



The Choice

Edith Eger

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'The Choice is a gift to humanity. One of those rare and eternal stories that you don't want to end and that leaves you forever changed' DESMOND TUTU, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Edith Eger was a gymnast and ballerina when she was sent to Auschwitz at the age of sixteen. There, she was made to dance for the infamous Josef Mengele. Her heroic actions helped her sister to survive, and her bunkmates to save her life, during a death march, after which she was found in a pile of bodies, barely alive. She recovered and moved to America, going on to become an eminent psychologist, and giving the keynote address at Viktor Frankl's 90th birthday party.

Like Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*, Dr Edith Eger's important book, *The Choice*, could change your life. Eger shares stories of the Holocaust and the experiences of her clients, who range from survivors of abuse to soldiers suffering from PTSD. She explains how many of us live within a mind that has become a prison and shows how freedom becomes possible once we confront our suffering. Warm, wise and compassionate, *The Choice* offers profound insights into the nature of human suffering, and our capacity to heal.

The Choice Details

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Author : Edith Eger

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Maria João Trindade says

No words to describe this. It's life-changing and I will never forget what I read here. Thank you so much for sharing your story, Dr. Eger. It truly was one of the most inspiring books I've ever read.

Ruth O'hagan says

This was one of the most beautiful and inspiring books I have ever read. Edith tells the story her extraordinary. The main premise of the book is how she highlights her extraordinary experience as a Holocaust survivor and the how she learned to heal herself. Edith gently takes the reader by the hand vividly guides the reader on a journey of her past and present through this book. The most compelling section of the book is when she retells her experience in the concentration camps. She explains it with such bravery and strength. It was heartbreaking to hear what she went through. The strength that she showed is otherworldly. Also, compassion that she shows throughout the book is truly inspiring. She doesn't just show compassion for the Nazi's but also the compassion she shows for herself.

I recommend this book for so many reasons. It's a coming of age story and how our family can affect our self esteem and how we view ourselves. Edith demonstrates that family is where we learn how to value our self-worth and the personal expectations we set for ourself's. Edith does explain the holocaust but that is not what the book is mainly about. The book is about healing and how we can love to learn to love ourselves through our challenges. Similar to Viktor Frank's, Man's search for meaning, Edith explains how love and a hunger for learning/purpose helped her survive her the holocaust.

Maureen says

****4.5 STARS ****

Please try to remember that what they believe, as well as what they do and cause you to endure does not testify to your inferiority but to their inhumanity”

? James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time

I could never find the right words and phrases to describe what a moving yet uplifting memoir this is. Edith Eger was just 16 years old in 1944 when she entered the gates of hell - Auschwitz. Her grandparents and mother and father were sent to the gas chamber under the direct orders of the infamous Josef Mengele. Under those same orders she was made to dance for Mengele. Although she was terrified, she managed to take her mind back to the outside world, back to when she used to give ballet performances for appreciative audiences. At the end of her performance for Mengele she was thrown a small loaf of bread - and though grateful that she had the extra food to share with her sister Magda and others, she was also relieved that he hadn't bestowed the same fate on her as her beloved family members.

I won't go into any more detail, but Edith shares her experiences in Auschwitz , and when liberation finally came, she was discovered among a pile of bodies barely alive.

Man's inhumanity to man never fails to shock me. The ones who were fortunate enough to survive the death camps, didn't just need medical intervention for their extreme malnutrition and other physical problems, but more importantly it was the huge psychological scars that would prove the most difficult to heal.

Edith went on to become an eminent psychologist, someone who helped people come to terms with the traumas in their lives, (and she shares many of those cases with us) but she also needed to exorcise the ghosts of her own past too!

I found when I was reading this book, that an involuntary sob would sometimes appear out of nowhere. It was excruciating to read at times, and yet I couldn't put it down. Desmond Tutu said that this book would leave you forever changed- I'm inclined to agree. Thank you Edith for sharing your courageous and inspiring life story, it's not something I will forget any time soon.

Thank you so Netgalley and Penguin Random House UK Ebury Publishing for my Arc. I have given an honest unbiased review in exchange.

Jaike says

Ik heb zo veel emoties gevoeld tijdens het lezen. Niet te beschrijven. Recensie volgt snel.

Gary says

This is a remarkable story written by Dr. Edith Eva Eger who in 1944 as a sixteen-year-old was sent to Auschwitz and endured unimaginable experiences, including being made to dance for the infamous Josef Mengele.

The book tells of her bravery that helped her sister to survive and led to her bunk mates rescuing her during a death march. When the camp was finally liberated, Edith was pulled from a pile of bodies, barely alive and survived to tell this remarkable story. The book is about a lot more though and Edith Eger tells her life story and how her experiences in the camp encouraged her to find a hope and resilience that may appear impossible to most of us.

The book is truly inspiring and tells how Edith discovered a gift to help others after the Second World War, by getting many others through their own versions of trauma. This is a fascinating read of a remarkable life that is full of heart break, yet Edith succeeds in becoming a psychologist and helps others.

