of her children’s personal journey. She has us look at the effects on the family system—those you love, those you touch, and the community that surrounds you. The wisdom Melody shares will help you find the strength to believe that no matter what crosses your path in life, you are not alone—not even when lightning strikes twice.

—Catherine Cameron, Psychotherapist
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

For Melody Leclair:

• Why do you think adolescent mental illness with—and emphasis on—the family is an important topic?

• What motivated you to write about it?

• Was writing *When Lightning Strikes Twice* a difficult or cathartic experience?

• I understand you are a mental health professional as well as a parent. Did your psychology background help or hinder your ability to cope amidst multiple mental health crisis in your family?

• Why do you think self-care for the caregiver is vital to this and what does self-care look like for you?

• Family and friends watching from the sidelines don’t necessarily understand, don’t know how to help, or even what to say. What do you wish they knew?

• What do you wish they would not say?

• Why was it important for you to include first person accounts, friends and family reflections, as well as clinical perspectives in *When Lightning Strikes Twice*?

• How is everybody doing now?

• What advice would you give to others going through similar situations?

For media inquiries or to schedule an interview with Melody please contact:

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ABOUT WORD ALIVE PRESS

Who We Are

At Word Alive Press, we pride ourselves on being accessible and providing excellent one-on-one customer care. That means that you reach real people who are genuinely interested in seeing your manuscript come to life and have an impact on your readers.

The publishing industry can be intimidating to a new author, and we’re here to answer your questions and clarify the mysteries of publishing. We are neither a traditional publisher nor a self-publisher. We provide professional publishing services and distribution (like a traditional publisher), though there is a cost to publishing with us (like a self-publisher). We support authors through the process, provide feedback on marketability, offer marketing services, and have publishing industry standards.

How Did We Get Started?

Word Alive Inc. began as a distributor over thirty years ago and today is one of the largest and most trusted suppliers of Christian books, entertainment, and giftware in Canada. They represent over thirty publishing houses in the Canadian market of Christian bookstores, trade bookstores, such as Chapters/Indigo, Costco, Superstores, and Wal-Mart, as well as thousands of churches, ministries and schools.

With Word Alive Inc.’s relationship with publishers in mind, authors would often approach the company looking either for a publisher or a distributor for their books. Seeing the high calibre of these manuscripts, and the lack of interest in them from traditional publishers, an idea was formed. Word Alive Press was created in a format best described in today’s vernacular as a “hybrid” publisher—a company that harnesses the power of conventional royalty-based publishing, Word Alive Inc.’s distribution, all while being easily accessible to Canadian authors.

On June 1 of 2016, Word Alive Inc. (the distributor) merged with US-based Anchor Distributors. This new North American strategy directly benefits our Canadian authors as their books will now be stocked and available to the U.S. market, as well as Canada. This nugget of history is a major distinction between our services and those of any other publishing company. Since our inception, sales, marketing, and distribution have been at the forefront of our growth. We understand the Canadian Christian market, and our authors benefit from that expertise.