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### **Bipolar Realities**

1. Families are not places in which people get to let out the *worst* in themselves onto other family members. Emotional survival of every family member is important, not just the child with Bipolar Disorder.
2. Sometimes you need to be at the end of your rope in your struggle with your child and in complete misery to find your soul, your courage, and your own resources. The struggle may be an essential condition for change to occur..
3. Thinking "outside the box" is essential to a family's survival: Examples include the use of 911 to position household rules, cooling rage with a cold shower, considering District-paid boarding schools.
4. It's not about right and wrong. The limbic brain sits as an equal partner with the cortex in the psyches of our children. Accepting the child's *animality* in this way we are able to dialogue with him.
5. The world needs the perspective of our children. We are all in need of new answers. Of obsessive, focused insight. Of blue-hot vision! They provide vital system disturbance.
6. Children with Bipolar Disorder cannot tolerate *absurdity* in the world and have much to teach us as parents and professionals in this regard. If learning does not occur in a public school, why call it a school at all?
7. Love is more than butterflies and teddy bears. Love needs a warrior's heart. Love needs a sword. As one ten-year-old with BD challenges put it: "My mom needs to be strict with me or I'll take the place apart!"
8. To live in a balanced way, a child must understand the narrative of his life, his roots, his wounds, his triumphs, his gifts, and how it will all turn out.