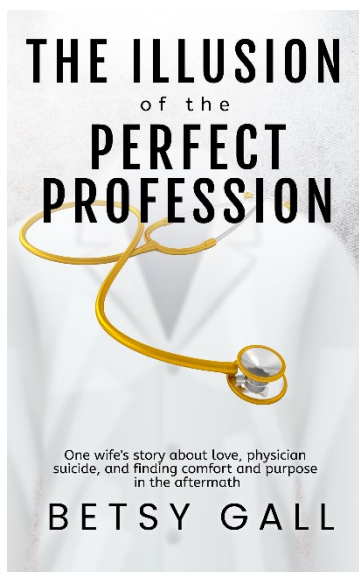

One Wife's Story about Love, Physician Suicide, and Finding Comfort and Purpose in the after Math

Betsy Gall was living the American dream. Married to an oncologist with three healthy children; life was pretty darn good. That all changed on Thanksgiving Day of 2019 when her "life of the party" physician husband took his own life. Matthew Taylor Gall, M.D., M.S., who had devoted his entire life to saving lives, was dead at the young age of 49. *The Illusion of the Perfect Profession* is a culmination of Betsy's journals, letters to God, and her journey with faith throughout this horrific traumatic experience that left her family shattered and asking how could this happen. Through reading and research, Betsy discovered that physician suicide is a trend. One million patients lose their doctors to suicide every single year. This is a subject matter that, unfortunately, needs to be widely discussed to help change a system that is undoubtedly broken. This book is one wife's story about love, physician suicide, and finding comfort and purpose in the aftermath.

What people are saying:

Suicide has reached the point where, like knowing someone with cancer, we all know someone who has killed themselves. Anyone and everyone is at risk, and that includes people in the medical profession. The saying, 'doctor heal thyself,' is easier said than done, and tragically every year, doctors die by suicide at a rate higher than that of the general population. It happened to my family in 2017 when we lost my ex-husband, who was also a cardiothoracic surgeon. It was years later when I met Betsy, and we soon learned how much we had in common. Her drive to help others going through the same experience and to offer hope and healing, courage, and community to others who have lost a loved one to suicide is inspiring. One thing is clear, optics are deceiving, even for doctors.

~Dr. Jennifer Ashton, ABC News Chief Medical Correspondent and author of *Life After Suicide*.



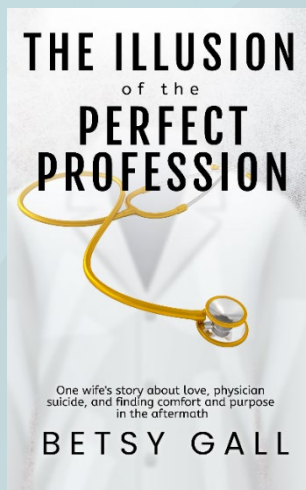
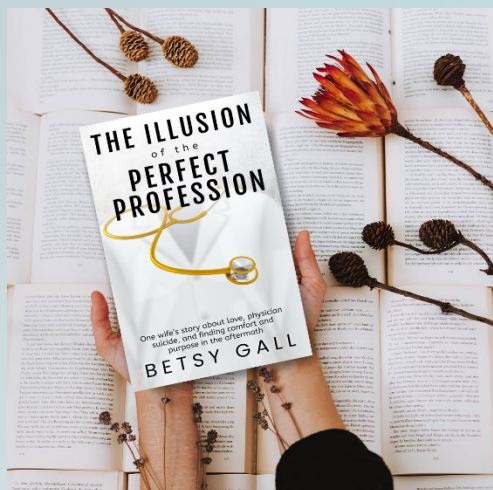
Betsy Gall and her three children, Grady, Gavin, Sophie, and their dog Liberty, split their time between Charlotte, North Carolina, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she focuses on faith, family, and friends. In addition, Betsy is an active real estate agent, investor, landlord, and habitual remodeler. Betsy is speaking all over the country about physician suicide after her oncologist husband, Dr. Matthew Gall, tragically and unexpectedly took his own life on Thanksgiving Day in 2019. In her spare time, Betsy loves to ski downhill, spend time at her lake home, and exercise. In addition, she continues to give back to Angel Foundation and the Dr. Lorna Breen Foundation.

The Illusion of the Perfect Profession
By Betsy Gall
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The Illusion of the Perfect Profession

One Wife's Story about Love, Physician Suicide, and Finding Comfort and Purpose in the After Math



About the book:

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Excerpt from Introduction

It's 3 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning—the bedroom is dark. I'm scared, and my heart is beating out of my chest. I woke up to Matthew saying, "What's going to happen, Bets?"

Oh, dear Lord, I thought to myself, the sleep medication didn't work. Why Lord, why didn't it work? My husband Matthew was very sick. He was suicidal last night.

Last night, Chris, my brother-in-law, was trying desperately to pry open our master bathroom door in order to get Matt to hand over the small, silver handgun he was holding. Matt was wearing a beautiful blue dress shirt. My husband always prided himself on dressing impeccably, and today was no exception. We had planned on remodeling this house, but things here in North Carolina have "gone south" quickly, so I'd simply had the bathroom painted white, making it feel clean and bright.

Matthew kept asking, "Is Sophie home?" And he repeatedly said, "It's over. It's over." Sophie is our 13-year-old daughter, and her bedroom is directly above our master bathroom. "Yes, she is home," I said. Diane, my sweet, red-headed sister-in-law was pacing outside the bedroom door. "I'm going to call 911," she kept repeating. I said, "Matthew, you are a child of God. You are a child of God!" The look on Chris's face was panicked and pained. Sweat beads were rolling down his forehead. He didn't have half the strength of my husband.

Matthew is my muscular, powerful, brilliant partner of 20 years. He has the strongest mind and the strongest body. *How did we get here?* I thought to myself. Grady suddenly walked down the hallway. "Grady! Grady, Dad has a gun. Can you help?" I pleaded. Grady, my beautiful, handsome 17-year-old boy, walked up to the door and said, "Dad...Dad... I've been there. I understand how you feel. Please don't do this. Open the door."

"Enough!" I screamed. "THIS IS OVER!" Chris looked at me, with a petrified look on his face. "Matthew, this is OVER!" I yelled. Grady and Chris pushed open the door and got the gun out of Matthew's hand.

I'm floating. I've been floating for about the past three months. I feel like I am in a bad made-for-TV movie. God is here though; God is with me. *What in the hell has happened to my husband? We've only been in North Carolina for three months. What has happened to our perfectly normal, beautiful, all-American life?* "Matthew, you're going to the emergency room. Chris, Di, and Grady are taking you to the ER."

I'm way too tired; I can't go. I am exhausted. Matthew hasn't slept for more than three or four hours a night for the past twelve weeks; therefore, my sleep has been irregular and cut short as well. Tomorrow is Thanksgiving, and I will have a lot to do.

I've been fighting for Matthew since mid-August. The oncology practice that Matthew recently joined is not what we thought it was going to be—and this has contributed greatly to Matthew's stress. Everything that could go wrong has. I have a plan to get us out of this situation, but Matthew has to stay with me. *I can't lose him, I think to myself.*

Off they go to the emergency room, about ten minutes away from our home. They drive off in Chris and Di's big, baby-blue Cadillac. They are taking my husband, a physician, who has never suffered from depression or even believed in depression for that matter, to the ER because he is suicidal. Matt had once told our oldest son Grady, "Don't use your depression as a crutch." And he also told him that "Suicide is for cowards."

This is not a joke. Matthew Taylor Gall, age 49, MD, MS, was threatening to kill himself. I have to ask myself, *"How, God? How did this become my life?"*



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