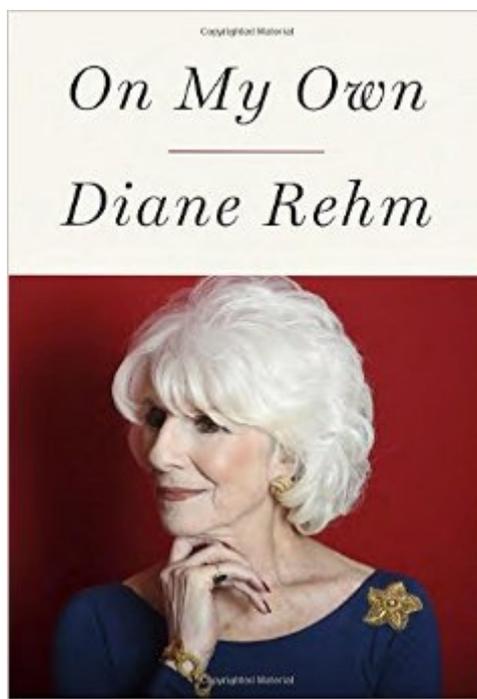


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# On My Own



## Synopsis

In a deeply personal and moving book, the beloved NPR radio host speaks out about the long drawn-out death (from Parkinson's) of her husband of fifty-four years, and of her struggle to reconstruct her life without him. With John gone, Diane was indeed "on her own," coping with the inevitable practical issues and, more important, with the profoundly emotional ones. What to do, how to react, reaching out again into the world "struggling to create a new reality for herself while clinging to memories of the past. Her focus is on her own roller-coaster experiences, but she has also solicited the moving stories of such recently widowed friends as Roger Mudd and Susan Stamberg, which work to expose the reader to a remarkable range of reactions to the death of a spouse. John's unnecessarily extended death "he begged to be helped to die" culminated in his taking matters into his own hands, simply refusing to take water, food, and medication. His heroic actions spurred Diane into becoming a kind of poster person for the "right to die" movement that is all too slowly taking shape in our country. With the brave determination that has characterized her whole life, she is finding a meaningful new way to contribute to the world. Her book "as practical as it is inspiring" will be a help and a comfort to the recently bereaved, and a beacon of hope about the possibilities that remain to us as we deal with our own approaching mortality.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Diane Rehm tells us "I don't believe in closure, some part of me will grieve forever." In the first year of grief, after her husband, John, died, Diane Rehm shares with us her personal loss. A lifetime of

memories, the good and the bad, the times of her life. Down the path of grief, loss and finding oneself alone and moving on. Diane and John Rehm were married for 54 years, they had two children, a mostly loving marriage. He was a lawyer for the State Department, and Diane is the host of the NPR, 'Diane Rehm Show'. How often I have listened to this NPR program, with such brilliant discussions on every topic imaginable. I have learned a lot listening to this program, and I have learned from Diane Rehm as she tells us her story of her marriage and her husband's death. John Rehm had Parkinson's Disease, and at a point in the disease he could not care for himself and entered a facility for care. His disease progressed, and there came a time when he was unable to complete any personal task for himself and he had had enough and wanted to die. They lived in Washington, DC, and their doctor could not assist John with his death. What John could and would do was to stop eating, drinking and stopped all his medications. He was not in pain and was kept comfortable, but it took 10 days for him to die. Since that time Diane has become a strong advocate for 'The right to die debate.' In the first year we hear how Diane coped everyday. Several friends who were widowed and widowers give their input into how they have lived their lives after the death of their spouse. The holidays, the anniversaries, the parties, the social events that one must attend alone. The grieving that does not end, missing John becomes evident as each day passes.

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