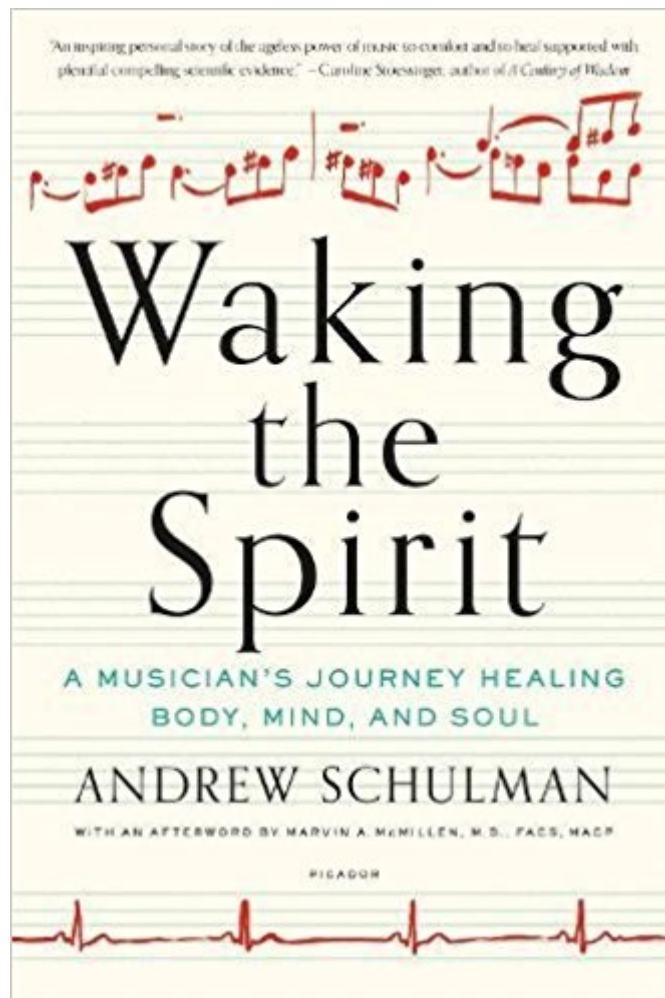




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Waking The Spirit: A Musician's Journey Healing Body, Mind, And Soul



Synopsis

An Oliver Sacks Foundation Best Book of the Year Selection, Finalist for the Books for a Better Life "Best First Book" Award, and a People Magazine Pick in Nonfiction. The astounding story of a critically ill musician who is saved by music and returns to the same hospital to help heal others. Andrew Schulman, a fifty-seven-year-old professional guitarist, had a close brush with death on the night of July 16, 2009. Against the odds—and with the help of music—he survived: a medical miracle. Once fully recovered, Andrew resolved to use his musical gifts to help critically ill patients at Mount Sinai Beth Israel's ICU. In *Waking the Spirit*, you'll learn the astonishing stories of the people he's met along the way—both patients and doctors—and see the incredible role music can play in a modern hospital setting. Schulman expertly weaves cutting-edge research on neuroscience and medicine, as well as what he's learned as a professional musician, to explore the power of music to heal the body and awaken the spirit.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Earnest but affable memoir....He talks with neuroscientists and psychiatrists and explores the legacy of Pythagoras, the ancient Greek mathematician and philosopher who was among the first to recognize the healing properties of music. Along the way, Schulman posits that the relationship between the pain we feel and the songs and compositions we love has its roots in a tender, transcendent form of symbiosis." —Meghan Daum, *The New York Times Book Review* "Waking the Spirit is an inspiring story that teaches many important spiritual lessons, but the principal one is that

to give thanks, you have to give. By healing others, he healed himself. You will never listen to music in the same way again.

- John Kralik, author of *365 Thank Yous* "An inspiring personal story of the ageless power of music to comfort and to heal supported with plentiful compelling scientific evidence."
- Caroline Stoessinger, author of *A Century of Wisdom* "Andrew Schulman has chronicled his amazing journey in a book that should be read by everyone, not only by doctors, caregivers and musicians. 'Waking the Spirit' recounts Andrew's own miraculous recovery in an ICU when he was literally brought back to life. His profound discoveries related to healing and self healing through music will astound the reader. As a classical guitarist and composer I have witnessed music's power to heal, but nothing as dramatic as what the author, facing death, has been able to reveal."
- Liona Boyd, author of *In My Own Key: My Life in Love and Music* "In the grand tradition of Oliver Sacks' *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, Schulman cannily narrates stories of the ways that music can bring healing not only to the broken spirit but also to the broken body."
- No Depression, *Journal of Roots Music* "Inspirational."
- Publishers Weekly "Great new book on power of music in medicine by Andrew Schulman. A must read."
- Kate Edgar, Oliver Sacks Foundation "Waking the Spirit is full of hope and wonders. Andrew Schulman has as light a touch with his pen as he does when he picks up his guitar. I think the world has been waiting for this book."
- Bill McGlaughlin, Host and music director of the public radio programs *Exploring Music* and *Saint Paul Sunday* "A very educational and uplifting look at music therapy from a world class musician."
- The Help Desk "In his heartfelt chronicle of unorthodox medicine, professional guitarist Schulman celebrates his sixth year as resident musician in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit at Manhattan's Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital. His own journey began years earlier when, at 57, he was admitted to the same ward as a terminal 'Code Blue' patient with circulatory collapse following a routine pancreatic tumor excision. Along with the bedside presence of his wife, Wendy, also a professional musician, was an iPod loaded with Bach, Brahms, Debussy, Ellington, and the Beatles. It was, writes the author, 'all the music that moved my heart'—just the thing to help him cope and sooth his spirit. Schulman miraculously survived his ordeal, escaping with only minor brain damage. He swiftly decided to redirect his music career toward patient care as a 'medical musician' in the same ward where he was a patient just months prior. With a winning combination of anecdotal bedside stories, personal experience, and the research of neuroscientists, neuromusicologists, and fellow musicians, the author offers evidence of the calming, stabilizing, and synchronous ('entrainment') physical effects music therapy can have on a patient's nervous system, pain, and overall health. Though his own work in the ward was not without its share of trial and error, Schulman's innate intuitive skills (brain surgery patients were treated to Bach first) and

compassionate demeanor made him an integral part of the hospital staff. The author considers his proactive role in patient care and his own astounding recovery to have both been beautifully transformed 'by the bridge that music creates between the healthy and the sick.' An inspirational testament to the limitless benefits of music and its role in health care." â•Kirkus Review

