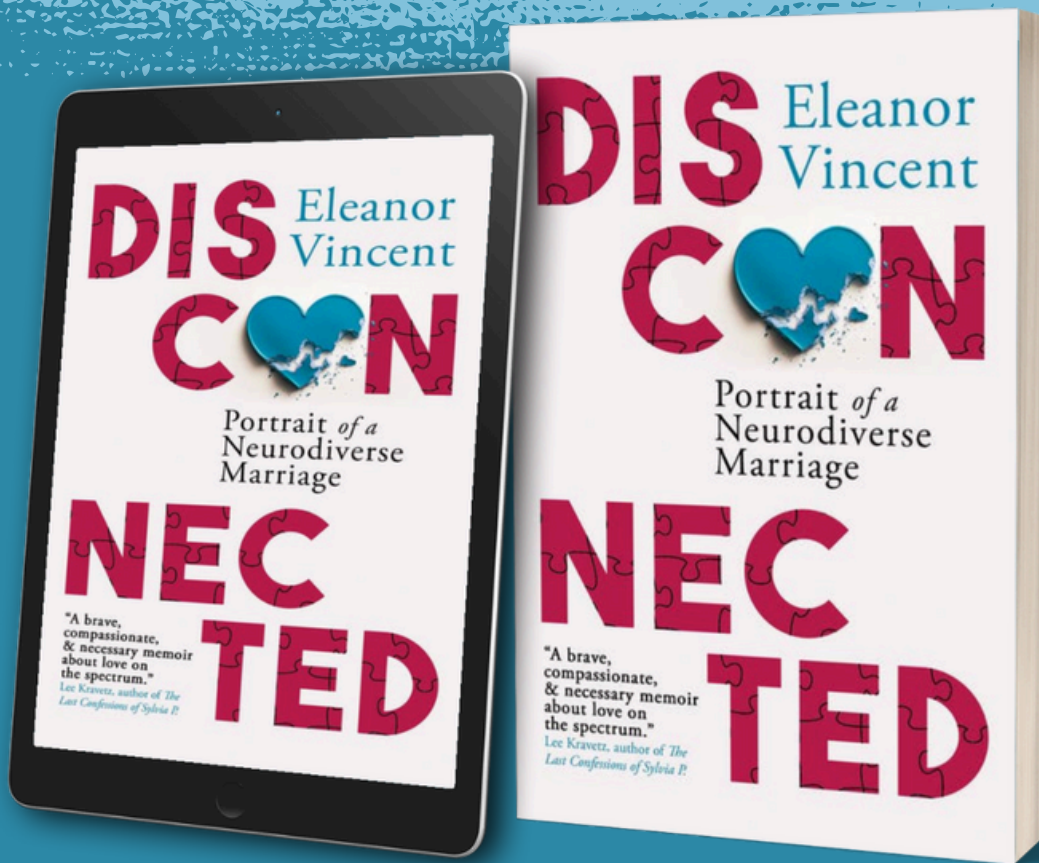


DISCONNECTED

Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage



Eleanor Vincent



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Biography

Eleanor Vincent

Author of *Disconnected: Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage* (2024) & *Swimming with Maya: A Mother's Story* (2013)



Eleanor Vincent is a memoirist and essayist whose work has been recognized by the Feminist Writers' Guild and published in numerous journals and anthologies. Her memoir *Disconnected: Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage* is available from Vine Leaves Press. Her previous memoir, *Swimming with Maya: A Mother's Story* (Dream of Things, 2013) has twice been on *The New York Times* bestseller list and was a finalist for the Independent Publisher of the Year Award. Her essays have appeared in anthologies by *Creative Nonfiction* and *This I Believe*, the literary magazines *580 Split* and *Dorothy Parker's Ashes*, as well as shorter pieces in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Sacramento Bee*, and *Generations Today*. She has an MFA in creative writing from Mills College and is a member of the Author's Guild, the San Francisco Writers Grotto, and Left Margin Lit. She has taught creative nonfiction seminars at Mills College as a visiting writer and been awarded residencies at Hedgebrook, the Vermont Studio Center, and Between the Vines. She lives in Walnut Creek, California.

"In lyric, in epic tale, in stubborn retelling of what happened, or did not happen, but should have happened, or still might—we live past ourselves and those we have lost but can never lose."

– Dorothy Allison

DIS Eleanor
Vincent



Portrait of a
Neurodiverse
Marriage

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"A brave, compassionate, & necessary memoir about love on the spectrum."
Lee Kravetz, author of *The Last Confessions of Sylvia P.*

Quick Facts

Disconnected pulls back the curtain on a high conflict marriage with a partner who refused a diagnosis but had all the hallmarks of autism. It shows how two people who love each other can inflict unintentional hurt when they don't have the tools to deal with very differently wired brains. It will challenge your ideas about love.

