



New Life, No Instructions: A Memoir

Gail Caldwell

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The Pulitzer Prize winner and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Let's Take the Long Way Home* now gives us a stunning, exquisitely written memoir about a dramatic turning point in her life, which unexpectedly opened up a world of understanding, possibility, and connection. *New Life, No Instructions* is about the surprising way life can begin again, at any age.

Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more.

"What do you do when the story changes in midlife? When a tale you have told yourself turns out to be a little untrue, just enough to throw the world off-kilter? It's like leaving the train at the wrong stop: You are still you, but in a new place, there by accident or grace, and you will need your wits about you to proceed.

"Any change that matters, or takes, begins as immeasurably small. Then it accumulates, moss on stone, and after a few thousand years of not interfering, you have a glen, or a waterfall, or a field of hope where sorrow used to be.

"I suppose all of us consider our loved ones extraordinary; that is one of the elixirs of attachment. But over the months of pain and disrepair of that winter, I felt something that made the grimness tolerable: I felt blessed by the tribe I was part of. Here I was, supposedly solo, and the real truth was that I had a force field of connection surrounding me.

"Most of all I told this story because I wanted to say something about hope and the absence of it, and how we keep going anyway. About second chances, and how they're sometimes buried amid the dross, even when you're poised for the downhill grade. The narrative can always turn out to be a different story from what you expected."

Praise for *New Life, No Instructions*

"Brimming with insights and wisdom . . . As far as I'm concerned, Caldwell can write about whatever she pleases. . . . Unabashed dispatches from lifelong single women are a fairly recent phenomenon. Caldwell has so much more to teach us."—**Kate Bolick, *The New York Times Book Review***

"Gail Caldwell offers the kind of wisdom and grace you'd wish a friend, sister, or mother might deliver. . . . Fans and new readers alike will find comfort in Caldwell's voice."—***The Boston Globe***

"Quiet but powerful . . . an absorbing meditation on grief and rebirth in midlife."—***More***

"Eloquent and uplifting . . . [a story] to inspire you."—***Good Housekeeping***

"Graceful and reflective."—***USA Today***

"[Caldwell] confronts, with pluck and fortitude, the hurdles that life throws her way."—***Publishers Weekly***

"An uplifting journey . . . This book celebrates finding support where you least expect it."—***Woman's Day***

“[A] beautifully written memoir.”—*Parade*

“[A] thoughtful, wide-eyed view of the world . . . [Caldwell] ably explores the shifts of our hearts.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Getting old, as they say, is not for sissies, and no one would call Pulitzer Prize–winner Caldwell a wimp. . . . There may not have been a road map for the life-changing trip [she] was about to take, but . . . Caldwell realized she had the power to endure.”—*Booklist*

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From reader reviews:

Charles Alexander:

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Lisa Rice:

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The particular book New Life, No Instructions: A Memoir has a lot info on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was authored by the very famous author. Mcdougal makes some research previous to write this book. This book very easy to read you may get the point easily after looking over this book.

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