



Any Body Can Heal: A Memoir About Facing Down Trauma

Sara Davidson

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Any Body Can Heal is a powerful memoir about turmoil and growth.

A moving memoir about overcoming trauma, psychotherapist Sara Davidson's *Any Body Can Heal* deals with the aftermath of multiple traumatic experiences in an informative manner.

Davidson is the survivor of three traumatic events. When she was twenty-five, while teaching South African elementary students how to run a relay race, she was robbed at knifepoint. A year later, in Thailand, she was sucked underwater in the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami; she ran for higher ground and waited days for rescue. And when she was thirty-two and teaching physical education in Trinidad, masked gunmen broke into her home and raped her for hours. These experiences led her to get a degree in psychology and become a trauma-informed psychotherapist. Still, it took years of work and dedicated therapy to relearn how to function in society, not precluding sudden events that could send her body back into trauma mode.

Though the bulk of the book is devoted to Davidson's personal story, it also delves into complementary topics like the neuroscience behind trauma, using clear language to dissect related intricacies. Overall, the work is split into four parts: before, after, "beautiful adaptations," and now. The coverage of "before" is brief, focused on Davidson's idyllic childhood in Canada and her love of sports prior to her traumas. In covering the "after" period, the book goes into the mental and physical side effects of the attacks, covering her grueling efforts at recovery, education, and healing. The final two parts are concise, discussing myriad ways the human body adapts after traumatic experiences, Davidson's traumatizing birth experience that led to an emergency C-section, and her present. Strategies and resources for fellow trauma survivors conclude the book, including information about techniques like breathwork, humming, mindfulness, and radical acceptance.

While the book's content is heavy, care is taken with how its darker details are meted out. Indeed, the scenes covering Davidson's traumas are shared only to the extent that is necessary for the narrative; the book does not dwell on their specifics. Further, much is handled in retrospect, placing distance between the book's reflections and the moments themselves. Still, the prose is visceral in describing tough experiences, with Davidson revealing, "Trauma does not make you stronger, nor did it strengthen me."

A powerful memoir about turmoil and growth, *Any Body Can Heal* celebrates the human spirit and what it can overcome.

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