ANDREW SCHULMAN is the resident musician in the Critical Care Units at NYU Langone Medical Center in New York City and Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He is the founder and artistic director of the Abaca String Band, which has performed throughout the United States. He is also a solo guitarist and has appeared at Carnegie Hall, The Royal Albert Hall in London, the White House, and the Improv Comedy Club. Andrew lives in New York City with his wife, Wendy, and their dog, Phoebe. He is the author of *Waking the Spirit: A Musician's Journey Healing Body, Mind, and Soul*.

Disclaimer: I have been friends with Andrew for a long time. We lost touch about 12 years ago and then we reconnected on Facebook in late 2009 - just months after Andrew had surfaced from his medical crisis, as I would later discover. It was business as usual discussing music, dogs, guitar, life, etc., until I read read posts by Andrew discussing the details of the crisis. Needless to say, I had no idea that this had happened and was a bit shocked and reminded just how tenuous the thread between life and death can be. I am glad that his wife Wendy on a whim decided to see if music could get through to Andrew during the crisis. Fate had it that the piece Andrew heard on his iPod when she put the earbud in Andrew's ear during the crisis had strong associations in his life, and surprisingly - or not so really! - it brought him back to this world. That being said, this book not only presents the gripping drama surrounding the crisis, it also provides a very deep background on the history of the effects of music on the brain, with Andrew's experiences as a medical musician being the center of focus. It is presented in prose worthy of the late Oliver Sacks, but uniquely in Andrew's voice. This book is also testament to how associations to music embedded in one's mind can be extremely powerful. My only complaint was that the book was far too short! I sincerely hope Andrew continues his exploration into the connection between the brain and music, since this is fertile ground in terms of groundbreaking research across cultural barriers.

Waking the Spirit: A Musician's Journey Healing Body, Mind, and Soul is an amazing story of a professional musician who, after experiencing a near-death experience, literally returns 'to life' and playing music by the healing power of music. Moved by this transformative experience, the author

tells how he, was compelled to return later to ICU to heal others through performing live music at patients' bedsides. Supported by scientific information from experts in neuroscience medicine and references to recent research in the field of music and medicine, these deeply personal and compelling anecdotal stories will prove to be an inspiration to musicians and health care professionals alike. I highly recommend this touching book for the general public as well as performing musicians who believe in the magic of "live" music and health care professionals who may consider the inclusion of "musical prescriptions" as part of a therapeutic plan for both palliative care and healing.

Waking the Spirit is simply wonderful! It's the perfect antidote to today's depressing political scene, is full of hope, and inspirational. Andrew Schulman is a professional guitarist who finds himself in an induced coma in the SICU at Beth Israel Hospital in New York, the most desperately ill patient in the unit. As each hour elapses, he worsens and is given almost no chance of survival...until his wife reaches into her handbag and finds his iPod programmed with his favorite music, beginning with Bach's St. Matthew's Passion, his most treasured favorite. From the moment the ear buds relay Bach's music to him, his condition begins to improve. He....and the medical staff in the SICU....credit music with saving his life and to give thanks, Andrew returns to the unit at Beth Israel to become a medical musician and to play for both patients and staff 3 days a week. In Waking the Spirit he recounts his experiences there and the life changing effect it has had upon him, helping his healing continue to this day. In the book afterward, Dr. Marvin A. McMillen continues with his own personal story, reinforcing Andrew's account. There was a time when music was considered unorthodox medicine, but that is changing, as Schulman, McMillan and the other doctors who comment illustrate. Andrew's story was the subject of a PBS feature which you might want to watch via YouTube. The highest of recommendations.

I loved this book. Andrew is a musician, but he is also a poet of the human soul. He opened up an world for me that made me proud to me be human. A world where Music can reach places in the brain and the heart of a comatose patient and in fortunate cases give them the will and the path to live. I found some of the music that he referenced including Bernstein's recording of the St. Matthew Passion and understood Andrew's world. I had drifted away from music and was reminded how much it had touched me in the past. I am fortunately healthy but perhaps Andrew has also brought music back into my life. A beautiful book, a wonderful author - with luck you will be touched

and moved as I was.

From the minute I started reading this book I could not put it down. With many friends in the medical field who are also musicians I felt obliged to send multiple copies around the country. The nerd in all of us is sated by the references to studies that provide scientific evidence of what Mr. Schulman experiences regularly in the ICU. This book will make the perfect gift for anyone working in an ICU anywhere. It should not be taken lightly! Kudos to Mr. Schulman and his team for bringing this information to the main stream and making it so readable and interesting for the layman.

This is an excellent book showing just how our brains work even when we are unconscious and what power music has over our well-being. I wish every medical worker was fully trained in this reality. Perhaps there would be fewer adverse reactions caused by physicians & surgeons listening to their own kind of music while performing their treatments. The music preferred by the patient should be the primary consideration. If a surgeon needs to listen to hard rock in order to perform his or her surgical procedures, I want to know that beforehand so I can find a different surgeon!

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