

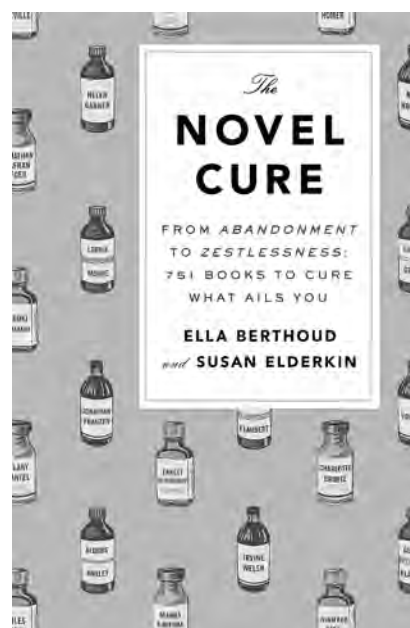
Tekst 4

Bibliotherapy

Textual healing

The Novel Cure: From Abandonment to Zestlessness – 751 Books to Cure What Ails You. By Ella Berthoud and Susan Elderkin. *Penguin Press*; 420 pages; \$26.95. *Canongate*; £17

- 1 **O**N A therapist's couch, a patient complains of heartache, work stress and a creepy sense of alienation. The session ends with a prescription: Ali Smith's 2011 novel, *There but for the*, a darkly amusing book about a man who escapes a dinner party by locking himself in the host's spare bedroom, which he refuses to leave for months. It is an inspired tonic – absurd and vicariously satisfying.
- 2 This is "Shelf Help", a service from the School of Life, an enterprise that caters to the financially comfortable and emotionally discontented (with lectures and programmes about "how to balance work with life", for example, or "how to be creative"). Customers seeking bibliotherapy trade £80 (\$130) for an hour of chat with an insightful and dauntingly well-read "therapist", who then crafts a bespoke reading list designed to meet someone's special needs.
- 3 Fiction is often more powerful than self-help books according to Ella Berthoud, a bibliotherapist at the School of Life, whose "patients" range from the newly retired to the newly divorced. She reckons that a good book leaves people feeling altered in a fundamental way, and life is too short for bad books.
- 4 But if a session of bibliotherapy seems a bit dear, help is at hand with *The Novel Cure*, an A-Z of literary remedies by Ms Berthoud and Susan Elderkin, a novelist and fellow bibliophile. This entertaining tour of 2,000 years of literature matches beloved books with specific ailments, from "abandonment" (try Kent Haruf's heartening *Plainsong*) to "zestlessness" (go for the "tumult and tumble" of E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime*). The result is astute and often amusing. Written in plain and inviting language, *The Novel Cure* is a charming addition to any library. Time spent leafing through its pages is inspiring – even therapeutic, if not quite therapy.



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- 1p 14 How is the topic 'bibliotherapy' introduced in paragraph 1?
- A by giving an example of how it works
 - B by questioning its overall effectiveness
 - C by reviewing a book that is written for it
 - D by stressing its innovative character
- 1p 15 Which of the following is part of 'bibliotherapy'?
- A a membership of a specialised reading club
 - B a number of obligatory background articles
 - C a personalised selection of literary works
 - D a therapeutic session in a local library
- 1p 16 In welk van de volgende fragmenten klinkt milde spot over het verschijnsel 'bibliotherapy' door?
- A "It is an inspired tonic – absurd and vicariously satisfying." (alinea 1)
 - B "an enterprise that caters to the financially comfortable and emotionally discontented" (alinea 2)
 - C "Fiction is often more powerful than self-help books" (alinea 3)
 - D "The result is astute and often amusing." (alinea 4)
 - E "Written in plain and inviting language, *The Novel Cure* is a charming addition to any library." (alinea 4)