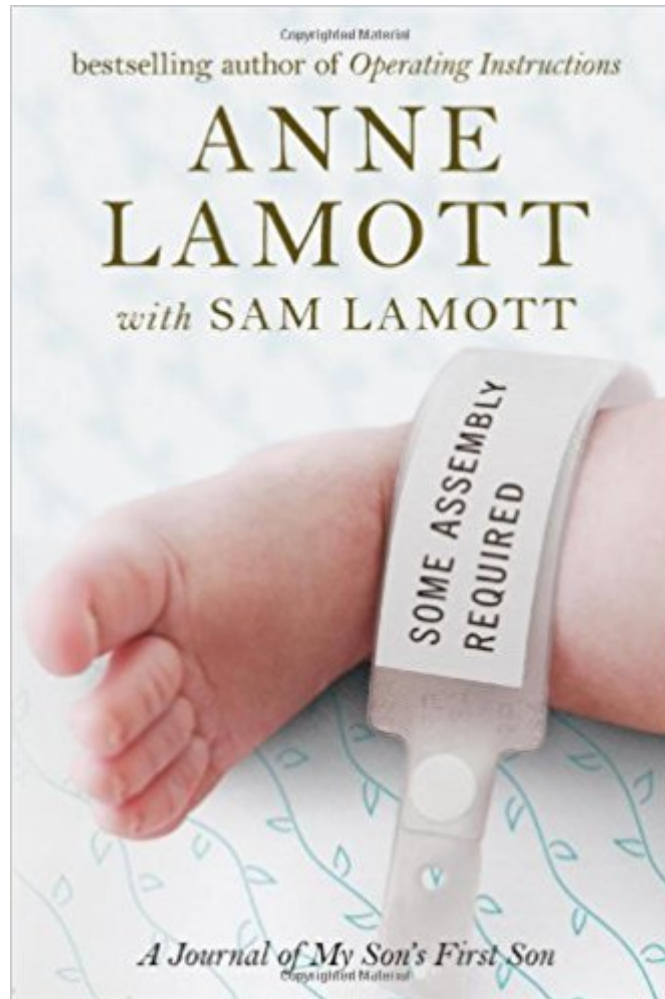


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Some Assembly Required: A Journal Of My Son's First Son



Synopsis

Look out for Anne's next book, *Hallelujah Anyway*, coming April 2017. If there is a doyenne of the parenting memoir, it would be Anne Lamott. • "Time In Some Assembly Required, Anne Lamott enters a new and unexpected chapter in her own life: grandmotherhood. Stunned to learn that her son, Sam, is about to become a father at nineteen, Lamott begins a journal about the first year of her grandson Jax's life. In careful and often hilarious detail, Lamott and Sam "about whom she first wrote so movingly in *Operating Instructions*" struggle to balance their changing roles. By turns poignant and funny, honest and touching, *Some Assembly Required* is the true story of how the birth of a baby changes a family "as this book will change everyone who reads it.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Riverhead Books; 1st edition (March 20, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 159448841X

ISBN-13: 978-1594488412

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars • See all reviews • (140 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #767,049 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #180 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Relationships > Grandparenting #466 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Parenting > Parenting Boys #21004 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Memoirs

Customer Reviews

I read Anne Lamott's book about her son Sam's first year of life (*Operating Instructions*) back during my first year of motherhood. So, in some twisted and narcissistic way, I had it in my head that her son Sam was about the same age as my son--as that is when I became aware of him. (It could also have been a persistent "mommy brain" notion that never quite left me.) So it was with a bit of a shock when I saw Lamott's new memoir, *Some Assembly Required: A Journal of My Son's First Son*. "How could little Sam possibly have a child?" I marveled to myself. Of course, Sam isn't 7 like my son. He is 19. (Still pretty young to be a father but certainly within the realm of believability.) Always wanting to find out "how things turned out" in any story, I eagerly started the book--excited to catch up with Anne and Sam's life since we last spent time together. Within a few pages, I was

reminded of just why I love Anne Lamott. She has a brutal honesty about herself and her life that is both self-deprecating, amusing and authentic. She writes from her heart, and she isn't afraid to show us all aspects of herself--from her neurotic and selfish sides to the spiritual and open searching soul she works on so assiduously. Her writing is never fancy or condescending. Rather, it is heartfelt yet with a sly irreverence and joking tone that always lets you know she is aware of her frailties and flaws. I'd love to have her as a friend. The subject of her son's first son is fraught with all kinds of emotional minefields that challenge Anne in a myriad of different ways. Not only does she struggle with the idea becoming a grandmother at the age of 55, but her son's complex and volatile relationship with his girlfriend Amy adds a tricky new dimension to Anne's relationship with her grandchild Jax.

As both a parent and grandparent- to-be, I couldn't resist ordering this one. To my surprise, it arrived a day earlier than expected and I put everything aside to read it immediately. Written in daily and dated journal form, author Anne Lamott and her son not only write about the transformation a grandchild brings but also reveal the turbulence experienced by very young parents. When grandchild Jax arrived into the world, Lamott's son Sam was 19 and his girlfriend Amy was 20. Their relationship was bumpy even before the baby came. So of course the bumpiness and stress continues while caring for a new baby, especially since Sam is juggling school and fatherhood and Amy can feel overwhelmed. But there are pleasures as well, watching Jax change and grow. The book is more than just a portrayal of young parents and their challenges. It is also an honest, even painfully honest, admission of the unique feelings that come with grandparenting. Based on Lamott's experiences, these feelings can be profoundly different than parenting one's own child...with some overlap, of course. She becomes upset and even territorial about decisions affecting Jax, including such events as where he will be baptized. Because I was drawn to this book due to the impending arrival of a grandchild, I don't know if I can be anything close to objective about this memoir. I can step back enough to see how the day to day descriptions of a baby's tiniest changes might not make for enthralling reading by all. But I was swept up by the book. I was intrigued by a letter Lamott wrote to her grandson on the Secret of Life. On another day she "interviews" her son about his grandmother as well as how his identity has been affected by parenthood.

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