

# Rebellious Wellness<sup>over 50</sup>

## The Hungover Widow, Loss, Grief, and Dating for the first time at 50



Episode 093: The Hungover  
Widow, Loss, Grief, and Dating  
for the first time at 50

**Gregory Anne:** Didn't you say you were Jewish?

**Debbie Weiss:** I am Jewish. I'm Jewish. I'm Jewish heritage and I love Jewish people. I mean, I am a Jew. I got grief counseling. It's a synagogue and I talked to the rabbi and he offered grief counseling and I said, well, I'm an atheist.

And he said, well, if synagogues excluded everybody who's an atheist, we wouldn't have congregations.

**Gregory Anne:** Welcome back everybody to another episode of Rebellious Wellness Over 50. Today my guest, Debbie Weiss is. Also known as the hungover widow. I can imagine that it wouldn't be hard to get in a hungover state having lost a partner of 32 years was it Debbie?

**Debbie Weiss:** Yes. 32. 32 years.

**Gregory Anne:** Debbie, welcome. I am so grateful to have you here cuz I know that you are certainly not alone in your journey of losing the love of your life way too soon.

**Debbie Weiss:** And thank you for having me.

**Gregory Anne:** Happy to have you. Where shall we begin? There's so much. Um, First of all, you wrote a book about your experience, and I'm curious, you weren't a writer before. What prompted you to take out a pen and say, I'm just gotta put this all on paper.

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, I've always enjoyed writing, you know, from grade school through high school.

I took all the creative writing classes. I won a little writing contest. I was an English major in college, and then I went to law school because I thought it was very important to be employable. So when I retired I was 40 and I dabbled in a few writing classes, but then when I lost my husband, I just really got more into it and things just kind of flowed with getting more serious about it.

Quit practicing law at 40. I retired from being an attorney. I lost my husband when I was 49 and a half.

**Gregory Anne:** Which then became dating at 50 or 50 something, and I'm sure you have funny stories.

One of them appeared in the New York Times, one of the papers that I read regularly and it was called Pastrami and Polyamory and just the title is enough to make somebody wanna read it. You said [00:02:00] something in the article about you figured that this dating would be, if not this, then weird, like an experiencing in weird.

Tell us a little bit about that journey of dating in your fifties.

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, um, I was with my high school sweetheart, so he was my one and only. I'd known him since I was seven. Our parents worked together and then we were tossed together over the years until we eventually started dating. Uh, he was four years older when I was a senior in high school, and he was a senior at UC Berkeley.

He's an engineer. He was majoring in engineering. So when he passed, I'd only been in one relationship in my whole life. Mm. And it was committed. Obviously and it was pretty, it didn't feel serious cuz we had a lot of fun. But it, you know, that was it. So when I started dating, I, I realized, and I kind of go through all this in, in my book, that, you know, I didn't necessarily have to be monogamous or serious that I could just date for fun.

And so I kind of looked at dating for fun or looked at dating multiple people or looked at, not dating sometimes, but kind of looked at different ways of how did I wanna live. Um, And unfortunately, um, most of it really wasn't that fun. But, I thought it might be fun.

**Gregory Anne:** I can't imagine it being fun in only because my reference, I've never, I, I've had two marriages.

One was very short, like a year and a half, but I was never like, from the time I was able to date until I got right, there was more than few people that I dated and some were long term and not. But all of that dating was never fun. In between the committed relationships, meeting somebody new, and then it was exciting, but then you have to tell them your whole story again, and then you find out the reality of who they are.

I can't imagine doing that once we're settled and we really know who we are in our mid fifties. Did you have like standards?

**Debbie Weiss:** I definitely had standards. Um, Of course I then violated those standards because I found so few people who met them. But, uh, you know, I started originally trying to, to look for something committed and I started on J Date, um, which [00:04:00] is a site for Jewish people.

And I thought that would give me people who were maybe more serious. Uh, hopefully saner. That's debatable. And, the guys I met were pretty messed up. This wasn't any fun. Um, They were in fact, more serious than I was. You know, my husband died of cancer, so I'd been a caregiver. So I had thought it might be enjoyable to at least, you know, put on something besides a beat up sweatsuit, go out, talk to somebody, have a pleasant conversation.

