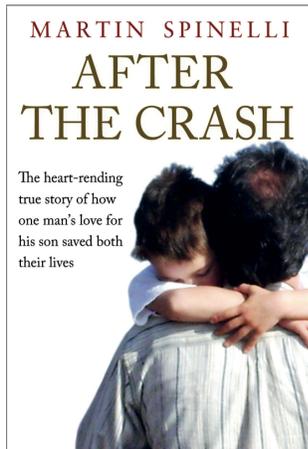


After The Crash

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month: Martin Spinelli and his 11-year-old son issue a wake-up call to drowsy drivers



On a beautiful September morning, Sasha Roberts drops her husband off at the train station, and heads off to take her young son pre-school. It is a journey she and four-year-old Lio have made many times before. But this morning would turn out to be very different.

A truck driver who had been driving for three days without his legally required breaks fell asleep at the wheel and ploughed into their Nissan. Their car was thrown, spinning in the air, windows smashing on impact. Sasha was killed instantly and Lio suffered multiple skull fractures and a shattered leg.

After the Crash charts Lio's recovery from brain damage so severe he wasn't expected to walk, talk or even breathe unaided ever again. It tells how this incredibly strong and tenacious four-year-old pulled himself back from the edge of death and the loss of his mother to create for himself not just a 'normal' childhood but an exceptional one. Their story is a sobering reminder of the deadly affects of distracted driving.

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By Martin Spinelli

Mainstream Publishing /
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Non-fiction
Paperback

Martin and Lio (now a happy, healthy 11-year-old) are available for interview on publication.

A UK bestseller, the book follows Martin Spinelli's battles against dire prognoses for his son, infuriating medical bureaucracies, monstrous insurance companies and profound grief, all in an effort to heal his little boy. By remaining steadfastly optimistic in the face of professionals who thought they knew better, Martin found real meaning and a true purpose in life for the first time.

News tie-ins & core messages:

- April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month: 11-year-old Lio Spinelli and his dad issue a wake-up call to drowsy drivers
- Parenting after tragedy: How do you get back to normal (or do you)?
- Ambition can be a fool's game: Martin Spinelli says "Focus on what you have, not what you don't."
- Easter message: A miraculous story of recovery, rebirth and redemption after a car crash claiming life of a mom and wife
- Single parenting a special needs child
- Trusting your parent instinct when your child is sick
- Using tragedy to transform your life for the better
- Believing in your recovery

Research shows:

- According to a National Sleep Foundation poll, 60% of adult drivers say they have driven a vehicle while feeling drowsy in the past year, and more than one-third have actually fallen asleep at the wheel.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 100,000 police-reported crashes are the direct result of driver fatigue each year.
- A study by researchers in Australia showed that being awake for 18 hours produced an impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05, and .10 after 24 hours; .08 is considered legally drunk.

After the Crash is much more than a profoundly moving personal story.

Why it matters:

PR BY THE BOOK

"I hope people take from the book a sense that tragedy can be met bravely and turned around into something good. Lio's astonishing recovery is a small example of what he and I were able to accomplish in the wake of a horrendous tragedy."

- *After the Crash* is a powerful reminder on the potentially devastating effects of distracted driving
- It's a moving story that will inspire readers to figure out what's truly important in their lives, to face hardships with strength and take them as an opportunity for personal growth.
- The story shows the rewards of being brave enough to trust your own instincts, to reject the words of the "experts" and to find your own path through an all-too-common tragedy.
- In the way it analyses brain damage and treatment options, the book is a practical tool for families who find themselves in similar situations. It's also useful for families with young children coping with the loss of a parent.
- It is a handbook for dealing with disaster, not just surviving it but mastering it and using it to transform your life and your heart for the better.

Who wrote it?

Amazon reviews:

"A must-read for any parent."

"Soars way above the usual 'I have survived' genre."

"A life lesson on fighting for a better outcome."

"Heartbreaking, yet wonderful."

"A real hero's journey."

Originally from New Jersey, Martin Spinelli (www.martinspinelli.com) has produced award-winning news features for NPR, as well as the BBC. He has also produced the acclaimed literary series *LINEbreak* and *Radio Radio*.

In September 2006, Martin's life was transformed when his wife was killed and his son nearly killed by a trucker who fell asleep at the wheel. His memoir *After the Crash* tells the story of their recovery.

He currently writes inspirational stories and is a lecturer in Media, Film and Music at the University of Sussex. But his most important and rewarding job is father to the most amazing boy in Britain, Lio Spinelli.

Press coverage:

- A UK bestseller, it has maintained Amazon.co.uk Top 25 billing since publication.
- Featured in the UK by *BBC Outlook*, *BBC Breakfast*, *ITV This Morning*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Jeremy Vine Show* - BBC Radio 2, *Saturday Live* - BBC Radio 4, *The Scotsman Magazine* and *The Catholic Herald*.

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