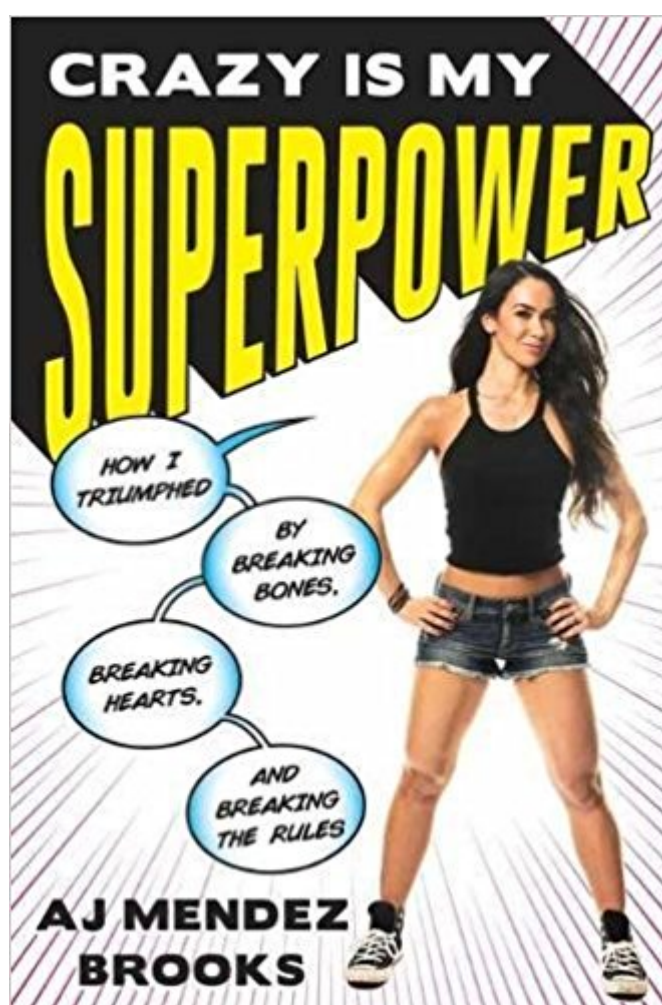


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Crazy Is My Superpower: How I Triumphed By Breaking Bones, Breaking Hearts, And Breaking The Rules



Synopsis

The New York Times **#1** Bestseller Recently retired WWE superstar AJ Mendez Brooks is a powerhouse—strong, quirky, and totally confident. But that wasn't always the case. With humor and tremendous heart, she opens up for the first time about her harrowing struggle to understand her demons and the diagnosis that helped her gain control over her life. **Everything I was told should be my greatest insecurities and weaknesses, everything that I've been labeled—SHORT, NERDY, SKINNY, WEAK, IMPULSIVE, UGLY, TOMBOY, POOR, REBEL, LOUD, FREAK, CRAZY—turned out to be my greatest strengths. I didn't become successful in spite of them. I became successful because of them.** Growing up AJ was a quiet girl trying to act “normal” when she felt anything but. As her family struggled with drug addiction, poverty, and mental illness, she found escape through comic books and video games, and was inspired by the tough and unconventional female characters. It wasn't until she discovered pro wrestling that she learned superheroes could be real. Determined to become the superhero she'd always admired, AJ trained and sacrificed for years to achieve her dream of wrestling professionally. Yet she quickly faced industry pressure to play the role of the damsel in distress and to dress more provocatively to cater to male fans. But she fought back and created an ass-kicking alter ego that was a genuine representation of herself: nerdy, enthusiastic, and a little bit crazy. With humor and tremendous heart, AJ opens up for the first time about her harrowing struggle to understand her demons and the mental illness diagnosis that helped her gain control over her life. What most people view as a hardship, AJ embraced as inspiration for her superhero persona, shattering the stigma attached to mental illness. Charting her journey from a scrappy girl in an unstable home to an empowered wrestling champion, *Crazy Is My Superpower* is an unflinchingly honest story and brave confessional about her long road to self-acceptance.

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Customer Reviews

"This book is for every young woman who couldn't find a seat at the lunch table. AJ Mendez Brooks writes about loneliness, mental illness and finding her place in the world with genuine vulnerability and perhaps more importantly, genuine strength." — Amy Koppelman, author of *A Mouthful of Air*, *Hesitation Wounds* and *I Smile Back* "A.J. Mendez Brooks is a stunningly gifted writer. *Crazy Is My Superpower* is at once breathtakingly honest, hilariously funny, self-deprecating and incredibly inspiring. I absolutely loved every page of this

book." — Julie Klam, New York Times bestselling author of *Friendkeeping* and *You Had Me at Woof* "This woman is 5'2" of raw talent, heroic honesty, and gut-busting humor. AJ's story left me both breathless and feeling like I should be jumping up and down shouting, "Yes, yes, oh my god, f**k yes!!!!"

— Deborah Copaken, New York Times bestselling author of *Shutterbabe* and *The Red Book* "AJ Mendez Brooks' candid account of her struggles and success offer young women a wonderful role model regarding how to be yourself, stand up for what you believe in and embrace the "crazy." AJ's story promotes empowerment, not just through physical strength, but through emotional strength as well." — Dr. Jen Hartstein, Family Psychologist and author of *Princess Recovery* "This compelling memoir, written with genuine humor and strength, shows how AJ persevered over circumstances that a lesser human would have been destroyed by. She is truly a Super Hero."