Title: Disconnected: Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage

Author: Eleanor Vincent

Genre: Memoir

Publisher: Vine Leaves Press (November 12, 2024)

Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.61 x 8.5 inches

Pages: 244 pages

Format: Paperback (\$17.99) Digital, Audio

ISBN: 978-6188607729

Order: Ingram

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About the Book

Disconnected

Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage

Eleanor Vincent

Summary

WHEN LOVE MEETS NEURODIVERSITY, CAN IT SURVIVE THE STORM?

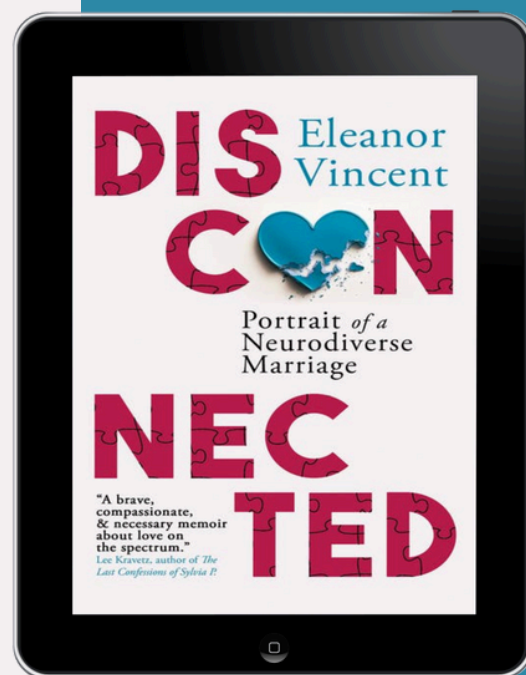
In a late-life romance, Eleanor marries Lars, a brilliant database expert, believing their fairytale love will last forever. But their marriage quickly devolves into angry outbursts and shutdowns as Eleanor fights for what she hopes is possible and encourages Lars to do the same. That is until Lars refuses to work with an autism coach to improve their communication and Eleanor must decide whether she will give up her dream of happiness and, if so, how.

Disconnected powerfully portrays the obstacles that neurodiverse couples must overcome to keep their love alive. It will resonate with anyone who struggles to grasp how even the closest bonds can break, and then must create a new life.

Ideal Readers

Fans of **Memoirs** and readers who enjoyed:

- *You Could Make This Place Beautiful* by Maggie Smith
- *Love Warrior* by Glennon Doyle
- *Splinters* by Leslie Jamison
- *Blow Your House Down* by Gina Frangello



Title: Disconnected: Portrait of a Neurodiverse Marriage

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Available on Kindle Unlimited

Author Q&A

Eleanor Vincent

How many books have you written, and which is your favorite?

Two published memoirs, an unpublished novel, and a work in progress. I'm partial to my work in progress, *Swiss Coffee*, about my time living in Basel Switzerland with a host family I loved so much I've returned six times.

How long have you been writing and/or when did you start?

I wrote my first short story at age 12. So if my math is correct, I've been writing for more than 60 years. I wrote articles for my high school and college newspapers, became a journalist in my early 20s, and began my first novel shortly after that. Starting in my 30s, I worked as an editor in large companies to make a living and support my children as a single mother. I got an MFA in mid 40s and published my first book at age 55.

What is your writing process like?

I like to putter before I write but once I sit down and focus I work rapidly. My journalism background means I can turn out copy quickly. I'll edit as I go - but only a little. I let the work cool for a week or so and then get feedback from my writing partner or my writing group. I revise obsessively once I've gotten feedback - I often will do ten or more drafts of important chapters, not a total rewrite, but moving sections around and smoothing out the prose.

What risks have you taken with your writing that have paid off?

Being authentic and self-revealing to an extreme degree. I don't hold back on revealing my own flaws, my trauma, my limitations. But I also don't shy away from showing my strengths. That makes my work more relatable, and gives it greater emotional impact.

What is the most valuable piece of advice you've been given about writing?

Writing IS rewriting. If you don't want to revise, your writing career will be short.

What books helped you the most when you were writing your book?

Crisis memoirs by authors like Lucy Grealy, Nancy Mairs, and Natalie Kusz when I wrote my first book about the death of my daughter. For the new book, I read everything I could about autism and neurodiverse relationships plus all the great divorce memoirs out now by writers like Maggie Smith, Glennon Doyle, Gina Frangello, Leslie Jamison, and the novel *Liars* by Sarah Manguso.

If you had to describe yourself in just three words, what would those be?

Brave, Creative, Funny

Book Q&A

Disconnected

What part of the book did you have the hardest time writing?

The sex scenes.

What part of the book did you enjoy writing the most?

The sex scenes

What is a significant way your book has changed since the first draft?

Less starry eyed, more realistic, more focus on the clues the narrator overlooks as she is falling in love.

