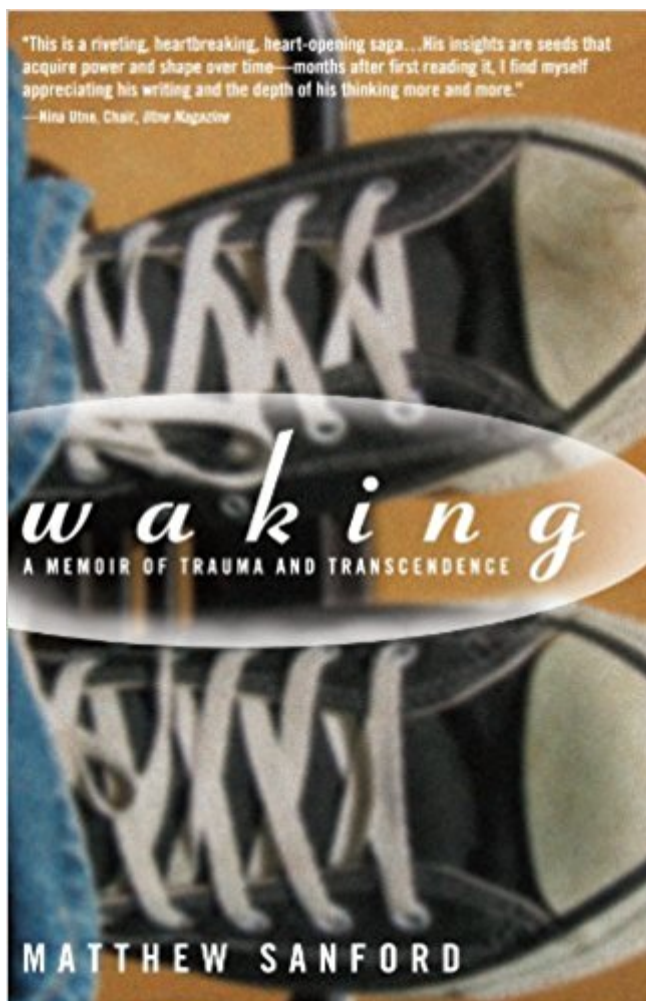


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# Waking: A Memoir Of Trauma And Transcendence



## Synopsis

Matthew Sanford's life and body were irrevocably changed at age 13 when his family's car skidded off a snowy Iowa overpass, killing Matt's father and sister and leaving him paralyzed from the chest down. This pivotal event set Matt on a lifelong journey, from his intensive care experiences at the Mayo Clinic to becoming a paralyzed yoga teacher and founder of a nonprofit organization. Forced to explore what it truly means to live in a body, he emerges with an entirely new view of being a "whole" person. In *Waking* - his searingly candid memoir - Sanford delivers a powerful message about the endurance of the human spirit and of the body that houses it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Losing his father, his sister--and his legs--in a terrible car accident at the age of 13 did not stop Matthew Sanford from living his life . . . In *Waking*, he offers a powerful, honest account of his battle: awakening a spirit within a damaged body.” —*Psychology Today*

“This is a riveting, heartbreaking, heart-opening saga. . . . Months after first reading it, I find myself appreciating his writing and the depth of his thinking more and more.” —Nina Utne, Chair, Utne magazine

“His paralysis has taught him powerful lessons about consciousness . . . [Sanford] will truly dare readers to appreciate their own bodies and lives.” —*Yoga Journal*

“From a hard-won understanding of how the body has intelligence and is an aspect of the soul, the author presents us with a new revitalizing vision of what it is to be human.” —Susan Griffin, author of *Woman and Nature*

MATTHEW SANFORD is the founder of the non-profit organization Mind Body Solutions. He specializes in adapting yoga to people living with disabilities and teaches workshops around the country. He currently resides in Orono, Minnesota.

