



# Thinking Out Loud: Love, Grief and Being Mum and Dad

*Rio Ferdinand*

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**Thinking Out Loud: Love, Grief and Being Mum and Dad** Rio Ferdinand

**In 2015, former England football star Rio Ferdinand suddenly and tragically lost his wife and soulmate Rebecca, aged 34, to cancer.** It was a profound shock and Rio found himself struggling to cope not just with the pain of his grief, but also with his new role as both mum and dad to their three young children.

Rio's BBC1 documentary, *Being Mum and Dad*, touched everyone who watched it and won huge praise for the honesty and bravery he showed in talking about his emotions and experiences. His book now shares the story of meeting, marrying and losing Rebecca, his own and the family's grief - as well as the advice and support that gets him through each day as they strive to piece themselves back together. It is written in the hope that he can inspire others struggling with loss and grief to find the help they need through this most difficult of times.

## Thinking Out Loud: Love, Grief and Being Mum and Dad Details

Date : Published October 3rd 2017 by Hodder & Stoughton

ISBN :

Author : Rio Ferdinand

Format : Kindle Edition 288 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Biography, Autobiography



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# **From Reader Review Thinking Out Loud: Love, Grief and Being Mum and Dad for online ebook**

## **Mary says**

What a totally wonderful book. heartbreaking at times. I felt rio wrote from the heart and was so lovely to hear a man's prospective . I wish him well in his new relationship. great book

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## **Leonard Bacica says**

This is a football biography unlike any other football biography: the sport only stays in the background and despite the insights into Rio's footballing life, the book centers on his family life. Meeting Rebecca - his future wife, their years together, the tough time of acting as a single parent while his wife was being treated for cancer and finally, his struggle to keep going and having to fulfill, this time for good, the roles of both mum and dad for his three kids.

Sure, due to his footballing talents Rio has had, since his mid-teens, a privileged life, and he doesn't shy away from it. But looking too much at the story from this angle doesn't do justice to anyone, least so to Rio. Tragedy is tragedy, and no amount of wealth or social privilege can protect you from it.

Not having experienced a loss as big as Rio's, I don't know how it feels. But I know that if, God forbid, I would suffer such a loss, I'd like to have a book like this close. And I feel it is a great instrument and has the potential to help a lot of people that go through similar experiences.

I cried a number of times while reading it, and there's also a lot of cute moments in the book, specially when he talks about the relationship with his kids.

Writing this book has been an enormous act of courage for Rio and shows both his strength of characters and his generosity. It is a great read, and I now think of it as a very peculiar cross between biography, self-help book and great literature.

Having experienced the death of his mother less than two years after his wife's was soul-crushing even for me when hearing the news. I can only imagine how poor Rio must've felt. All the more admirable that he chose to go through with his projects, all the more admirable to see him weekly in Sky's pundit chair. Even with this review, I feel I've been too harsh with a very admirable man and a great footballer. I'll end with a little story that is, I think, illustrative for Rio's character:

Earlier this month, when attending the launch of the book, we were told that a book is included in the price of the ticket, but there will be no signings, autograph sessions or photo-ops. And it was indeed an unfitting atmosphere for a meet-up between a footballer and his fans: most people in the audience were either recently bereaved or healthcare professionals, Rio's family and close friends were there and yes, there were a few Manchester United jerseys in the room, but they were in no way a focus. At the end, however, ignoring the organizer's advice and venue security's orders, Rio stayed and signed all the books that he was requested to, took all the pictures with everyone who asked him to and was generally an all-round gracious host.

I now feel sorry for ever being judgmental about Rio. Whenever I see him nowadays, whether on TV or in a

picture, I just want to give him a big hug.

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### **Stephen says**

thanks to netgalley and the publishers for a free copy in return for an open and honest review

found this memoir based on his wife battle with cancer and his coping measures very heart warming and very interesting on how people cope with the loss of a loved one and how it effects the whole family and friends.

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### **Chloe Metzger says**

When I was asked if I wanted to review this title, I thought it would be a decent read. I'd heard about Rio's documentary but hadn't watched it myself. The blurb was heart-wrenching, but I wanted to read about the journey of the Ferdinand family after the death of Rio's wife Rebecca, of Cancer.

The book covers Rio's relationship with Rebecca and the aftermath of her death as he learns to be a single parent. While the majority of the book I was interested, it wasn't exactly what I thought it would be about. This is more of a book for Rebecca, about how Rio met and fell in love with her, his regrets that he always out football first rather than her etc. I wish there had been more about the children, more practical advice, that's just my own personal opinion.

