

Finding Fatherhood

Rob Kozak

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Finding Fatherhood is an inspiring story about deciding what it means to be a man and a father.

Rob Kozak's memoir *Finding Fatherhood* is a relatable and insightful account of a father struggling to connect to his child after divorce.

After a domestic separation, Kozak remained in Canada while his eight-year-old son, Bobby, ended up half a world away in Australia. A terrible automobile accident led Kozak to reconsider his life and focus on connecting to the people he loved—what if he weren't around for his son? Throughout the book, he and Bobby reunite in Australia over various Christmas breaks.

Organized in roughly chronological fashion, the book makes use of different media, including emails, journal entries, and first-person stories, to build a compelling picture of a father-son relationship that developed over time, though the pair were separated by miles and held together by love.

Finding Fatherhood is about deciding what it means to be a man and a father. Short entries speak to a wide range of issues, such as Kozak's life goals, personal motivation, and focus. Kozak's conclusions are inspiring, as is his fatherly perspective on how best to raise boys in today's world.

The book's years of anecdotes read like tips for building and maintaining a father-son relationship. Some are basic: be interested in what your child likes. Others are more difficult: despite the challenge of divorce, choose to be civil to your previous partner. Such ideas are relatably presented and sufficiently detailed. Scenes in Australia enliven the text further, with accounts of biking, travel, exploration, and other new adventures.

Writing is clear and concise, and more complex ideas are explored with the help of examples. Emails and letters are frequently interspersed with more specific prose to offer additional insights or explanations. Transitions between forms are sometimes clunky; not all pieces exemplify the same quality of writing or command the same level of interest. Blow-by-blow descriptions of adventures lose some verve, taking on a postcard quality.

As the book draws toward its end, a picture of Kozak comes into focus: he is an introspective father whose desire to do the best for his son leads him to become a better person. With its effective mix of travel writing and memories, this book is a work full of warmhearted fatherly wisdom that will endear itself to other contemporary parents.

Finding Fatherhood is an inspiring, sympathetic memoir that shows how a father's love can bridge great distances.

JEREMIAH ROOD (February 22, 2018)

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