This book is a reference guide for life. I did not expect to be so taken in, so much a part of his trauma and transcendence. A mirror to my soul. I am going to read this book twice, maybe 3 times, so I can apply the life lessons for living whole. Beautiful writing, absolutely beautiful. I have had both feet operated on twice, and contacted an infection at the surgery center. My podiatrist said if the 6 weeks of aggressive IV antibiotics don't kill the infection, there is a possibility of amputating the big toe, but I refuse to accept that possibility. I have been an athlete since age 10 and now I'm 54. Running, biking, hot yoga, karate, etc. I'm literally at a loss about what I can do and who I am. Exercise was for my mind and my body. I feel like I have a friend or a buddy in reading Matthew's healing stories and encouraged to write my own. Thank you Matthew. Thank you. Amy

Waking is a remarkable memoir with vivid descriptions of trauma and healing experienced by a 13 year old boy as he progresses through his next 3 decades of life with paraplegia. Sanford does a beautiful job illustrating the limits of the medical model to address whole mind and body healing for people experiencing serious trauma. He further offers healing practices that transcend linear, formulaic medical protocols. It is nothing short of amazing that Sanford discovers aspects of mind-body work that completely change his experience in his paralyzed body, but even more amazing is his ability to articulate his journey so clearly and beautifully.

A fascinating, insightful look into the mind/body connection. Matthew tells his story with an honest frankness that takes you with him on his journey. Beautiful, well written, I have a new understanding of anyone who has experienced body trauma.

A tragic but inspiring story. I love how Matt finds connection with his body again through yoga, without overhyping the practice.

Went way too fast, wanted to know more and just inspired me to do more in the able body I have, cancer surgery aside....I can walk, do yoga, meditate, help others...and do...but I won't take walking sidewalks in airports, unless I'm so tired I can't move.

Heartbreaking, well-written. Definitely recommend.

Wonderful book. I had just started getting into yoga and found this book. I work with people who have disabilities and I have found that this book and the authors point of view put many things into perspective. Grit, preserving, success, and what it means to be a yoga body.

I discovered this book while searching the web for information on yoga for people living with disabilities. Through a series of clicks I landed on Matthew Sanford's web site where I saw a photo of a young man leaning forward from his wheel chair, reaching over to adjust a student practicing a yoga standing pose. I learned that the author is a leader in adapting Iyengar yoga to meet the needs of the individual. Matthew's mental awareness--as a result of a spinal cord injury--was literally knocked out of the lower two-thirds of his body. While doctors were able to keep him alive, he was not given the tools to reconnect his mind to his paralyzed body. Matthew describes how for years after the devastating accident, from the chest down, he experiences a "schism" or "a form of silence" between his mind and his body. During his first months in the hospital and later periods in intensive care units there was so much pain that leaving his body became a survival skill. These experiences alone catapulted Matthew into unknown territory when it comes to understanding the mind and body. In 1991, he began studying Iyengar yoga with Jo Zukovich, co-founder of the San Diego Yoga Studio. When they started, it was not clear how yoga would travel through his paralyzed body, and there were no examples to emulate. *WAKING* describes how teacher and student learned and adapted together. In 1998, Matthew began to share the results of their work in an adaptive class for people with disabilities. About the same time, he began teaching people without disabilities. He found that the principles of yoga apply the same way in both cases. *WAKING* helps the reader to understand why the author's unique perspective is equally applicable for people who do not have his limitations. Matthew's broader aim in writing this book and in teaching yoga is to infuse the importance of mind-body integration into the rehabilitation process. To this end, he offers workshops to healthcare professionals and yoga teachers alike. He uses his story to share how yoga is indeed a "waking" of the human consciousness. This is a book that can potentially revolutionize the thinking of physical therapists and anyone that works with people who are coping with past trauma and injuries. I recommend it with all my heart and soul!--Suza Francina, author, *The New Yoga for People Over 50* and *The New Yoga for Healthy Aging*.

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