This does a brilliant job of exploring grief, Rio does not shy away from the darkness that he felt, the drink that he turned to and the hopelessness that he felt. It is hard to read at times, it plays on your mind. That said it was confusing at times jumping between time periods and what he believed was happening compared to what was actually happening.

I gave this 3 stars, it was an interesting and heartfelt read but I felt that it could have focused less on Rio's younger life and more on the aftermath and slow down on the steps he took to deal with his grief.

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### **Louise Wilson says**

I think most people will have heard of the footballer Rio Ferdinand. He tragically lost his wife Rebecca to cancer when she was just 34. Rio had to become both father and mother to his three young children. Rio has also made a documentary, Being Mum and Dad, and it touched everyone who watched it. In this biography Rio is brutally honest about not being able to express his emotions. This is an honest emotional read and you don't have to be a fan of football to enjoy this book.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Hodder and Stoughton and the author Rio Ferdinand for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Zoe Mann says**

I watched "Being Mum and Dad" on BBC One when it was broadcast and I don't think any documentary has ever touched me or had such a large impact on me as this one.

In this day and age when there is so much fight for feminism and Woman's rights I do strongly feel more needs to be done for men and in particular their mental health. Rio Ferdinand has taken a huge step in raising this point with his documentary and new book "Thinking out Loud".

85% of the people who seek help after losing a child are woman. Over 1/3 of men abuse alcohol after experiencing the loss of a loved one and suicide is vastly higher in men. I know a lot is being done to encourage men to speak out but is the help actually there for them, or anyone, when they finally find the courage to do so?

The main focus of this book is to tell Rio and Rebecca's story. He pays homage to the strong, amazing and loving mother, friend and wife that Rebecca was before she lost her life to cancer and how her death affected himself and his children.

He talks about the amazing services available for families dealing with grief. He raises awareness of the lack of services. He raises the question of why we don't discuss death? He talks about the stages of grief, the one most strongly portrayed is denial. He talks about guilt and his struggle with being a single parent and he talks about the other amazing people who have shared their stories which have inspired and enabled him to find hope.

One of the most encouraging things about this book is that you can tell it has been written by Rio. It hasn't been edited to be fancy, to show him in an amazing light, to act like he is now a therapist in dealing with grief. It is raw, imperfect and honest.

I felt frustration, sadness, inspiration and so much sorrow reading "Thinking out Loud" but most importantly I felt hope. Rio has shown with the right help and support life can go on. Life can get better and one day you will smile again.

I could go on forever about the impact this book and documentary will have on men's mental health in the future but we would be here all day. I am truly grateful to Rio for finding the courage to share his story and for helping so many others. I wish him and his children all the best for their future and I hope he continues to fight and raise awareness for men's mental health and grief management.

Thank you to Netgalley and the publisher for an ARC in return for an honest review.

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## **Rebecca Carter says**

I started reading this book thinking "why did I take so long to actually get around to this"? Maybe I thought it was going to be depressing and I wasn't in the right state of mind. I don't know why, but it took me almost a year to begin reading it. I was living overseas when the documentary about Rio Ferdinand and his family's loss was screened in the U.K. I had read things on social media by people who didn't think much of him, who then watched the documentary, and their opinion towards him changed to one of respect and sympathy.

I guess I was ambivalent towards him. When I lived in the U.K. Rio was playing at Man Utd and they were the team to beat. I used to be quite into football back then and respected him as a player. I had no interest in his personal life, and to be fair, didn't pick up on any gossip about him - although I'm not really one for gossip rags. Then I moved overseas; during that time the U.K. press began finding ways to "out" players who had taken out high court injunctions against British media outlets to prevent them reporting on their dubious personal lives. Everyone has heard about Giggs and Rooney's affairs. I was oblivious to Rio Ferdinand being mixed up in this. Strangely enough, until I was about 30% through this book I thought he sounded devoted to his wife. I picked up on an odd line about him saying he certainly wasn't a saint - but didn't think too much about it. The other day I was reading an article online about a dress (of all things), and the related comments. I knew Rio is now in a relationship with another woman and just engaged, but didn't know her, her name or what she did for a living - I just don't care a great deal for celebrity gossip.

Many online comments were about this woman, saying she and Rio should be disgusted with themselves for allegedly creeping around behind his dying wife's back, while seeing Kate (the girlfriend). While married he also allegedly cheated on his wife at least ten times (this is how many super injunctions were taken out to prevent the press reporting). It's said to actually be over 30 affairs and flings.

