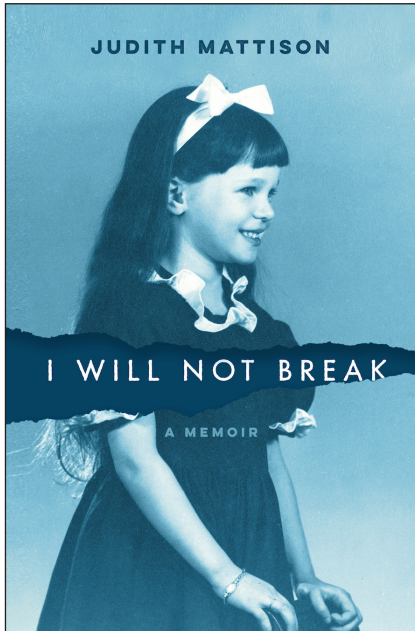


PRESS KIT FOR

I Will Not Break: A Memoir by Judith Mattison



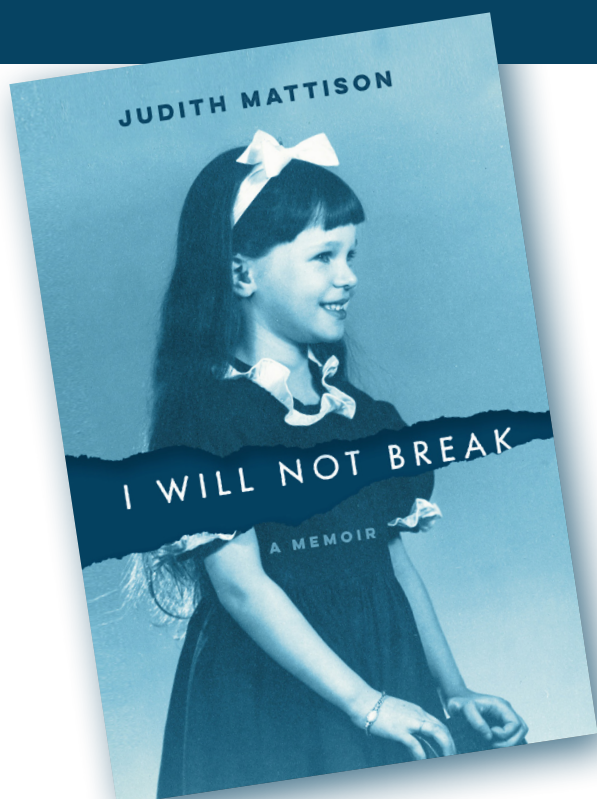
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For interview requests and invitations to speak, contact Judith Mattison at judiematt@gmail.com.

AS A CHILD SHE HAD TO FORGET IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.
AS AN ADULT SHE HAD TO REMEMBER IN ORDER TO BE FREE.



ANNOUNCING AN IMPORTANT NEW BOOK

BY JUDITH MATTISON

I WILL NOT BREAK

A MEMOIR

Judith Mattison had a conventional 1940s Midwestern childhood, followed by college, marriage, and children. Still, throughout her life, she was haunted by a mysterious terror of deer head hunting trophies. With the help of a therapist, she began to recover memories of severe abuse at the hands of her father. . . .

“I Will Not Break is a testament to the strength of a child’s soul.”

—JULIE ELLEFSON
executive director, Southside Family
Nurturing Center, Minneapolis

“By her candor and witness, she invites all of us to be more vigilant to the possibilities of abuse in our communities.”

—DAVID LOSE
senior pastor, Mt. Olivet
Lutheran Church, Minneapolis



JUDITH MATTISON is the author of fourteen previous books, including *I'm Worried About Your Drinking and Divorce: The Pain and the Healing*, and the first woman to be a pastor of the largest Lutheran church in the United States. She is a popular speaker and has served on several nonprofit boards. Judith currently volunteers in a preschool for children at risk of abuse and neglect.

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PRAISE FOR

I Will Not Break: A Memoir by Judith Mattison

I Will Not Break is a testament to the strength of a child's soul. Within the abyss of abuse, Judith Mattison finds beauty, refuge, and solace in nature. Her inner strength to experience profound harm, protect others, seemingly forget, remember, and ultimately heal is **hopeful and astounding!** She tells her story so that we as individuals, families, and communities commit to protecting and advocating for every child's sanctity.

—JULIE ELLEFSON, executive director,
Southside Family Nurturing Center, Minneapolis

An inspiring story of a woman's courageous confrontation with her horrific past. Readers struggling with the long-term effects of child abuse will find an honest, informed, and ultimately compassionate supporter in Judith Mattison's excellent memoir.

