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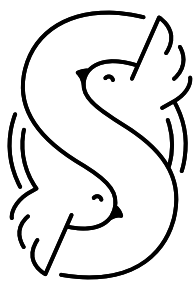
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With an emphasis on equilibrium and personal growth, *5ive for Women* encourages the on-the-go gal to pause for self-nurturing, through insightful articles and thought-provoking features - supporting the not-so-simple balance between faith, family, friends, fitness, and finance.

At *5ive*, we are advocates of healthy priorities and fitness for life, while striving to motivate, energize and inspire camaraderie of the Chippewa Valley sisterhood.



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EDITOR'S NOTE



Photo Credit: Eliza Porter Photography

Celebrating Courageous Women In our lives, courageous women shine brightly, embodying resilience and strength. They remind us that true bravery isn't the absence of fear; it's the determination to forge ahead despite it. In this special edition of 5ive for Women, we honor those who inspire us to navigate life's challenges with authenticity and grace.

As I reflect on my own journey over the past three years, I am incredibly proud of how my family has navigated the challenges of divorce. It has been a time of growth, both for me and my fabulous five children, who have walked through grief and change alongside me. Together, we have learned that it takes immense courage and strength to stand tall and share our experiences, embracing vulnerability as a source of connection rather than

a weakness. Courage often reveals itself when we confront difficulties head-on. Life throws obstacles our way, but the women we admire show us that surrender is not an option. They rise, drawing strength from their faith, family, and friends, transforming challenges into opportunities for growth. Speaking the truth is another vital aspect of courage, especially when it comes to having difficult conversations. It takes bravery to address uncomfortable topics, whether in our personal relationships or professional environments.

Courageous women don't shy away from these challenging discussions; instead, they engage with empathy and honesty. In my own life, I've realized that avoiding tough conversations can lead to misunderstandings and resentment. By choosing to address issues head-on, we foster deeper connections and create a culture of openness and trust. Moreover, these women exemplify the strength to refrain from gossip and negativity. When faced with conversations that veer into unproductive territory, they courageously choose to shut it down, steering the dialogue towards positivity and understanding. They recognize that gossip can be damaging and counterproductive, undermining the very relationships they seek to nurture. By modeling this behavior, they not only protect their own integrity but also inspire others to elevate their conversations. Patience is a form of courage that often goes unnoticed. In today's fast-paced world, waiting for our dreams to materialize can be daunting. Yet, courageous women teach us that perseverance is essential. They remind us to trust the journey, embracing each step with resilience and grace. Moreover, the courage to fail is something we must all learn to embrace. Fear of failure can be paralyzing, but courageous women encourage us to take risks and hustle with determination. They show us that every setback is a chance to learn and grow, leading us to greater success. As Gary Zukav states in *Seat of the Soul*, our intentions shape our reality. The courageous women we celebrate here live with purpose, reminding us that the energy we put out into the world comes back to us. Maya Angelou once said, "The cost is high, but the reward is great." The journey of a courageous woman may be filled with trials, but the rewards—personal growth and the ability to uplift others—are invaluable. In this edition of 5ive for Women, let us honor those courageous women who inspire us to embrace our own strength. I am proud of my own journey and the growth my children and I have experienced together. May our stories motivate us to speak our truths, engage in difficult conversations, remain patient, accept failures, and hustle with intention. Together, let's create a community where we uplift and empower one another, celebrating the incredible courage that resides within us all. The Journey continues in Faith, Family, Friends, Fitness and Finance.

Jennifer V Theisen
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

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Carrying On

Maura Parker Loses Her Rock

By Katie McKy



Maura Parker, 51, of Bordentown, had been with her husband Ryan for 30 years, and they had been married for 23 years. Ryan had “been her rock.” They had two kids, a son (age 20) and a daughter (age 10). Then, in an utterly unexpected instant, it all changed.

“The Friday before Ryan died, I lost my college roommate to breast cancer,” Maura recalled. “I had been devastated to hear of her passing and didn’t get much sleep all weekend. On Saturday and Sunday of that weekend, our daughter had dance recitals. I remember it being very hot that weekend. We had dinner at his parents’ house on Sunday, and my daughter and I left to go home. Ryan stayed to work more on my son’s car.”

Mother and daughter went to bed Sunday night.

“On Monday morning, around 7 a.m., my daughter came into the bedroom to tell me that ‘Daddy’ was on the floor in the kitchen and wasn’t waking up.”

Maura knew instantly that he was gone.

“I called 911, and they walked me through CPR,” Maura said. “The police arrived at our house very quickly after that and confirmed his death. Our son was away with his high school friends for the weekend. My first call was to him to come home right away. I also had to call Ryan’s parents, my parents, and both of our jobs.”

Her in-laws lived about 15 minutes away, so they came over quickly.

