



Finding My Voice

Diane Rehm

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In **Finding My Voice**, the nationally acclaimed public radio host Diane Rehm tells the story of her remarkable life -- a story in three acts. First, her childhood: She was raised in a traditional Christian Arab household -- her parents were immigrants from the Near East who had a grocery store in Washington, D.C. It was a household dominated by rigor and fear, and Rehm's account of her mother's emotional and physical abuse is chilling. Her young girl's intelligence and energy helped her survive, though the cost to her self-esteem was substantial. After a brief early marriage and divorce, she embarked on a second marriage, to John Rehm -- a marriage rockier than many but one that has endured and flourished, and in which they have happily raised their two children.

Then, in her thirties, as she found her life as a housewife/mother starting to push her into depression, Rehm began by a stroke of good fortune to volunteer at WAMU-FM, then a small public radio station in Washington, and found that she loved radio and was good at it. She had found her métier. Six years later she had her own show, hosting politicians, artists, writers, musicians, and scientists, including Hillary Clinton, Newt Gingrich, Carl Sagan, Francis Crick, Salman Rushdie, and Norman Mailer, among thousands of others. Twenty years after she began, her talk show is distributed nationally by National Public Radio (NPR) and reaches more than 700,000 listeners each week. Rehm's knowledge of her medium is extensive. Her account of her career is important for what it tells us about the growth of talk radio and about her ability to use that medium to create a straightforward, honest dialogue with her guests and callers throughout the nation.

Finally, **Finding My Voice** recounts Rehm's recent frightening battle with a rare neurological disorder, spasmodic dysphonia (SD), a condition that "creates a strangled hoarseness [and] fills [her] voice with tremors." A radio broadcaster's nightmare, the loss of her voice took her off the air for an extended period of time and into a frantic -- and successful -- search for treatment. As she has with other trials in her life, Rehm has faced this ongoing struggle with fortitude, insight, and pluck. This is a fascinating story by a courageous and resourceful American woman.

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