—BILL PERCY, PhD, psychologist emeritus

Judith Mattison's memoir is an **extraordinary testament to courage** in the face of abuse and gratitude in the face of loss. By her candor and witness, she invites all of us to be more vigilant to the possibilities of abuse in our communities. More than that, she empowers us to seek help, offer comfort, support each other, and in all these ways be shaped more fully into a community of healing and grace.

—DAVID LOSE, senior pastor, Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis



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ABOUT JUDITH MATTISON

author of *I Will Not Break: A Memoir*

Judith (Judie) Mattison is a writer, Lutheran pastor, and teacher. She is the author of fifteen books with sales of over 170,000 copies; previous titles include *I'm Worried About Your Drinking* and *Divorce: The Pain and the Healing*. Her books, articles, poetry, and talks focus on human struggles and sensitivities and are filled with honest introspection and persistent hope. Her latest book, *I Will Not Break: A Memoir*, tells her story of surviving abuse as a child and finding strength and healing as an adult.

Judie has been active in service to her communities, including as a board member of Centennial School District Number 12 in Anoka County and Luther Seminary in St. Paul and as a trustee of Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota. She was awarded the Charles E. Merrill Fellowship at Harvard Divinity School. She has volunteered in the Minneapolis Public Schools, at Southside Family Nurturing Center in Minneapolis, and for local, synod, and national Lutheran church entities, including the teaching staff of Holden Village in Chelan, Washington.

Judie is the mother of two sons, whose families have blessed her with three granddaughters. Along with spending time with friends, she enjoys music, sports, film, and theatre, as well as international travel.

As a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), she is noted for meaningful preaching, community building, sensitive pastoral care, organization skills, and creative strategies for problem solving. Her decades of church service have been fueled by a strong curiosity to explore life and theology. She believes surviving abuse, experiencing healing, and ultimately finding pride in her accomplishments have increased her understanding, concern for, and love of people.



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Q & A WITH JUDITH MATTISON

author of *I Will Not Break*

How difficult was it to write this book?

This book took eight years to write, but actually it took a lifetime. Writing it was sometimes very painful, but I gained many insights as I looked back and contemplated.

Do you think American society's attitudes toward and awareness of child abuse are different today from what they were like when you were growing up?

Yes and no. The topic is more public now, especially since the #MeToo movement has openly exposed so many abuses. But that has been more about adult-on-adult abuse, and it is in the media. In my day everything was more secretive, as well as denied by families and friends. We need to support continued growth in protecting women, revealing and rejecting abuses of all ages.

What do you think about the belief that a survivor should forgive their abuser in order to heal?

It's easier to forgive when the perpetrator acknowledges guilt and remorse. There is a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation. But someone can forgive at a distance. The survivor must feel safe from the perpetrator, otherwise they may set themselves up for more abuse. In my case, I never felt safe, so I kept my distance.

Would it have been better to just forget about the abuse?

Some people don't need to process things. Some people can compartmentalize their experiences and set some of them to the side. People have different levels of sensitivity. We have to respect their individuality. For example, when abuse is stopped early, the survivor can often heal more quickly. And while we may heal, there always remains scar tissue.

How can we make sure that abuse isn't ignored or dismissed?

Call into question ideas like "He/she's too nice to do that." "Boys will be boys." "She shouldn't have tempted him." And remember that family members can be perpetrators. We have to acknowledge that hiding or overlooking abuse for so long has enabled more abuse, whether in institutions like the church or in families.

What should we watch for when we are concerned about potential abuse?

When an adult hangs around children more than adults or the children disappear at a gathering. When an adult crosses physical boundaries, like uninvited kissing or tickling—being excessively friendly and not respecting "no." When a child appears to be reluctant around an adult.

What should someone do if they suspect or have been told that a person has been abused?

If they tell you, believe them. It takes a great deal of courage to say it aloud to anyone. Ask if they'd like to talk with someone about it. Offer your support.



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RESOURCES

for abuse survivors and their supporters

Minnesota

CornerHouse Interagency Child Abuse Evaluation and Training Center
cornerhousemn.org
612-813-8300

Midwest Center for Trauma and Emotional Healing
mwtraumacenter.com
952-934-2555

Minnesota Communities Caring for Children
pcamn.org
1-800-244-5373

Sexual Violence Center—counseling, legal, and other services
sexualviolencecenter.org
612-871-5111 (24-hour crisis line)



National

Darkness to Light—crisis intervention and referrals to children or people affected by sexual abuse of children
d2l.org
866-FOR-LIGHT

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
missingkids.com
1-800-THE-LOST (hotline)

RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network)—the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization
rainn.org
800-656-HOPE (hotline)

Survivors of Incest Anonymous—help with finding local support groups
siaawso.org

Find more resources here: rainn.org/national-resources-sexual-assault-survivors-and-their-loved-ones



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