“There were lots of decisions to make that day, but I waited for my son to join me in making some of them,” Maura said. “Because we did not have a will and hadn’t discussed end of life plans, I decided to go with



whatever my children wanted. We opted for a viewing, funeral, and burial.”

There’d been no outward signs of a problematic heart.

“He did have high blood pressure, but it was being treated,” Maura said. “He had some other medical conditions (diabetes) that were more serious than his heart. He was very private, so I was the only one that knew the details.”

And they’d never talked much about death.

“We never really talked seriously about one of us passing early. We joked from time to time about making sure the life insurance policy was paid,” she said. “I would never have expected this in a million years.”

That life insurance policy was a huge help.

“I’ll always have to work, but other things are taken care of,” Maura said.

It took more than money, however, to help Maura put her life back together.

“Several things have kept me together in these last three years,” Maura explained. “My faith has been shattered and rebuilt. Relearning who God is to me, specifically, has been life changing.”

Maura also feels Ryan watching over her.

“Wanting to make Ryan proud of me has been my biggest motivation,” she said. “I picture his smile and hear his encouragement when I figure out the little things. I feel his love still daily.”

And she stays steady for her children, too.

“My kids are my biggest inspirations,” Maura said. “I want them to know that Mom was able to rebuild after the worst possible loss. I want them

to know that life is hard, but there is still so much good in this world. I hope they will always remember to look for the best in everything."

And friends and relations have had her back.

"My sister and best friends have called, texted, and dropped everything to be with me when I have needed them. I could not imagine not having them," Maura said. "This time has been so difficult, and yet, I am so blessed to have such amazing people by my side."

There have been others who have been less supportive.

"I think there are people that want to me grieve and move on," Maura said. "People are uncomfortable with facing mortality. People don't know what to say and have said some things that didn't sit well with me. It's hard to move on from someone who loved us all so well."

Maura's grief hasn't ended.

"I do continue to grieve. I think I always will," she said. "Our relationship was the best thing I ever experienced, and it makes me happy and proud to have been his wife. The grief softens after some time, but it will always be there. Watching our children grow and achieve their dreams is beautiful and bittersweet at the same time. I know he is so proud of all of us."

And moving on isn't easy when you're numb.

"He had been my rock for so many years, and I knew that I had to get through and make him proud," Maura said. "My only focus was on helping our kids and keeping our lives as normal as possible."

At the time of Ryan's death, Maura was the director of HR and Finance for a privately-owned tire company.

"I left that job due to the pressure and brain fog," she said. "I am currently a teacher/career counselor for a non-profit adult education program."

And this teacher and counselor has some wise words for all who are facing loss.

"Whatever you feel is fine. Feel your feelings. They are all valid," she said. "Cling to the ones who show up for you; it may be different people

"My kids are my biggest inspirations, I want them to know that Mom was able to rebuild after the worst possible loss."
~Maura Parker

than you expect. Talk to others that have experienced a similar loss. It helps to know that you are not alone."

Vitas Healthcare agrees with Maura, as it encourages all who've suffered the loss of a spouse to "grieve in your own way."

And the mental healthcare professionals at verywell-mind also agree with Maura, for they acknowledge that someone suffering through great loss might be "inclined to turn inward or withdraw socially," one should "resist the urge to isolate yourself" and reach out.

Finally, as Maura noted, those who "show up for you" might be "different people than you expect. ☺"



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A Balanced Life

By Katie McKy

Ashley Elizabeth Bases her Business in her Home

Corporations woo talent by claiming that they deliver work/life balance through flexible scheduling, at-home workdays, and so on. But Ashley Elizabeth Albertson of Lake Hallie configured her own work/life balance by basing her makeup business in her home, allowing her to keep one eye on her two daughters and the other eye on her clients.

However, she didn't launch her business, called Makeup by Ashley Elizabeth, with big ambitions.

"My business started out as a hobby, a way for me to do something I love while being a stay-at-home mom and make a little money on the side," Albertson said. "I am so grateful that it has continued to grow year over year."

Albertson works with brides on their big days, doing a trial run at her home studio and then traveling to the wedding venue on the big day. She also does makeup for professional women going to a photo shoot, for pregnant women doing a maternity shoot, and makeup for family photos. Being her own boss lets her keep her life in balance.

"I'm mindful and purposeful with filling my schedule with clients, and balancing that with my kids' schedules, as well," she said.

Albertson lives her balanced life in front of her daughters, showing them that you can have it all with enough planning and consideration.

"I love showing my girls a healthy work/home life through example," she said. "Having my girls watch me with my career has been really cool. I'm so grateful for the ability to show them how to work hard for something you love. I love that they get to see me maintain a healthy balance by having a career while also being present for them."

And her girls love when their mom goes to work.

"They know that when I have a client come, it is their chance to watch a movie or have some tablet time," Albertson said. "Mostly, they can't wait for me to work because they are so excited for that time!"

All in all, Albertson's home-based business harmonizes with her family.

