



Matthew Sanford Testimonials & Reviews

Public Speaking:

"A rising star."

—Donna Karan, Chief Designer/Creative Director, Donna Karan International & Founder, Urban Zen Foundation

"Charismatic in his presentation."

—Dr. Mehmet Oz, Oprah & Friends, XM 156

"...this is what corporate America needs."

—Jon Swenson Tellekson, Minneapolis, MN

"Your story was so inspirational – the conference attendees were able to leave with a wonderful message from you. Thank you for what you do."

—Debbie Maysack, The Arthritis Foundation, MN Chapter

"Matthew [Sanford] elucidates insights into the mind-body connection that are pioneering and revolutionary. By sharing his own self-discoveries, he challenges us to think beyond current knowledge and practice, and to explore facets of the mind-body previously thought impossible."

—Duane G. Ollendick, Ph.D., ABPP, licensed psychologist

"Phenomenal. Matthew [Sanford] left an incredible impression on the audience about the delicate balance all healers must walk—between truth and dogmatic dictums, between brutal reality and leaving room for hope."

—Brent Bauer, Director, Complementary and Integrative Medicine Program, Mayo Clinic

"Matt is a very refreshing motivational speaker as he intertwines yoga poses into his presentations..."

—Rose Becker, US Business Leadershop Network, National Conference, Medtronic

"Matthew's well delivered message to our medical students ignited much thought and dialogue by encouraging a broader understanding and approach to mind-body connectedness than our current paradigm demands."

—Jennifer Pearson, MD, Assistant Professor, UMD School of Medicine

"In Matthew's presentation, our staff learned that there is more to supporting our patients than just treating their physical injury or condition. By recognizing patient's whole selves—their emotions, stories and physical condition—we have the opportunity to assist them in a more complete way. The result can be that patients are helped to feel more whole and connected to themselves. Matthew empowers us as healthcare providers to consider more fully our role in supporting others by honoring the mind-body relationship."

—Paula Borer, Ridgeview Home Care & Hospice, Waconia, Minn.

"Your talk was exactly what we had hoped for! Feedback was very positive - so many people stopped me to tell me how much they enjoyed it and that they were looking forward to reading your book."

—Astrid Liden, ABE Professional Development Coordinator, MN Depart. of Education

The Book: *Waking: A Memoir of Trauma and Transcendence*:

EDITOR'S CHOICE - BOOK:

Matthew Sanford was 13 when a car crash killed his father and sister and left him paralyzed from the chest down. In *Waking: A Memoir of Trauma and Transcendence*, he recounts the inspiring tale of how, with enormous determination, he crafted a rich new life that today includes a wife and young son.

—Reader's Digest

The Book Cont.:

...Sanford has done time as a philosophy graduate student, and it shows. His paralysis has taught him powerful lessons about consciousness, and he shares them with lucidity in this funny but wrenching memoir. Still, it's his story of how he came to embody his grownup life as a paraplegic-complete with wife, kids, and a job as a yoga instructor-that will truly dare readers to appreciate their own bodies and lives.

—*Yoga Journal*

Losing his father, his sister—and his legs—in a terrible car accident at the age of 13 did not stop Matthew Sanford from living his life. In *Waking*, he retraces his traumatic trek, from hospitalization to fathering a family. Holistic philosophy and the practice of yoga eventually bring peace. The memoir is easy to read, although metered with harrowing details. Sanford offers a powerful, honest account of his battle: awakening a spirit within a damaged body.

—*Psychology Today*

Matthew Sanford's *Waking: A Memoir of Trauma and Transcendence* is a literary hymn in praise of yoga as well as an exploration of the nature of consciousness. As a memoir about sudden onset of paraplegia, it truly is transcendent. And yes, it is also inspirational, but not in the usual clichéd sense of the word as it so often applies to stories about disability. Sanford's writing inspires not because of any drama or melodrama connected to loss, but because it awakens us to non-medical possibilities of healing - discovering ways our minds can connect with our bodies to open windows to wholeness-something disabled and non-disabled alike can embrace.

—*New Mobility Magazine*

“Inspirational.”

—*NBC Today Show*

“This is a book that can potentially revolutionize the thinking of physical therapists and anyone that works with people who are coping with past trauma and injuries. I recommend it with all my heart and soul!”

