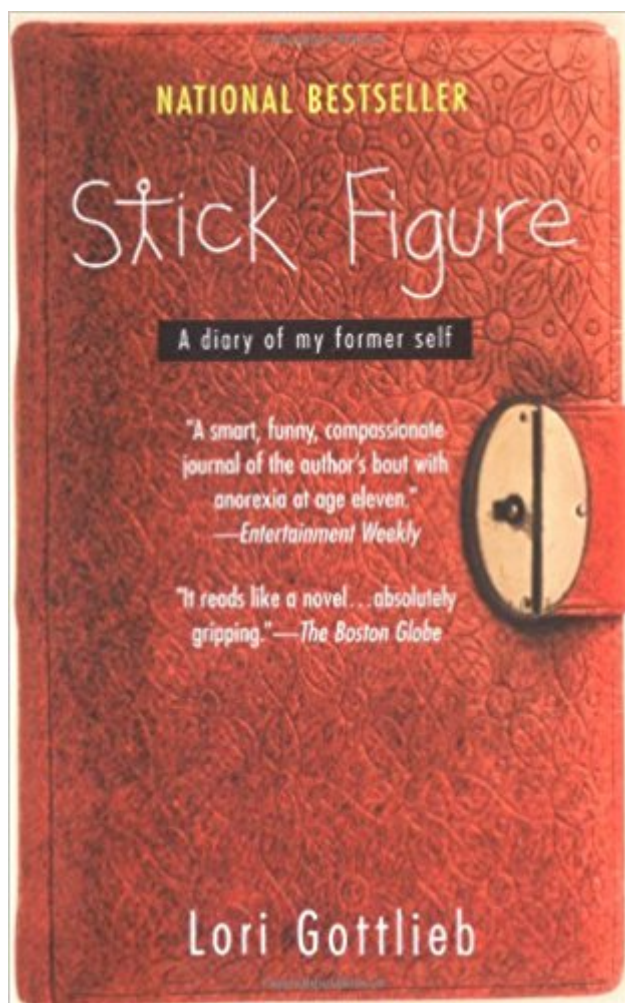


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# Stick Figure: A Diary Of My Former Self



## Synopsis

An Alternate Selection of the Book of the Month Club and Quality Paperback Book

Club. Although it reads like a novel, a funny, touching, and absolutely gripping novel. Stick Figure is, astonishingly, the diary of Lori Gottlieb in 1978, when, at age 11 and all evidence to the contrary, she decided she was too fat and simply stopped eating. Boston Globe Growing up in Beverly Hills in the 1970s, Lori Gottlieb learned the lessons her culture had to teach her—for example, that “no one could ever like a girl with thunder thighs.” Lori took those lessons seriously, and saw her world fall slowly apart as she developed a fierce reluctance to eat—winding up hospitalized when her “diet” took over her life. Fortunately, she recorded the journey in her diary, and her story is funny, slyly insightful, and surprisingly universal. A Los Angeles Times bestseller, Lori’s story is being made into a motion picture film by Martin Scorsese’s company, Carpo Productions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In the image-conscious world of 1970s Beverly Hills, 11-year-old Lori knows she’s different. Instead of trading clothes and dreaming of teen idols like most of her pre-adolescent friends, Lori prefers reading books, writing in her journal and making up her own creative homework assignments. Chronically disapproving of her parents’ shallow lifestyle, she challenges their authority and chafes under their constant demands to curb her frank opinions and act more “ladylike.” Feeling as though

she has lost control over her rapidly changing world, Lori focuses all her concentration on one subject: dieting. Her life narrows to a single goal--to be "...the thinnest eleven year old on the entire planet." But once she achieves her "stick figure," Lori really sees herself for the first time in a restaurant bathroom mirror and decides then and there to bring herself back from the brink of starvation. *Stick Figure* is a surprisingly upbeat memoir, mainly due to Gottlieb's descriptions of her upper-crust parents: "Mom and I usually don't like the same movies. For example, she didn't like my favorite movie, *Star Wars*, probably because no one goes shopping...." But despite the sly humor, Lori comes to a sobering conclusion that is, sadly, still relevant today: "...you can be too thin and not even know it, because you spend so much time listening to everyone talk about how ladies are supposed to diet, and how something's wrong with you if you aren't worried about being thin, too." Culled from Gottlieb's pre-teen diaries, *Stick Figure* is a wry and engaging observation of an eating disorder and the society that contributed to it. --Jennifer Hubert --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

