



# AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A RECOVERING SKINHEAD

**THE FRANK MEEINK  
STORY** AS TOLD TO  
**JODY M. ROY, Ph.D.**

"Frank Meeink's book  
has much to teach  
all of us. Don't miss it."

**DR. CORNEL WEST**  
Author of *Race Matters*

"Frank Meeink's story...  
has the power  
to change lives."

**MORRIS DEES**  
Founder & Chief Trial Counsel  
Southern Poverty Law Center

INTRODUCTION BY  
**ELIZABETH WURTZEL**

*Author of Prozac Nation*



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# Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead

Frank Meeink

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A convalescing SKINHEAD IS Frank Meeink's uncooked telling of his descent into America's Nazi underground and his final overcome hatred and addiction. Frank's violent youth in South Philadelphia primed him to hate. He made effortless prey for a small staff of skinhead gang recruiters led via his older cousin. At fourteen, he shaved his head. by way of sixteen, Frank was once probably the most infamous skinhead gang leaders at the East Coast. by means of eighteen, he was once doing demanding time in an Illinois prison. at the back of bars, Frank started to query his hatred, thank you largely to his African-American teammates on a jail soccer league. presently after being paroled, Frank defected from the white supremacy movement. The Oklahoma urban bombing encouraged him to attempt to forestall the hatred he as soon as Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead had felt. He started talking on behalf of the Anti-Defamation League and seemed on MTV and different nationwide networks in his efforts to forestall the hate. In time, Frank partnered with the Philadelphia Flyers to release an cutting edge hate prevention application known as concord via Hockey. he's at present constructing the same software for the Iowa Chops, an AHL crew affiliated with the Anaheim Ducks. the tale of Frank Meeink's downfall and redemption has the ability to open hearts and alter lives.

In June of 2001, I had the chance to affix my mom and a contingent from her institution on a travel of the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, California. even supposing it's not that i am an educator, my mother concept i'd have an interest in going alongside (not to say spending a bit time together with her considering the fact that we are living over four hundred miles apart). The event made an incredible impact on me. The museum used to be a lot more than I expected, masking quite a lot of topics. It was once an eye fixed opener to claim the least. besides the standard museum screens and recorded presentations, there have been additionally dwell presentations, one a Holocaust survivor whose tale was once heartbreaking and one other used to be a former neo-Nazi, whose tale was once not just unhappy yet very frightening. particularly scary due to their growing to be numbers and with simply how prepared teams just like the neo-Nazis had become. they're breeding grounds for domestic grown terrorists. a special kind than the basic islamists we listen approximately at the information today, yet related of their violent, passionate anger and self-righteousness. This earlier 12 months I examine a small protest in my very own city, a meeting of neo-Nazis protesting unlawful immigration. The anti-protesters some distance outnumbered the skinheads. there have been many jokes made on the fee of the skinheads. I learn many of the reviews at the newspaper's site and determined to do some research. I visited a random white supremacist website. I confess i used to be embarrassed to be doing so. It felt unsuitable because it is going opposed to on the subject of every thing I believe. I watched a recruitment video, which i discovered extra funny than factual--in an offended making type of way. I learn the tenets of the organization, and whereas so much made me cringe, Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead I additionally may well see the draw. They spoke to a person's feel of self-worth, to the father or mother who's suffering to elevate a child, to a person's have to consider safe and safe, and to development a cohesive community. there has been additionally whatever approximately drug use, the way it hurts anyone and neighborhood greater than it helps. That one particularly

