



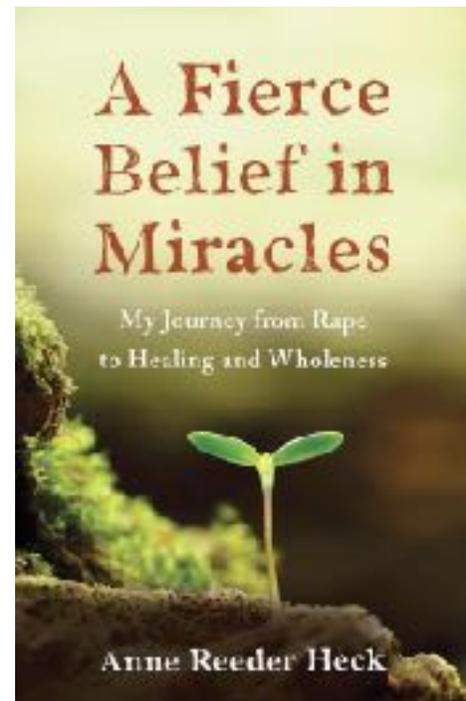
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Memoir Offers Courageous Journey of Assault Survivor Seeking Wholeness

ASHEVILLE, North Carolina – Anne Reeder Heck’s new memoir offers both guidance and solace for those seeking healing and ready to explore paths of forgiveness and spirituality. *A Fierce Belief in Miracles: My Journey from Rape to Healing and Wholeness* (She Writes Press, Sept. 22, 2020) is a powerful and uplifting story of determination and trust. It’s for anyone who believes in—or questions—the existence of miracles.

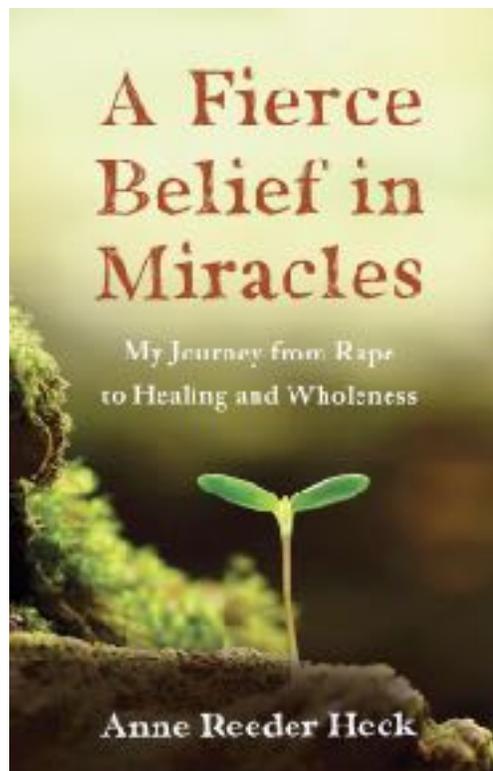
A Fierce Belief in Miracles recounts the experience of Heck, who at age 26 was enjoying a morning bicycle ride in northern Virginia when she was stopped by a man asking for directions. She was violently beaten and raped. Heck is tenacious in her pursuit to heal the pain permeating her body after the rape, and she devotes herself to a healing quest that opens her to the transformative power of intention, intuition and trust. Her prayers for strength are synchronistically answered with a DNA match and identification of her rapist 14 years after the crime.



Featured on the front page of *The Washington Post* and by Diane Sawyer on *Good Morning America*, Heck shares her story to offer hope and support to others navigating their way to wholeness. Gail Straub, award-winning author and co-founder of Empowerment Institute calls Heck’s work “a courageous and generous account of one woman’s healing journey and a testament to resilience of the human spirit.” In this inspiring story, readers will witness the beauty that emerges from darkness, the goodness that is born of ill-guided acts, and the perfection of all that transpires on this path we call life.