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

Vir says

Llevaba tiempo detrás de leer este libro y la verdad es que la experiencia no pudo ser más satisfactoria. Me ha gustado, sobre todo, que se centre ya no sólo en lo que le ocurrió en Auschwitz sino en sus años posteriores, cómo siguió adelante con su vida, las secuelas psicológicas a las que tuvo que hacer frente... Y todo desde una perspectiva muy esperanzadora y transmitiendo unos mensajes y una sabiduría digna de admirar.

Maria Sol says

Terriblemente real..... sigo leyendo y leyendo relatos que vienen de la locura de la segunda guerra mundial y sigo sin poder entender como todo esto fue posible. Tremendo!

Elyse says

“Time doesn’t heal. It’s what you do with time. Healing is possible when we choose to take responsibility, when we choose to take risks, and finally, when we choose to release the wound, to let go of the past or the grief”.

The above excerpt is true - but that doesn’t mean it’s easy - or can be achieved by waving a magic wand- or positive thinking it alone. We’d only be fooling ourselves.
It’s more involved than simply stating a mantra.

But.... I’m getting ahead of myself.

The most important thing I can share is how extraordinary this memoir is.

From start to finish - it’s PIERCING....ASTONISHING....GUT WRENCHING...EYE-OPENING about experiences of the Holocaust- (no matter how many books you’ve read on this topic).

Edith also gives us a very close look at what follows at the end of imprisonment, the end of the war.

- ‘Something’ will feel ‘new’ about The Holocaust as if reading it for the very first time.

I didn’t know who this 90 year old author was until yesterday- but her name -

Edith Eva Eger is a mainstay solid name in my heart & mind now. Can you image writing your first and only book at age 90? If ‘yes’....’wonderful’. This woman had a story to tell!!!!

I’ve read several memoirs about the Holocaust—written by ‘survivors’ whom I can ‘never’ forget their ‘name’ —

“The CHOICE”, by Edith Eva Eger is a mind boggling memoir — incredibly affecting!!!! I’ll remember her name!!! And... I can’t recommend this book highly enough.

When Edith was first released from the war...she said many things...

Here are a couple of things she said:

“I AM FREE! I AM FREE!

but now I have no voice”.

“For more than a year I have not had the luxury to think about what hurts or doesn’t hurt. I have been able to think only about how to keep up with others, how to stay one step ahead, to get a little food here, to walk fast enough, to never stop, to stay alive, to not be left behind. Now that the danger is gone, the pain within and the suffering around me turn awareness into hallucination. A silent movie. A march of skeletons. Most of us are too physically ruined to walk. We lie on carts, we lean on sticks. Our uniforms are filthy and worn, so

ragged and tattered that they hardly cover our skin. Our skin hardly covers our bones. We are an anatomy lesson. Elbows, knees, ankles, cheeks, knuckles, ribs jut out like questions. What are we now? Our bones look obscene, our eyes are caverns, Blue-black finger nails. We are trauma in motion”.

***Edith was born in 1927. She died in 1978. She competed in the Olympic Games as a Hungarian swimmer in 1964. She was also training for the Olympic team for gymnastics before she was kicked off the team for being Jewish- soon after her family was sent to the camps. She was 17 at the time.

The story you'll read in this book deals with a dark, difficult, and important subject ...
Edith brings forth a profound human quality relative to today.

Edith married, came over to the United States, had three children, learned English, got a degree, a PhD, taught history in Texas.
She later became a psychologist helping others overcome traumas.

Adele Shea says

Words can not express the feelings and emotions I felt reading The Choice.

To read first hand what a POW had to endure, saddens me but I also feel privileged that Edith Eger has shared her horrific story with us.

Edith Eger, is most definitely up there in the top ten strongest people I have ever learned about. Such a wonderfully strong woman, she's not afraid to admit are weakness. I feel, to speak of your weaknesses makes you stronger.

Note: the last 10% of the book is just index and points of reference so it isn't as long as you think.

Samantha says

I will admit that I did not expect to enjoy this book. I thought it was going to be another holocaust memoir with a hint of psychological analysis. But man, was I wrong.

This book was beautifully written, and was a struggle to put down every night. This book was a small exercise in self-help, disguised as a gorgeous memoir. The Choice has genuinely made me change how I think about life.

I would highly recommend this book.

Kathleen says

This is a beautiful, absolutely pitch-perfect memoir by Dr. Edith Eger. I was not familiar with Dr. Eger prior to reading this, and I am grateful to her for sharing her story.

The book is organized into four sections: Prison, Escape, Freedom, and Healing. I would describe it as three parts memoir, one part therapy. It would be enough, simply for nanogeneraia Dr. Eger to tell us her story and share the important events she witnessed in her lifetime. But she is not satisfied to make this book only

about her experience. She is clearly a committed therapist who understands pain and forgiveness uniquely, and has a very powerful message that to truly live a full life, we need to make the choice not only to forgive, but to forgive ourselves.

