



The Listener: A Psychoanalyst Examines His Life

By Allen Wheelis

W. W. Norton & Company. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 264 pages. Dimensions: 8.5in. x 5.5in. x 0.9in. As a psychoanalyst, Alan Wheelis has helped many patients understand themselves and cope with the legacies of trauma or obsession that shape the neurotic personality. Here he uses his own life for the same process of discovery. The story begins with his parents life of poverty in rural Texas. When Wheelis was a small boy, his father contracted tuberculosis. He spent several years dying, exercising a tyrannical control over his family. In one searing scene, Wheelis is made to cut the lawn with a razor, a task that occupies every day of his summer. Timidity, insecurity and a cloyingly close connection to his mother mark Wheelis efforts to establish himself in the adult world. When trying to write a novel as a young man, he falls mysteriously ill. Eventually he realizes that he has made himself ill so that his failure to write can be excused. This perception leads him to the study of medicine and eventually psychiatry. As Wheelis turns his explanatory lens on the dark corners of his own life, we come to understand how a gift for analysis - like...

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