

**KATHY CRONKITE**  
**MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE**

Kathy Cronkite is a popular writer, journalist, and public speaker. As one of the millions who suffer from clinical depression, she has become a tireless champion for mental health. As an advocate, Cronkite delivers a clear message: “Depression must be accepted as the medical condition it is in order to combat the stigma attached to it and to make help available for those who suffer from it.”

Her book, *On the Edge of Darkness: Conversations About Conquering Depression*, has received wide acclaim for its informative and eloquent treatment of mental illness. In writing the book, Cronkite interviewed celebrities who suffer from depression, including Mike Wallace, Joan Rivers, Dick Clark, Kitty Dukakis, Rod Steiger, Rona Barrett, Jules Feiffer, John Kenneth Galbraith, and William Styron. Combined with interviews with well-known researchers of mental illness, these celebrity conversations cast a dispelling light on the myths and stigma that surround mental illness.

Her knowledge and work are well respected by professionals in the mental health field. As a layperson who has researched extensively the causes and cures of depression, she is uniquely qualified to educate other laypeople on these matters. As a consumer of mental health resources, she brings hands-on experience to her critiques of the services available in this country.

Awarded by the Texas Psychological Association for outstanding public contribution to psychology in 1999, Cronkite has appeared many times on television and radio. Her appearance on *The Today Show* prompted over 12,000 calls in three hours to the 800 number of the National Institute of Mental Health, where she served on the advisory board of grant reviews. She also worked on the Communications Workgroup and the Bridging Science and Services Workgroup.

In 1994, Cronkite was presented with the National Institute of Mental Health's D/ART Public Service award, and in 1996, with the William Styron Award given by the National Mental Health Association. This award is presented to a prominent American who has managed a mental illness and helped others through his or her openness and outspoken advocacy. She was also the recipient of the Media Award from the Mental Health Association of Austin in 1987 and 1996.

Cronkite drew on her experiences as the daughter of famed television newscaster Walter Cronkite in penning her first book, *On the Edge of the Spotlight: Celebrities' Children Speak Out About Their Lives*. Using a similar method to the one that she later employed in *On the Edge of Darkness*, she interviewed the children of celebrities to explore the challenges and privileges that were afforded to them.

Always informative, her presentations are enlivened with compassion, humor, and honesty. With a conviction born of experience, Cronkite delivers a message of hope and a call to understanding.

**TOPICS:**

- Erasing the Stigma of Mental Illness
- Smile for the Camera: Celebrities & Depression
- Why Johnnie Can't Smile: Children & Depression