

## BOOK REVIEW

**Madeline Popelka, *You're Going to Be Okay: 16 Lessons on Healing after Trauma* Hay House Inc., Carlsbad, California, 2022, 207 pp. ISBN 978-1-4019-6824-3 (ebook)**

**Ilona Mercieca**  
University of Malta

In *You're Going to Be Okay: 16 Lessons on Healing after Trauma*, Madeline Popelka provides a deep and supportive guide for individuals as they embark on the journey towards healing after experiencing trauma. In the book, Popelka, who is the founder of @Healing from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), offers 16 lessons exploring key concepts, practical tips and empowering perspectives to help readers as they navigate through the complexities of recovering from trauma. As Popelka (2022), who is a trauma survivor herself, states, “healing is a lifelong journey, and while it can be messy and uncomfortable, there are gifts to be found along the way”.

So, will this book take us to uncomfortable places as a means to process our trauma?

This book is skilfully divided in 16 chapters, where each chapter tackles a different lesson: from acknowledging the reality and the impact of the trauma experienced to self-compassion and seeking support both informal and formal. The notions of setting boundaries are crucial for protecting one's emotional well-being during the healing process and practicing mindfulness as a coping mechanism with the aftermath of trauma are cleverly portrayed.

Popelka encourages the readers to challenge negative beliefs to replace them with empowering perspectives. The concepts of practicing gratitude

and establishing routines as a means to provide structure and stability are explored in the book.

As the readers explore the practice of self-care as a means to nurture one's well-being after trauma, Popelka immerses us in various self-care practices that can help individuals feel grounded. Healing after trauma is gradual and thus the author emphasizes the importance of honouring one's progress while setting realistic expectations. The same importance is given to understanding triggers and here Popelka provides strategies for identifying and managing triggers effectively.

Towards the end of the book, the author explores the concept of forgiveness as an essential part of healing after trauma and finding meaning in the aftermath of trauma thus seeking out opportunities for personal growth. Ultimately, the closing lesson is about embracing hope as a means of providing a guiding light that can sustain the reader through the darkest moments of one's lives. Emphasis is put on embracing hope as the central belief of the healing journey.

*You're Going to Be Okay: 16 Lessons on Healing after Trauma* offers a comprehensive roadmap for individuals seeking to heal from trauma. Through practical strategies, empowering insights and compassionate guidance, Popelka provides readers with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of trauma recovering and emerging stronger and more resilient on the other side.

The ways the author explored the delicate concept of trauma and guided the readers through the healing process step by step is remarkable. The fact that every chapter is cleverly divided to tackle each lesson one by one makes it enjoyable for the reader and an opportunity to self-engage in the healing process by indulging oneself one stage at a time.

The book makes an enjoyable read. Even though the topic is a sensitive one, the author skilfully manages to shift between the narrative part to providing tips on how to heal from trauma. The book is written in a clear way in which it is a powerful yet practical tool that helps the reader to overcome trauma in small but meaningful steps. Healing is a work in progress; thus, this book enables the reader to go back and forward to the lesson that is required at that point in time. It is written in a way that has the reader in mind. The preamble of each chapter paves the way for the

lesson that needs to be tackled. It is surely a valuable contribution to the genre of self-help books.

Whether the reader is still dealing with past trauma or whether the reader is a novice on the subject, this book will certainly prove to be helpful and useful as the reader will immerse in the book while the author delves with the lessons on healing from trauma.

Considering that the book addresses the sensitive issue of trauma, which can lead to psychological difficulties and the development of mental health issues related to trauma, I would personally have preferred if this book had been supported by medical and perhaps psychiatric expertise. Nonetheless, towards the end of the book, there are useful resources like websites, details related to mental health organisations and further reads. This surely offers a more holistic approach to the subject and a valid opportunity to read more on the topic and to reach out to organisations for further support.

This subject, similar to other subjects related to mental health or psychological issues, is often regarded as taboo in certain cultures and thus it is not easy for persons going through such an ordeal to open up about their experiences. Such books will assist the reader to go through the topic in a safe and contained manner. This book will provide the reader with strategies that enhance clarity and sense of direction in life.

## Reference

Popelka, M. (2022). *You're going to be okay: 16 lessons on healing after trauma* [Book description]. Lighthouse – Edinburgh's Radical Bookshop.  
<https://lighthousebookshop.com/book/9781837820597>.