But things really weren't like that. It felt much, much more like a power struggle.

**Gregory Anne:** Did you find that men were on these, I don't know about these apps, but are, were they needy or were they domineering? What kind of characteristic did you find in common, if any?

**Debbie Weiss:** Uh, extraordinarily low emotional quo. Uh oh, eq.

Mm-hmm. Emotional iq. Emotional iq. I met up recently with a, another woman I'd actually practiced law with, and she's been single probably many more years than I have, and she found the same kind of schmucks. You know, it, I mean, the thing is a lot of folks, men at least of this age, are single for a reason.

And if you think about it, this is kind of an analogy I use, when I passed the California bar, the pass rate was something like 45%. But if you, if you're a first time taker, it was more like 70%. Good school 80. So the numbers are really low because you have all these people who keep flunking it and retaking it.

And that's kind of what dating at mid midlife is like. You have all these people who can't function in a relationship, so they, they keep getting spat back out into the pool.

**Gregory Anne:** Hmm. And how long did it take you to feel like you wanted to do something other than grieve and move beyond this? I know it's individual for everybody, but you, it, it sounded to me if I'm reading your story like you kind of dove in pretty soon.

**Debbie Weiss:** I did. And I dove in too fast. Didn't in some ways and not in others. Um, my husband and I were pretty isolated. Again, he was an engineer. He liked being at a computer. I mean, he liked [00:06:00] researching. He liked home improvement projects. So all of this was home. I was a bookworm. I liked being on the couch with the book.

After years of practicing law, I was very happy to garden again, we're home bound people. So when he died, I was really alone. I didn't have friends I, so I started to join some groups to get out of the house, and that was fine because you know, that's not traumatic. You go to a, I was in a suburban town.

You go to a car club breakfast or a Rotary Club dinner, you don't like it. You don't go again. Yoga classes, those were great. Met a lot of great women. But you know, the dating is difficult. People are strange and a lot of men were very

negative and I feel like they kind of try to establish, try to out alpha you, which really surprised me cuz I saw that as a lawyer.

But I was really surprised to see that dating. It's like, you know, even if you can try to show that somehow you're dominant to me, that sure doesn't mean I wanna hang out with you. Right. You know? But it took about three years to get my brain back. Now my husband had cancer and he was in denial. I had P T S D I, it took a while to get over it, but for me to really kind of think again to say, write better and all, um, It was three years, but it was probably about six months.

I could do simple outings. Nothing too complicated, but I could start to say, okay, I'm sitting here alone and I have to find a way to interact with people.

**Gregory Anne:** Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah. That's gotta be hard after a while. So, where does the hungover part, I, I read something about Manhattan's. Were you a Manhattan drinker?

**Debbie Weiss:** I was. Not so much anymore. No. Although I, I've, you know, now and then at a, at a restaurant. But yeah, my husband and I drank a lot. We were Manhattan drinkers, you know, wouldn't drink before dinner, nothing too much. But when he died, you know, I was alone in the house and he'd been in denial about having cancer.

Being his caregiver had been difficult, so I was left with a lot of guilt. And at night I was alone in our home, which didn't feel like [00:08:00] our home. You know, he decorated it, which was part of it, but I mean, he was gone and it was so quiet and so empty. So I'd put on some music, I'd make a couple Manhattans and just hang out.

I bingeing watched before that was chic and uh, you know, I was drinking those things. If I was really upset, I'd throw the glass in the fireplaces cuz I deserved to vent. And, you know, none of that was that great. So, yeah. So Manhattan's, yeah.

**Gregory Anne:** Manhattans. It seems it's a throwback cocktail.

It's like a madman era cocktail. I realize it's very popular again.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah, we were retro. We like Manhattans and traditional martinis. Okay.

**Gregory Anne:** Not dirty, shaken, not stirred.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah. All that stuff. Yes, yes. Shaken, not stirred, dirty. A martini is gin and an olive. If you add an onion, it's a gimlet. And you know, a vodka martini isn't such, so, yes, we were, we're kind of sticklers for all that.

