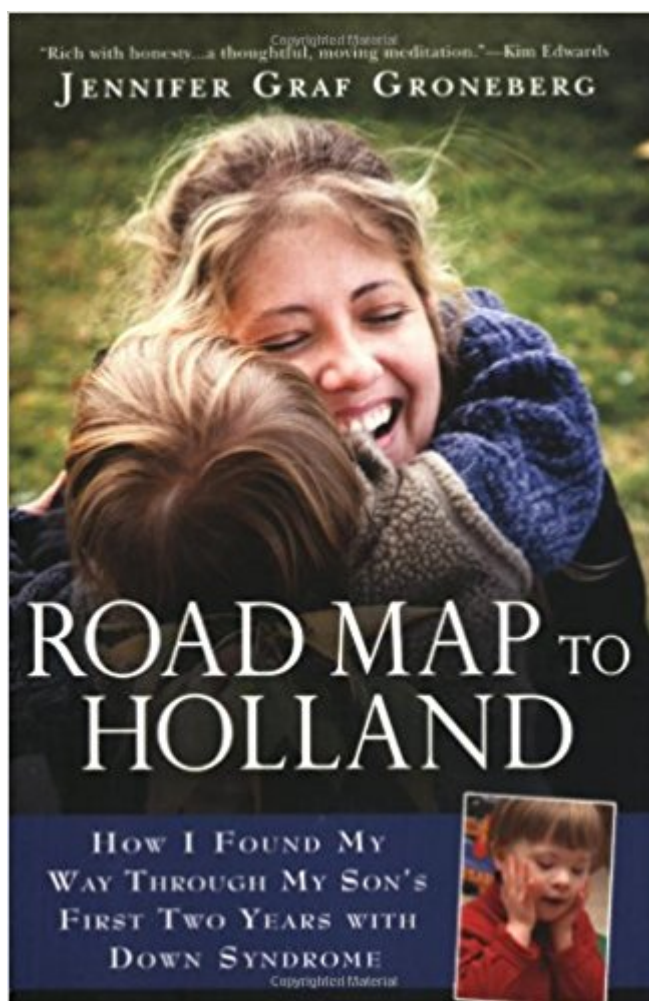


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# Road Map To Holland: How I Found My Way Through My Son's First Two Years With Down Syndrome



## Synopsis

An exceptional memoir that provides emotional insight and practical advice. It's like planning a trip to Italy, only to get off the plane and discover you're actually in Holland. You need a new road map, and fast... When Jennifer Groneberg and her husband learned they'd be having twin boys, their main concern was whether they'd need an addition on their house. Then, five days after Avery and Bennett were born, Avery was diagnosed with Down syndrome. Here, Jennifer shares the story of what followed. She dealt with doctors-some who helped, and some who were disrespectful or even dangerous. She saw some relationships in her life grow stronger, while severing ties with people who proved unsupportive. And she continues to struggle to find balance in the hardships and joys of raising a child with special needs. This book is a resource, a companion for parents, and above all, a story of the love between a mother and her son-as she learns that Avery is exactly the child she never knew she wanted.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Montana wife and mother Groneberg traces in her tenderly moving account the life-changing realization after the premature birth of her twin boys that one of them, Avery, has Down syndrome. Utterly unprepared for the emergency C-section of the seven-week-early preemies, Groneberg and her writer husband, Tom, the parents of a four-year-old, are devastated by the news about Avery, and they must gradually alter their easygoing future plans about raising their kids. They reject the notion of adoption, suggested by a well-intentioned nurse at the hospital where the babies are

ensconced in the neonatal intensive-care unit, and embark on an exhaustively trying, ultimately enlightening journey to care for the needy babies, especially Avery, and educate themselves about his condition. Rising from the shame of feeling that their family is broken, and letting slide hurtful comments by a grocery-store clerk or neighbor, Groneberg devoured books and information from the Internet, and began to foster their son's development by seeking out physical therapists and specialists. Small gains in Avery's motor skills were causes for celebration, and the beginning of speech the greatest gift the parents could ask for. Groneberg affectingly delineates these gradual, hard-won stages during Avery's first year toward love and acceptance. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Rich with honesty, wisdom, and a deep appreciation for every day miracles, "Road Map to Holland" is a thoughtful, moving meditation on the struggles and joys Jennifer Graf Groneberg and her family experienced during her son Avery's first two years. Groneberg offers a wealth of insight, information, and even practical resources for families whose children have Down syndrome. Yet this book is first and foremost a story about the constant discovery of love, and it will resonate with every reader who has traveled the always unpredictable, often overwhelming, wonder-filled journey into parenthood." -Kim Edwards, author of "The Memory Keeper's Daughter" "I have been 'to Holland' for eighteen years now, and this book brought back so many thoughts and feelings I had saved up that I felt an immediate sisterhood with Jennifer. I watched her deal with that same fear of the unknown that singed my heart, and I wept when she reached that crucial moment when she found that same place of self-forgiveness. No matter who or where you are in relation to a child with Down syndrome, these pages will be like signposts along your road, to give hope and a new way of seeing things. It's good to be able to see the potholes coming and be ready for them, and it's good to know when to pull over and take the time to enjoy the breathtaking views that only happen on this road. Thank goodness for road maps!" -Martha Sears, coauthor, "The Baby Book: Everything You Need to Know About Your Baby From Birth to Age Two" and author, "25 Things Every New Mother Should Know" "What a remarkable book! With excruciating candor and exquisite generosity, Jennifer Graf Groneberg invites us into the deepest privacy of her innermost thoughts, feelings, fears, challenges and triumphs. Nothing is left out in this amazingly intimate and profound journal. She allows us into every nook and cranny of her life and we find ourselves firmly ensconced in her heart." -Emily Perl Kingsley, national spokesperson and advocate for people with disabilities and author of "Welcome to Holland" "This is the story of Avery-a child with Down syndrome who transformed his mother's broken heart into one filled with cheer, awe, and pride. He offers all new