"My makeup business has been such a positive thing for our family," she said. "During the week, when clients come to my home studio, my girls get to be a part of supporting my business by being quiet and respectful. Appointments typically take about an hour

and afterwards, we get the rest of our day together."

And the role modeling goes on and on.

"My girls get to see how I interact with people in a friendly and professional manner," she said.

Albertson, in turn, appreciates how her girls step up.

"It was surprising how easy it was to run my studio from my home," she said. "My girls really stepped up and impressed me with how respectful and quiet they are when I have a client here."

Chris, her husband, also gets top-tier daddy-time.

"On Saturdays when I have a wedding, Chris gets quality time with them where they typically head to a park or some other adventure!" she said.

Her family's support isn't the only thing that keeps her business humming.

"When we built our home two years ago, I knew I wanted to create a studio for my makeup business in one of the front rooms of the house," Albertson said.

Her last house didn't have a studio up front.

"Now it's definitely easier to maintain that professional, studio-like atmosphere."

Her studio isn't just upfront. It's professional grade.

"I also made sure that my studio was very professional looking, as I didn't want clients thinking that I didn't take my business seriously, running it out of my home," Albertson said.

A home-based business is also a money-saver.

"For Chris and me, having this flexible career has been such a gift," she said. "We don't have to worry about childcare both in availability and cost. Since my husband works outside of the home, he also doesn't have to worry about being available when I have a client scheduled."

One of the best perks of all is how Albertson feels about her work.

"I absolutely love



what I do!" she said. "Most of the time, I can't believe that I get to help people feel beautiful for a living, whether it's makeup for a wedding, a photo shoot, or for a professional event. I love the confidence we gain from looking our best self. Being the person that gets to do that for women is such a gift."

And where did Albertson learn her art?

"I attended online classes from a school based out of New York, and earned my certification from there," she said. "I continue to build my education through online courses and books published by other makeup artists."

Albertson is an independent artist, meaning she has latitude to pick the best product for her clients.

"Being independent means that I am not limited to using a single makeup line," she explained. "Instead, I use different products from different lines, testing and carefully choosing each product that I believe does the best job in each category."

How do her clients find her?

"They find me a few different ways," Albertson said. "Some have friends that I have done makeup for, others are given my name from a photographer or wedding venue, and some find me on social media."

If Albertson's entrepreneurship appeals to you, she encourages you to configure a balanced life, too.

"Don't let fear stand in your way," she said. "Pick a place to start and then pivot where you need to. Just keep moving forward. I am



always

assessing what works and what doesn't.

Being able to self-reflect and make changes where needed is so important."

And if you need any more encouragement?

"Go for it! I think our generation is changing what a career looks like, moving away from the standard 9-5," Albertson said. "We are creating careers that work for us rather than sacrificing for our careers. You don't want to be left regretting the chance you never took."

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One Wife's Courage

By Katie McKy

Shauna Joas Summoned Grace Under Pressure



Ernest Hemingway described courage as “grace under pressure.” You might wonder if you could muster sufficient grace under pressure some dark day, but nine years ago, Shauna Joas of Eagan, MN, was too busy for such thoughts. She was (and is) a kindergarten teacher and mother of two, preoccupied with the hurly-burly of teaching numbers and letters to five-year-olds and keeping her own two kids (ages 9 and 7 at the time) healthy and happy. She was married to Bryan, a manager at MHC software and amateur bicycle racer.

One March evening in 2016, Bryan was riding home from work, taking the long way home to squeeze some training into his busy day. He never arrived.

“I was home with the kids. We were eating dinner when I noticed that it was dark out. Bryan never rode in the dark, so that had me worried. I started calling and texting him, knowing that if he was riding, he wasn’t going to answer,” Joas said.

Without any tracking devices and not knowing where he was riding, she sent the kids upstairs to take a bath, while she tried to figure out what to do.

“The kids were done with their bath and downstairs eating a bedtime snack,” Joas remembered. “I went upstairs to brush my teeth. Griffin, my son, came running into the bathroom and told me the police were at the door.”

Bryan had been hit by a vehicle, and the driver had fled.

“He had been airlifted to North Memorial hospital,” Joas said. “My neighbor drove me to the hospital, and another neighbor stayed with the kids. Bryan was intubated and wheeled into surgery. He had no injuries on his head or face, so he looked like he was sleeping, except for the nurse squeezing the bag for his oxygen.”

His pelvis and back were broken, his kidneys and liver damaged. Massive blood loss required 50 units of blood products.

“After surgery, there were so many machines and tubes. The beeping and alarming of the machines was terrifying,” Joas said. “I thought he was dying each time, and I would panic.”

It was a far cry from when they first met, when Shauna was literally the girl next door.

“We actually were next door neighbors growing up. He was a good friend of my sisters,” she said. “They were four years older than me, so I was pretty much invisible when we were younger.”

