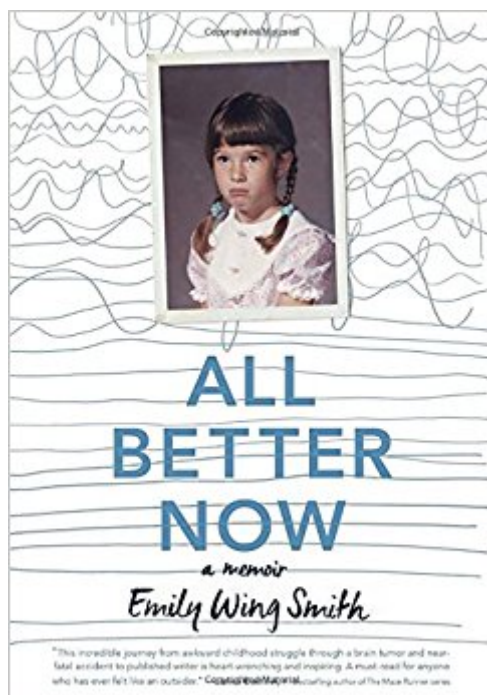


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# All Better Now



## Synopsis

An honest and captivating memoir of the author's childhood struggles as a result of a brain tumor, only discovered following a near-fatal car accident. All her life, Emily has felt different from other kids. Between therapist visits, sudden uncontrollable bursts of anger, and unexplained episodes of dizziness and loss of coordination, things have always felt not right. For years, her only escape was through the stories she'd craft about herself and the world around her. But it isn't until a near-fatal accident when she's twelve years old that Emily and her family discover the truth: a grapefruit sized benign brain tumor at the base of her skull.

In turns candid, angry, and beautiful, Emily Wing Smith's riveting memoir chronicles her struggles with both mental and physical disabilities during her childhood, the devastating accident that may have saved her life, and the means by which she coped with it all: writing. "This incredible journey from an awkward childhood struggle through a brain tumor and near-fatal accident to published writer is heart-wrenching and inspiring. A must-read, especially for anyone who has ever felt like an outsider." —James Dashner, #1 bestselling author of the *The Maze Runner* series "An extraordinary memoir about her life on the outside and how she found her way in." —Booklist "Smith unapologetically and honestly delivers all the messy details of her hard-won life and, without striving for sympathy, draws readers firmly to her side to applaud her developing successes." —Publishers Weekly

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up-In this memoir, Smith chronicles the psychological and physical problems she faced throughout her childhood, until, at age 12, she learned that a previously undiagnosed brain tumor was at the root of her problems. As a young girl, Smith attended the Children's Center, a place for troubled children to work out their issues through individual and group play. However, Smith didn't want to interact with others, preferring to reflect on her own thoughts and to figure out how to be "all better." She details her struggles with depression, anger, and the question of where she fit into the world. Smith eventually accepted headaches as part of her life, a condition that she called Woo-Head. As fate would have it, a horrific car accident saved her life: when she was examined, doctors discovered that she had a large tumor growing in the frontal lobe of her brain. Weaving in stories of abuse, disappointments, and successes, Smith creates captivating tales that are disturbing and beautiful, making it clear that her writing saved her life. VERDICT Those who feel different or unsure of how to navigate the awkwardness of youth will appreciate this poignant read.-Amy Caldera, Dripping Springs Middle School, Dripping Springs, TX\~ (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

~ "This incredible journey from an awkward childhood struggle through a brain tumor and near-fatal accident to published writer is heart-wrenching and inspiring. A must-read, especially for anyone who has ever felt like an outsider.~ ~ ~James Dashner, #1 bestselling author of the The Maze Runner series"Smith unapologetically and honestly delivers all the messy details of her hard-won life and, without striving for sympathy, draws readers firmly to her side to applaud her developing successes." ~ ~ Publishers Weekly"An extraordinary memoir about her life on the outside and how she found her way in."~ ~ ~Booklist~ "I read this memoir in one sitting, unable to leave Emily~ ~,cs story of hard things and of hope behind until I knew what happened. All Better New is beautifully written and honestly told. I loved it.~ ~ ~Ally Condie, international bestselling author of the Matched series and Summerlost ~ ~ ~ "This book is not just a memoir of incredible tragedy overcome. It is a beautiful, funny, brilliantly written story that will keep you reading. Read it not just because it is real and amazing, but for the truth it will reveal about your own heart.~ ~ ~Francisco X. Stork, author of Marcelo in the Real World ~ ~ ~ "Emily Wing Smith is one of my favorite writers. I am thrilled that she wrote this

memoir. So many readers will relate to her feelings of isolation and just plain weirdness. I know I did. But I also came away changed, with more understanding and empathy than before. I ripped through this book, breathless for each new scene.

