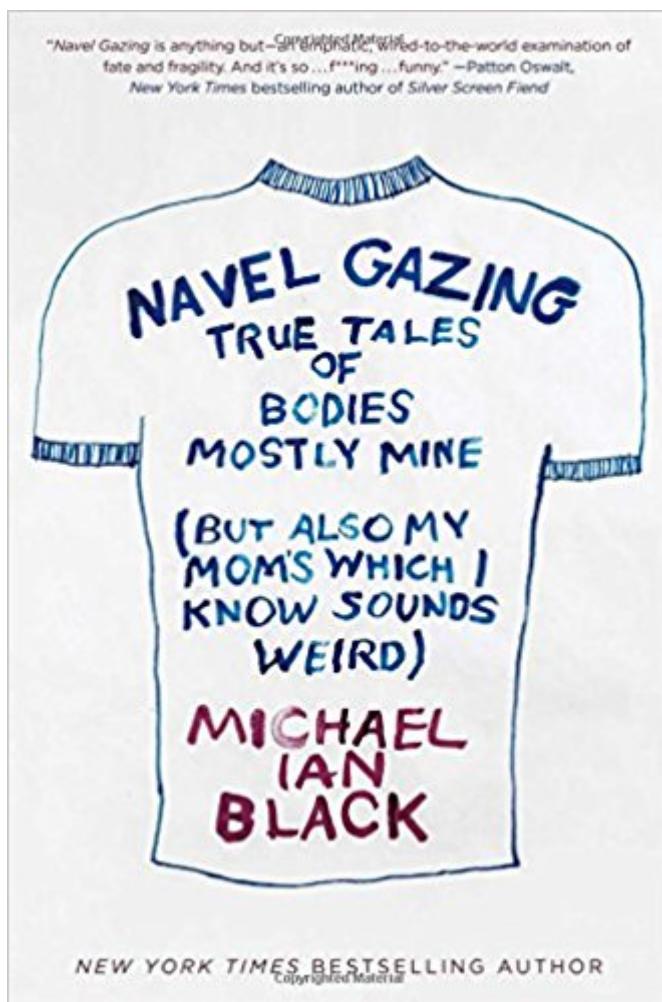


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# Navel Gazing: True Tales Of Bodies, Mostly Mine (but Also My Mom's, Which I Know Sounds Weird)



## Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author and stand-up comedian Michael Ian Black (author of *A Child's First Book of Trump*) delivers a "memorable and funny" (Kirkus Reviews) memoir about confronting his genetic legacy as he hits his forties. Whether it's family history, religion, aging, or his parents, Michael Ian Black always has something to say in the dry, irreverent voice that has captured a fan base of millions. When a medical diagnosis forces him to realize he's not getting any younger, he reexamines his life as a middle-aged guy—of course, in the deadpan wit and self-deprecating vignettes that have become trademarks of his humor. The alt-comedy take on getting older, *Navel Gazing* is a funny-because-it's-true memoir about looking around when you're forty and realizing that life is about more than receding hairlines and proving one's manliness on Twitter—it's about laughing at yourself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Set him on the recommended shelf beside Sedaris and Fey." (Booklist)"It's funny and sad and ridiculous and searching and humane and the gravitas sneaks up on you, and the last page had me in tears." (Elizabeth Gilbert, NYT bestselling author of *Eat Pray Love*)"Solid, sensitive, and often appropriately silly... Unlike many other books by comedians, this memoir never feels like a series of onstage routines transcribed to make a buck. Black's examination of the many meanings of being a middle-aged father, husband, and son is an insightful and eminently readable story." (Publishers Weekly)"NAVEL GAZING is anything but -- an emphatic, wired-to-the-world

examination of fate and fragility. And it's so...fucking...funny." (Patton Oswalt)"Michael Ian Black asked me if I would provide a quote for his book and I said that I would." (Ricky Gervais)"I don't know what's more gut wrenching - the tales of his mom's illness or the time he tried to start a punk band. This book is so touching, well-written, dare I say profound? Okay how about totally life affirming? These pages are so beautiful they don't deserve to also be fall down funny. Michael Ian Black is showing off. This book made me giggle wildly, then shook me with the reminder of mine and everyone's impending death, brought comfort, and then more giggles. And then in honor of Michael, I took a nap." (Jen Kirkman, author of I CAN BARELY TAKE CARE OF MYSELF)"Black sustains a light touch throughout, projecting a warmth that extends from his relationship with his mother through his family life with wife and children." (Kirkus Reviews) "All these years, Michael Ian Black has not gotten enough credit for what a good writer he is. This book is charming and good company and the best of all is amazingly honest. And really, really funny, of course" • though you probably already guessed at that part. • Ira Glass, This American Life "Memorable and funny. . . . An amusing look at masculine insecurity and confusion." • Kirkus Reviews "This book is so frank, so full of amusingly embarrassing confessions, I should probably be giving Michael Black a hug instead of a blurb." • Sarah Vowell, New York Times bestselling author and essayist "It's no surprise that Michael Ian Black's book is hysterical. But I was surprised by how heartfelt and touching his memoir is. It's true: Michael Ian Black has emotions!" • A.J. Jacobs, New York Times bestselling author of The Year of Living Biblically and The Know-It-All "I loved My Custom Van. But I loved You're Not Doing It Right even more. Reading this book felt like taking a long road trip with Michael himself which I've done. And I actually recommend the book more. Touching, hilarious, and truthful all at once. What else do you want, America?" • Mike Birbiglia, New York Times bestselling author of Sleepwalk with Me "Dear Michael Ian Black: please stop writing things in books that I wish I had written myself, it's starting to make me feel bad. Also, would you like to be friends someday? I sure would." • Samantha Bee, senior correspondent on The Daily Show and author of I Know I Am But What Are You? "Michael Ian Black is one of the finest comedy minds of our generation and a master at assembling words in a hilariously pleasing way. You would have to be a vapid crapsack not to enjoy this book." • Chris Hardwick (Praise for Michael Ian Black)

