Cracked Not Broken: Surviving and Thriving After a Suicide Attempt
By: Kevin Hines (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: NY)
Reviewed by: Jasmine Boardman, MSW

In his book, Kevin Hines produces a window, with which we can see into his experience with mental illness. *Cracked Not Broken: Surviving and Thriving After a Suicide Attempt,* is a moving portrait of his life, painted with internal conflict, anguish, acceptance, and his found passion as an international speaker and mental health advocate. Hines’ words are raw and often painful, laying out the stark reality of recurring psychosis.

His journey begins in a hotel room where 4-month-old Hines and his twin brother are laying, malnourished and abandoned. What follows is a chronicle of the events that brought Hines, at age 19, to the moment where he jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge, falling 220 feet before colliding with the frigid water of the San Francisco Bay. While he meant for his actions to culminate in his death, it evolved into the discovery of a passion, and a re-birth of purpose.

The ensuing process of healing involved much more than the mending of bones, and fading of bruises. Hines began a journey of reconciling his confliction towards mental health treatment, and allowing himself to grieve the life he will never have. The courage and determination he manifested following his suicide attempt were fuelled by the love and support of his family and friends.

Coming to terms with the diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder with psychotic features, allowed Hines to begin the reconstruction of his identity. He undertook the difficult process of accepting his limitations and developing the tools needed to ask for help when his limitations have been reached. Hines openly shares with the reader that he continues to suffer from mental illness, yet states that he will never again attempt to take his own life.

*Cracked Not Broken* is a testimony of ongoing recovery, where there is no false promise of a cure, but an affirmation that with hard work, persistence, and support, anyone can improve their quality of life. Hines does not hold back in this personal memoir of depression, mania, and suicidality. This book should be read by anyone seeking to gain a deeper understanding of what it is like to live with a mental illness.

Kevin Hines’ book does not disappoint when reflecting on his reputation as an award-winning author, mental health advocate, and international speaker. His influence on the fields of mental health and suicide awareness/prevention, has reached far and wide. *Cracked Not Broken,* chronicles the path that led him to a place of healing.