**Gregory Anne:** So you had standards about your cocktails?

**Debbie Weiss:** I did.

**Gregory Anne:** So how have you changed, would you say? I mean, you've mentioned a few things. You got into yoga, you figured out a way to get outta the house, you drink less Manhattans, but what really would you say changed through that caregiving denial, which had to have been a really hard thing for you, caregiving to a person who was like, I don't need this, or what was he like during that time?

I just asked you three questions. Let's start with how have you changed since your husband died?

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, when he died, I was very shy and self-conscious. Um, maybe that wasn't me inherently, but, uh, where when I was practicing law, it was very sexist and I wound up feeling very uncomfortable. So I was kind of happy to retreat and I'm an introvert anyway, so I was just kind of there.

I was in my little house. Even the house was closed in, it was on a street and we'd had our shades down all the time, and it was a little track house that we'd bought together I was very grateful for, but it wasn't really me. And then when he died, I started to kind of look at, well, what do I wanna do?

And some of that involved reaching out to people and interacting more with people. And then from there going, well, you know, you [00:10:00] can't be that uptight. Every interaction can't be a source of such anxiety. And I do have anxiety. So very much just kind of opening up and just doing different stuff, you know?

Um, my late husband hadn't wanted to travel. He traveled a lot with his parents and didn't wanna do that anymore. He thought the internet was pretty darn good for seeing things. So I took some solo trips with the uc alumni group and I got really into hiking, which gives you whole different groups of people and they do stuff like go to free concerts and dance.

So there you are dancing in a group of strangers and all that was a good experience and led to my going back to school and getting a master's in mfa. Mm-hmm. I changed. In the scale of, are you a super, open person, you know these kind of people who jump on a plane and say, I'm outta here.

That isn't me. That's never gonna be me. But from a place of zero I, I think I improved,

**Gregory Anne:** yeah, it sounds like it. So now you're with a partner, Randall?

**Debbie Weiss:** Yes. Yes.

**Gregory Anne:** And did you meet him on an app or did you meet him in one of your new social engagements?

**Debbie Weiss:** Sadly enough, I met him online.

But he was the only good one. I mean, I met a couple folks online, actually. I met a couple, few folks online who were nice men, but I didn't, connect with, yeah. But I did meet Randall online On OkCupid.

**Gregory Anne:** OkCupid? I knew J date. I know OK cupid. But I don't know the ins and outs.

Each has its own personality. Some are for certain age groups, certain belief system.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah. Yeah. Most are dysfunctional. Yeah.

**Gregory Anne:** I was out to dinner with two women

that are now married who met on Match and they were using the lingo. They're like, well, you are shadowing me and you were doing this.

And I was like, what did these things even mean? There's a whole world of learning before you could become fluent in using one of these dating apps. I'm sure there are courses that can teach you that.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah, but I wouldn't take one. I mean, the main thing you wanna do is not waste your time.

The verbiage isn't what matters. What matters is not wasting a lot of time [00:12:00] texting or dealing a virtual realm except maybe during the pandemic. And what you really wanna do is meet in person and see if there's a point or have a phone call. You just wanna screen because you're gonna get rid of about 98% of people that way.

**Gregory Anne:** Did I read that at one point you were going on two dates a day, sifting and sorting.

**Debbie Weiss:** I was, but I'm a writer and at the time I would just kind of meet people who seemed interesting. I was taking a writing class and I was in a writing group. And you know, I've been an unemployed slacker for, at that point, about 10 years, 11 years.

So I was just kind of saying, well, let's see what's out there. And, you know, it was pretty disheartening. I mean, I could, I could say I out of about, you know, a quarter of those dates. Did anybody ask me about myself? I felt, it just felt like being an audience. That's the worst.

That's kinda what I meant by low eq.

**Gregory Anne:** Gotcha. Yeah. And did men tell you about their exes? I've heard stories where men want to tell you about

their exes.

**Debbie Weiss:** Oh, so flipping much. It's the first, it's like the second chapter of my book where my first date after I'm widowed, you know, and I'm thinking the guy is gorgeous.

You know, we chat a few times, things look fine. We had a couple lunches, we have a dinner. And all I get the whole night is Xs, Xs, Xs, Xs. And sometimes it was more subtle, it was more like, you'd go to a restaurant and they'd be like, well, my ex used to order the most expensive thing on the menu.