After happening upon the diary she kept when she was 11 years old, Gottlieb was moved to publish this chronicle of her struggle with anorexia nearly 20 years after she wrote it. In the late 1970s, she lived with her parents and brother in Beverly Hills, where Gottlieb's loneliness and concern about looking attractive to boys swiftly transformed into an obsession with dieting, although she had never been overweight. In her diary entries, she presents her father as a successful but emotionally withdrawn stockbroker, and her mother as a controlling airhead whose major concerns were her appearance and shopping. Gottlieb's parents became very alarmed, however, when their daughter, who believed that even smelling food would make her gain weight, kept refusing to eat. They took her to their family physician and then to a therapist who hospitalized her for several months when her condition continued to deteriorate. Though it is clear that Gottlieb, who is a regular contributor to *Salon*, has polished her childhood diary, her descriptions of preteen vulnerability and self-consciousness ring true--for example, when she recounts how, at lunchtime one day, her popularity skyrocketed because she could figure out a diet plan for every girl. In the context of the daunting (though unfootnoted) statistic Gottlieb cites, that "50% of fourth grade girls in the United States diet, because they think they're too fat," her diary offers haunting evidence of what little progress we have made. Agents, Jill Grinberg and Laurie Fox. First serial to YM; BOMC and QPB alternates; 3-city author tour; foreign rights sold in Germany, Finland and Portugal. (Mar.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Funny, honest, heartbreaking at times, this is a book every young person should read. And every parent, and teacher as well. Written with clarity, and amazing detail.

I enjoyed this book, but I don't feel like it is the best representation of eating disorders. I have read several other books on EDs and I have many friends who also suffer from EDs, and the description in this book does not seem to be an average version of events. I am by no means saying that Lori Gottlieb did not experience things in the way described within this memoir, but I'm not sure that it is the best book to choose if you are looking for a way to understand EDs.

I am a clinical psychology graduate student specializing in eating disorders. My supervisor recommended this book in order to better understand how an eating disorder can develop in a very young child. For example, the very arbitrary rules the character would come up with based on her observation of adults - she can't exactly explain why she has to eat this way, she just knows it's the "right" way. A very quick, but interesting read.

I LOVED this book! Really helps you to understand how our society shapes young minds and why we should try to represent ourselves as good leaders. LOVE!

I highly recommend this book to all people who have any 11 year olds in their life. Lori's 11 year old mind reflects what any bright, thoughtful, questioning 11 year old might think if only she/he allowed herself to think out loud. The conclusions she comes to based on her observations of adult behavior are hysterically funny and frighteningly accurate. Many of these refer to food, but others are just about life in general. While especially helpful to anyone wanting to understand the beginnings of eating disordered thinking, this book is just a plain good read for anyone who enjoys seeing life from another's perspective. Thanks to Lori for sharing this part of her life with us.

I heard good things about this book, but it was horrible and boring and not all that well written. I wouldn't recommend it.

My heart goes out to this woman. I'm usually a faithful fiction reader, but after adding *Stick Figure* to my collection, I'm now making it an effort to read more autobiographies and memoirs. Lori takes her readers back to 1978 and immerses us in her world and into her painful realization: she is 11 years old and fat. Although Lori's story has a happy ending, *Stick Figure* allows many of us to grasp the

thought processes behind anorexia nervosa and possibly equip some of us with enough knowledge to recognize the problem. If you are suffering with anorexia or if you know someone else who has it or is on the brink, then it is imperative that you read this book. I believe that it is powerful enough to influence behaviors. Also, it is dramatic enough to make a killer DI for all you speech and debate people out there.

These are the diaries of an eleven year old girl. It must have taken huge amount of courage on Lori Gottlieb's part to publish these. I read it in one night, promising myself "One more chapter then sleep." But when the chapter ended I needed to know what happened next. I laughed at certain parts, and I teared up at others - she was quite the charming eleven year old. Her environment was ripe for her to develop an ED, and seems mildly pushed to do so by her mother. Who may not have realized at the time, but led a wonderful example. The biggest downfall of this book, is that it is seems atypical of eating disorders. Lori is found out early on and is fed up with it sooner than most. It is inspiring though. You can see the way the imbalances caused by malnourishment play out in her behaviour. I remember reading the portion about Lori looking at herself in the mirror of the restaurant in a Teen Magazine years ago. I was amazed it was in this book. At the time, it had spoken to me and it was nice to see it again. I really recommend this book.

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