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# Author Bios

 AMBRA WATKINS

*Escape from Dark Places: Guideposts to Hope in an Age of Anxiety & Depression*

*A motivating story of triumph over anxiety and depression, this mother-and-son journey offers practical steps toward mental and spiritual health that will empower young people to find purpose and hope in the postmodern Age of Anxiety.*

# AUTHOR BIOS

## **Bios**

### **2-Line Bio**

Ambra Watkins, MA, PMP, is a nonfiction author and organizational change consultant who provides the right tools for helping young people triumph over anxiety and depression.

### **Short Bio**

Author and speaker Ambra Watkins is a training and change expert with an MA and a PMP certification who provides tools for intergenerational dialogue that empower young people to triumph over anxiety and depression. Find out more about Ambra and her book *Escape from Dark Places* at [ambrawatkins.org](http://ambrawatkins.org). Email: [ambra@ambrawatkins.org](mailto:ambra@ambrawatkins.org).

### **Medium Bio**

Author and speaker Ambra Watkins is a Boomer mom intrigued by the Millennial generation. She is concerned for trophy-kids whose high expectations crashed into the reality of an economic downturn and for parents who are trying desperately to help them find purpose in the postmodern world. With an MA, a PMP, and fifteen years of experience, Ambra uses her knowledge and expertise to provide young people with tools for triumph over anxiety and depression through effective intergenerational dialogue. Find out more about Ambra and her book *Escape from Dark Places* at [ambrawatkins.org](http://ambrawatkins.org). Email: [ambra@ambrawatkins.org](mailto:ambra@ambrawatkins.org).

### **Long Bio**

Ambra was born the daughter of a Navy pilot at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Naval officers seldom stayed at a duty station for more than a year in those days, so she was barely two months old when the family packed up their belongings in pursuit of new adventures.

Ambra was the middle daughter in a family of three girls. Her dad describes the sisters' personalities this way: "When we tucked them in at night, the oldest daughter

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didn't say anything, the middle daughter (Ambra) said, 'Thank you,' and the youngest daughter hollered, 'What are you doing?'"

As her dad neared retirement, the family moved back to their hometown in lower Arkansas (or LA as they like to call it) where Ambra graduated from high school. Afterwards, she pursued a liberal arts education at Stephens College, in Missouri. In the summer after her freshman year, Ambra went on a blind date that changed her life forever. She married the next year, her husband joined the Navy, and she was off to yet another duty station, this time it was the snowy but beautiful Pine Tree state—Maine. There she completed her bachelor's degree at Bates College.

Before too many years, the family grew from two to four, so the Watkins decided to leave the Navy and settle in Houston close to Ambra's family. A few years passed, and the family became five. Government contracting proved to be just as transient as the military. The family packed up and moved to Alabama, where Ambra stayed home with the kids and wrote freelance articles; then to North Carolina, where she earned her master's degree and started a career in technical writing.

Ambra worked in the insurance software industry, and then transitioned into the customer relationship management space where she worked as documentation and training manager. When the company was bought out, Ambra consulted for a marketing analytics firm where she implemented an enterprise knowledge management system. Upon project completion, Ambra provided instructional design services in the financial sector.

From Charlotte, the Watkins moved to the Washington DC metro area where Ambra worked on communications at an analytics company in support of the Air Force Surgeon General. Eager to consult again, Ambra joined Accenture as a talent and organization performance manager where she consulted for a utility in Pennsylvania, the Office of Personnel Management in DC, and the world's largest retailer in Arkansas.

Before they knew it, Ambra and her husband found themselves as spectators at their youngest son's high school graduation. In the ultimate attempt to avoid empty nester syndrome, they dropped him off at the university and headed overseas. They had both been hired to work for AECOM, a leading design and development firm, on a

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\$50 billion infrastructure and housing project in Libya, Africa. The journey to Libya was long, as it included a layover in Germany when Ambra made the mistake of eating fish on the plane. Then, after spending hours in the hot, smoke-filled Libyan airport and enduring the treacherous van ride into Tripoli, they sat on the hard couch in the tiny apartment that smelled of sewage and asked each other, “What have we done?”

But they grew to love the Libyan people, and as Knowledge Transfer and Training Director, Ambra had the privilege of rolling out a learning program that prepared 1600 Libyan Nationals to lead the development initiative. The Watkins headed back to the good ‘ole USA about a year before the revolution, which quickly curtailed the program and Saif Gaddafi’s plan to develop the coastline for tourism. Sadly, the country remains unstable to this day.

The Watkins ended up in Florida where Ambra managed IT programs at a large utility company. Afterwards, they moved to Denver, Colorado, where she and her husband enjoy a view of the mountain ranges and spend downtime hiking, biking, snowshoeing, and skiing. Ambra is pursuing her goal of becoming a full-time author and establishing Guideposts to Hope, Inc., to provide tools that will empower young people to find purpose and hope in the postmodern Age of Anxiety.

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