Or, doing the dating's expensive, my ex. So, even if it wasn't perpetual, it was this constant sense of comparison and griping, you know, that that's like this thing I wrote a long time ago. And my, my biggest problems, everybody was disillusioned. Everybody was living in the past.



And often I felt like I was wearing a mask with the ex's face on it saying, why aren't you buying me this? Or, or whatever it is. It just, it was, it was kind of ugly that way. Nobody was really very present, very few people were present.

**Gregory Anne:** Right. So I. Tell us the name of your book.

**Debbie Weiss:** It's called Available as Is, A Midlife Widow Search for Love.

**Gregory Anne:** I love that. Available as is, and [00:14:00] I would be doing a disservice if I didn't close the loop on pastrami and polyamory. For the listeners, can you just give us a brief, uh, synopsis of that dating the..

**Debbie Weiss:** Do you want the story of being in the New York Times, or do you want the story of the date?

**Gregory Anne:** Whatever you feel like saying. I read the Times article, but whatever is important for us to hear it was so funny.

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, it was funny. Um, as part of my experimenting at this point, I was not meeting anybody very good, but I was online. This guy reached out to me and he was, Ivy League, MBA, doctor, apparently very successful, but he was throwing that over for a career in, uh, tantric sex instruction.

And he was also polyamorous, which means, uh, loving many, I believe. And, um, we hung out for a while. And despite being such a evolved specimen that's in quotes, uh, he was really a mansplainer. And he was quite patronizing and he always sort of tried to get me to see that his lifestyle was so wonderful.

Polyamory I think means loving many people. It's multiple relationships and it's different. It's living in a certain way, but it's with love. This schmuck had just been a geek in high school. I mean, he was wearing the cowboy boots and all, and he was just trying to nail everything he could at 60, so that wasn't polyamory.

So this was a really, I think, a really disgusting level of mansplaining. And rationalizing, you can say I'm having, I'm trying to get laid a lot and that's personal growth, but to somehow compare this to some type of human evolution was something else. And it's also a disservice to true polyamory as I've discovered or heard from folks who do practice it.

I'm personally monogamous, but people hated my story and because for that reason, yeah, I got some pushback from polyamorous because I was kind of

putting that down. But it was really this fellow particularly, the way he approached things, he sort of had a girl for different days of the week.

You know, you really couldn't call him at times that weren't convenient, and that wasn't what I wanted in a relationship. I [00:16:00] wanted a real relationship. But there together when you wanna be. And, um, So somehow that really pissed me off. And I guess anger's a great motivator because that's probably the best thing I've ever written.

And I actually did get a modern love column in the New York Times, which is a big deal.

**Gregory Anne:** People who don't read the New York Times, that is a big deal. And it's a feature length article, isn't it?

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah. Yeah. And it is genuinely hard to get.

**Gregory Anne:** Anything in those types of LA Times, New York Times, Washington Post they're hard to break into if you're not.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah, I've tried a few times since then and I couldn't get in. So if anybody's curious. No, that isn't a doorway. It's a one time shot.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah. Which is a shame.

Yours is a great voice and I think it speaks for a lot of women, um, which is not something we see enough of. Let me just leave it at that.

**Debbie Weiss:** I'd agree. I don't feel like we see enough of women, I, I wanna say midlife women, women over 50 who are kind of claiming being empowered and being amazing and not putting up with this shit and being invisible except for ads that are selling, products for urinary incontinence.

**Gregory Anne:** Prescription drugs.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah. Or maybe retirement, you know, I mean, I just wrote to the place where I buy my yoga pants and said, could you please put some older people in your ads? I wear these pants, I look okay. I mean, everything, you know. Could you put some people in who I could relate to?

**Gregory Anne:** Yes. I see most frequently women at, um, let's just say midlife 50 or older. Um, we jumped somehow into the 75, 80. Yes, for the prescription ads, right, or for the sneakers with the extra cushion or the help I've fallen and I can't get up ads. You're either, you know, nubile fit and fabulous and 20 or 30. Or you're gone, sister, you're like old and we'll let you wear your Velcro sneakers if you'll be in our

commercial.