• Shannon Hale, award-winning, bestselling author of *Austenland* and *Dangerous* “Emily Wing Smith delivers a raw account of a painful and singular childhood that touches on questions we all ask of ourselves. I was moved to tears by her bravery and utterly authentic voice.”

• Matthew J. Kirby, Edgar Award-winning author of *Icefall* “A searing, beautiful, heartbreakingly honest memoir about beating . . . the odds, staying true to oneself, and finding a way through this complicated life. You’ll laugh, you’ll cry, and you’ll want to be best friends with the delightful author, Emily Wing Smith.”

• Kristin Harmel, internationally bestselling author of *The Sweetness of Forgetting* “An honest, bittersweet, and beautiful memoir, Emily Wing Smith doesn’t pull any punches or ask for pity, she just tells it like it is.”

• Jessica Day George, bestselling author of *Silver in the Blood* “Triumphant and heartbreaking, poignant and powerful, Emily Wing Smith’s memoir is overwhelming in its humor and its truth.”

• Carrie Jones, bestselling author of *Need* “Breathtaking and beautiful, heartbreaking and full of quirky charm, Emily’s memoir sticks to your heart like peanut butter. If you can remember imaginary friends, or secret heartaches or just the feeling of being different, you will lose yourself in this book! I did not want to put it down.”

• Brodi Ashton, author of the *Everneath* trilogy “How to best describe this quirky memoir about a challenging childhood? It’s fierce. And funny at times, too. But ultimately it’s forgiving and so very generous-hearted. There are not enough words to say how much I love this wholly original book.”

• A. E. Cannon, author of *Charlotte’s Rose* “A warm, humorous coming-of-age memoir. It reminds us that childhood is more than a time of innocence; it’s also a time of debilitating anxiety that adults don’t understand. Emily Wing Smith’s writing sings with original metaphors and quirky insights.”

• Louise Plummer, author of *The Unlikely Romance of Kate Bjorkman* “Emily Wing Smith’s brain may be imperfect, but her heart is pure gold. In vulnerable, pared-down prose and a heaping of heart, *All Better Now* chronicles her miraculous and unforgettable story.”

• Wendy Toliver, author of *Lifted* “Poignant and incredibly honest, *All Better Now* is beautifully written. It is a memoir of self-discovery, growth, friendship, and ultimately grace.”

• Anne Bowen, author of *I Loved You Before You Were Born*

I picked up this book thinking, "This could be interesting." Little did I know. This memoir was so compelling I couldn't put it down, and compelling enough to prompt me to write my first book review ever. Although my life experiences have been vastly different from Emily's, I was astonished by the level of resonance I felt reading her story. It was a healing sensation to hear someone articulate the same awkwardness I so often felt in school, as well as the loneliness that comes when your perception of the world seems to be so different from everyone else's. Thank you, Emily, for sharing your story, and for the healing it gave me.

I read Smith's memoir within a few nights, which is saying something because with an infant, I don't read much without falling asleep! I didn't want to put it down because her story is fascinating, and heart breaking, and very real. Her writing really makes this book so excellent. She's funny, clever, and the way she describes her thoughts and feelings is poignant. Must read for yourself and all of the young adults in your life. It's a story about feeling out of place, and who hasn't felt like that at some point in their life?

I finished reading All Better Now, and I want to thank Emily Wing Smith for writing the book. It touched so many places in my heart that I can't even try to list them here. It wasn't just the storyline but Emily's voice that captured my attention. As I grew to know about her, I couldn't help but grow to like her. I hope one day to meet her. I have many questions, insights and observations that I'd love to discuss. Thank you, Emily Wing Smith, for being just the way you are and for doing what you do.

This has to be one of the best auto-biographies I have ever read! Emily really puts you in the scenario and you can feel what she's felt. There were a lot of ways I could relate with her story, and I love that she has put it out there for others to help understand themselves or a loved one, or someone who is just curious.

Emily's beautifully poetic yet painful journey grabbed my heart and kept me reading until I finished her memoir. "Woo head" and "bad hand" showed her struggles, but proved she has a wonderful sense of humor. And the conclusion showed me the happy woman with the huge smiles that I met last summer. Thank you, Emily for sharing. Marion Steiger

I appreciate Emily's candid view of the ups and downs of life, as well as her message of recognizing

ones individuality and self-worth.

Very interesting perspective. Startling at times, but hopeful and funny. Real.

I raced through this beautiful memoir. Emily Wing Smith is a gifted writer and an inspiring person.

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