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shocked me, i must say, as I are likely to affiliate drug abuse with teams like that. i will be able to see why anyone should be drawn to a firm like that while I sat there feeling a bit unwell to my stomach. In fact, i believe that is a part of what made me suppose sick--how effortless it'd be to sway somebody to that method of thinking, counting on a person's mind set and state of affairs in life. Groups, gangs and organisations like this prey on those who suppose disenfranchised and aren't proud of society or their lives. might be that individual is feeling on their own within Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead the world, battered and bullied. teams like this, at the least on a few level, supply teens a kinfolk of varieties and a feeling of security. that is precisely what the neo-Nazi skinheads provided Frank Meeink and he his personal recruits. In the introduction, Elizabeth Wrutzel writes: this is often the truth: I learn Autobiography of a recuperating Skinhead with my mouth both truly or metaphorically agape, simply because I simply couldn't think someone might be this a lot of an fool and reside to inform the tale so sincerely and cleanly. i do not understand what the worst of it is: the racism, the anti-Semitism, the sexism, the alcoholism, the addiction, the depression, the abuse, the violence, the homicide, the suicide - or simply the way in which these kinds of maladies co-exist. Frank Meeink's tale is scary and crazy, however it is principally a unusually absurdist drama that forces us to invite a troubling query approximately American life: Why, in a land with quite a bit opportunity, is a severe mass of teens picking hatred over possibility? It used to be with that very query in brain that i made a decision to learn this book, why I visited that website, and why that presentation years in the past me so much. i don't imagine i'll ever have the capacity to really comprehend the whys in solution to questions like this, yet probably i will achieve a bit insight. i am a real believer that armed with knowledge, we will paintings towards change--of course, it takes greater than that, yet it is a start. This isn't a good looking e-book to read. it's uncooked and immediately forward. i may certainly pay attention Frank's voice, however, within the phrases I learn at the page. Frank is particularly subject of truth approximately his experiences, and with strong reason. His tale is what it is. He didn't Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead sugarcoat something or attempt to make himself glance better. and that is what makes this this sort of tough read. Yet, i could not cease examining as soon as I started. I knew stepping into that this publication might make me angry--and it did. It additionally supplied me with a standpoint into why anyone may flip to the neo-Nazi skinhead movement. there have been moments while i couldn't support yet to suppose for Frank and recognize his energy and skill Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead to beat his anger and hate and switch his existence around. Frank isn't really so diversified from anybody of us. My center broke for that little boy who used to be significantly overwhelmed via his stepfather and many times rejected via his mother. He used to be the son of drug addicts. He used to be misplaced and alone, looking at any place and in all places for approval and guidance. He acquired it the place he could. Frank used to be fourteen whilst he used to be brought to his first neo-Nazi skinheads, his cousin and his cousin's friends. They took him less than their wing and made him believe part of something. Frank may cross directly to begin his personal workforce of skinheads again in South Philly, the place he used to be from, and he earned a name for being some of the most brutal and violent skinheads out there. He was once merciless and cruel in a fight, yet at the inside, he was once nonetheless that little boy yearning approval and attention. Frank, at age 17, landed in an grownup felony after kidnapping and approximately murdering a tender man. It used to be a get up demand him and person who sparked the start Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead of a transformation in his manner of thinking. in the course of his teenager years, he became a lot of his anger and frustration in the direction of different races, gays, homeless people, and Jewish

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people. As an adult, however, as his hatred for those teams diminished, he turned extra concerned with medicinal drugs and his alcoholism worsened. Frank made a number of makes Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead an attempt to scrub up his existence and stay sober, however it proved to be too daunting of a task. Time and time again, Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead he failed. What makes all of it the extra heartbreaking is that he had loads going for him, and but he had but to accommodate the underlying explanations that lead him habit and, initially, the skinhead movement. till he handled these issues, he would not have the capacity to get a greater deal with on his addiction, less flow on together with his life. Frank was once lucky to have friends and family who stood by way of him via all of his transgressions. even if he was once at his worst, they have been within the background, helpless to help, yet keen to seize him whilst he fell nonetheless. Strangers, these he as soon as might have quicker kicked along with his document Martens than grew to become to for help, reached out to supply him support. certainly one of my favourite moments within the publication is while Frank is invited to hitch a religious study Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead consultation in jail. he's the one white individual Autobiography of a Recovering Skinhead there. regardless of his attractiveness and swastika tattoo, the black inmates nonetheless made room for him. This isn't a ebook approximately white supremacy. Ultimately, Frank's tale is a coming of age story, one approximately baby abuse, gangs and drug dependency. it's a tale of tragedy in addition to one in all hope. Frank's violence and hatred opposed to others is certainly not appropriate neither is this e-book intended to excuse something he has done--it is just a glance into one man's existence and the way he ended up at the course that he did. Autobiography of a recuperating Skinhead is a crucial publication that's as suitable this present day because it might were while Frank Meeink was once starting to be up.

## **Autobiography Of A Recovering Skinhead**

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