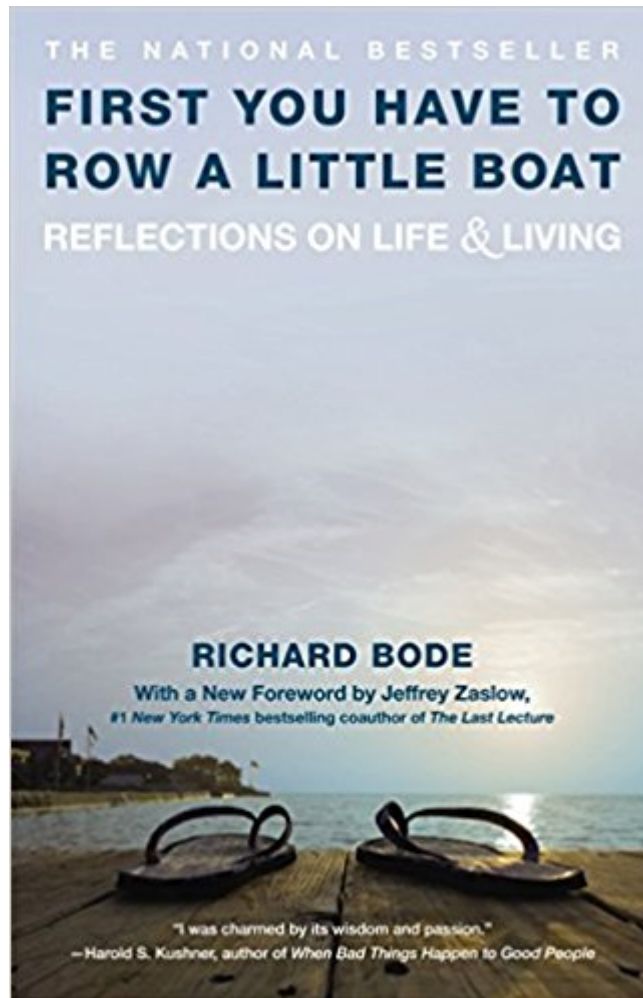




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# First You Have To Row A Little Boat: Reflections On Life & Living



## Synopsis

Now with a brand new foreword from New York Times bestselling author Jeffrey Zaslow. **FIRST YOU HAVE TO ROW A LITTLE BOAT** first hit shelves in the mid 1990s and has been inspiring readers ever since. Written by a grown man looking back on his childhood, it reflects on what learning to sail taught him about life: making choices, adapting to change, and becoming his own person. The book is filled with the spiritual wisdom and thought-provoking discoveries that marked such books as *Walden*, *The Prophet*, and *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. For nearly twenty years, it has enchanted and endeared sailors and non-sailors alike, but foremost, anyone who seeks large truths in small things. This refurbished edition will find a place in the hearts of a whole new generation of readers.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing; Reprint edition (June 1, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0446670030

ISBN-13: 978-0446670036

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.5 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 92 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #76,944 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Sailing](#) #117 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Water Sports](#) #1172 in [Books > Self-Help > Motivational](#)

## Customer Reviews

Bode ( *Blue Sloop at Dawn* ) uses his great love of sailing as a metaphor for the tides of life. Describing his own introduction to sailing at age 12, he stresses the importance of mastering the simple, small things before attempting more complicated actions. Later the author purchases a blue sloop, matures and, as a grown man with children, decides to sell the sloop and sail into new, uncharted waters, assuming he will never forget the many important lessons the boat taught him. Other themes include complacency ("Going with the Wind"), confusion ("Fogbound"), forgiveness ("A Forgiving Boat"), and violence ("A Lazy Sailor at Heart"). Determinedly inspirational, this book will appeal to admirers of Robert Fulghum et al. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Good-natured parables in which the lessons learned from sailing are translated into lessons about living. Bode (*Blue Sloop at Dawn*, 1979) looks back across a half century to his boyhood years on Long Island Sound, where he fell in love with boats and learned to sail. In the title piece, the author, as a 12-year-old eager to sail, is first made to row a small boat, and from the experience comes to understand the importance of mastery not over the boat or the elements but over himself. Sailing with a favorable wind teaches him the dangers of complacency and, from a frightening collision, he learns to handle his fears about the unpredictable. Even sailors' knots become metaphors as Bode likens a sturdy square knot to a good marriage and an improperly tied granny knot to a mismatched couple who "scrape and chafe against each other." Getting lost in fog teaches him not to thrash about wildly in confusion but to wait calmly for "the one constant in the swirling mist that would set me on my rightful course"--a lesson that serves him well in midlife when his private life collapses and he's lost in a different kind of fog. Sailing also teaches him to attend to details, for, as he puts it, "everything significant is small and slow." A frequent contributor to *Reader's Digest*, Bode is adept at pulling messages out of ordinary experiences. The images he creates are simple and clear, and so are the lessons he derives from them. A warm, fuzzy read for those who like to curl up with cozy philosophizing. -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Great advice and inspiration for me and young people. I spent happy summers near the Hamptons over 60 years ago and enjoyed sailing a Sunfish sailboat on Midwestern MN and WI lakes

This little book is a wonderful way to easily explain through metaphor the philosophy of life. I believe this is a must read for young adults to grasp important life lessons in a non-threatening way. When parents try to forward these concepts, children, especially young adults, just tune them out. But, this book allows the lessons to be discovered by themselves. It is also a great read for people of any age to remind them of how to better live their lives and to guide them toward correcting life errors they may be making. I use it as a gift book to people of all ages and recommend it to parents and grandparents to help guide their young charges. Gift this book as it truly is a gift.

For someone who is just learning to sail, I am envious that the author learned to sail as a boy. To really enjoy the book, I think it helps to know something about sailing. I understood the nautical terms in the book because of my sailing lessons. It is one thing to read about an accidental jibe, but

quite another to actually have the experience. What could have been a very sad story about a man who had to give up something he loved to do for the sake of his family and his career, was instead turned into an uplifting metaphor for how he lived his life.

This book was recommended to me by a physician who couldn't really decide what to do with his life. This book is a great book that uses sailing as a way to describe life. The author explains his childhood story and how he got into sailing. He says that he wished that he taught his kids to sail because sailing creates a way of thinking that can be directly used for managing your life. If you want to change your life and push yourself in a different direction then this is the book to read. It isn't very long, but it has a lot of great information in the pages that it has. I recommend this to any person whether it be an adult trying to figure out what to do with his or her life, or even a college student who wants to decide what career they are interested in.

Having been a sailor and teaching my little one's to identify breezes that will fill the sails of our 8ft Sabot, they found many corollaries to making proper decisions in their own lives. Now adults and raising families, I am always grateful for the moments of discovery I observed in their faces as the sail filled and the 8 ft. Sabot quickly moved forward. The author, Richard Bode passed on to all of us a formula for an appreciation of life and it's challenges, but importantly his love for the wind and sea, which I believe encompasses us all!

I first owned the hardcover edition some years ago, and lost it. I had read that edition probably five times, and just felt the need to own it because I like owning hard copies of books that change my life. Being a sailor, this book is full of metaphors that stick with me, and lessons that have served me well for many years. You cannot go wrong with this beautifully written and wonderfully wise book.

A must read to gain self-perception. One can see much in themselves if they would heed the concepts presented in this reading.

This will be one of those books you will keep forever and pick up and read every so often. Bode brilliantly used sailing techniques as a metaphor with life lessons and made a connection. Inspiring and very thought driven, he wove tales of life and the love of water and boats to make a perfect connection. This will be a gift for others who have a passion for sailing and those who have never sailed.

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