**A Fierce Belief in Miracles:
My Journey from Rape to Healing and Wholeness**



Anne Reeder Heck | September 22, 2020 | She Writes Press
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Ebook ISBN: B083BBSQ5X | \$8.99
232 pages | Memoir



About The Author

Anne Reeder Heck's life and livelihood are brimming with miracles. As a seasoned facilitator of spiritual circles for women, a certified Healing Touch practitioner, and an ordained interfaith minister, Anne is devoted to inspiring and guiding others to trust themselves, open to their intuitive guidance, and experience the magic of life through ceremony, positive intention and a creative, curious spirit.

Anne's life training has been diverse and compelling. In addition to graduating with honors in chemistry and receiving her MAT, Anne is trained in spiritual dowsing, conscious languaging, women's rites of passage, and transformational speaking. She is a self-taught artist, specializing in doll making, fiber arts and watercolor. She has trained in and/or participated in over seventy different healing modalities and is grateful to have studied with a multitude of wise and generous teachers.



Anne lives in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband of 26 years and her sweet retriever pup. She can often be found hiking nearby trails or meditatively turning her pedals on the Blue Ridge Parkway. When she's not outdoors, Anne is passionately speaking, facilitating workshops, mentoring, writing or making art. To learn more about Anne's offerings, or to see photos of her healing dolls, visit her at www.anneheck.com.



In an interview, Anne Reeder Heck can discuss:

- **How she came to believe in miracles**
- **Actionable steps assault survivors can take to help their journey to healing and wholeness**
- **How traumas open us to the miraculous**
- **Spiritual and emotional aspects of healing**
- **The importance of listening to that still small voice of intuition**
- **The use of dolls in healing**
- **The challenges of writing about her assault**

An Interview with Anne Reeder Heck

What inspired you to write *A Fierce Belief in Miracles*?

I spent years browsing libraries and later the Internet to find a true story of someone who had navigated their way to wholeness after rape—a story that could give me hope in what sometimes seemed a hopeless search. I wanted to read about those who'd been broken open and had come to discover their inner strength, their authentic voice and an understanding that our traumas are a precious part of our life experience. My book tells that story. What's more, I consider my story nothing short of miraculous, and one that needs to be shared.

Who is the primary audience for this book?

While the reader audience includes survivors of sexual violence, the book will appeal to anyone who's seeking deep healing and is ready to explore the paths of forgiveness and spirituality.

What can readers hope to learn from this book?

My intention in writing this book was to offer hope to those on a healing path. I share teachings that I've found invaluable and introduce the reader to some alternative paths of addressing the traumas in their life. While I can't predict what a reader may take from this book, I know there are plenty of powerful messages available to those who are open.

What was the most challenging part of writing *A Fierce Belief in Miracles*?

The writing and extensive editing process were grueling. I hadn't anticipated how emotionally draining this would be. What I learned is that writing about trauma can be re-traumatizing. I had



thought that it could be healing, but for me that wasn't the case. Writing and editing required great self-compassion and self-care.

A large part of your healing was directed by the making of dolls. Can you tell us more about that?

Yes. For seven years, I devoted myself to making dolls - medicine dolls you might call them - as part of my healing. By placing my emotion outside of myself, I could see it/myself from new perspectives, have a better idea of what I needed, and alter the course to find a new place of balance. The doll series clearly depicts a path of moving from pain and fear to freedom, vitality, strength, and wisdom.

Every journey to healing is unique, but are there actionable steps assault survivors can take?

I don't have a prescription for healing, but I share in my book many things that were valuable as part of my own journey. For example, a big turning point for me happened in the writing of my victim impact statement, when I was forced to consider the impact the rape had on my life. While I don't condone acts of violence, and the healing process was both painful and daunting for me, I also realized this experience taught me many things: the power of my thoughts, the deep connectedness to all life, and the positive influence we get to have through our reverence for all life and through holding an open heart.

Did you always believe in miracles? How did you come to believe in them? Can you remember the specific moment?