I describe the book as pitch-perfect because from the introduction, Dr. Eger explains that there is no hierarchy when it comes to suffering. She does not tell her story so that the reader will minimize their own suffering in comparison, that would just be another way of judging ourselves. As a therapist, she understands that someone whose suffering may seem superficial to others, is generally attributed to something much more deeply rooted, and representative of a much larger pain. I find it extraordinary that she is capable of empathizing with others to this extent. When you read her story, and I hope you do, you will understand the extent of her personal suffering. Not only what she endured in her youth, but as an adult coming to terms with everything she lost, and finding a way to let it be her strength, instead of imagining what her life would have been had it not been interrupted by the cruelty and injustice of the Holocaust. I can not find the words to describe the depth of her compassion.

Life is about choices, and I am guilty of the destructive thinking that Dr. Eger describes in the book. In my Midwestern upbringing, I was raised to take responsibility for my choices. I pride myself in this responsibility. What this book has made me realize that often in my experience, this has been a punishing idea - there are choices, and there are consequences. But life is not that simple, there are choices and more choices. Often we choose to punish ourselves. In doing so, we are imprisoning ourselves with our own beliefs - of not feeling worthy, a fear of making a bad choice... The author is open about choices she made in her own life, and that they may not have been the best ones. Everyone suffers. Everyone has endured the consequences of their own poor choices. But to live our best life, we must continue to make choices, instead of allowing ourselves to be imprisoned by our past.

Thank you, Dr. Edith Eva Eger for sharing your story and your wisdom. Thank you to NetGalley and the publisher for providing me with an advance copy of *The Choice* for review.

Laura says

An uplifting and powerful lifetime memoir documenting not only the authors experience in Auschwitz but also the longer term recovery, both physically and psychologically. This was an unexpected read in the sense that I anticipated much of the book to be focused on wartime; when in actual fact, only the first third was. The latter parts of the book focus on the authors personal life as she nurtured a family and works as a psychologist.

This was different to many books of a similar genre but I enjoyed it all the same. The authors account of returning to Auschwitz as a middle aged woman are particularly moving, as is her descriptions of speeches and workshops she gave to future generations. A must read for those interested in World War Two history.

Louise Wilson says

Dr Edith Eva Eger is an eminent psychologist whose own experiences as a Holocaust survivor helps her treat patients and allows them to escape the prisons of their own minds.

Edith Eger was just sixteen when the Nazis came to her hometown of Hungary and took the Jewish family to an internment centre and then to Auschwitz. Her parents were then sent to the gas chamber by Joseph Mengele. Edith was demanded by Mengele to waltz "The Blue Danube" just a few hours after her parents were murdered. Mengele rewarded Edith with a small loaf of bread of which she shared with her fellow prisoners.

This is a beautifully written and very moving memoir. It has been divided into four sections: Prison, Escape, Freedom and Healing. How these people who suffered so much, could heal and then go on to make something of their lives like Edith has, beggars belief. This is one very committed woman, who became a therapist, who truly understands people's pain and forgives uniquely. This is not something I would normally read, but I'm really glad that I did. I highly recommend this book.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Penguin Random House UK, Ebury Publishing and the author Edith Eger for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Lynn says

Wow, double wow. This is a memoir about a woman who survived Auschwitz as a child. She went on to be a famous psychologist known for helping people recover from trauma.

There are many books about surviving the holocaust but not as many about the saga of recovery. This one does both. Once her story reaches adulthood she expertly weaves in patient case studies with issues relevant to her own struggles.

She offers many pearls of wisdom but I have a favorite: there is no hierarchy of pain. Everyone's pain is every one's pain and there is no rating system or need for quantitative comparison. Brilliant.

She reveals a secret near the end and I cried, not from sadness but from happiness that she overcame it.

Linda says

I once had the opportunity to hear Christopher Reeves speak after he was paralyzed from his neck down. He was confined to a wheelchair, dependent on a ventilator to breathe and yet I was totally amazed at all he had accomplished after his accident...how he did not allow his body to imprison him. Tears flowed through out the audience as he shared his story . I do not think anyone could leave that day without being inspired.

Amazing as it is, Edy Eger and her book have impacted me even more. Not only for her own heart wrenching, horrific story of her survival as a prisoner of war at one of the worst concentration camps in history, but for her story of her life's work in teaching people how to "escape the concentration camps of their own minds. "

Some books we hold dear to our hearts for the touching stories or for how they made us feel. It is the rare book that comes along that gives us new eyes to see and shares tools that can impact our daily life. " The Choice Embrace the Possible " is that kind of book. Tucked within its pages you will find hope, healing and wisdom. We are blessed to have Edy Eger in our midst. I am blessed to have been able to read her book. I have to share this last thought. No matter what I would write here, I could not do this book justice.