**Debbie Weiss:** Right. And you need things to help you get through the day. You know, you're not doing the same [00:18:00] things you did.

**Gregory Anne:** Right. Which is part of the reason I have this podcast is to help women stay in the conversation of what's possible and not to well, as, uh, the woman who won the Oscar a couple of nights ago, last name is Yo. Oh, Michelle. Yo, yeah, Michelle. And she said, don't ever let them tell you that you're old.

That being whatever age you are, you're finished. If we stop and think fabulous women that are in their seventies and eighties, Oh yeah, some great poets and, uh, grandma Moses didn't start painting till what she was 80. I mean, really there is opportunity everywhere at whatever age we are, but we have to be willing to engage and go out and get it.

Like you had to change the way you were being in order to experience a different kind of life than you had with your husband.

**Debbie Weiss:** And it's fun, you know, I went back to school to, uh, St. Mary's College in California, and I got my M F A and I graduated at 50. 56. I was 56. Wow. And it was fun being with all these kids.

And they don't mind. I mean, it was a great time sitting in class, but I also was curious to see if anything in my book would resonate with them or if they would just kind of be like, yeah, this is old people stuff. But they were related to the book and it was great. One or two women in my year and a few amazing writers the year before me, who were my age or older.

Who were going back and getting their mfa and you know, that's not as rare as winning an Oscar, but it's certainly something we get to do.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah. It certainly is something we get to do. Yeah. And there are so many options. You mentioned travel, you went and got an MFA you're writing, you've got published in certain places.

I think one thing leads to another, right? If we open ourself up to experiences and it's, I'm not the first person to say this. If we think back to when we were young, what lights us up? Yes. 1, 5, 8, 12 in high school, maybe. What did we wanna do? Wish we could have, and then for some reason, you know, life got busy, we didn't do it.

Um, I have put back on my wishlist, my bucket list. I don't like that phrase. I hate that phrase.

**Debbie Weiss:** I do too.

It, it feels, it feels like I'm gonna kick the bucket. I mean, it just sounds

**Gregory Anne:** That's exactly right. It has this connotation towards the end. Yeah.

Well anyway, I'm gonna swim with whales. I took it off [00:20:00] for a while. I lived in California, got certified with Scuba and I was like, oh, I'm gonna swim with whales in San Ignasio and then I moved back home to the East Coast and it just seemed like, oh, it's gonna be so much work.

What the heck is that? It's gonna be so much work to do something you've always wanted to do? So, um, and I'm gonna make it happen by my 70th birthday, so.

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, that's awesome.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah, and I think that no matter how crazy it seems, at first, I'm gonna use a cliché at first blush, it could be crazy, but it could still be doable.

Do you agree?

**Debbie Weiss:** I do agree. I also think that, you know, if it's, it's like yoga. If, if that particular thing doesn't work, you can modify. Mm-hmm. I mean, if swimming with whales in the first place you wanna swim with whales, doesn't work, there might be another place to swim with whales or you can swim with a dolphin.

Another woman who I follow who's a midlife coach. She wrote about on her, I think 60th birthday going with some girlfriends to sea whale. She didn't swim, but she saw them cuz she'd taken the same trip in her thirties and she wanted to go back to Baja and see the same darn gray whales and she got some girlfriends together and she did it.

I also think like, and this is a big thing for me, Is taking little steps towards what you want can add up to more, cuz you start to see possibility. Mm-hmm. So maybe after swimming with a whale, you wanna do something else. Or after I write this book, I wanna do something else. But I think what helps us to have this idea like, hey, I could do that and I can modify it.

Mm-hmm. And then you start to see more things that you wanna do. Some of them may be harder to do and some of them may be just a passion that you hadn't realized.

**Gregory Anne:** I love that distinction that you start with one thing and it opens up the world of possibility when you see, and I think for it's sort of proving to ourselves, well, I can do this much, maybe I can do the next thing, right?

Like I. I'm glad you said you had a great time with the young people in your MFA course. Cuz to me it would be scary. It's like, oh, those young people, they're so cool and they won't want me in the classroom and, but that's great. But what if I went and took an adult ed class and just got back in a classroom?

