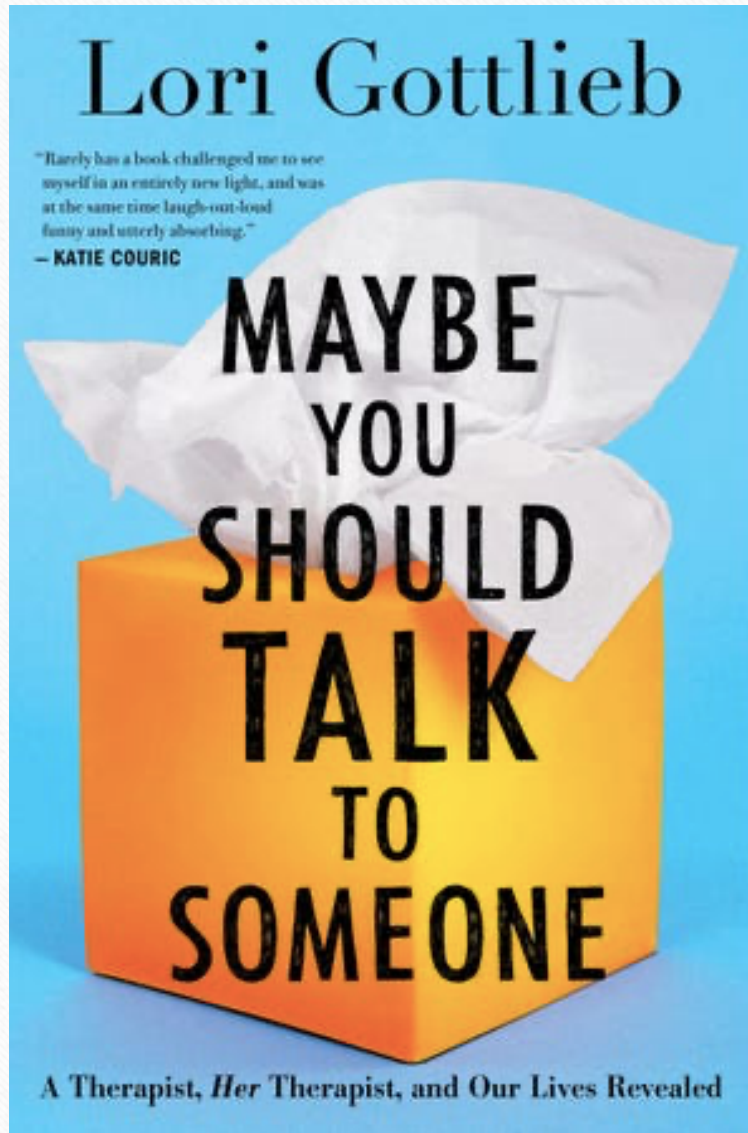


MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE

Lori Gottlieb

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LORI GOTTLIEB - BIOGRAPHY

- Birth—December 20, 1966
 - Los Angeles, California, USA
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- American writer and psychotherapist, who is best known for her weekly "Dear Therapist" advice column in *The Atlantic*. Studied language and culture at both Yale and Stanford University.
 - While in her 20s, Gottlieb worked as a film and TV executive until she decided to return to Stanford to study medicine. During medical school that she published her first book, inspiring her to pursue a career in writing.
 - After her child was born, Gottlieb went back to school again, (Pepperdine University), where she earned a graduate degree in clinical psychology.
 - *'Maybe You Should Talk to Someone'* is being adapted for a television series with Eva Longoria
 - One of most popular Ted Talk of 2019: Theme was to rewrite your narrative from a different point of view – “We are all going to die!” - Edit and revise your perspective – Hero of your own story and not the victim

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- More than 3,500 years ago, references to “healing through words” appeared in ancient Egyptian and Greek writings. The word “counseling” found its way into Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Wife of Bath’s Tale* in 1386.
- Formal term “psychotherapy” was coined in the late 1800s, which the Mayo Clinic defines as a “general term for treating mental health problems by talking with a psychiatrist, psychologist, or other mental health provider.”
- In 1879, an article in The Lancet suggested that telephone calls could reduce unnecessary doctor visits. It was the first known time that telehealth — the ability to conveniently receive treatment remotely — was noted publicly and professionally. Less than a decade later, one of the most famous psychotherapists of all time, Sigmund Freud, founded psychoanalysis.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- While Freud represents an often-cited, prominent name in psychology, Viennese physician [Franz Mesmer](#) is considered the “Father of Western Psychotherapy.” He pioneered hypnotherapy in the 1700s to treat psychosomatic problems and other disorders. The word “mesmerize” is traced to Mesmer, who established a theory of illness that involved internal magnetic forces, a school of thought which later became known as mesmerism.
- His use of magnets and high doses of iron didn’t impress the medical community in the U.S. or even in France where he later fled. Skeptics claimed that Mesmer’s patients were improved by their desire to get better — not by his magnetism or hypnosis.
- Regardless, Psychologist Philip Cushman notes his long-lasting impact. “In certain ways, mesmerism was the first secular psychotherapy in America, a way of ministering psychologically to the great America unchurched. It was an ambitious attempt to combine religion with psychotherapy, and it spawned ideologies such as mind cure philosophy, the New Thought movement, Christian Science and American spiritualism.”