Sorry for digressing. Reading this made me reluctant to carry on with "Thinking Out Loud". It tarnished the entire book and made it feel like a fallacy. What kind of man can (allegedly) have numerous affairs, treat his wife with utter contempt and disrespect and then publish a book about grief and getting over the loss of her? It just didn't sit right with me.

I persevered and tried to ignore what I now know about the man. The book is part memoir, part autobiography and part a manual for dealing with loss and grief, after his wife Rebecca is diagnosed with cancer.

From about 60% onwards in particular, parts of the book could be helpful for someone grieving the loss of a loved one. Although Rio had the help of numerous professionals and resources normal people simply wouldn't have access to, there are some helpful pointers and lists of charities and helpful organisations.

Knowing how reluctant some men are to deal with emotional issues and grief, the fact this is written by a footballer, may encourage them to pick it up and read and in the process learn to open up more.

I wish I could write a more positive review and had remained oblivious to what Rio had (allegedly) been up to while he wife was in a hospital bed dying from cancer. This review would have been totally different. Sadly it altered my opinion of him and made me contemplate what he was doing at various points in the book, when he kept reiterating he has a "terrible memory" and grief can also make you blank time. I'm aware I should have attempted to remain neutral, however that's somewhat difficult when a book is about his "cherished beautiful" wife that he appears devoted to. There was another part that now makes me cringe, about moving on and dating other people and how unless you've been in the same situation you can't possibly understand. Now I can't help but think he raised such a point because he (allegedly) had someone else on the sidelines. Really wanted to enjoy this but sadly allegations ruined it :(

Saying that, Rio appears to be a fantastic father to his three children. He's willing to see his errors and attempt to change them to be a better father. I'm sure this book will help many people, in particular men, to help deal with their emotions and grief after the loss of a loved one. Which if you take the book on the surface, and don't know any other details, is what the aim of it is - to help people to open up and overcome grief.

Thanks to NetGalley and Hodder & Stoughton for the opportunity to read this ARC in return for an honest and unbiased review.

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## **Gary says**

I had already read and enjoyed Rio Ferdinand's biography but I was a little doubtful whether I wanted to read this due to the main subject matter of the book. I did choose to read it and was glad I did, yes it was sad and upsetting but it was a lot more than that. It helps to explain Rio's grief and how he manages to cope in such difficult circumstances bringing up 3 young children who are also struggling to cope with the tragic loss of their mother. Rio confesses that he has always struggled to show his feelings but now he must take on the role of both mother and father as well as trying to get through his own life. This is a very good read about a difficult subject, Rio Ferdinand shows bravery and resolve to overcome his most difficult situation.

I would like to thank Net Galley and Hodder & Stoughton for supplying a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Vicki - I Love Reading says**

The first thing I have to say about this book is, What an emotional read!

Tears were dropping down my cheeks at an alarming rate reading this book, I was a snotty sniveling mess.

What a beautifully written, honest and emotional read that was.

Rio Ferdinand thought he was in control of his life, until the day his beautiful wife died, and his life changed forever, not only his life but the life of his 3 children. This book not only highlights how coping with grief is so difficult, but how one parent has to suddenly take on the roll of being both parents.

When you're the parent that wasn't in charge of the household, the daily running of things, you hadn't even realised the task of the school run is a military operation that you didn't realise just how much needed to be done, then life changes and changes in a big way.

Facing all these changes as well as suffering the loss of a loved one must be so so difficult, and in this book Rio tells us just how he found it, how he coped and didn't cope. How the children managed each day or didn't manage. This is a raw and honestly written book. It's an absolutely heart wrenching read, and anyone that has suffered the loss of someone they loved will understand a lot of what is said in this book. I also hope that this book will help anyone currently going through grief, to realise that grief is normal, anyone/everyone can suffer with grief at some stage, some cope better than others, there is no right or wrong way.

We also learn in this book of Rio's upbringing, his journey into football and him meeting his wife Rebecca. As I said earlier this book is emotional, it is very well put together, raw, honest, moving, i'm stuck for words on giving this book the justice it deserves. But if one person going through grief can find any form of comfort or help from this book then it's all been worth it for Rio, jumping out of his comfort zone and admitting that he's not a super human robot. And it shows that just because you are up there in the lime light, doesn't mean you are not affected like any other human being. Well done for writing this book Rio, I hope it also helped you.

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## **Bookread2day says**

Review on [www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com) Twitter@favouritenovels Thinking Out Loud broke my heart reading it. Not only has Rio lost his wife Rebecca but he also lost his mother too. It's amazing how Rio finds the strength to be a mum and a dad to his children. There is a beautiful picture on the first page of Rebecca in

her wedding dress. Lovely pictures are throughout Thinking Out Loud. Rio was sent many letters of support which he has added them in this book. You don't need to be a fan of football to read this brave account of Rio Ferdinand.