Time passed, and the girl next door grew up.

“We reconnected at Lifetime Fitness in Eagan where we both worked out at 5:30 a.m. before work,” Joas said. “When I first saw him, I called my sister and asked her where Bryan was living because I swear that I had seen him at the gym. She ran into his mom a few days later and confirmed that it was him.”

They dated for two years and married on April 9, 2005, in St. Paul. Eleven years and two children later, Bryan was fighting to survive.

“He had four surgeries in four days,” Joas said. “After the initial surgery to stop his bleeding, Bryan’s stats were tanking. Dr. Beal took him into his second surgery, where they discovered he was septic and his large intestine was dying.”

They removed some of his large intestine, but the next day his numbers weren’t getting better, so a third surgery was required.

“The rest of his large intestine was removed and most of his small intestine. They left just enough small intestine for him to live,” Joas said. “The next morning, he was

crashing again.”

His doctor explained three scenarios to Shauna: 1. Put Bryan on comfort care. 2. Go for surgery; if any more of the small intestine was septic, he would close him up and put him on comfort care. 3. Go for surgery, and if his small intestine was clear, he would find the septic tissue in his rectal stump and remove it.

“Of course, I told him to do the surgery. . . and. . . we got our miracle!” Joas said.

Shauna had enough sick days to take the rest of the school year off.

“I stayed at the hospital 24/7. My parents stayed with our kids. We lived 45 minutes from the hospital. But Bryan was so critical, that I didn’t feel I could leave,” she said. “I slept in the waiting room for the six weeks he was in the ICU, and then when he moved to the regular floor, they had a chair that converted to a bed for me in his room.”

She’d decided against letting their children see their father.

“Some people thought I should bring up the kids, and if Bryan was going to be put on comfort care, then I would have had the kids come and say good-bye, but not before,” Joas said. “It was so scary to see Bryan with all the machines and tubes keeping him alive. I didn’t want the kids to see that unless they HAD to. Was that the right call? I don’t know, but it is what I felt was best for my family.”

Uncertainty ruled her days.

“At the beginning of the journey, it was hard to breathe. There were so many setbacks; I was scared to get my hopes up, because I knew they would get crushed,” Joas remembered. “The heavy panic in my chest eased when Bryan was able to start talking and moving a bit on his own.”

Today, Shauna carries more memories of those days than Bryan does.

“Bryan really doesn’t have any solid memories for about eight weeks after the accident,” she said. “He has some memories that were more hallucinations.”

At the time, Bryan’s focus was laser-like.

“He just wanted to go home,” she said. “He had a lot to deal with. . . learning to walk again, living with an ileostomy bag, etc.”

His attitude was buoyant.

“He took everything in stride and was NEVER angry.”

Shauna wrote a book about her family’s journey, titled *The Long Way Home*.

“I came up with this title because Bryan would often state that he was taking “the long way” when he was commuting by bike from his office to home, to get extra time training,” Joas said.

An even longer way home lay ahead of both of them.

“His 88 days in the hospital before getting home was an unimaginably long journey home,” Joas said. “Once he went to rehab, I felt I could leave him during the day a bit more, but then the nurses were teaching me everything I was going to have to do at home: changing his bag, giving him is TPN (IV nutrition), giving him his medication,

flushing out his feeding tube, and helping him transfer to and from the wheelchair.”

The patience required in recovery was daunting.

“It took a lot longer than Bryan expected,” Joas said. “I don’t think I knew how very sick Bryan actually was, even though the doctors had said, ‘He is really sick.’ Looking back, being in the ICU for six weeks is a long time. Medical people now tell me, ‘I didn’t think he was going to make it with how severe his injuries were.’ Our world stopped, but everything around you continues on. Our lives were frozen in time.”

Writing her book has helped.

“It really was healing. It made me revisit it all with a new perspective,” she said. “When you go through a trauma, it is like an out-of-body experience.”

She worked closely with her mother and others, getting their points of view.

“Working with my mom and getting input from my close friends was so interesting, just hearing other people’s perspectives about the accident,” Joas said.

Finishing it was a challenge.

“It was a big undertaking. Finding the time was difficult; that is why it took me five years to finish,” Joas said. “When the editor told me I needed to stretch certain areas more, I would and send it back.”

It wasn’t just writing the book that helped her healing.

“We had so much support from people in Eagan, where we live, but also from the Chippewa community where we both grew up,” she said.

Some even slept with her at the hospital.

“I had friends that stayed with me every night at the hospital. Shani Johnson stayed during the week, and Shelly Tischler stayed with me on the weekends,” Joas said. “If they couldn’t be there, other friends would come. Shani and Shelly’s husbands were Bryan’s bike friends and teammates.”

Food was also provided.



“People would bring lunch or dinner for me every day. People were bringing meals for my parents and kids, too,” Joas said. “Even strangers were sending cards and well wishes. You never know who is going to step up.”