What perspectives or beliefs have you challenged with this work?

The belief that love conquers all. Love is not enough in the case of a high conflict marriage between people with opposite neurotypes. You must be educated about how our brains and emotions function when you have a neurotypical paired with a neurodivergent partner. Both partners have to be willing to learn new tools and techniques to communicate and find ways to offset their profound differences.

How long did it take to write this book?

Two years.

What inspired the idea for your book?

The painful experience of falling in love with a man who masked his autism during courtship and then dropped the mask early in the marriage, resulting in miscommunication and conflicts I had no idea how to handle. The profound shock and loneliness I experienced.

How would you describe your book's ideal reader?

A feminist leaning man or woman who is mature enough to appreciate the ambiguities of relationships, and curious enough to want to understand a neurodiverse marriage.

How did you come up with the title of your book?

Endless brainstorming. Writing down and rejecting titles. Then, one day, as I was working on revisions at my co-working space, Left Margin Lit, the idea of Disconnected came to me. Later, over lunch, a small group of writers brainstormed the subtitle.

If you were given the chance to say something to the individuals in your memoir what would it be?

I am so sorry. You both deserved so much better.

Next Level Q&A

Disconnected

What was your objective in writing this book?

To raise awareness of the special challenges faced by couples when one is neurotypical and the other is neurodivergent. To show that it is possible to reclaim your own identity and your life after a marriage becomes emotionally and physically untenable.

Before writing this book, were you knowledgeable on the subject?

I thought I understood Asperger's syndrome (ASD-1) but discovered my knowledge was partial and ill-informed because it was based on pop psychology articles and TV portrayals. I thought of it as social awkwardness, difficulty with eye contact, and challenges with expressing emotions. It is so much more than that. The experience of discovering the array of associated conditions my husband manifested from Pervasive Demand Avoidance to Alexithymia (no words for emotions) to context blindness, emotional dysregulation, hoarding, depression, and anxiety was a deeply humbling experience. I literally had no idea what I was signing up for.

What are some surprising facts you discovered while writing this book?

Some estimates are that up to 85 percent of neurodiverse marriages end in divorce.

What are the 3 most important takeaways from this book?

- Look for signs of neurodivergence early in your relationship and heed them.
- Find appropriate resources for supporting your neurodiverse relationship. Traditional couples therapy is not helpful, and can actually be harmful.
- If you are a woman, understand the signs of Cassandra Syndrome, a form of affective disorder, that can cause extreme distress and depression. Get help immediately!

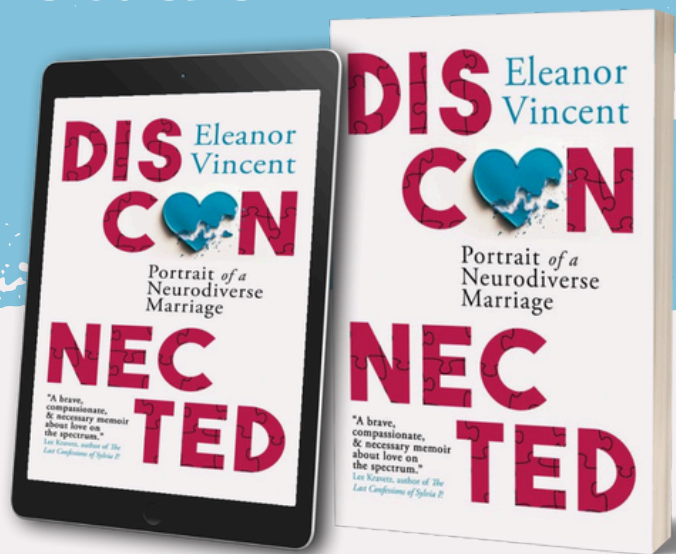
What advice can you give your readers?

Educate yourself on neurodivergence. It takes many forms. Do not take a relationship at face value in the early months and years. Be sure you know how your partner will respond under 24/7 togetherness and the inevitable stress of an intimate relationship.

What do you hope the readers take from this book?

A sense of compassion for couples who do not know they are neurodiverse at the time they marry, and a sense of hope that it is possible to reverse course if the marriage or the relationship becomes destructive to the emotional health of the couple.