Right. Do you know what I'm saying?

**Debbie Weiss:** That's what I did. I took an adult class. I was actually the youngest person in my writing classes [00:22:00] for a long time because I took a class at, an adult education center near me, and those are retirees. And I'm pretty young for a retired person, so most of them were around 75.

And they were really cool people and they were fun to write with and they were so encouraging and I loved it. But, you know, that was three hours a week and you had 20 minutes to read your story. The teacher was amazing. It was a limited kind of thing, right? And from there, some of the more serious folks had a writing group, and I did that.

So I had more writing, and then I got more serious, and then I got the mfa. I didn't just say, I think I wanna be with a bunch of millennials who find me kind of a privileged jerk, you know? And it really wasn't that, and it was a little intimidating I had to learn, you know, what's the patriarchy?

I didn't know proper pronouns. But, you know, you can learn from people and if you, I think if you're open, wonderful.

**Gregory Anne:** Now, are you working on another book?

**Debbie Weiss:** Not right now. No, putting this book out there, um, is very hard these days. And I went through a hybrid publisher's, extraordinarily expensive. And the promotion of it is difficult. So I do wanna write about my dad, who is still with us at almost 93 and has a fascinating life. He was a nuclear physicist, but I don't think that's something to publish. I think that's just for, for me.

**Gregory Anne:** Just for you. Are you still writing articles though? Pitching.

**Debbie Weiss:** Oh, yeah. I don't know how good it's gonna go, but gosh. Am I trying? Yes, I am. There's a publication called Next Avenue. Which is very good. I had a piece in there, it was featured and the editor was so nice. And I have a piece coming out in that again.

I had a piece on dating after Widowhood, and I have something else coming up called, um, I had to evict my late husband to lead a new life. Um, I have a piece coming out in the Huffington Post in a few months. Oh good. And that was all interesting place to pitch cuz I did feel a little on the older demographic end of there.

Yeah. And it's about 10 years after being widowed. I've pitched the two AARP publications and neither of them get back to me. If they are fans of your podcast, please, Ethel and Girlfriend, I am very disappointed in you. I [00:24:00] think it's a shame that people don't at least get

response.

Yeah. I mean, tell me I suck.

I can live with this isn't good. Right. You know, it's like my book. It's not getting a ton of attention. My small town is, the people here are so lovely. The bookstore, the local paper are wonderful. There's not a ton out there, but the people who have read it, I hear really nice, wonderful things and people write me and say, it resonates.

So I'm pushing it and it has, you know, five star Amazon reviews if it. Mostly one star Amazon reviews and people said, you know, me and I didn't hear anything good, I'd kind of be happy to let it go. It's like, okay, you're a decent

lawyer. Me not so much a writer, I can take it, but it, it's more that, you know, people like it.

So I wanna keep going with this.

**Gregory Anne:** Oh, absolutely. That's why I was happy to have you on here, because I love the idea of it. And I, I've interviewed A woman her book is called the Hospice Widow, doctor's widow.

**Debbie Weiss:** I'm in touch with her. Yeah. We exchanged email. Yes. She's, she's terrific.

**Gregory Anne:** She's really terrific. And, uh, so anyway, she wrote the book that was really, it's a collage,

**Debbie Weiss:** she's an artist as well, I believe.

**Gregory Anne:** her collages are beautiful. We talked about the guilt of the living person while caretaking for the dying person. Did you experience any of that?

**Debbie Weiss:** So much Extraordinarily so, and it kind of messed me up. I was kind of a mess when my husband died for a while. I had to, I got grief counseling. I was a caregiver and some of that's in my book, but it's a smaller piece, but I do deal with a lot of that and I wrote about that when I was a Huffington Post blogger.

I wrote about caregiver guilt because that's what I was going through at the time. Four years or so after George died. It was horrible. I felt very stained. I'm guilty. George, was in denial about having cancer and originally he tried to protect me. And left me out of his treatment, his decisions.

And eventually that got really terrible because he was obviously dying and I couldn't tell what was happening and he excluded his parents. Which was awful. I mean, they deserved to know and to be with him. And he just kept working and he wouldn't communicate with me about [00:26:00] it or let me go to medical treatment with him or anything.