All that goodness remains with Shauna and her family.

“Even though this was a horrible life-changing event in our family’s lives, we try to find the positives,” she said. “It changes your outlook on life. You know that life can change in an instant.”

Today, she tenders the tenderest advice.

“Tell people you love them,” she said. “Pay it forward to others. Be kind. Believe in the good in people.”

Shauna pays it forward, too.

“I donate blood every time I can,” she said. “We are big advocates of donating blood.”

And she also has pragmatic advice.

“We are also big advocates of helmets,” Joas said. “Bryan’s helmet was still on when he was found, and he had no brain injury.”

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Strong, Courageous Women:

FROM THE SOCCER FIELD TO THE COURTROOM

By Maggie McLoone

When I was younger, I played very competitive soccer: club, travel and high school. My travel team was in a Chicago suburb where I grew up, called the Palatine Celtic Stars. The girls on my team all happened to also be classmates and dear friends, even to this day. Our team won the Illinois State Championship several times, and then went on to compete in the Midwest Regional Tournament where we represented Illinois. We won the Midwest Regional Championship twice. We also won nearly every other tournament we entered... and we entered a lot! From Canada to Washington, DC to Michigan, we were always playing competitively. To say the least, we were GOOD!

I did not know it at the time, but those years really helped shape all of us into strong, confident, and courageous women. I learned skills as a teenager beyond just dribbling, passing and shooting a soccer ball. I learned how to communicate. I learned how to problem-solve. I learned how to initiate action. I learned time-management. I learned I was courageous enough to take chances.

The coach of our team was a man affectionately referred to as “Big G.” He was my best friend’s dad, and he ran a tight ship: our uniforms had to be perfect, our bags had to be lined up on the sideline, and our homework had to be completed in a timely manner. If we were late to a practice, we ran laps. If he found out someone had not done well on a test, he spoke to the individual about the importance of academics. Expectations were high.

Big G taught us that it was more important to be strong, confident, courageous, smart and capable than it was to be pretty or popular. He focused on building our character. He wanted each young woman to reach high. There was nothing we couldn’t do. Because of the skillset he instilled in us, we had the courage to tackle anything.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg famously spoke of how the dean of an Ivy League law school said that she, along with another female student, were taking places in the class away from well-qualified men. It was incredibly courageous of her to even apply to law school during a time when women were

not welcome there, let alone enroll. When she graduated, she stated she could not even get a job as an attorney because she was a woman. Despite doors closing in her face, she courageously kept applying.

Today, women make up over 50% of law school classes, and more and more courageous women are holding leadership positions at law schools, even becoming tenured professors and deans. I am forever grateful for the courageous women who came before me and paved the way for women in law.

Fast forward about 15 years after soccer ended: I had graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and had earned a master’s degree at Washington University in St. Louis. While I was taught that I could do anything, I still dug deep for the courage to apply. Applying to law school meant moving out of my New York City apartment where I had lived for 2 years, and returning to Chicago to enroll. I left behind friends, a job, and a city that I had grown to love. I didn’t know how I would fare in law school; I just knew I wanted to take the risk.

The skills I learned as a teenager served me well in academics and continue to help me every day, whether I am in a client meeting or the courtroom. Family law requires me to think and analyze information, manage my time to best serve my clients, and communicate effectively to my clients and to the Court. Every day, in my professional and personal life, I am faced with challenges or new opportunities. Despite the skills I learned as a teenager, it still takes courage to dive right into them; however, I know if I don’t get up the courage to try, I will never have the experience.

If you find yourself in need of assistance in a family law matter, please contact our office at 715-839-7786.

Maggie McLoone is an Associate Attorney at Weld Riley, S.C., where she focuses on probate and estate planning. Maggie is originally from the Chippewa Valley. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, baking, and spending time with her pet guinea pigs.



Banner Image courtesy of Adobe Stock

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Two Locals Muster the Courage to Write Books

Kim Senn and Steve Hoffman *By Katie McKy*

Many people aspire to write a book. They might even write the first paragraph, but they're reminded of how difficult writing can be. While wanna-be authors might be fluent in oral speech, when words are put on paper, one can't skate away from them by saying, "That's not what I said." It takes considerable courage to write a book, but two area authors have done just that.

Kim Senn

Kim LeRae Senn, the author of *Don't Put Your Chubby Baby in a Turtleneck*, is also a life coach. She considers children to be change-makers, and her book begins with a morning she was taking her daughter to school.

"It was a busy morning, and I was frantically trying to get my daughter ready for school," Senn recalled. "We were running late, and my Ellie was taking her time, completely oblivious to the pressure I felt from not getting her to school on time."

Senn felt caught in the chaos of running late, and the weather wasn't helping.

"As I dropped her off, I could hear the school bell ring," she said. "The skies opened up, and a downpour was taking place. I quickly reached back and unbuckled her, telling her, 'I love you, but you gotta go, girl.'"

