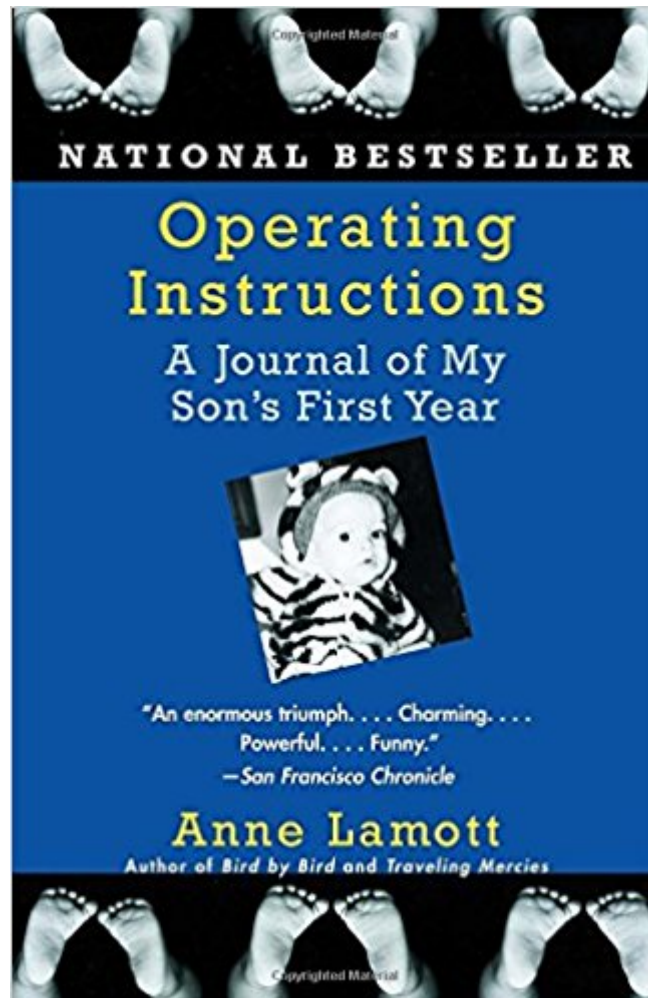




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# Operating Instructions: A Journal Of My Son's First Year



## Synopsis

With the same brilliant combination of humor and warmth she brought to *Bird by Bird*, Anne Lamott gives us a smart, funny, and comforting chronicle of single motherhood. It's not like she's the only woman to ever have a baby. At thirty-five. On her own. But Anne Lamott makes it all fresh in her now-classic account of how she and her son and numerous friends and neighbors and some strangers survived and thrived in that all important first year. From finding out that her baby is a boy (and getting used to the idea) to finding out that her best friend and greatest supporter Pam will die of cancer (and not getting used to that idea), with a generous amount of wit and faith (but very little piousness), Lamott narrates the great and small events that make up a woman's life. "Lamott has a conversational style that perfectly conveys her friendly, self-deprecating humor." -- Los Angeles Times Book Review "Lamott is a wonderfully lithe writer .... Anyone who has ever had a hard time facing a perfectly ordinary day will identify." -- Chicago Tribune

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The most honest, wildly enjoyable book written about motherhood is surely Anne Lamott's account of her son Sam's first year. A gifted writer and teacher, Lamott (*Crooked Little Heart*) is a single mother and ex-alcoholic with a pleasingly warped social circle and a remarkably tolerant religion to lean on. She responds to the changes, exhaustion, and love Sam brings with aplomb or outright insanity. The book rocks from hilarious to unbearably poignant when Sam's burgeoning life is

