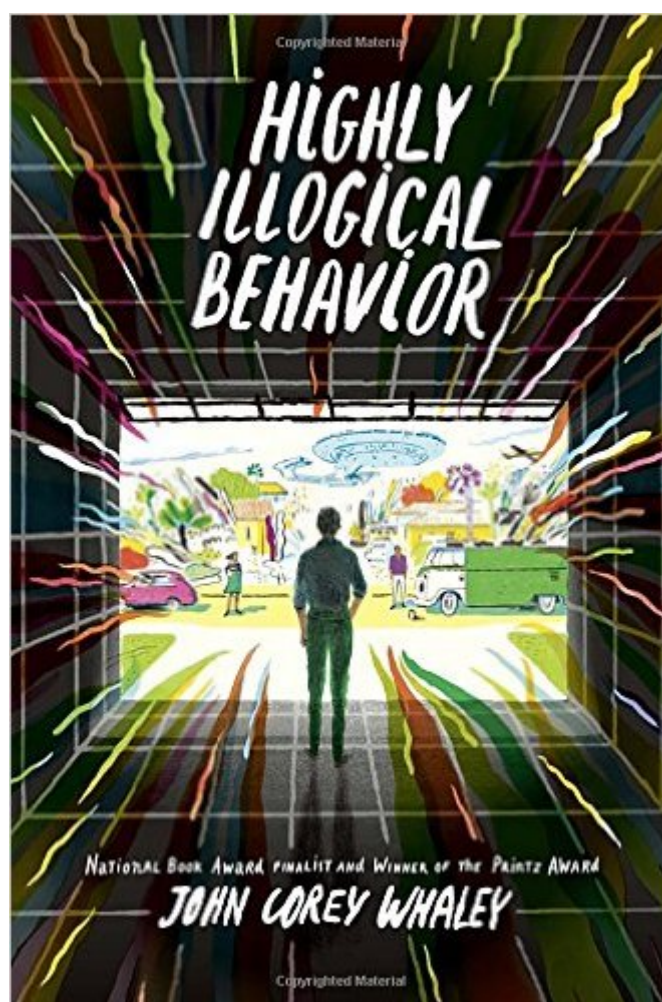


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# Highly Illogical Behavior



## Synopsis

Teen and adult fans of *All The Bright Places*, *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*, and *Everything, Everything* will adore this quirky story of coming-of-age, coming out, friendship, love...and agoraphobia. Sixteen-year-old Solomon is agoraphobic. He hasn't left the house in three years, which is fine by him. Ambitious Lisa desperately wants to get into the second-best psychology program for college (she's being realistic). But how can she prove she deserves a spot there? Solomon is the answer. Determined to help Sol, Lisa thrusts herself into his life, sitting through *Star Trek* marathons with him and introducing him to her charming boyfriend Clark. Soon, all three teens are far closer than they thought they'd be, and when their walls fall down, their friendships threaten to collapse, as well. A hilarious and heartwarming coming-of-age perfect for readers of Matthew Quick and Rainbow Rowell, *Highly Illogical Behavior* showcases the different ways we hide ourselves from the world and how love, tragedy, and the need for connection may be the only things to bring us back into the light.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**\*SPOILER FREE REVIEW\*** I decided to give this book a try solely because I am agoraphobic, and I have been dealing with anxiety related to this phobia for about twenty-five years (most of that time undiagnosed). I recognize that each individual's experiences with mental illness is different. And I am not a psychiatrist. Perhaps this author has insight into this particular issue. But for me, I found this book to be a very simplistic treatment of a complicated disorder. I was hoping to be able to