Her daughter slowly opened the door and headed to the school.

"I can still, to this day, see her tiny legs sticking out of her jean shorts," Senn remembered. "Her backpack was so large that she looked like a turtle with an oversized shell. I sat in the car, watching everyone race past her."

Then her daughter froze.

"I felt anger start to rise. What was she doing?" Senn wondered.

Her daughter stopped in the middle of the sidewalk, gently set her backpack next to her, stretched out her little arms, with palms and head facing the sky.

"She just stood in the rain. It was like she was grateful for every drop that tickled her face," Senn said. "She was present with peace surrounded by chaos. She was embracing the rain, not trying to escape it."

"I sat in my car with my three-year-old son and let the tears fall," she said. "And I thought to

myself, 'That's my girl.'"

That was the moment Senn realized that she had many lessons to learn from her children.

"Ellie taught me that despite what external pressures there are, you have control over finding peace within," Senn said, "and sometimes you just need to look up and be grateful."

In Senn's book, *Don't Put Your Chubby Baby in a Turtleneck*, she shares the struggles and joys of her parenting, all leavened with humor.

"Every parent's journey is different. However, there are similar situations that we all have to encounter as parents," she said. "This book is a way to support parents so that they don't feel so alone and hopeless during those difficult moments."

Writing the book was a challenge.

"My anxiety mostly came from the fear that I would offend someone," Senn said. "We have an obligation to each other to raise ethically responsible and resilient children. I am putting what I believe to be true out there into the world for complete scrutiny."

Senn is brave enough to tap her mistakes.

"In the book, I admit many parenting mistakes that I have done. There is not a perfect parent, just like there is not a perfect child," she said. "Knowing I could possibly help another parent through my mistakes made me continue to completion."

Senn's life coaching is another way that she helps.

"My neurological training has given me the ability to be more intentional with the questions I ask," she explained. "I listen for words that determine if they are acting from their left brain or their right brain. This is important because the most profound solutions come from utilizing both hemispheres of the brain."

You can literally change your brain.

"I am talking about neuroplasticity, or the ability to form new neurological pathways in the brain," Senn said. "This is extremely helpful when someone needs change in their life, as it provides support for your brain to adopt new ways of being."

Senn takes her clients from chaos to structure.

"It literally can feel like a heavy locked door just popped open," she said

Courage is key.

"Courage is always to be applauded, as it forces one to be an advocate for themselves, while gently embracing

their vulnerability to move in a direction that will serve them and create movement forward," Senn said.

Through Senn's guidance, people move from feeling like a victim to feeling in control.

"When people feel out of control, they often forget that ultimately, they still have a choice," she said. "Choice equals control."

Read more in *Don't Put Your Chubby Baby in a Turtleneck* and at facebook.com/kimsenncoaching/.

Steve Hoffman

Another local person who summoned the courage to compose a book is Steve Hoffman, the author of *Clear Vessels*. Hoffman believes that we're never alone, but rather always supported, if we surrender our egos to God's will. Hoffman's background in finance might seem an unlikely source for such profound spirituality.

"I've worked in the financial sector all my adult life," Hoffman said. "I've been told that I'm not your average money guy due to my openness to the ways of the universe. I'm not sure if that's true, as there are some of us in every sector of society."

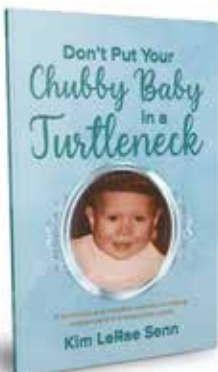
Working in finance created a disconnect in Hoffman.

"One thing about being having a high-profile professional job is people expect you to have a nice house, a nice car, a great marriage, etc. I mean, who wants to do business with a failure?" Hoffman said. "At one point, I felt like a fraud, because I was putting up that image, but deep down it felt like everything was falling apart."

All his life, Hoffman had tried to please his parents, teachers, coaches, and employers.

"I was raised in a small South Dakota town in the Catholic religion," Hoffman explained. "Dad was self-employed, so a hard-work ethic and no-quit attitude were engrained in me. While hard work and sacrificing for the future can be admirable traits, they don't necessarily teach you the value of finding joy in your life." Life, sooner or later, presents challenges that can confound joy.