Michael Ian Black is a writer, comedian, and actor who currently appears on *Another*

Period. The Jim Gaffigan Show, and The Wet Hot American Summer: First Day of Camp. He created and starred in many television series, including Michael and Michael Have Issues, Stella, and The State. He wrote the screenplay for the film Run, Fatboy, Run and wrote and directed the film Wedding Daze. Michael regularly tours the country as a stand-up comedian and is the bestselling author of the book My Custom Van (and 50 Other Mind-Blowing Essays That Will Blow Your Mind All Over Your Face), the memoir You're Not Doing It Right, and the children's books Chicken Cheeks, The Purple Kangaroo, A Pig Parade Is a Terrible Idea, I'm Bored, Naked!, and Cock-a-Doodle-Doo-Bop. Michael lives in Connecticut with his wife and two children.

Michael Ian Black is one of my favorite authors. The only problem with his collection of books is there are not enough of them. "Navel Gazing" is as sharp, funny, and philosophical as his previous memoir "You're Not Doing it Right," and I was just as delighted with the brutally honest content. Black is painfully aware of his own shortcomings, and the chapter about his feet had me laughing and feeling a sense of relief that my own calloused toes weren't as wretched in comparison. Each chapter is indicative of how effortlessly he can take a mundane or depressing situation (dysfunctional family, spiritual bankruptcy, cancer) and spin it into a very funny and relatable offbeat tale. Black comes across as a self deprecating, broody, complex man with a generous and childlike heart - a confusing but endearing combination. You'll want to hug him, your family, and maybe even yourself. Aging sucks. But with it comes enlightenment, wisdom, and humorous self examination. Black delivers it all.

Boy did I love this book! It was funny and touching in all the right places. I found myself laughing out loud on almost every page! Michael Ian Black has done it again! His often-times silly and every-time witty reflections on life are addictive. I read the whole book in only a few days! Literally couldn't put it down. Michael Ian Black has been one of my favorite comedians for years; now he's one of my favorite authors. You may know Michael Ian Black from movies such as Wet Hot American Summer, The Baxter, They Came Together, and Wanderlust. In addition, he has been in many great TV shows including The State, Stella and all those amazingly funny 'I love the...' shows on VH1 (my personal favorite was I love 1983 Strikes Back). On a personal level I have been a fan of his since I first fell in love with his dry and acerbic commentary on chicken nuggets. Michael Ian Black's intoxicating yet extremely neurotic personality shines through the pages. You feel as though he's

whispering in your ear as you read. He has masterfully transitioned his finely honed comedy skills into a writer's voice anyone can read and relate to. My personal favorite tale covered in the book had to do with a punk band Michael Ian Black started in high school. As someone with many, many regrets throughout my own life I really connected to his self-reflection during this section of the book (and every other section as well). I found that chapter VERY funny and therapeutic in a way. Overall, this is an outstanding book comedy fans of all ages will read and enjoy. Hopefully it will go down as one of the all-time classics of humor literature. For now it will be regarded as another triumph for Michael Ian Black, now undisputedly one of the greatest comedic minds of our generation. 5 stars.

Michael Ian Black has already proven he can write. But in *Navel Gazing* he proves he can write about his mother's chronic health problems, and turn them into an interesting, relatable and humorous book. In *Navel Gazing*, Michael reflects on his mortality, the meaning of life, aging, the pronunciation of his dog's unusual name, and the belief that it's only vanity when other people freak out about losing their hair. For him it's a valid crisis. His writing is always candid, perceptive and humorously self-deprecating. Despite his efforts to make us think otherwise, Michael Ian Black proves himself, once again, to be a GOOD person. Furthermore, even with all his not-having-life-figured-out, he seems to know quite a bit.

I loved this book and laughed out loud. Must disclose that I've read MIB's other books, I've seen him perform standup twice, and I listen to 3 of his podcasts, so I'm a fan. His writing is so relatable, but it also makes me squirm with how much truth there is. His humor - especially when pointed at himself which is mostly - reminds me that people are complex and everyone is immersed in their own struggles to be themselves. It makes me happy to not be that person dealing with their s\*\*\*, whoa, that'd be bad! (Thanks for that small happiness.) I also appreciate his honesty about his feet, his ears, his aunts and uncles and his bleeding nipples. My favorite line was about how cortisol is slowly killing him, bringing his wife closer to being a merry widow.. but he wrote it much better than that so buy the book to read it yourself. It made me laugh which made my teenage son roll his eyes at me, but at least I got his attention for the first time in 2 days. Thanks again Michael.

I can honestly say this is one of my favorite books. I just finished it, and I've enjoyed other books by Michael Ian Black (especially the kid ones - my kiddos LOVE "Bored" and "Naked"). I thought this book was leaps and bounds above his others, and I've been trying to figure out why. Its very well written, and its funny, but its not a repeatedly laugh out loud funny sort of book that you might first

expect from a comic. What I loved so much about it was the transparency and honesty. There really weren't subjects that he was afraid to touch, and he is so honest about himself. He says things that many of us think, but might not write down in a novel, but that is what made it so refreshing. It had depth as well. Sure, it was funny and introspective and self aware, but it touched on the greater meaning of family and death and love. I appreciated this book so much, especially at my current stage of life - married, two young kids, stay at home mom, because he discussed things I think about often, but with levity, intelligence, and heart. I'm off to see his standup routine in Portland soon, and this book just made me more wildly excited to see what he brings to a performance. Way to go Michael Ian Black, you hit this one out of the park.

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