



Open up when you're down ...

"A library is a hospital for the mind" – Anonymous

BREATHING Space is proud to present these brilliant new short stories by five of Scotland's top writers.

Our phone line and website is a free and confidential service for people in Scotland who are feeling down, anxious or depressed. We are here in times of difficulty to provide a safe and supportive space by listening and offering advice and information.

The publication of this book coincides with our fourth annual Breathing Space Day, which is today.

This regular date in our calendar provides an opportunity for people to take some time out to support their mental wellbeing during the year ahead.

In 2010, we want to celebrate the power of reading and writing to provide a break from our problems, lift our spirits and offer hope. The aim of the book is a simple one. We would like it to serve as a reminder of how the written word can boost our everyday wellbeing and help us recover from struggles or worries.

By reading about how others cope with their feelings, or by reading about emotions we may recognise as our own, we begin to understand that journey of recovery.

We are thrilled by the calibre of writers who are involved with this book. We thank them for all their support and efforts – and their wonderful stories. Breathing Space wanted the book to be a hopeful one – and it is. All the stories show that

even in our darkest hours we can find reasons to keep going and recover from mental or emotional distress. These are challenging, sometimes bleak, sometimes funny, but ultimately uplifting tales of people who choose life.

We hope you find this book thought-provoking and entertaining. We hope it will remind you of how words – written and spoken – help us understand ourselves better.

If you're experiencing difficulty in your life and would like to talk to someone, then phone Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or visit www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk.

Enjoy taking your breathing space, whatever that may be.

Breathing Space

Jackie Kay The Winter Visitor Page 3
James Kelman Tricky Times Ahead Pal Page 9
Denise Mina I Am Carnage Page 13
William Boyd The Dreams Of Bethany Mellmoth Page 19
Janice Galloway Ad Astra Page 25



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