identify with the main character on some level (granted, he's a teenage boy and I am an adult woman, among other differences). I even highlighted any quotes in my Kindle that rang true to me. There are probably about half a dozen of those. Without getting specific, I would say that I felt like the author made the illness into a dichotomy: either you are inside your home and afraid to so much as set foot in your backyard, or you step outside and you are released from your self-made prison. It's not like that, in my experience. Agoraphobes carry our prisons with us. It's a constant feeling of being trapped, whether you are inside or outside. Think about the origin of the word: "agora" is Greek for marketplace. So, you can think of it as a fear of the open marketplace (say, a grocery store or shopping mall--whatever triggers you). The fear of being disoriented and losing control in that crowd, which may or may not lead to a panic attack, is what agoraphobes try to avoid. Although the writing style was not personally to my taste, the book was a fast read, and I wanted to see if it redeemed itself. In terms of characters, I think I have said all that I can about the main character (Solomon) without giving anything away. I found his parents to be totally unbelievable, but they generally are in YA books, for the sake of convenience, if for no other reason. Though she has a small role, Lisa's mom seemed to me to have more depth than some of the more prominent characters. I did not find Lisa herself to be particularly convincing, especially in her contrived plan and determination to see it through. What senior in high school would do that, when she probably could have written a great essay about, say, her mom, or even herself. In most of her POV chapters, I could tell that a male author was writing from a female's perspective, and it just didn't work. I found myself most intrigued by Clark, perhaps because he did not have any POV chapters. It would have been illuminating, and I think would have made the narrative more cohesive, if he were given just one or two chapters, as there were a couple of aspects to his personality/behavior that were swept under the rug or not satisfactorily explained, in my opinion. I realize the story wasn't his story, but there were some loose ends at the end of the book as far as he was concerned. So, after all of my criticism, why two stars instead of one? I do think the author did a good job of cultivating a relationship at least between Clark and Solomon, and perhaps even between Sol and Lisa. There were pop culture references and nerdy sorts of activities for them to bond over. The author handled the awkwardness of those first moments alone with someone you don't know well, or someone you are trying to impress, by instilling awkwardness into the dialogue. Considering how much time the two or three of them spent together, which had to be spelled out instead of glossed over, this aspect of the story was deftly handled.

Ever since Solomon Reed had a public breakdown at his junior high, he's been a recluse, dealing

with agoraphobia and panic attacks so severe that they prevent him from leaving his home. Fortunately, however, he has sympathetic parents and a grandmother who lives nearby and is also a source of support. He has another issue, as well, having realized that he is gay, but assumes that that will never matter, if he spends the rest of his life at home. Solomon's former classmate, overachiever Lisa Praytor, who has always wondered what happened to Solomon after he left school, is desperate to leave her California town. When she discovers a scholarship that will give her a full ride to a university out of state, where she plans to major in psychology, she decides to apply. The only trouble is that she needs to write and submit an essay on her personal experience with mental illness. When she learns from Solomon's mother that her son lives at home, she becomes determined to get to know Solomon and cure his condition. At first, her plan works, and she even introduces her boyfriend Clark to Solomon, with whom he forms a friendship (since they have the same interest in science fiction among other things). However, when Solomon begins to have feelings for Clark, Lisa begins to suspect her boyfriend is really gay, and Clark decides to tell Solomon about the essay, things become far more complicated. This book has three teen characters who are mostly believable and sympathetic even when they're doing the wrong thing. I liked the rapport that developed between the three, and the positive relationship Solomon had with his family. Although the pacing seemed rushed in places, I was impressed that the author didn't sugarcoat the effects of mental illness or the "recovery" process. Overall, I would recommend it to young adults looking for novels about teens with mental illness, especially ones with male protagonists.

"Highly Illogical Behavior" is a very special book indeed. The main character Solomon Reed has agoraphobia, he fears going outside his own home and frequently hyperventilate when stressed out. Lisa, a girl who saw Solomon freak out Three years ago, wants to be a shrink. She decides to help Sol become normal again. She'll pretend to be his friend and prove what a great therapist she'll become. Her boyfriend Clark will help her. But Lisa did not consider the possibility that she and Clark would actually become Sol's friends for real ...A few Things that made me like this book: The characters are strong and easy to believe in. They are very different from each other, and that's something I really like. The book is full of good humor and gives you a good feeling. There is a lot of honesty in this book. It describes a panic attack perfectly, at least I think so. The characters show real emotions. There's a real story to this book, a meaning behind it and a satisfying end. This book talks about angst and fear of the outside world in a way that is not depressing, but can help People understand those who struggle With stuff like Solomon. After Reading this book I felt ashamed of myself. I had a boy in class when I was 14 who was "different". He acted more or less like a child. I

had a few classes alone With him because I struggled With Math. I felt bad because I had to have "extra classes" With a guy who was, well, not normal. But the guy was funny and kind. He was strange and I did not always get him, but I liked him. We could've been friend, but I was scared other People would think I was like him, lesser smart or something. Now, Solomon Reed from this book is not lesser smart. He doesn't have a syndrome, but the story still got me thinking that we have a way of seperating ourselves from those we think are different. The world should not be like that. We should be able to Accept everyone for who they are. We should be able to be friends. I highly recommend this book! Give it a try.

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