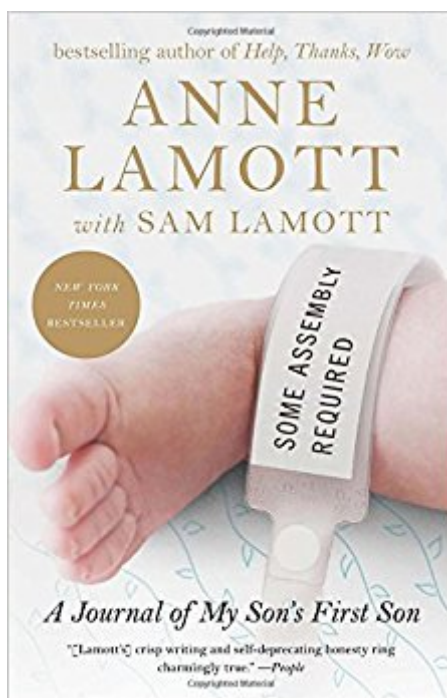


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# Some Assembly Required: A Journal Of My Son's First Son



## 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

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## Customer Reviews

Lamott burst onto the literary scene in 1993 with *Operating Instructions*, her achingly honest account of her son Sam's first year of life, endearing herself to single mothers, parents, and even nonparents. She is set to do the same thing now for grandparenthood, as she and Sam explore their first year with Sam's son, Jax. When Sam announced that he and recent girlfriend Amy were about to become parents, Lamott reacted as only Lamott could, with a joyful "Oh, yes!" followed by a fearful "Oh, no!" After all, at fiftysomething, she was too young to be a grandmother, and at 19, Sam was too young to be a father. But tell all that to Jax, who is, of course, the Perfect Baby. That his parents' relationship is less so is a

source of constant consternation for Lamott, who tries to fix things in her own inimitable and irritating way. Funny, frantic, and frustrating, Lamott enthusiastically embraces this new chapter in her life, learning that she is a wiser grandparent than parent who, nevertheless, managed to produce one pretty remarkable son. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Best-selling Lamott will delight her avid fans and attract new readers among fellow grandparents as she goes on a national tour and makes media appearances. --Carol Haggas --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"[Lamott's] crisp writing and self-deprecating honesty ring charmingly true. People's trademark neurotic spirituality, and it's one Lamott's fans will want. The Washington Post "Wonderful. . . . [with] Lamott's trademark sharp wit and self-deprecating humor. Like so many of Lamott's books, [Some Assembly Required] leaves readers with new insights. The Associated Press "[Lamott's] typical combination of astuteness and wit. . . . As always, Lamott's earnest faith is central to her, and whether you share her concerns or not, you appreciate her candor. NPR "The story of one year in a woman's life, a year that happens to include the arrival of a blanket-bundled gift for Lamott and her longtime readers. San Francisco Chronicle "[Some Assembly Required] highlights the trademark humor we've come to expect from Lamott, with laugh-out-loud one-liners that are both self-deprecating and wise. A welcome addition in the larger Gospel of Lamott. Minneapolis Star Tribune "Funny, insightful, irreverent filled with humor and the author's quirky faith. Bound to do for grandmothers what the earlier book did for mothers. bring them insight and sanity in the midst of chaos. The Denver Post "Anne Lamott's singular gift for bringing readers into the intimate circle of her life flows effortlessly in this new memoir, mixing the absurd and sublime with her usual alchemical genius. you'll be seduced by the darkly comic tone, self-deprecating wit, and relentless honesty; she somehow makes the bumps and joys of her life intensely relatable. She can capture the bliss and beauty of tiny emotional events in a few perfect words, then skewer her own worst impulses with brutal hilarity. Bust Magazine