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### **Hayley Whytock says**

This book definitely puts life into perspective, it makes you think, it makes you value everything you have. You don't know what you've got until it's gone.  
I genuinely do think that it will be a massive help to people.

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### **Ting Tong says**

It's funny isn't it that we all at some point are going to die and yet we barely ever talk about it, in fact we try our best to avoid and delude ourselves into thinking that death is naturally something that will happen to us, our friends and family eventually, but only in the far-flung future. Although this book is heavily focused on men not being able to process grief I think it is applicable to everyone; particularly those of us who find it hard to be vocal about how we feel. When I experienced grief, I didn't talk to anyone about it; I just buried it as deep as I could, and it remained an underlying issue for me for over 10 years. I'd been carrying around with me feelings of guilt for not spending more time with that person, for not showing them how much they meant to me and for being selfish in how I spent my time around them. The pain of losing someone you're so close to makes you never want to be close to anyone again; you distance yourself and try to keep everyone at an arm's length; you care but you don't show ever show it. You try to make yourself as self-sufficient as possible so that if you ever lose anyone again you won't fall apart. You then overgeneralise this and if another person makes you feel negative emotions you have a knee-jerk reaction to just cut them off and escape, which makes further relationships tumultuous. All this is hiding just below your consciousness and you don't for years even realise you are doing it, so you make it very likely in the future that you'll have the same guilt about someone else when they die. This book is immersive into the world of someone who is processing their grief and the challenges they face along the way; I was in tears at the end and hoping that no one I know dies anytime soon.

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### **Jane Hunt says**

Well written, with honesty and sensitivity, This is a story of a man's life and career and how he coped with the loss of his young wife. It is fast paced, poignant and gives a message of hope to those in similar circumstances.

I received a copy of this book from Hodder & Stoughton via NetGalley in return for an honest review.

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### **Louise says**

I've read many celebrity and sporting autobiographies, but this was so very different. Rio Ferdinand's book read more like a confession at times rather than the memoirs of one of the world's top footballers.



Rio had been brought up to hide his feelings, not to talk about anything emotional and that to show feelings was a sign of weakness. This was carried on into his football career where his whole life centered on winning matches. Failure was not an option and the loss of a match was met with utter devastation.

When Rio met and married Rebecca she understood that his world of football was all-consuming, that he would miss big family occasions because he was away playing football and not always be there for herself and their children.

Rebecca accepted this lifestyle because she knew that the career of a footballer was so short lived and that the day would come when he would hang up his boots and they could reap the rewards of his dedication to the game with a lavish and privileged lifestyle. She ran the home to perfection and was a fantastic mother to their three children, happy to keep everything running smoothly, and accepting that her husband was working for the benefit of their family.

Tragically Rebecca died from cancer in 2015 leaving Rio with three children he hardly knew how to communicate with and no idea how to care for.

Rio had been unable to accept that Rebecca was terminally ill and refused to let her talk about her upcoming death, her deepest wishes, messages for her children and now the guilt was wearing away at him. Rio doesn't just tell how things happened, but how he told the world they had happened, because he was in denial, still working and avoiding facing up to the sadly inevitable.

The autobiography is an enormously brave account and an extremely honest view of how badly he got things so wrong. From such a private, guarded and proud man, this book is truly amazing, and you can tell that it is done purely to help others avoid making the same mistakes he did.

The book shows that people can change, adapt and admit that to move on you need to show feelings and admit insecurities.

A tragic, heartbreaking book that will help so many grief-stricken people carry on after bereavement.

Rio Ferdinand also made a powerful and acclaimed documentary called 'Being Mum and Dad', that was aired by the BBC in 2017.

Thank you NetGalley for providing me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sara Oxton says**

Thinking out loud: Love, grief and being mum and dad a five-star read that will have you grabbing everyone you care about and not wishing to let them go. I was a little perturbed about this book at first as I had seen the documentary and thought this was just going to be a celebrity autobiography dealing with life as a footballer, but it's so much more. There is a great quality to the writing, and the openness that is shared in the content and the stories shared are full of heart-warming tales about real life, not the glossed over version we normally see. I'm not a fan of football, but I have faced loss in my life and this book was so refreshing and showed you can deal with loss in your own way and there's no cut and straight ways. It's hard to pin this to one category, as there is so much in it. Overall I'm just glad I read it.

