

“Be a Triangle” - Lilly Singh

In this book, Singh provides a safe space where readers can learn how to create a sense of peace within themselves. Without sugarcoating what it's like to face adversity—including acknowledging her own intensely personal struggles with identity, success, and self-doubt—Singh teaches readers to “unsubscribe” from cookie-cutter ideals.

With her signature blend of vulnerability, insight, and humor, Singh instructs readers to “be a triangle,” creating a solid foundation for your life, one that can be built upon, but never fundamentally changed or destroyed. As she puts it, we must always find a way to come home to ourselves: “we must create a place, a system of beliefs, a simple set of priorities to come back to should life lead us astray, which it definitely will.”

Like a wise, empathetic friend who always keeps you honest, Singh pushes you to adjust your mindset and change your internal dialogue. The result is a deeply humane, entertaining, and uplifting guide to befriending yourself and becoming a true “miracle for the world.”

“Prisoner of Tehran” - Marina Nemat’s novel

In 1982, 16-year-old Marina Nemat was arrested on false charges by Iranian Revolutionary Guards and tortured in Tehran’s notorious Evin prison. At a time when most Western teenaged girls are choosing their prom dresses, Nemat was having her feet beaten by men with cables and listening to gunshots as her friends were being executed. She survived only because one of the guards fell in love with her and threatened to harm her family if she refused to marry him. Soon after her forced conversion to Islam and marriage, her husband was assassinated by rival factions. Nemat was returned to prison but, ironically, it was her captor’s family who eventually secured her release. An extraordinary tale of faith and survival, *Prisoner of Tehran* is a testament to the power of love in the face of evil and injustice.

“Braiding Sweetgrass” - Robin Wall Kimmerer

As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants, and animals are our oldest teachers. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together to take us on “a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise” (Elizabeth Gilbert).

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders,

algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth and learn to give our own gifts in return.

“The Stranger” - Albert Camus

The classic literary masterpiece *The Stranger* is a story about an Algerian, Meursault, the titular character who commits a murder after attending his mother's funeral. His understanding of the world, his emotional spectrum, and the general absurdities of the time all combine to form a compelling read.

The story is aptly divided into two riveting sections, both told from the perspective of Meursault, who gives us his views before the murder in the first section and later walks us through his state of mind after the murder in the second section. The two parts in this thrilling novel encompass the protagonist's mindset through the ordeal of grieving for his mother's death while also coming face to face with his own moral compass for committing a murder.

The Stranger is often cited as one of the finest examples of the philosophy of the absurd. The sense of culture and various human values interwoven during the turbulent pre-modern era is also best captured in the contents of this novel.

“Touch the Dragon: A Thai Journal” - Karen Connelly

At the age of 17, the adventure-seeking Calgary teenager went to Thailand on a Rotary exchange program and her life changed forever. Twenty-four years later, Connelly is still travelling and writing, inspiring the world with her stories.

Through vivid imagery, humour and careful observation of the families, school friends and Buddhist rituals around her, Connelly brings to life the small village in northern Thailand where she stayed for a year. Initially homesick and frustrated by the habits and lifestyle of the gentle but patriarchal Thais, Connelly begins to view herself as one of them by the end of her stay. The idea of returning to Canada becomes terrifying and strange because she has become so accustomed to her new community and the Thai way of life.

Put together from her journals written at the time, Connelly's to-the-moment chronicling of her experience reveals a momentous growing experience in the heart and mind of a young woman.