— Caroline Rhea, Actor, TV Host, and Stand-up Comedian "AJ Mendez Brooks is the role model we desperately need in

today's culture! Authentic and inspiring, AJ embraces her challenges, bravely discusses her past, and shows us all how to turn pain into power."

— Emily Roberts MA, LPC "The Guidance Girl" — Psychotherapist and author of *Express Yourself: A Teen Girl's Guide to Speaking Up and Being Who You Are* "[Brooks] successfully uses her own life story to show how a perceived weakness can be an unstoppable strength." — Library Journal

AJ MENDEZ BROOKS is a former WWE wrestler and three-time Diva champion under the ring name AJ Lee. She is an animal rescue ambassador for several organizations including the ASPCA, and works with Girls Make Games, a program encouraging young women to pursue science and tech-based careers. She lives in Chicago with her husband, Phil 'CM Punk' Brooks.

I honestly was not much of a fan of her's initially (I still loved wrestling before, during, and after her time in WWE; same love for other wrestling promotions throughout time). Amy Dumas/Lita and Trish Stratus have always been among my favorite women wrestlers (The Undertaker is my all time favorite among the men); A.J. has proven she is as great as them. Since her retirement, I actually grew fondness for her work and was curious of what she is like as a person. What she has written pierces me as a human, a man, and wrestling fan. There were some aspects I think I genuinely connected with her more than I imagined and to be in touch with her humanity. I have interests in Mortal Kombat and Resident Evil as she does in the video game aspect (of course it includes wrestling games too). Deep down, there are other factors, which did hit me a bit more, while reading like the chaotic relationship with her family; it sometimes reminds me of my own biological family's disconnect with me, but we do mostly get along. We both have many health problems as individuals and our own family members have their own. I loved numerous references A.J. makes throughout her book (a Harry Potter one for example), which informs me of my love for Mystery Science Theater 3000 (one of my favorite television shows of all time next to The Simpsons among certain others; she does happen to like The Simpsons also). I was interested in how she talked about women's issues; her understanding of how girls are socially conditioned in our culture and her encounters in everyday life. The most impact I experienced reading was how she discussed her mental illness; making it her strength just like I have with my lead poisoning since I was an infant. Overall, I think everything turned out nicely for this book; it has its own charm and sophistication. A.J. says to simply be un-apologetically yourself and I absolutely agree. Thank you.

AJ's story is compelling and told with a sense of humor- and a sense of purpose. As the first woman to break the mold of tall glamorous models doing throwaway matches to give the WWE Universe a cheap thrill, the character of AJ Lee captured everyone's attention- men, women, boys & girls loved seeing her skip out to the ring, felt for her as the male wrestlers broke her heart, and cheered as she defeated much bigger opponents with her cat like moves. But this book is so wonderful because AJ writes about her life. She describes her parents, brother and sister and her relationship with them in affectionate but realistic terms. She also fearlessly talks about her mom's and her own bi-polar

disorder and the different outcomes for each. Now happily married to CM Punk, she gives her viewpoint on men and how women should assert themselves to live life on their own terms. A truly wonderful read, highly recommended.

I love AJ even more now. This book is one of the most entertaining WWE biographies I have read. It had me laughing out loud after three pages. That reaction was repeated many times. On the other hand, there were many sad moments hearing about how she grew up and struggled with mental illness in her family and being homeless for a time. It took about 160 pages before there was any talk about her wrestling, but that's not a bad thing as I could not put this book down. You get a good summary of her career from training to becoming the top WWE Diva. You also get a lot of insight into her personality and perspective on life, including personal journals. I didn't understand why she talked about drawing her own cartoons and writing her own fanfic, but the sketches in the book were from another artist (and did little to add to the book). If Bret Hart could include his own cartoons, why not AJ? While she talked about her internal conflict between being a good girl and still trying to be marketable as a Diva, and talked about sexual harassment and unwanted advances from men, I was disappointed that she didn't explain more about how she felt about kissing at least eight different men on national TV. We do get to hear about how she felt about two onscreen kisses with CM Punk and how the second one she probably shouldn't have liked, but she loved and ended up marrying the guy in real life. I'm still jealous of him. This is a fantastic book for any WWE fan and any person that wants to hear an inspirational story about becoming successful, not in spite of yourself but by being yourself.

I LOVED AJ when she was a WWE Superstar. I just loved everything about who she was. As soon as I found out she was writing a book I knew I had to get it the moment it came out. So I preordered it months prior and waited until it showed up at my door. I read it that first day. It was amazing and showed so much of her life that I never knew until I read it. I cannot believe what she overcame and who she is now. She is my role model even more now. I highly recommend this to any fan of hers. You will not be disappointed!

Most will come for her WWE story but the book offers much more. You'll get the story of her climbing the ranks in the indies and within the WWE - which is great - but that's just the surface of her story. Starting with her childhood in a poor family up until her retirement from wrestling after she had achieved all her goals it goes in-depth the mental issues she dealt and continues to deal with.

You don't need to be diagnosed with any similar illnesses to understand - anyone of any age who can relate to occasionally feeling depressed or like an outsider will be able to relate. For those who do have the same issues as AJ, I'm sure it offers some comfort knowing there is someone in your same situation and has succeeded and is happy with their life. And yeah, it mentions CM Punk.

I absolutely loved reading this book. She writes about her struggles growing up and what helped her fight through those struggles as she grows up. Even once she lives her dream of being a wrestler there are still some things she tried to fight for in the company. I would definitely recommend everyone who comes across this book to read it!

Already hoping AJ Lee writes a second book!!

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