And I got very angry because I couldn't see what was happening. And I felt very guilty deceiving his parents. I mean, even silence at that point was kind of deceiving them. Right. You know? And even had them over and he sort of had

to hide it all. He sat and we hid his wheelchair, he put a hat on, you know, his mom figured it out.

**Gregory Anne:** Goodness. He was serious about denying it.

**Debbie Weiss:** Oh, he was serious. Yes. He was very serious. And. I, I got angry sometimes cause he turned down outside help. I needed help to care for him and he wouldn't get it. So I was doing things like breaking a nebulizer under his nose a few times a night. So I was sleep deprived.

I was crazy. Oh my gosh. I had hives from stress, so I was on major prednisone, of course. Big, you know, medical doctor, like, whoa, I don't know what it is. It might be change of life. It's like my husband's dying. Yeah. So it was awful. So I yelled at him occasionally. I still hate to talk about that, but yeah, I yelled at him.

And I was very angry and I was screaming. I'd say, we need to get help. We need to do something. This can't all be on me. And I thought I was killing him. I'm not a trained in medical at all. Right? dealing with things I just wasn't qualified to deal with and he wasn't doing the right thing.

He wouldn't let me do things like get a hospital bed, get him out of our bedroom so that he could be comfortable, get him out of the computer, deal with all kinds of physical issues. So I yelled and I was very angry and I still have, I still have guilt about it. I did get grief therapy, but yeah, I still have guilt.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah. She talks too about having, she, because she, this book was a journal in part, she left in the part where she blew up one day. Yeah. And as the words were coming out of her mouth, she was all at the same time thinking. If these are the last words I say to him, will it be okay? Like, I have to let this out.

But then I, it was so complex and I really, I, I'm just in awe people that do that.

**Debbie Weiss:** Uh oh, it's complicated. My last words, unfortunately to my late husband were, what's your effing Wells Fargo password? Because he,

**Gregory Anne:** sorry to laugh, but

**Debbie Weiss:** No, it's funny, I mean, I felt terrible. He was, I'd [00:28:00] visited him in the hospital and things weren't going well, but at the same time, all our bills were due and he was a control freak.



So he paid all the bills from his computer and I was having to try to figure out what to do. Our taxes were due. He did the taxes. So, okay. That was kind of my last words. And then he died. You know, he sounded fine, but he died that day and I, oh my. I wish we'd had a better goodbye, but yeah, if you'd ask about Manhattans now Yeah.

That's, you're, you're, you're seeing the underpinnings.

**Gregory Anne:** I can certainly understand why. Oh my goodness. Debbie, what a story. Uh, anything you'd like to leave the listeners with?

**Debbie Weiss:** I'd like to leave them with a sense of hope for people who have suffered a really devastating loss. And even a divorce, you know, that's devastating too for women where you have to kind of reinvent yourself and move forward.

And for me, what helped, cuz I'm a very cautious person, again, anxiety was to take a few little steps, you know, start with a walk. Go to a yoga class, say hi to the nice lady next to you. Later, maybe find a group of girls in yoga and you'll go for drinks. Or the walking turned into hiking, which turned into traveling.

So I, I guess I wanna leave them with a sense of hope that if you can start taking when you feel ready to take a few small steps forward, those can add up to creating a different kind of life that's better.

**Gregory Anne:** That's beautiful. And it's important because I think sometimes people, when they're in it, they lose hope.

They can't see any hope. Right.

**Debbie Weiss:** Yeah. I didn't have any but moving forward I started to get a sense of hope, which was good cuz I started out doing things without a sense of hope. And then that came later because

you just kind of have to put one foot in front of the other together.

Yeah. It's kinda that show up thing.

**Gregory Anne:** Yeah. That kind of that show up thing. Yeah. Debbie Weiss author.com is where you can find Debbie's book, her podcasts, her articles, learn a little bit more about her. Debbie, thank you so much for your time and your stories. I'm really glad that we had [00:30:00] this time together.

**Debbie Weiss:** Well, thank you, Greg. This was wonderful. I appreciate it. You're welcome,

**Gregory Anne:** peeps. I'll be back next week. You'd be well till then.