

## In 2 Minds



Description In this achingly honest memoir Fabia Cerra tells the story of her struggle with mental illness, from an abused childhood, an adolescence in which she became the World Disco Dancing Champion, and an adulthood plagued by divisions in her family life, drug abuse, schizophrenia, depression and bi-polar illness. In the course of the book, Fabia writes with great understanding and out of her own experience about the nature of bi-polar illness and how she has learnt to cope with it, in a way that will be helpful and encouraging to fellow sufferers and provide insight for others who may know less about how this terrible illness can blight the lives of all those affected, including family and friends. From early childhood, Oxford-born Fabia (born 1973) and her younger sister Lorenza experience physical abuse at the hands of their alcoholic, promiscuous mother. Bullied at home and later at school, Fabia seeks refuge in late childhood and early adolescence in dancing. A beautiful slim young girl with long dark curly hair, Fabia becomes a disco dancer, winning championship after championship, but the pressure to win becomes more and more overwhelming. Her competition rankings start to fall and her mother announces that she will no longer accompany her to competitions. Paradoxically Fabia realises that the only way she can win is by fulfilling her mothers expectations and being treated like dirt is part of the deal. Without her mothers support, she hangs up her dancing shoes. Raped at a party, bullied at school because I danced (she pulls a gun in school on her tormentors), Fabia retreats into drug-taking cannabis, amphetamines and ecstasy, in a loveless relationship with a drug-dealing boyfriend. In Italy, with her beloved father Brunos family, she falls for Luigi, an older cousin, but their affair proves abortive. In the wake of this, devastated to discover he is marrying

someone else, her mental state deteriorates. In 1994 she suffers the first of many schizophrenic breakdowns in which she hears voices, confuses the past with the present, and experiences hallucinations, persecutory ideas and grandiose thoughts, such as the idea that she is the daughter of Princess Margaret. After a devastating miscarriage, she moves twice to Oxford B&Bs and on each occasion is burgled. A respite comes in 1996 when Fabia visits Lorenza in Cairo, where her sister has been living since her marriage to an Egyptian. For the first time for years she dances in public, with a belly dancer and a cobra, and experiences a new sense of hope for the future. But more periods of mental illness follow and she is again sectioned in the Ashurst Ward of the Littlemore Hospital, Oxford. After the death of her mother in 2001 she meets Dougie who subsequently becomes her long-term partner, but their relationship is at first constantly jeopardised by her mental illness. On one occasion she suspects, for no apparent reason, that he is having an affair with Lorenza, back in England after her divorce. This culminates in Fabia setting fire to her hair and hacking it off with meat scissors to make it look more like Lorenzas. When, finally reunited with Dougie, she becomes pregnant again, her weight due to medication balloons to 18 stone. During the pregnancy she develops gestational diabetes and her weight again rockets to 22 stone by full term. She gives birth by Caesarean section to a delightful little boy, Leone, who is subsequently found to have development delay. In the immediate post-natal period Fabia develops an infected C-section wound which festers because it is not immediately diagnosed and treated. She has contracted a flesh-eating bug called necrotising fasciitis. After several operations and eight weeks in hospital she is finally released. Apart from the principle consolation of her beautiful son, she is also told that her blubber has kept her safe from the flesh-eating bug. Being fat has saved her life.

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**by The Free Dictionary** In *Two Minds* takes you on a quirky, rollicking journey that unveils the complexities of mental illness with wit and warmth. Gordon Parkers **be in two minds (about something) (phrase) definition and synonyms** [hide]. 1 English. 1.1 Alternative forms 1.2 Adjective. 1.2.1 Synonyms 1.2.2 Translations. 1.3 See also. English[edit]. Alternative forms[edit]. in two minds **be in two minds Definition in the Cambridge English Dictionary** Synonyms of in or of two minds: undecided, uncertain, unsure, wavering, hesitant Collins English Thesaurus.