and expectant parents a powerful perspective on life's greatest lessons." -Brian Skotko, M.D., M.P.P., Children's Hospital Boston & Boston Medical Center. "Bursting with hope, Groneberg's account of mothering Avery highlights the triumph of love over fear. Its candid, vivid prose and poignant emotion make the story is difficult to put down and impossible to forget. Herein lies truth to be pondered and savored by every mother, every woman, every human being." -Kathryn Lynard Soper, editor of "Gifts: Mothers Reflect on How Children with Down Syndrome Enrich Their Lives"

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Jennifer and Tom find out they are having twins. During the birth there were complications and many months in NICU and finding out one son has Down syndrome. Jennifer writes about all her emotions very elegantly. We feel her hurts and pains and also her joys as she and Tom go through the first two years with the twins. We learn about evaluations, tests, assessments and OT, PT and speech therapy. But most of all, we learn of the love of a family for a child who is just a little bit different.

This book started slow for me because of the back & forth from before her baby was born to after. Once I got past that first part I found this book very helpful. A lot of great resources. It was amazing to know some one else had the same feelings I had & I am not crazy for feeling the way I do. I wish I had read this sooner maybe even before my son was born since we all ready had a diagnosis. This would have been a much better book to give me w/ the diagnosis than the ones that were suggested to me.

Jennifer Groneberg shares all her feelings about having a Down Syndrome child; the concern, worries, cares, fear, etc. All of these are overcome by the courage and love of she and her husband. This child has a bright future and will achieve more than the generation of Down Syndrome children before him, because the level of acceptance and understanding that disabled people can learn. They have a distinct brightness unique to them. I have a DS son who is now 52. Many avenues and

therapy advantages were not open or available to him. Not enough was known then. He has done really well. I bought the book in the Kindle edition. When I finished it, I noticed all the reference sources. I will be buying the book on paper, in order to have reference to it. I hope we get to read more from Jennifer Groneberg, she has a clarity of thought that enables her to explain things that sometimes people have difficulty understanding.

Road map to Holland Helped us all with the new birth. My daughter found this to be the most helpful in explaining the feelings she was having, when she didn't understand what she was feeling. Thank you for this road map and we are so glad we are in Holland....might be a little more laid back than Rome...but we love the tulips in all there different colors and shapes...

The subtitle is perhaps a bit misleading. While this book certainly gives you plenty of information on Down syndrome, it's really all about family. This book should be filed under family and under memoirs too. Jennifer Groneberg is an extremely talented writer, who is so obviously in love with her family that you almost wish you were a relative. The book is brutally honest however. She does not shrink from telling you about the doubts and fears she experienced upon learning of her son's condition, but what shines through the strongest is the love. The Gronebergs are people I'd like to know, to have as friends or neighbors. I recommend this book highly. You don't have to have a Down syndrome kid to appreciate it. You just have to like good writing and a well-told story. - Tim Bazzett, author of Pinhead: A Love Story

I cannot recommend this book enough! Groneberg does an exceptional job at relating her story to the reader. We feel her ups and downs as if it were happening to our own family. I am impressed that Groneberg shared her true feelings and life of her family after the diagnosis of her son Avery's diagnosis. The struggles were heart wrenching, yet I was so thankful to read about how they function as a wonderful family then and now as the boys all grow. You are a remarkable woman, writer and mother Jennifer, the boys and your husband Tom are lucky to have you. Keep up the great work.

I purchased this book (along with others) after the family I nanny for welcomed a beautiful baby boy with Down syndrome. I wanted to find out as much as I could about the issue in order to try and care for him and his family best. This was one of the books I purchased. I loved it. I laughed with her; I cried with her. More importantly, I felt like I could better understand what families go through when

they get the news that their precious baby has Down syndrome. It helped me to put myself in the shoes of the family I nanny for. Worth the purchase for sure.

Excellent book I really enjoyed it!! read it for an education class! It gave a clear understanding and parental perspective of a NICU and early intervention.

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