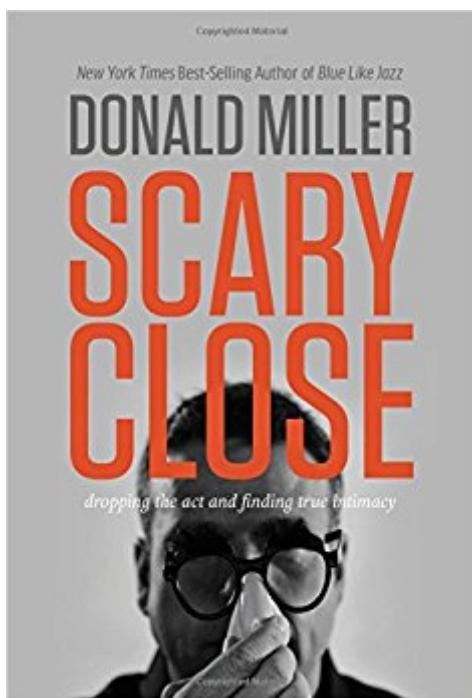


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Scary Close: Dropping The Act And Finding True Intimacy



Synopsis

After decades of failed relationships and painful drama, Donald Miller decided he'd had enough. Impressing people wasn't helping him connect with anyone. He'd built a life of public isolation, yet he dreamed of meaningful relationships. So at forty years old he made a scary decision: to be himself no matter what it cost. From the author of *Blue Like Jazz* comes a book about the risk involved in choosing to impress fewer people and connect with more, about the freedom that comes when we stop acting and start loving. It is a story about knocking down old walls to create a healthy mind, a strong family, and a satisfying career. And it all feels like a conversation with the best kind of friend: smart, funny, true, important. *Scary Close* is Donald Miller at his best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Donald Miller is the author of several books, including the bestsellers *Blue Like Jazz* and *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years*. He helps people live a better story at storylineblog.com and helps leaders grow their businesses at storybrand.com. He lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his wife, Betsy, and their chocolate lab, Lucy.

Excellent! Reading Donald Miller is like chatting with an old friend. It was an easy pre-order. I have to admit when I read the description I didn't think I connected with the topic and considered cancelling. I'm glad I didn't. It's one of Don's best books and I resonated with it. My wife read the intro and

couldn't understand why I liked it so much. After she read the first two chapters she was in tears. Why? Because that's what happens when you have a deep conversation with an old friend. Is it revolutionary? No. But I believe sometimes we need to hear wisdom in different voices or at different places in our lives before it makes sense or an impact. This is always true of scripture and for me, it was true with the content in *Scary Close*. I won't go into the heart of the book. Some people like to read clinical breakdowns but often this can drain the energy from the experience of a really good book and leave us disconnected from it. If you're on the fence like I was and considering passing, remember, it's a book not a mortgage. I hope others are touched by this book, but if not, it was a couple of hours with a friend talking about what affected him and maybe at the least it will be a lesson in empathy.

This book is a mind opener. Without being judgemental or preachy Don unzipped my outer shell and pulled the real me out. While truly flawed, the girl inside is indeed worth knowing. I will strive every day to apply what I've learned. I deeply long for a partnership where I, and my beloved, can be fully known to each other without fear. However, the reality is I must learn how to fully live and love the real me first. I have work to do, and a long road ahead of me, but Don has cleared the way. I feel I will be ever changed, for the better, after reading *Scary Close*. I'm buying extra copies to share with my kids...it's that good.

Having read a couple of his previous books, I was looking forward to reading Donald Miller's new book, *Scary Close*. I have to say, I wasn't disappointed. *Scary Close* is an easy, yet extremely informative look at intimacy in relationships (both romantic and platonic) told through the lens of Miller's engagement and eventual marriage. His confessional, conversational writing style is very disarming and makes the ideas easy to process. Miller is very open about his failings (early on he talks about his visit to Onsite, a sort of therapy retreat) and uses them, along with his triumphs, as encouragement to others who struggle with intimacy and relationship issues. Each chapter details another step in Miller's quest for true intimacy and healthy, honest relationships. Interspersed throughout each chapter are anecdotes involving friends of Miller's, books he read, seminars he attended, and interactions with his fiancée that tie in to the main idea and help guide him on his journey. Several of the topics covered include: The Distracting Noises of Insecurity, Everybody's Got a Story and It's Not the One They're Telling, Performance Anxiety in Real Life, The Risk of Being Careful, Great Parents Do This Well, Do Men Do Intimacy Differently?, and You Will Not Complete Me, amongst many others. Don looks in depth

at many of the hang-ups and excuses surrounding relationships and addresses them with his trademark self-deprecating humor (he actually addresses this, too). I highly recommend Scary Close. It will appeal to Donald Miller's previous fans, and will be a helpful tool for anyone looking to engage in a healthy relationships at home, at work, or with friends. It is a quick read, but is full of ideas that can be processed slowly in order to fully digest them. I received a preview copy of this book as part of Thomas Nelson's BookLook Bloggers program in exchange for an honest review.

The book is a very easy read because it is well written and contains a lot of stories. I found the book to be helpful in making clear this one concept: In order to connect with others, I have to show my true self. While he does an amazing job of exposing why this is true, there wasn't much, if any, pragmatic or practical direction given on how to overcome this problem we have of putting on a social act. It's one of those books where the lessons are within the stories. Each chapter tells a different personal story from his life, with the central story arc of his engagement with his now wife. At the end of each chapter, there is a very short, I'm talking one paragraph or so, explanation of the lesson apparent in the story. He drills these home well, and they were definitely effective in helping me see the root of my intimacy issues. But now I feel like I need to read another book to know how to practically go about addressing those issues. There was however, some helpful advice from one of his counselors included in some of the earlier chapters, that would be worth revisiting. All in all, I enjoyed reading this book. It was insightful and while sometimes very deep and personal, a light read.

This was a Father's Day gift that I devoured by the end of the weekend. Scary Close seemed perfectly suited for the holiday and for me where I am these days. After many years of twelve step groups and counseling I had become weary of self examination. Scary Close was a welcome refresher into why we look at ourselves and address our unhealthy patterns. I needed to hear that I don't do all this self-work to be applauded but to give/accept love and be known. It is first and foremost a memoir and yet I gained direction and practical advice all the same. I feel like Donald Miller's style is more mature thanks to the lessons described in this story and I can see how his use of humor is still there, but dialed way back from Blue Like Jazz and other examples. I did sense some repetition towards the end, but likely that came from reading it all in two sittings seeing so much so close together. I'm sure I needed the reminder anyway. I'm grateful for the fresh wind in my sails courtesy of a writer I've appreciated for many years.

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