Advanced Reader Discussions

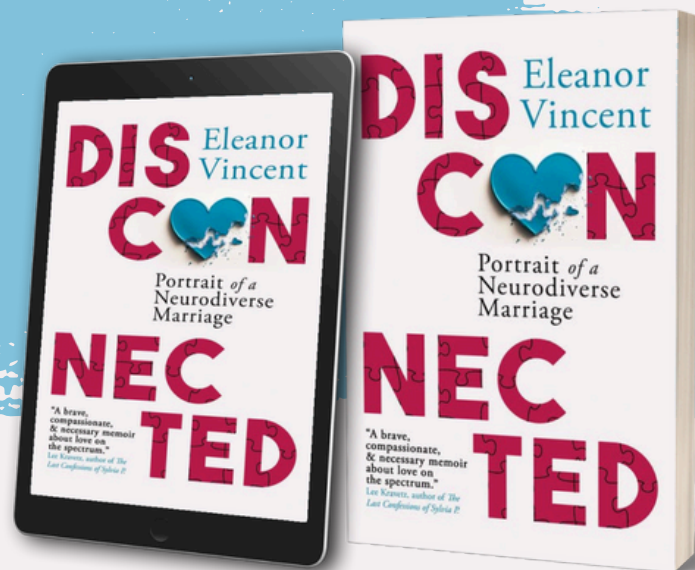


- What was most memorable about this book?
- What feelings did this book evoke for you?
- What did you already know about this book's subject before you read it?
- What new things did you learn?
- What questions do you still have?
- Did this book change or challenge any preconceived notions you had about the subject?
- What aspects of the author's story could you most relate to?
- Why do you think the author chose to tell this story?
- How did the memoir make you reflect on your own life?
- What do you think is the most important takeaway from the author's story?

Let's Connect:

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Reader Reviews



“

"This unflinching portrait of a marriage will change the way you look at love...This is a book that needed to be written."

— **David W. Berner, author of *Daylight Savings Time: The Power of Growing Old***

"A powerful testimony about the ways neurodiverse couples can cause each other unintentional hurt."

— **Mona Kay, MSW, Ph.D., host of the "Neurodiverse Love" podcast**

"A brave, compassionate, and necessary memoir about love on the spectrum."

— **Lee Kravetz, author of *The Last Confessions of Sylvia P.***

"Eleanor Vincent shows us how to be resilient and still tender no matter what life brings."

— **Linda Joy Meyers, President, National Association of Memoir Writers, author of *Don't Call me Mother***

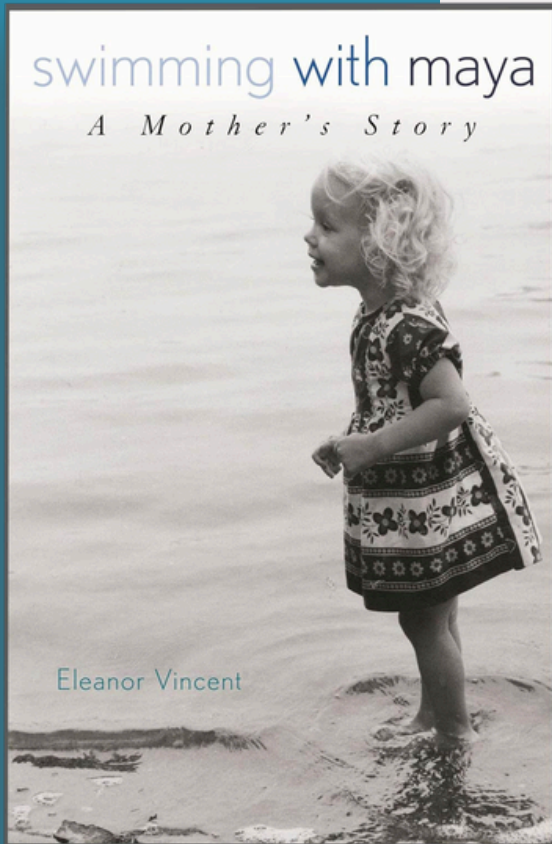
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More from Author

Eleanor Vincent



Swimming with Maya: A Mother's Story (Dream of Things, 2013)

Swimming with Maya demonstrates the remarkable process of healing after the traumatic death of a loved one. At age 19, Maya mounts a horse bareback as a dare and in a crushing cantilever fall, is left in a coma from which she will never recover. Author Eleanor Vincent's life is turned upside down as she struggles to make the painful decision about Maya's fate. Ultimately Eleanor chooses to donate Maya's organs. Years later, she is able to hear Maya's heart beat in the chest of the heart recipient. Along the way, Eleanor re-examines her relationship with her daughter, as well as Eleanor's traumatic life as a child and young woman. In a story that has been called "heartbreaking and heart-healing," Eleanor Vincent illuminates the kind of courage, creativity, faith, and sheer tenacity it takes to find one's balance after unthinkable tragedy.

"Powerful prose with a meaningful and memorable message."

Lee Gutkind, Founder, *Creative Nonfiction Magazine*

"An important addition to the literature of loss and restoration."

Maxine Kumin, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and author of *Inside the Halo and Beyond: The Anatomy of a Recovery*

"Heartbreaking and heart healing, this compelling story of surviving the death of a child will stay with you long after you've closed the book."

Ellen Bass, author of *The Courage to Heal and The Human Line*

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