



The Schopenhauer Cure: A Novel

By Irvin Yalom

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Suddenly confronted with his own mortality after a routine checkup, eminent psychotherapist Julius Hertzfeld is forced to reexamine his life and work -- and seeks out Philip Slate, a sex addict whom he failed to help some twenty years earlier. Yet Philip claims to be cured -- miraculously transformed by the pessimistic teachings of German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer -- and is, himself, a philosophical counselor in training. Philip's dour, misanthropic stance compels Julius to invite Philip to join his intensive therapy group in exchange for tutoring on Schopenhauer. But with mere months left, life may be far too short to help Philip or to compete with him for the hearts and minds of the group members. And then again, it might be just long enough.

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The Schopenhauer Cure: A Novel By Irvin Yalom Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Having taken on the origins of psychotherapy in the popular *When Nietzsche Wept*, psychiatrist-novelist Yalom now turns to group therapy and the thinker sometimes known as the "philosopher of pessimism," in this meticulous, occasionally slow-moving book. Julius Hertzfeld, a successful therapist in San Francisco, is shocked by the news that he suffers from terminal cancer. Moved to reassess his life's work, he contacts Philip Slate, whose three years of therapy for sexual addiction Julius describes as an "old-time major-league failure." Philip is now training to be a therapist himself, guided by the writings of Arthur Schopenhauer, and he offers to teach Julius about Schopenhauer as a way of helping him deal with his looming death. Julius and Philip strike a deal: Julius will serve as Philip's clinical supervisor, but only if Philip joins the ongoing therapy group Julius leads. To complicate matters further, Pam, a group member, is one of the hundreds of women Philip seduced and then rejected. Yalom often refers to his books as "teaching novels," and his recreation of a working therapy group is utterly convincing. At the same time, his approach can be overly documentary, as the inner workings of therapy, often repetitious and self-referential, absorb much of the novel's momentum. A parallel account of Schopenhauer's life sheds light on the philosopher's intellectual triumphs and emotional difficulties.

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Review

"A beautifully wrought tale of a therapy group's final year and a moving debate about the end of life."
(Kirkus Reviews)

"Considers the value and limits of therapy and those points at which philosophy and psychology converge."
(Washington Post)

"Yalom's enthusiasm is contagious. And he certainly knows how to tell a page-turning story." (Los Angeles Times)

"As a novel of ideas, this book effectively explores loss, sexual desire, and the search for meaning." (Library Journal)

"Yalom's melding of philosophy, pedantry, psychiatry and literature result in a surprisingly engaging novel of ideas." (San Francisco Chronicle)

"The world's first accurate group-therapy novel, a mesmerizing story of two men's search for meaning."
(Greensboro News & Record)

"Meticulous. [Yalom's] re-creation of a working therapy group is utterly convincing." (Publishers Weekly)

About the Author

Irvin D. Yalom, M.D., is the author of *Love's Executioner*, *Momma and the Meaning of Life*, *Lying on the Couch*, *The Schopenhauer Cure*, *When Nietzsche Wept*, as well as several classic textbooks on psychotherapy, including *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, considered the foremost work on group therapy. The Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at Stanford University, he divides his practice between Palo Alto, where he lives, and San Francisco, California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bert Gomes:

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