Everyone has a baby story to tell, stories about teething and diaper changing, stories about first

words and the funny little spit bubbles that burp and drool out of every baby's mouth. If the baby is yours or if you know the parent or grandparent of said baby, you will, of course, be delighted by such tales, because you love your baby or you love your friends and live through them in their stories. But enjoying these stories when it's a stranger telling them is something else. At the surface, there is nothing special about Anne Lamott's new book, "Some Assembly Required." It is a journal of the first year of her grandson Jax's life. Anne's son, Sam, is nineteen when Jax is born and Anne details Sam's journey with his son and how Anne must force herself to let her son grow up and make decisions on his own. Even though nothing particularly exciting happens to baby Jax that hasn't already happened to billions of babies everywhere, the joy is in the storytelling. Anne Lamott has always been one of my favorite storytellers. She is self-deprecating. She is unabashedly Christian and unabashedly uncouth. Yet even as a Christian, she visits ashrams in San Francisco and mosques in India. She searches for connection to God anywhere and everywhere. She quotes John Muir who "once said that to see the face of God, you do not need to open a book or go to church or temple; you have only to go to Yosemite. And you are a part of the world's beauty. God, and the beauty of God's creation, and you complete the circuit." She often says things that strike my soul in such a way I begin to wonder if we're all connected somehow, if we all share the same soul longings, the same soul fears and joys and if these things are what connect us all in the community of God. She writes in regards to her grandson Jax, "I think about the idea of his having dual citizenship--a child of God and heaven, with a human life here--and how confusing that has always been for me. And what he is in for, because our spiritual and human identities coexist, the way light is both a particle and a wave." The interesting thing in physics about wave-particle duality is that when you are looking for a wave you will find one and when you are hunting for a particle you will find that too. Both coexist together, but you can only see what you are looking for at the time. I love how Anne Lamott makes me think.

I wanted to like this book. Many years ago, I had read "Operating Instructions" and loved it, lending it to many friends. But, this book felt contrived, like it was something she and her son were supposed to do for the publishing company. I also felt many times like the things she had wanted to say, she couldn't because these were family. That is not the free-wheeling Anne we have come to enjoy. There is a brief section when Anne goes to India and is at last free of the invisible restraints. Once again, her writing shines. I did notice that even Anne has fallen prey to American affluenza. She wrote proudly of burying Jax in Christmas presents--grandparent excess. The illness runs deep in all of us. Anne as mother-in-law is a less sympathetic character. I wouldn't have wanted to be

Amy, but you feel Anne TRY so hard to keep her nose out. They make it through the year with Jax healthy and strong and the relationship between her son and his baby mama still very tentative.

This is no "Operating Instructions." Loved that, and "Bird by Bird." SAR is not up to standard- stilted "interviews" with Sam, grandmotherly effluvia, not very interesting trip to India. Borrow from library- don't waste your dime.

I have read many of Anne's books. I like the way she writes as if she was talking to you over a cup of coffee. This book I really enjoyed. I laughed, cried some, and learned as I always do when reading one of her books as in the first book of hers I ever read, "Traveling Mercies". In "Some Assembly Required" she learns a lot about the challenges of "letting go". Her son, Sam and his wife, Amy have just had a baby boy. It is all Anne can do to keep remembering her new place. She is not the mom, the baby is theirs, and Sam, Amy, Jax are a new family. Anne is a part of the family too, but in a whole new relationship. There are different scenarios in this book. One is when Anne takes a trip to India. This part shares a lot about the deep differences of their culture. She shares so beautifully I actually felt like I was with her among the beggars who she so badly wanted to give to. Sam shares a lot about the amazement in the development of Jax. He is totally infatuated with the things Jax does. This delights Nana but she tries desperately to keep her thoughts to herself when she knows a much better way. Throughout the book, she shows what a great support system that rally to her cause, sometimes being perfectly blunt!! related to many challenges she faced in this book, the "letting go" of your children so they can become who they are to become. Not who you want them to be. I think adults of all ages would enjoy this book and learn something new along the way!

I have read almost every book written by Anne Lamott, and am a BIG fan. Operating Instructions is one of my all-time favorites for her candid, honest attack of life and how even when you get run over by your own character flaws and circumstances of life, you still have to keep being a grown up and take care of the children and pay the bills anyway. And Thank goodness for the friends! With Some Assembly Required, you get that same access to Ms. Lamott's world - and you can see she's matured, and stabilized, and surrounded herself with great people - just like you, since you read Operating Instructions 15 years ago... but she's still Anne - and her voice, her spirituality and her ability to poke fun at herself are so amazing. She's inspiring, honest and I suppose, unabashed, as I marvel at herchutzpah to put it all out there in a book with her name on the cover. She can do it,

because her voice is like the one in our heads. With all the less than lovely emotions of being human (self-absorption, fear, doubt, anger), there is so much love in this story. It's so relatable, so real, so touching and downright funny too.

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