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- If you've ever used the term "anal retentive" or "Freudian slip," you've kept Freud's influence on modern day culture alive and well. Although controversial, Freud's theories center on the two-part human mind — the conscious and the unconscious. He saw the human personality as the id, ego, and superego and suggested that children go through a series of psychosexual stages.
- In addition to insights into dreams and defense mechanisms, one of his greatest contributions was talk therapy. The simple idea of talking about a problem to help alleviate it came from his work with colleague Josef Breuer and his patients Bertha Pappenheim. Through her treatment for hysteria, they noticed that discussing her experiences provided relief for her symptoms of blurred vision, hallucinations, partial paralysis. Pappenheim referred to the treatment as "talking cure."
- Freud's belief system greatly influenced 20th-century thinking where many ailments began to be treated psychologically rather than physically. Freudian theory is still applied in many fields, from Freudian readings of literary works to pop-culture hot takes.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- As a counter to often dramatic practices of psychoanalysis, behaviorism rose in popularity throughout the mid-1900s. It stated that mental processes were irrelevant and that it is healthy behaviors that make people feel better.
- B.F. Skinner, the American Psychological Association's most eminent psychologist of the 20th century, was a leader in this movement. He refined the concept of operant conditioning and the Law of Effect and explored schedules of reinforcement and complex behavioral sequences.
- Among his contributions was a systematic exploration of intermittent schedules of reinforcement, the shaping of novel behavior through successive approximations, the chaining of complex behavioral sequences via learned reinforcers, and “superstitious” (accidentally reinforced) behavior.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- Skinner created his famous Skinner Box in the 1930s to study operant and classical conditioning
- Carl Rogers introduced client-centered therapy. He found that the relationship between practitioner and client was key, and that practitioners should be non-judgmental and non-prescriptive. This process encouraged self-actualization or fulfillment of one's highest needs.
- Just a few decades later in 1962, Albert Ellis published his first book on Rational Emotional Behavior Therapy, the first major form of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). One of the most popular systems of psychotherapy today, CBT aims to change patterns of sometimes irrational thinking or behavior that are behind people's challenges to change the way they think, feel, or behave.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THERAPY (APOLOGIES TO ERIN 😊)

- Cognitive psychotherapy, developed by Aaron Beck, tweaked this further to say that what we think dictates what we feel. He developed the Beck Institute for [Cognitive Behavior Therapy](#) in 1994 and created the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventories, important metrics for measuring the severity of these disorders.
- In 1972 at the International Conference on Computer Communications, staff from Stanford and UCLA linked computers to demonstrate a psychotherapy session. When personal computers were introduced four years later, it laid the groundwork for support groups and individual therapy options on a larger scale.

BOOK STRUCTURE

- 4 patient stories interspersed with Gottlieb's own therapy experience
 - **John:** Self-absorbed Hollywood producer
 - **Julie:** Young newlywed university professor diagnosed with a terminal illness
 - **Rita:** Senior threatening to end her life on her birthday if nothing gets better
 - **Charlotte:** Young woman who has challenges getting her life going

.....And she finds that the questions they are struggling with are the very ones she is now bringing to **Wendell.**

PATIENT SUMMARIES

- **John:** Self-absorbed Hollywood producer
 - He thinks everyone is an idiot and seems to love only his dog and daughters.
 - Blaming everything on someone else, John does not need to have to do the hard work of looking inward
 - **His issues echo Lori's sense of loss and fear of getting hurt**

PATIENT SUMMARIES

- **Julie:** Young newlywed university tenure track professor diagnosed with a terminal illness
- She is angry at the unfairness of getting a deadly diagnosis just as her life is getting started
- How can she learn to enjoy the time she has left
 - **Her issues echo Lori's fears of mortality and what will happen to her son given her own scary symptoms**