As a youngster, I was pragmatic and realistic on the exterior and a mystic and dreamer on the interior. In chapter 11 of my book, a chapter titled "Possibility," I write: "miracles—transformations that could not be explained by science—were a concept I warmed to cautiously. My mind required a rational basis or personal experience to give credence to something beyond reason. However, the faint and timid whisper of my heart fiercely believed in miracles. It was this heart whisper that began to speak to me in my despairing moments during the years I sought healing. It was this quiet voice that encouraged me to stay open to possibility."

I consciously chose to stay curious, to be expectant about what may come. It was partly a mind game to keep me focused positively, but truly, I wanted a faith in miracles, to experience proof of miracles in my own life. My transformative moments as concerns this are described in my book. They were nothing short of miraculous. This is partly why I needed to write this story.

How important is forgiveness to the healing process?



My experience is not going to be the same as that of others, but forgiveness was an essential part of my healing. Any anger or judgment I had about the rapist or the experience of rape hurt me more than it hurt anyone else. When we forgive and find peace this helps us, and it also heals others. It's a compassionate gift to all people to let go of our anger and open our hearts to love.

What does it mean for you to live openly as a survivor of assault?

Terry committed a crime against me that was horrendous and hurtful in so many ways. I couldn't cover that up and move forward knowing that it could happen to someone else. From day one, I did all I could to identify my assailant. It didn't matter what that required of me; I simply needed to speak the truth, and be open about my experience. At this point in my journey, the rape doesn't define me. My healing journey defines me. This is the piece that I'm inspired to share with others - that healing is available to us, and not just healing, but miracles. Yes, miracles.



Endorsements for “A Fierce Belief in Miracles”

“In *A Fierce Belief in Miracles*, Anne has explored in depth her healing path so that others can navigate their trials with greater ease and inspiration. Pay attention to the teachings offered in this book and you will be supported in new and unexpected ways on your own path to healing.”
~ Lynne Twist, Co-Founder, The Pachamama Alliance; Founder, The Soul of Money Institute; best-selling author, *The Soul of Money*

“*A Fierce Belief in Miracles* is a courageous and generous account of one woman’s healing journey. A testament to resilience of the human spirit, Anne Heck’s story traces the trauma of rape all the way to a place of hard earned equanimity. Her unconventional path offers hope and wisdom to any trauma survivor. And Anne’s willingness to share her story with unflinching honesty is a powerful signal in a world where too many women know the trauma of rape.”
~ Gail Straub, Co-Founder, Empowerment Institute and award-winning author, *Empowerment* and *Returning to My Mother’s House*

“This beautifully written page-turner about a cyclist with a passion for exploring wilderness trails gently guides readers through her violation of rape into a courageous and creative healing journey of self-discovery. The unexpected potentials and guides she meets—both inner and outer—embolden this indomitable traveler to befriend her fear, anger, resistance, and pain, and eventually enjoy her rewards of trust and spiritual meaning. Wise and breathtakingly honest, this inspiring story will bring hope to those who suffer the after-effects of trauma and long to liberate their captive truths into consciousness.”
~ Jean Benedict Raffa, Ed.D, author of *The Bridge to Wholeness*, *Dream Theatres of the Soul*, *Healing the Sacred Divide*, and *The Soul’s Twins*.

“*A Fierce Belief in Miracles* is the compelling and moving story of Anne Heck’s quest to understand and transform the scrambled pieces of her heart and soul in the aftermath of sexual violence. Through her fearless exploration of healing modalities over two decades and her determination to embrace the arduous journey and its mysteries, she bestows a gift of hope. Heck’s story of her path to meaning, truth, and transformative integration is an important contribution to the growing body of literature on sexual violence — its complex impact on individuals and society.”
~ Nancy Venable Raine, author of *After Silence: Rape and My Journey Back*



“Anne gives us the courage to trust that the unconventional path to healing might just be the greatest gift of our lives.”

~ Amy B. Scher, author of *This Is How I Save My Life* and *How To Heal Yourself When No One Else Can*

“Heck is a bracingly honest and clear writer, and her penchant for detail . . . gives her recollections an intense feeling of immediacy. Her prose is simple and graceful. . . . A candid remembrance that examines pain and celebrates growth.”

~ Kirkus Reviews