"I went through a divorce in my mid-thirties," Hoffman



Rays of Grace

By Grace Pulver

Out of the Wedding Bubble~

My new husband, Matt, and I have officially emerged from our wedding bubble after over a year of planning. When it was time to return to work, many people asked me how the wedding went. I was giddy and responded with clichés such as, “It was the best day ever!” While there were a few things that didn’t go as planned, those moments added a bit of character and made the wedding weekend even more personal to who Matt and I are. Honestly, we wouldn’t have changed a thing! Prior to the wedding, I spent hours online searching for templates for menus, cocktail napkins, table numbers, and programs. I ordered all the items to my mom’s house to avoid losing anything during our trip from Omaha to Eau Claire. The problem was that I never had my mom open these items; I didn’t see them until three days before the wedding. I was SHOCKED when I opened my programs. They were beautiful, but they were also the size of my palm! My mom and I broke out into hysterical laughter. As always, Mom to the rescue! She called her friends at FedEx and had them create a completely new template—one that our

guests would actually be able to read. They printed it by the next morning, all was well in wedding world. On wedding morning, my mom and I arrived at the venue around 8 a.m. Excitement filled the air as we watched the décor, flowers, and linens transform the space. My bridesmaids trickled in throughout the morning to start hair and makeup. While I was getting pampered, my mom noticed that we had a slight miscommunication with the rental company. Mom thought they would be setting everything up, but soon realized that wasn’t included in the package we had chosen—oops! Once again, Mom to the rescue. Unbeknownst to me, she gathered a few of my bridesmaids and aunts to help her get to work. An hour later, I walked into the main room to see how the décor had turned out. To my surprise, I saw my mom and best friends running around, climbing ladders, and double-checking name cards—all while wearing their beautiful dresses and looking fabulous! They told me they were handling things and that I should go back to the room and relax. In that moment, I knew I had chosen the right women to stand next to me while I married my best friend just a few



hours later. After the ceremony and dinner, Matt and I wanted to say a few words to thank our families, friends, and vendors. A few days prior, we had gone to breakfast and written a speech together. However, when it was our turn to shine that night, we realized we didn’t have the speech—classic! Instead, we spoke from our hearts. While it wasn’t as polished as we had practiced, it felt more personal. One of our close friends gave us great advice before the wedding. It sounds so simple, but he reminded us to keep the focus on each other throughout the weekend. Another friend reminded us to have fun, even when things don’t go as planned. We are so thankful for our friends and family who supported us as a couple and helped us celebrate our relationship as we embarked on this new chapter as husband and wife.

Image Submitted

said. “This, of course, added financial stress and really pulled the rug out on the image I was trying to portray to the outside world. In hindsight, I believe a lack of self-love was part of the cause of the divorce - how could she love me when I didn’t love myself?”

Hoffman now knows that self-worth and self-love come from within . . . and from God. There was a specific moment that Hoffman learned the latter.

“I was on a hike in a county park outside of Eau Claire, and a voice in my head kept repeating, ‘Look at the sign,’” Hoffman said.

Hoffman could not glean much meaning out of the various park signs.

“Finally, I reached an observation tower near the end of my hike,” he said.

“The voice seemed to yell

this time, ‘Look at the sign!’ I looked down and there was a plaque that had the last name of someone: ‘Hoffman-Godlove.’ I read that as God loves Hoffman. My faith exploded, and I’ve never looked back.”

Hoffman understands that there are always skeptics.

“I don’t care if anyone else believes or not. I know we are being guided, and I know we are loved,” he said. “So, drop the ego and follow God’s path. His way is a lot more fun than the way I was trying.”

Hoffman shares what worked for him in *Clear Vessels*.

“The name of my book comes from the concept of emptying ourselves of negative thoughts, beliefs, and ego to make room for the good stuff to flow in,” he said. “As Hafiz wrote, ‘I’m a hole in a flute through which God’s breath flows. Listen to the music!’”

“Have compassion for others,” he said. “We do not know their life plan. Heck, we struggle enough with our own.”

Your love for others must extend to you, too.

“Self-love is the starting point for all good things,” Hoffman said. “It may take time, like polishing a rock, but you don’t have to do it alone. You have a team of spirit guides who want nothing more than for you to let them assist.”

Your healing journey is likely to have potholes.

“I still have down periods and struggles, but there is permanent, underlying serenity and knowing that everything will be alright,” Hoffman said. “There are miracles all around us if we just know where to focus. Happiness is a decision. Are you going to focus on the good or focus on what’s not working out for us?”

“The progression is not linear,” Hoffman warned. “One day we are making cool manifestations, and the next day our heart is hurting. Hopefully my book will provide people with some tools. Some days, life is just tough, but it is always good, and God is always great -- that I am sure of. So, to all those people who are wondering if life is worth living, don’t give up before the magic begins.”



Foodie Forum

Graphic courtesy of Adobe Stock



Happy Fall, people of the Northwoods. As the temperatures fall as fast as the leaves, it's a great time to celebrate the harvest as we prepare for testing season (winter is coming). I would like to raise up two courageous women in my life who I am proud to call daughters. They took two different paths to reach the places they are in now. They both help souls with healthcare concerns and promote strong minds. I am over the moon they both enjoy cooking and entertaining, as did both of their

grandmothers.

Love you ladies!

Bon Apetit, Lanette

Lanette Hesse lives with her husband and three children in the Eau Claire area. When she is not computer consulting, volunteering, or enjoying outdoor activities, she loves to be in the kitchen cooking for her family and friends.