PATIENT SUMMARIES

- **Rita:** Senior threatening to end her life on her birthday if nothing gets better
- She has experienced several failed marriages and estrangement from her children and sees suicide as the only solution
- As she works through the therapy, she does seem to feel better and more positive but feels like she is psychologically unable to be happy.
- She comes to realize that she will always have regrets, she has learned to appreciate her blessings and learn to enjoy the future.
 - **Her issues echo Lori's fears of loneliness and uncertainty about aging and not ever meeting another partner**

PATIENT SUMMARIES

- **Charlotte:** Young woman who has challenges getting her life going
- She is an immature twenty something with an alcohol addiction and continual difficulties with relationships
- Eventually through therapy, she is able to come to accept that she does have to deal with her own issues, come to terms with her childhood with absentee parents and understand that she needs to manage her own life and not get stuck with her regrets re difficult/unhappy childhood
 - **Her issues echo Lori's relationship issues and search for meaningful work – Continually changing successful careers**

For me.....I cried about
John's story the most

STORY QUESTIONS

- 4 patient stories interspersed with Gottlieb's own therapy experience
 - **John:** Self-absorbed Hollywood producer
 - **Julie:** Young newlywed university professor diagnosed with a terminal illness
 - **Rita:** Senior threatening to end her life on her birthday if nothing gets better
 - **Charlotte:** Young woman who has challenges getting her life going – Alcoholism, Relationships

.....And she finds that the questions they are struggling with are the very ones she is now bringing to **Wendell**.

- Which patient arc resonates most for you?
- What made you laugh/cry?

FOUR PARTS OF BOOK BEGIN WITH EPIGRAPHS

OVERALL EPIGRAPH:

WHO LOOKS INSIDE, AWAKES

Part 1 Epigraph:

- *Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch – James Baldwin*

Part 2 Epigraph:

- *Honesty is stronger medicine than sympathy, which may console by often conceals – Gretal Erlich*

Part 3 Epigraph:

- *What makes night within us may leave stars - Victor Hugo*

Part 4 Epigraph:

- *Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not. – Ralph Waldo Emerson*

WHICH CHARACTER MATCHES EACH: OVERALL EPIGRAPH: *WHO LOOKS INSIDE, AWAKES*

My Guess

Lori

Part 1 Epigraph:

- *Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch* – James Baldwin

John

Part 2 Epigraph:

- *Honesty is stronger medicine than sympathy, which may console by often conceals* – Gretal Erlich

Julie

Part 3 Epigraph:

- *What makes night within us may leave stars* - Victor Hugo

Charlotte

Part 4 Epigraph:

- *Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.* – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Rita

ETHICAL CONFLICT

- Using stories from real-life patients (albeit anonymized, conflated, disguised). She did have written permission from the patients.
 - This maybe projectionbut per Gottlieb, that after reading the book, the patients have shared a common sentiment that she knew how much she cared about them but didn't not know the depth of it.
 - Would you want to confide in a therapist who liberally uses your pain as fodder for her books or who was a famous character in her own notable books.
 - Knowing too much about your therapist is a little like reading the last page of a mystery thriller before you've read the rest of the book.
 - Will her notoriety could be a deterrent to the therapy process
 - What if she drops you as a patient – Is it because you are 'boring' or because she truly thinks that you would be better treated by someone else

QUESTIONS

After reading about Julie's preparations for death, did you look up from the book and see the world any differently?

Do you have a bucket list?

Have you ever tried writing your own obituary?

What have you learned from these exercises?

QUESTIONS

(I loved this chapter)

- In the 1980s, a psychologist named James Prochaska developed the transtheoretical model of behavior change (TTM) based on research showing that people generally don't "just do it," tend to move through a series of sequential stages that look like this:
- Stage 1: Pre-contemplation
- Stage 2: Contemplation
- Stage 3: Preparation
- Stage 4: Action
- Stage 5: Maintenance
- **In Chapter 39, "How Humans Change," Gottlieb outlines one model of behavioral change and applies its stages to Charlotte's case. Think about changes you've made in your own life. What helped you to make them? Do you recognize these stages?**

QUESTIONS

- Gottlieb notes that contemporary culture is rendering the ingredients for emotional health more elusive, such as real connection with others, time and patience for processing our experiences, and enough silence to hear ourselves. Have you noticed a change in your own emotional health (or that of your loved ones) as our lives become increasingly digitalized? Pandemic isolation?
- What do you do to offset the effects of an online age (Pandemic)?

QUESTIONS

- What do you learn from this book that you can apply to your relationship with yourself? With others?
- Would this book make you more or less likely to try therapy?
- If you have a therapist, what do you think you want from him/her? Have you ever shared Lori's experience, and that of her patients, of wanting to specific advice, or wondering what the therapist is thinking about you?