played out against a very close friend's illness. No saccharine paean to becoming a parent, this touches on the rage and befuddlement that dog sweeter emotions during this sea change in one's life. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Magazine columnist and novelist Lamott ( *All New People* ) captures both the poignancy and comedy of her first year as a single mother in this wonderfully candid diary. Her quirky humor steadily draws the reader into her unconventional world as she describes her friends and neighbors in northern California, her participation in a local church, her experiences as a recovering alcoholic and--best of all--her infant son, Sam, born in 1989. She covers maternal emotions from rapturous bliss to bare fury ("In the middle of the colic death marches, I end up looking at the baby with those hooded eyes that were in the old ads for *The Boston Strangler* "). Throughout, she airs her strong political and religious beliefs. And when her best friend, Pammy, is diagnosed with terminal cancer, Lamott conveys her anguish with the same depth of feeling and sense of the absurd that characterize her observations about her son, God, recovery, writing, Republicans, men and life as usual. Even non-parents will enjoy this glowing work. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I don't think I would like to meet Ms. Lamott. There's much I do not like about her. She can be shallow, opinionated and superficial. Her politics are reactive. I can say that because I was precisely the same at her age. I think you hit 40 and you start to realize that life is not so dichotomous. She is a woman of profound faith but doesn't seem to fully realize it- which makes it so alarmingly sincere. This is not a book for the sled right and morally pure. This describes on woman's journey to make sense out of faith through birth and death. Through addictions and stability. That faith grows not merely in the pure, but like a lotus flower it blooms in the mud. The mud of living a human life. The mud of imperfection. This book was also like a mirror for me and I am sure others will agree if they challenge themselves. Much of what I disliked about her I can see in myself. That we are all deeply flawed characters; especially when viewing from a position of detachment. Also, I, like Ms. Lamott, was as left of center without being a communist. I was like that for years. There was a time I said probably the same things against a Bush. But now that I am less political I cringed when reading her political diatribes. To be frank they were utterly superfluous and completely unnecessary. The story would have been more fluid and universal. Lastly some critics have been outraged over her violent fantasies about her baby. To those people: I would suggest that you've never been a parent. She was simply vomiting out what nearly all parents have felt at one point or another. When you've had

4 hours of sleep in tow days while working and it's 3 in the morning and you have a child who sounds like a slaughtered pig, you think strange things. I commend Ms. Lamott' courage in writing this book.

I read this book for my American Literature class, and I enjoyed learning how the author changed her identity. Until you become a mother, you can not understand all the stress and expectations. Buchanan tells an honest story about being a new mom with expectations. A new mom does not get a lot of sleep and works hard. She may lose some friends. I recommend this book for any new mom.

The author was recommended to me from a member of my book club. I choose this particular book to find out more about Anne Lamott's early years. The book was very enjoyable, learning about the support system she had with family and friends, the beginning of raising her son, her faith, and her best friend. I liked her writing style, her humor...I felt like she was right in the room with me, telling about her day, her struggles ,etc.I look forward to reading another of her books.

For me, a mom, this book is amazing. I feel like I get a chance to see myself for who I really am when I read Lamott. She shows herself broken, unsure, insecure, enraged, scared and therefore allows me to feel ok about being those things too. She shows herself brave, persistent, in awe of life, a mom in love - and I somehow feel truly honored to know her (the book is so personal). I laughed out loud and cried hard many times reading this book. It is life, but somehow deeper, more real, 3-D because of how Lamott describes it. She is a master words, a master of human experience.

Anne Lamott did a hilarious job of summing up of my experience of my oldest baby's first year. She is so funny and honest in confessing the times she wanted to just "put him outside as an experiment in natural selection," or describing his lifting his "reptilian head" while capturing, at the same time, the breathtaking awe of the new life she had, at least a part in, creating. Her words, not mine, I'm not nearly so eloquent. Her chatty style of writing stays in my head all day as I create a running narrative of my own life. It was so funny I laughed until I cried (not a book to be read on a bus) but I also cried when it was over. I can't wait to get my hands on the recent one about her becoming a grandmother. I've read many of Anne Lamott's books, but this the one I have enjoyed by far, the most.

Love this book, I laughed until tears ran down my face. Her story is so easy to relate too. I have a 36 year old daughter with a 4 month old son. I can't wait for her to read this book. I have been worried and stressed and reading this, and laughing till I cried made me feel much better! :^) Anne told her story in such a wonderful relatable way. I discovered this book at time when I needed it. I'm so thankful I came across it. Thank God for Anne Lamott. Thanks for telling your story in such a honest way!! I'm looking forward to reading about her experiences as a grandmother! (Also my book arrived quickly and in immaculate condition from CTBookFinder. I would buy from them again.)

The author just was not my favorite. I didn't care for the journal style, but that was my fault. I knew it was written in the format of a journal. I was disappointed. I just had a baby and wanted to relate with the author about similarities I was having with her and although I did relate in some of the baby stuff I just never related to her. Just was disappointed. I thought I would like it better from the previous reviews.

Author Anne Lamott's writing at times brings me to tears and other times I find myself laughing out loud as she describes her experiences as a new mother. This book is something I find myself giving certain young mothers as their introduction to motherhood and to Anne's writings. My own introduction came long after my children were born, and my first Lamott book was Bird By Bird. I now look forward to each and every book she writes. I have appreciated her honest and sometimes gut wrenching sharing in her non-fiction. Recently, I prepared a lesson for a women's group at my church based on Traveling Mercies. Anne was quoted from this book in our last Horizon's bible study of the season about family and the household in biblical times and today. The roles we play, traditional or non-traditional are important. But as Lamott progresses on her spiritual journey we also discover the importance of forgiveness and redemption. Try her, you will like her.

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