—Suza Francina, Ojai, CA (*The New Yoga for People Over 50* and *The New Yoga for Healthy Aging*)

“I'm currently reading Matthew Sanford's "*Waking: A Memoir of Trauma and Transcendence*". Matthew is the young man, who at the age of 13 became paralyzed from the chest down due to a car accident that killed his father and his sister. It is a story of the magnificence of spirit and the human body that houses it. At one point in the book he speaks about the silence that happens when the body is separated from the mind. He is urged by the medical experts to ignore the silence. He is urged to overcome it and to not breathe in the cold air of silence. What he says was revealed to him though is that 'my traumatic experience of a spinal cord injury and its resulting paralysis has made more tangible a silence that exists in everyone's consciousness, a silence that can be experienced in the gap between mind and body. How we relate to this silence, how we process it, is a fundamental issue presented by consciousness.' would venture to say that spirit is the key for anyone faced with physical paralysis. Who would have the stamina to sustain the silence created by having no communication between the mind and body? Matthew Sanford would...and did. He now teaches yoga designed for people living with disabilities and has founded the nonprofit organization Mind Body Solutions. I would further venture to say that there are many people on the face of the earth today who are not physically paralyzed, yet they are paralyzed by fear, by anger, by the thought of change. Theirs is not an experience of the beauty of life sustained by the spirit of love.”

—*Nia Inner Journeys blog*

“This is a book you will want to share with colleagues, patients, family and friends if you are in an integrative medicine healing practice. Those that "get" what you are doing will love it for its clear description of our vision. Those that don't "get" what you are doing may very well after reading this extremely well written, passionate story.”

—*Matthew J. Taylor, Scottsdale, AZ (Yoga Physical Therapist)*

“I loved, loved, loved, loved, the book and found myself looking at Matt's picture and bio on the outside cover, saying 'Thank you.'”

—*Nichole Hirsch, Long Lake, MN*

“It was so wonderful I had to finish it in one day! It stays in my thoughts days later. My soul is still lit up.”

—*Rachel Gee, Louisville, KY*

Healthcare and Disability:

“Matthew has an uncanny ability to identify the movement of energy through the bodies of his students and he directs that energy to align their mind and body. For the past 11 years, Matt has been a role model for my son and his other yoga students with disabilities. I have seen phenomenal positive changes in many of his students as they learn how to utilize their mind-body relationships for improved positioning brought on by Matt’s gentle teaching and persuasion.”

—*Rose Becker, caregiver and adaptive class assistant*

I was overwhelmed at the seminar with Matthew and I'm so glad you worked hard to get him here. This is such cool stuff - and in some ways so simple - that it hits you between the eyes! Now I understand that the therapists in the room saw so much more than I did, but I got the feeling they were under the spell, too! Jenna was upbeat, and impressed after the half day session and that's not something that happens every day with her. All of those patients in that room had such a clear understanding and profound voice. This was truly magic and I'm not sure I'll ever see something this powerful ever again. THANK YOU! & to all of those that worked to get Matt to CAMC. So many doors were opened! I'm sure that you will keep them propped wide open.

—*Mark L. Brand, (father of Jenna Brand – patient at CAMC)*

“I am a T-12 paraplegic resulting from a motorcycle accident. I discovered yoga about seven months after my injury. In the beginning, I was very depressed about what had happened to me and I could not focus on anything. Yoga helped ease that feeling of depression and although I still get depressed, I feel I now have a ‘tool’ to help get me through. I always feel better after every class. For me, yoga helps my state of mind so much that the benefits it has for my body are just a big bonus.”

—*Danny G., adaptive yoga student*

“Five years ago, I was in my chair all of the time. Two years into my yoga, I have now been able to transfer out of my chair. The first time, the entire process took about 20 minutes; now it takes about five. What does it mean to me? Not being tethered to my chair—it’s freedom.”

—*Joe D., adaptive yoga student*

“I have an awareness of my body that I didn’t before. If my foot falls off my pedal, I can feel it. Obviously with my paralysis, I can’t *actually* feel it, but I can sense something is off elsewhere in my body, my hips, and I can tell someone what to do to help. I also can now project my voice more using my body. I feel more confident as a student. I feel more open to myself and I’m more open to trying new things. As I’m more in my whole body, I feel more open to myself.”

—*Sammy D., adaptive yoga student*