Survivors of the suicide will find Jeff Alt’s “A Hike for Mike” worth reading on two levels. First, it is a quick read and interesting adventure story — Alt and his wife, whose adult brother died by suicide, tackle a 218-mile hike on the John Muir Trail in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Alt writes about the physical and emotional challenges of the trek and its parallels to our journey through life and grief. However, the rewards of meeting the challenge — a closer relationship with his wife, the beauty of the scenery, the opportunity to reflect on mental health — more than outweigh the hardships.

Secondly, the Alts used the trek not only as a healing venture, but also to raise awareness of untreated depression — the book, public speaking, on the Internet — and raise funds for a suicide prevention group. Being a survivor is no easy job, and one of the most significant and most common questions we have is, “what should I have done?” The Alts’ quest to educate others about depression and suicide might inspire readers to tackle projects of their own so that others may not succumb to depression and suicide. We survivors can educate the public about the signs of depression, the available treatments and, hopefully, turn “what should I have done?” into “what can I do?” or, “this is what I am doing.”

The American Association of Suicidology’s Publication Review Committee reviews books for the purpose of informing the membership of the latest and most relevant material devoted to the understanding, treatment, prevention, and postvention of suicide.