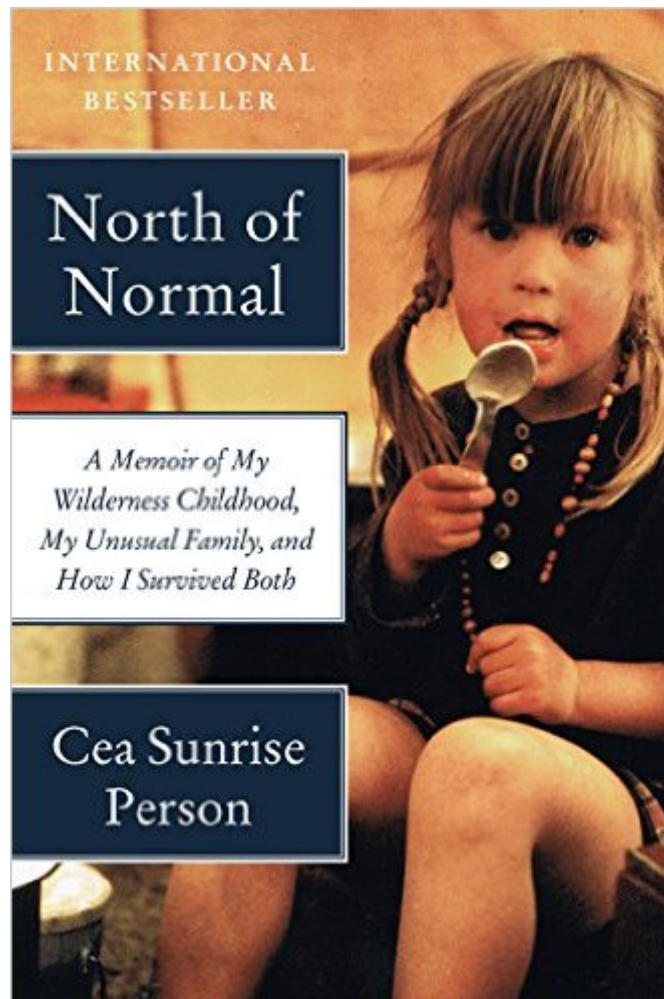


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North Of Normal: A Memoir Of My Wilderness Childhood, My Unusual Family, And How I Survived Both



Synopsis

Sex, drugs, and . . . bug stew? In the vein of *The Glass Castle* and *Wild*, Cea Sunrise Person's compelling memoir of a childhood spent with her dysfunctional counter-culture family in the Canadian wilderness is a searing story of physical, emotional, and psychological survival. In the late 1960s, riding the crest of the counterculture movement, Cea's family left a comfortable existence in California to live off the land in the Canadian wilderness. But unlike most commune dwellers of the time, the Persons weren't trying to build a new society—they wanted to escape civilization altogether. Led by Cea's grandfather Dick, they lived a pot-smoking, free-loving, clothing-optional life under a canvas tipi without running water, electricity, or heat for the bitter winters. Living out her grandparents' dream with her teenage mother Michelle, young Cea knew little of the world beyond her forest. She spent her summers playing nude in the meadow and her winters snowshoeing behind the grandfather she idolized. Despite fierce storms, food shortages, and the occasional drug-and-sex-infused party for visitors, it seemed to be a mostly happy existence. For Michelle, however, now long separated from Cea's father, there was one crucial element missing: a man. When Cea was five, Michelle took her on the road with a new boyfriend. As the trio set upon a series of ill-fated adventures, Cea began to question both her highly unusual world and the hedonistic woman at the centre of it—questions that eventually evolved into an all-consuming search for a more normal life. Finally, in her early teens, Cea realized she would have to make a choice as drastic as the one her grandparents once had in order to save herself. While a successful international modeling career offered her a way out of the wilderness, Cea discovered that this new world was in its own way daunting and full of challenges. Containing twenty-four intimate black-and-white family photos, *North of Normal* is Cea's funny, shocking, heartbreaking, and triumphant tale of self-discovery and acceptance, adversity, and strength that will leave no reader unmoved.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I was fifteen years old. I had created my own life and now there would be no one stopping me." "I had become everything he " (Papa Dick) "despised". So states Cea when a daring, resourceful plan to find a modeling job in Paris, works out exceptionally well. And although I realize that she was VERY happy to put her past behind her, it WAS her past that enabled her to have the survival instincts and very wise frame of mind to get her where she was now. Cea began her life living a hippie/survivalist lifestyle in a hand-sewn Tipi with her dysfunctional mother, her survivalist grandfather and grandmother, in a nudist free-love pot-smoking atmosphere, learning how to hunt, fish, survive in the wilderness -- and once she was old enough to realize what was going on around her, learning what SHE wanted -- And DID NOT want (especially her mother's free-loving boyfriends some of whom hit on her and more.) I see that some of the reviewers did not like the nudity, profanity, pot-smoking presented in this book, but as someone who grew up in that "Hippie Era", and had no problem with naked people around me waking thru Central Park or dancing at an outdoor concert, where the air was thick with THAT smoke - and as someone who studied Survival courses and had more than their visits to pit toilets, outhouses and "walks through the forest", it was really just part of life. Of course I had a more stable (but also dysfunctional) family and home to go back to once my weekend adventures were over. So in a way I vicariously lived through the pages of this book and could relate to much of Cea's early narrative.

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