

## *Harmonic Feedback*

**Tara Kelly**

**Reviewed by: Mikha Kounouho, 14**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of *Be the Star You Are!* Charity**

**[www.bethestaryouare.org](http://www.bethestaryouare.org)**

Sixteen-year-old Drea isn't normal, or at least that is what everyone else tells her. The doctors diagnosed her with ADHD and Asperger's syndrome when she was young, so she has grown up surrounded by the words freak and socially immature. She never had many friends other than her guitar and sound equipment, but she can't help but wonder if there really is anything wrong with her. All she has ever wanted is to be normal, yet everyone tells her she's different just because she chooses not to follow certain social rules that don't make sense to her. She doesn't get why things like lying and faking are deemed normal and acceptable by society, nevertheless, she finds herself doing so just to attempt to fit in.

Finally, when she and her mother move in with her Grandmother in Bellingham, things start to look up for Drea. She meets Naomi, her free-spirited and wild neighbor who becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> person in a long time to give her a chance at friendship, and Justin, the charming new kid looking for a fresh start in the small town. For the first time in forever, she has real friends who mean the world to her. As the three bond over their love for music and their band, Drea finds it is easy to forget she is different, but, even so, the unspoken truth about her ADHD and Asperger's leaves a burden on her shoulders. She must decide whether or not to tell them the truth, even if she may risk losing the closest friends she has ever had.

This story is truly heart wrenching, breathtaking, and beautiful all at once. Drea's story is filled with sadness and pain, but within there is truth and hope in her resolve. This book makes you question not only the unspoken societal rules that we often live by, but also what it really means to be normal. *Harmonic Feedback* is a wonderful glimpse into the mind of a teenage girl who reveals that diagnoses are not labels meant to put people in a box but rather, in her case, a different way of thinking. It serves as an inspiring reminder to question society's norms as well as your own actions.

Though there is much to love about this book, it does have some mature content making it suitable only for teens 13 and up. Drugs, romance, death, and violence are found in the story, so I would not recommend it for very young readers. Nevertheless, for older readers, these aspects may bring a stroke of realism similar to the darker parts of everyday life. As this book is one that I would definitely read multiple times, I would recommend this book be bought for readers 13 and up. The story's themes of hope and friendship may serve as valuable reoccurring reminders to appreciate the beauty of life and to never be afraid to take a chance.

**Recommended Titles:**

*Hello?* by Liza Wiemer

*It's My Life* by Stacey Ramey

*Fear of Missing Out* by Kate McGovern