Photo Credit:
Mary Moua

PUMPKIN GNOCCHI WITH SAGE SAUCE

PUMPKIN GNOCCHI INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium diced potato
- 1/2 cup pumpkin purée
- 1-2.5 cups flour
- 1/4 cup ricotta
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup Parmesan

CREAMY SAGE SAUCE INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/4 white cooking wine
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Splash of milk
- 2 tbsp fresh sage
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- Salt & pepper
- 1/2 tsp mustard powder

DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by peeling your potato and cutting it into smaller pieces. Place in boiling salted water, and cook until fork tender. Remove and set aside to cool slightly.

2. Once potatoes have cooled, rice the potatoes onto a flat, clean surface. Spread the pumpkin purée, and 1 cup of flour on top of the riced potatoes.

3. Make a well in the center and drop the egg, ricotta, and Parmesan into the center. Whisk with a fork until center is combined, then begin combining the ingredients with your hands.

4. Add 1/4 cup of flour at a time until the dough is no longer sticky. The dough should be soft and slightly springy. Everyone's dough will be slightly different, so it is up to you to determine how much flour is needed, but you should end up using around 2-2.5 cups.

5. Cut dough into 8 pieces. Roll out each piece into long snakes; they should be roughly as thick as your thumb. Then cut the long rolls into individual squares. Flour the gnocchi to prevent from sticking.

6. Next, use a fork to roll down each gnocchi to make cute little lines (you don't have to do this, but it's fun).

7. While the gnocchi is resting, begin your sauce by melting 2 tbsp of butter in a pan on low heat. Once melted, add the garlic and cook for another couple minutes.

8. Once the garlic is fragrant, add the white cooking wine. Once the alcohol is evaporated (it should evaporate after a couple minutes) add the heavy cream and fresh sage on low heat.

9. Here you can add the gnocchi to cook in the sauce for 4-5 minutes. Or you can boil them beforehand, the gnocchi will float to the top when done. 10. Take the pan off the heat once the sauce is thickened and gnocchi are cooked. At this point add the parm, salt & pepper, mustard powder, and any other seasonings you'd like. Serve and Artisan Bread.



ARTISAN BREAD

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups of bread flour
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons all purpose flour

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix together in a large mixing bowl: bread flour, instant yeast and sea salt (NOT table salt).

2. Heat 1 3/4 cups of water until very warm, but not hot. Pour

water in dry mixture and mix with a spatula until sticky (too sticky to knead but not like cake batter - add more warm water if needed).

3. Cover with plastic wrap and put in a very warm place for 2-3 hours, until it doubles in size and it jiggles when you shake it.

4. Put Dutch oven in at 450 degrees.

5. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon flour onto clean surface.

6. Use spatula to get dough onto surface; sprinkle 1/2 table-spoon flour on top of dough.

7. Use floured hands or spatula to fold over edges (just use the side of spatula to pull dough over towards the center) Example in Bread Photo above.



8. Flip over dough onto parchment paper with folded side on bottom.

9. Take out Dutch oven and put bread in, sitting on parchment paper.

10. Bake for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake for another 10 minutes to brown the top.

*Bon
Apetit!*

BOOKMARK

Book Review by
Maureen Therou



THE TENNIS PARTNER

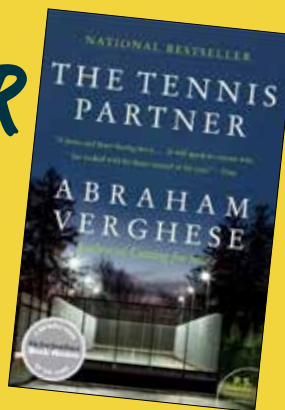
By Abraham Verghese

The Tennis Partner is a memoir by Abraham Verghese that looks into the author's friendship with medical student David Smith. Smith was recovering from a drug addiction. Before going into medicine, Smith was also a pro tennis player. Verghese was a good tennis player, so the two wound up on the court every chance they got, thus leading to a deep friendship.

As their relationship progresses, they share many heartfelt conversations regarding Verghese's failing marriage

and Smith's battle with addiction. It is a tale of loyalty, loss and the healing powers of tennis.

I found this book to be a very compelling story that brings out the ugliness of addiction and the agony of divorce. It will leave you with much to reflect on long after turning the last page. If, however, you are looking for a lighthearted read, this may not be the book for you.



About the Author:

Abraham Verghese was born of Indian parents in 1955. He grew up near Addis Ababa, where he began his medical training. He is currently a physician and professor of medicine at Stanford University and lives in Palo Alto, California.

Other books by Verghese include *Cutting for Stone*, *My Own Country* and *The Covenant of Water*.

Graphic courtesy of Adobe Stock. Book cover image courtesy of Google Images



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