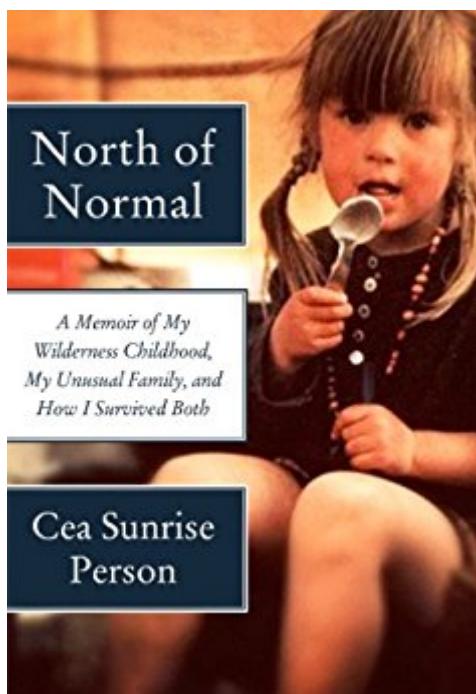


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North Of Normal: A Memoir Of My Wilderness Childhood, My Unusual Family, And How I Survived Both



Synopsis

Sex, drugs, and . . . bug stew? In the vein of *The Glass Castle* and *Wild*, *Cea Sunrise Person*'s compelling memoir of a childhood spent with her dysfunctional counter-culture family in the Canadian wilderness—a searing story of physical, emotional, and psychological survival. In the late 1960s, riding the crest of the counterculture movement, Cea's family left a comfortable existence in California to live off the land in the Canadian wilderness. But unlike most commune dwellers of the time, the Persons weren't trying to build a new society—they wanted to escape civilization altogether. Led by Cea's grandfather Dick, they lived a pot-smoking, free-loving, clothing-optional life under a canvas tipi without running water, electricity, or heat for the bitter winters. Living out her grandparents' dream with her teenage mother Michelle, young Cea knew little of the world beyond her forest. She spent her summers playing nude in the meadow and her winters snowshoeing behind the grandfather she idolized. Despite fierce storms, food shortages, and the occasional drug-and-sex-infused party for visitors, it seemed to be a mostly happy existence. For Michelle, however, now long separated from Cea's father, there was one crucial element missing: a man. When Cea was five, Michelle took her on the road with a new boyfriend. As the trio set upon a series of ill-fated adventures, Cea began to question both her highly unusual world and the hedonistic woman at the centre of it—questions that eventually evolved into an all-consuming search for a more normal life. Finally, in her early teens, Cea realized she would have to make a choice as drastic as the one her grandparents once had in order to save herself. While a successful international modeling career offered her a way out of the wilderness, Cea discovered that this new world was in its own way daunting and full of challenges. Containing twenty-four intimate black-and-white family photos, *North of Normal* is Cea's funny, shocking, heartbreakin, and triumphant tale of self-discovery and acceptance, adversity, and strength that will leave no reader unmoved.

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Customer Reviews

This memoir of a young woman raised in the Canadian wilderness by her pot smoking, sex crazed, often naked mother, is truly unbelievable. It was actually her grandfather who decided to leave civilization behind, and his daughter and young granddaughter followed, living off the land, oftentimes on Indian reservations, frequently moving to survive. The author had no immunizations, and little schooling, but as she got older was determined to make something of herself and leave her wayward family behind. Despite overcoming hardships and struggling for years, she proves that one can virtually rise above all odds to become happy and fulfilled.

I couldn't put this book down. Much like the Glass Castle, it is a story of triumph after an unbelievably bizarre and downright abusive childhood. I couldn't wait until she grew up and made her move to find her "normal." The ending did not disappoint. Anyone tempted to whine about his or her childhood should read this book and appreciate the power of choice and the journey this girl made toward wholeness.

Well written memoir of a difficult childhood in a profoundly dysfunctional family by an apparently once famous model. I was very interested in her story as a child but found her teen and adult years rushed. I would have either rather have more in depth accounting of her later years, or have that section shorted to an epilog.

Oh my gosh, I have recommended this book to everyone I know. The fact that this little girl arrived into adulthood successfully is amazing. Riveting from page one. This reminded me of "This Life is in My Hands" by Melissa Coleman (get that book too!)....both girls of the late 60s, early 70s, surviving

very oddball circumstances, even for that point in American history. Loved it.

A very well-written account of being raised by an incredibly self-centered and irresponsible group of people who embraced the counterculture movement to avoid dealing with self-responsibility and their own mental health issues. It's amazing that Ms. Person managed to not only survive her childhood but seems to have emerged, relatively intact, to tell the tale. Excellent, couldn't-put-it-down read!

I went into reading this book thinking, "Yeah, let's see how far north of normal this family really is!" Thinking that there's not much that can beat my weird childhood. I was wrong. But, the thing I wasn't wrong about: how much our childhoods shape us into the adults we are now. Reading Cea's passage through childhood and journey into adulthood kept me enthralled, sick with heartache, and finally, rejoicing with happiness at the beautiful smile on her face in the picture with her children and husband. I will definitely read more of her novels and other works of art!

This is a wonderfully written book that will take you from laughing until you hurt to cringing for the circumstances this precious child finds herself in, to crying with her when there is nothing left to do but cry! Cea is just plain remarkable in her intelligence, courage and resilience at a very young age. Really, I really could go on and on but I wouldn't spoil this remarkable true story for anyone. My dearest regards to Cea and her success, she earned every bit of it--- over and over again!!

Bought this over Christmas break and couldn't put it down. The author is a brave and confidant woman who uses factual language, almost void of emotion, to describe her childhood experiences. The author does seek professional help and her healing is evident. As a professional, I would caution readers regarding possible "triggers" as the content of this book deals with various abuses. Overall, this book is a positive tribute.

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