



# I Thought We'd Never Speak Again: The Road from Estrangement to Reconciliation

By Laura Davis

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In her bestselling classic *The Courage to Heal*, Laura Davis helped millions heal from the pain of child sexual abuse. Now, in *I Thought We'd Never Speak Again*, she tackles another critical, emerging issue: reconciling relationships that have been damaged by betrayal, anger, and misunderstanding.

With clarity and compassion, Davis maps the reconciliation process through gripping first-person stories of people who have mended relationships in a wide variety of circumstances. In these pages, parents reconcile with children, embittered siblings reconnect, angry friends reunite, and war veterans and crime victims meet with their enemies. Davis weaves these powerful accounts with her own experiences reconciling with her mother after a long, painful estrangement.

Making a crucial distinction between reconciliation and forgiveness, Davis explains how people can make peace in relationships without necessarily forgiving past hurts. In addition to a special section called "Ideas for Reflection and Discussion," she includes a self-assessment quiz, "Are You Ready for Reconciliation?"

Whether you want to reconcile a relationship that has ended, improve a relationship that is difficult or distant, or learn the skills you need for dealing with the inevitable conflicts we all face in life, this book will teach you to mend troubled relationships and find peace.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

We've all been advised to forgive and forget, but rarely has anyone suggested a way to reconcile without necessarily forgiving. *I Thought We'd Never Speak Again* does. It covers every sort of contention, from seemingly minor differences that can escalate over time to larger issues of abuse, neglect, and dysfunction.

Author Laura Davis (*The Courage to Heal*) once again comes from a very personal place in this book; she has slowly renewed relations with her mother's family after 10 years with no contact. As she interviews people and shares their stories, she uses the wisdom they've gained to illustrate numerous ways to reconcile--sometimes involving forgiveness and sometimes not. From the family who lost a member to a drunk driver or drive-by shooting to generations of kids on opposite sides of racial, religious, or political issues, the process of coming to peace is a lengthy one, marked by both pain and rewards.

Useful for adults who are dealing with personal issues or families trying to move beyond the emotional aftermath of 9/11, this loving and thoughtful book examines how we can all work together to achieve understanding. --*Jill Lightner*

#### From Publishers Weekly

Families, partnerships and friendships can break up over what appear to be surmountable conflicts, and efforts at damage control are often unproductive. Davis (coauthor, *The Courage to Heal*), a counselor to survivors of childhood sexual abuse, does an excellent job of mapping out an effective reconciliation process. She explains how to rationally assess the possibility of success, recognize the value of partial reconciliation and establish the rules of engagement. Throughout the book are riveting first-person stories by a neglectful mother who made amends with her grown children, a man who organized a reconciliation workshop between children of Holocaust victims and children of Nazis, and many others that illustrate how compassion, honesty and the ability to listen are indispensable. Davis's book is most useful as a guide to reconciliation with intimates; when she extends the scope to include restorative justice initiatives, the issues become somewhat muddied. The needs of violent crime victims and offenders in mediation programs, for example, don't seem exactly the same as those of feuding families and friends. Without a discussion of those differences, the concepts of reconciliation and forgiveness can be confused with empowerment and revenge. In addition, for crime victims and discrimination victims, the social pressure to "get over it" can be fierce, something Davis touches on only briefly. Nonetheless, her insight, clear writing and especially the extensive personal anecdotes should be helpful to readers struggling with these issues.

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#### From Library Journal

Davis is coauthor of *The Courage To Heal*, a best-selling memoir about surviving childhood sexual abuse. Inspired by her reunion with her estranged family, this exploration of reconciliation features interviews with people who have made amends with others from crime victims and their perpetrators to Israeli and Palestinian girls. Before she sat down to write, Davis sifted through the narratives to see whether she could find the "right" or "best" way to reconcile, but she discovered instead that there are as many ways to do so as there are human beings. So that readers may see how people with deeply held, diametrically opposed beliefs can still come together, Davis also shares the story of her reconciliation with her mother, who continues to believe that her daughter is a victim of False Memory Syndrome. Recommended for all public libraries owing to the depth of the examples and Davis's optimism.

## Users Review

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