



Love Works Like This: Moving from One Kind of Life to Another

Lauren Slater

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“Is even the most clenched heart capable of it?” Lauren Slater asks about love, in this original, eloquent, and illuminating book about how we discover what love truly is. Slater, career-oriented and willfully autonomous, charts her own personal journey and decision-making process, starting with a list of the pros and cons, about having a child. The cons are many, the pros only one: “learning a new kind of love.” But what will that love look like? How does one reconcile the needs of the self with the demands of others? How do couples go from the dyad that is a marriage to the triad that is a family? And how can Slater adjust to losing precious control of her own carefully developed life?

Slater’s complex biological and psychological history also lies at the core of this unique and yet strikingly universal story. One of the first people ever to take Prozac, she chronicles the impossibly conflicting advice regarding pregnancy and antidepressants, and explains the rationale behind her eventual decision to stop taking the medication during her first trimester. This is Slater’s first encounter with self-sacrifice, and for her a crossroad at which modern medicine and basic human love meet.

Love Works Like This is a richly written book by “an enormously poetic and ebullient writer” (Elle magazine), an author who writes with “beauty and bravery” (Los Angeles Times Book Review) about falling in love, about growing into the ability to put someone else’s life ahead of your own, and about the rich rewards we can draw from the courage to exchange one kind of happy life for another.

Love Works Like This: Moving from One Kind of Life to Another Details

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From Reader Review Love Works Like This: Moving from One Kind of Life to Another for online ebook

Martha says

A quick and intense read. Scary and beautiful.

Lisa says

WOW I thought I was the only one conflicted with this many worries about pregnancy and motherhood. A gripping, emotional read that I really identified with. A story of hope!

Elyssa says

Lauren Slater is one of my favorite non-fiction writers. This book is perfect for the parent-to-be or new parent who is trying to reconcile their shifting identity. As always, Slater offers no easy answers, but helps the reader to find his/her own meaning in the complex questions.

Aubrey says

Ever since I read 'Prozac Diary' in undergrad, Lauren Slater has been one of my favorite authors. This, her most recent memoir, does not disappoint. As a pregnant woman who also struggles with mental illness, I found her experiences reassuring and I saw my own feelings mirrored in hers. One of the main reasons I read is to feel a little less alone - this book meets me where I am.

4/25/10

I just finished this book for the second time. I find myself wishing that she would write a book about her daughter's first few years of life. I still find myself relating to her feelings... and I appreciate even more her style of writing. Poetic.

4/24/11

Is it weird that I read this again almost exactly a year later? Maybe it's being pregnant again that sparked it. Again, I love the poetry, I relate to the struggles of being pregnant and a new mother with mental illness. And I love the hope that seems to grow through the book.

Melissa says

I read this when I was pregnant with my son. I'm glad that I never had to deal with the issues the author dealt with while pregnant. She had to choose between her mental health and her baby's health.

Kristin says

Interesting author, poignant perspective. Will read more from her.

C says

Quick and beautiful, like all of Slater's books. For me, the most interesting sections came early when Slater went off Prozac in her first trimester. This book isn't Lying, but it's still pretty good.

Emma Curran says

"The paradox of the whole thing is that motherhood is the most powerful of all biological experiences and the most disempowering of all social ones"

"Having a child does not change you so much as amplify whatever is unresolved."

Deborah Maganza says

Brutally honest, intense, refreshing in it's realistic approach to the single most life changing event in a woman's life. Not having a baby (that is the easy part), but becoming a mother.

From the book:

"If I could design the perfect pregnancy test, its results would read at once primitive and poetic, an image of a rocking horse for yes, a martini for no. Or this. I have it. The window turns a scalding red. Far away, fires burn in California and whole homes come down. But here in the East, I am building my home, and the perfect test would flare and words would swim up. If it's negative the test reads, "Keep your excellent life". If it's positive the test reads, "Risk everything".

Slater, page 6

Lightreads says

Diary entries from a psychologist and mental illness sufferer as her pregnancy progresses. Intense, fragmented, strangely refractive, like the book is a giant crystal set to catch the light of her story. She's a talented writer in that imagistic way which I can appreciate but never quite adore, and she struggles with questions of motherhood and responsibility that I find deeply compelling. Worth it for the personal face on the surprisingly common phenomenon of pregnancy-amplified mental illness, and for a mature grappling with the ethics of psychotropic medication while expecting.

Nichole says

An honest, gripping journey into motherhood. Her expression of how it took some time to fall in love with her daughter (after her daughter's birth)-- that it took some time to feel like a mother-- felt very real and familiar to me. The book as a whole is a bit episodic, I would have liked a larger narrative arc to carry me through (reads a bit too much like a diary), but the spontaneous intense and desperate thoughts are very true to the form realizations about parenthood actually take: they come in immediate bursts, at the most unexpected of times.

Christina says

This book is an interesting insight into the life of a depressed married woman who becomes pregnant. She is scared to take her Prozac during pregnancy because she is afraid that her baby would be harmed. This book is written in journal form. Keep in mind that this is not a diary, but is a chronicle of this depressed woman's pregnancy, and after the pregnancy.

Cherylann says

After I read Lying I thought I was like Lauren Slater: attention seeking, addicted to lying, a lover of writing with a flair for the dramatic. This book completely dispelled my soul-sister relationship with Lauren, and though I still love her and especially her writing, I think I'll stop writing my 10 page fan letter that suggests we meet up.

Love Works like This tracks Slater through her first pregnancy, following her through her most challenging and selfish moments. Lauren Slater suffers from severe chronic depression. She had been on medication for most of her life and decided to continue taking them while pregnant. This leads to feelings of fear and guilt throughout her pregnancy and after her daughter Eva's birth.

This is a good book. It really is. Lauren Slater is excruciatingly honest especially about her feelings leading up to and after the pregnancy. She admits those horrible things we think in our heads but never say for fear of judgment. She writes in a beautiful, whimsical way, but also an extremely accessible one. That said, there are a couple things I disagreed with.

- 1) Being a mother does not take away your feminist identity. Giving birth is one of the most amazing biological experiences in the world. A woman can house a fetus, and give birth to something human, something that will have a favorite color, and learn to talk. Honestly as a feminist woman, the ability to give birth is one of the things I most prize about my gender. I am woman, hear me roar and create a living being.
- 2) I don't understand Slater's lack of love for her child until one year later. It doesn't make biological or emotional sense to me. I could never give birth to a child and only "kind of like it."

Though I've become a bit disenchanted with Ms. Slater, I still believe she is a brave woman and a wonderful writer.

Brooke Lidell says

like a candid conversation from a mother who did not necessarily intend to be a mother. from the depths of

one kind of love to another, one kind of crazy to the other.

I am who I am because of serotonin, because of norepinephrine, because dopamine courses in rich, dark deluges through my brain. I am who I am because billions of cells click and stutter, thus giving rise to chemical yet utterly invisible thing we call imagination, and my imagination which floats above my head like a cartoon bubble, but no, more beautiful than that, like the bubbles blown from a soap wand, my imagination creates and constructs and every construct is true... my history manufactured from the dense physiology where the spirit and gray matter meet; I have no need for history. I come from everywhere. I come from nowhere. I am radically free. I am empty.

Priscilla says

Now one of my favorite memoirs, this book on the author's journey to motherhood strikes me as honest and well written. By her very "cautiously optimistic" account Slater debunks the myths of sentimental and angry motherhood with her own tale of ambivalence, fear, and gradual transition to hope. In the end we come to understand the process of becoming a mother as a subtle shift in feeling as well as an unfolding of the possibilities offered by the imagination. Even if you experienced pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood differently from Slater, I think her unique voice confirms that motherhood alters us in ways both monumental and infinitely subtle. Please read this book!
