

C'mon, Let's Play!

Living, playing and moving forward

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CHAPTER 1

Me and My Numb Spots

One pill makes you larger, and one pill makes you small;
and the ones that mother gives you don't do anything at all.

—Grace Slick

I have numb spots in my brain. I'm always surprised when they take an active role in my life, being numb spots and all. Sometimes when something very dramatic happens, I don't feel things—mentally, physically, or emotionally. Of course, at other times you might find me weeping while watching puppies or a brilliant sunset.

Over the years, I've done a lot of research, learning and observing, and have integrated the best of it into this book to serve as an entry point for those looking for a way to move forward. I love knowing that my résumé, the work I do, my education, my financial circumstances, and my previous experiences do not define me. Nor do the roles I play in this world or any of those questionable choices I've made over the years (although many of those choices, as it turns out, make darn good stories!).

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My questionable choices serve as great examples of how a person can transcend his or her circumstances and ignite his or her own power to live a life filled with wonder, beauty, and passion. For me, it's all about learning and moving forward—just moving forward in love and joy. When I discovered my purpose, I was so grateful that I could live the life that I wanted to live but felt disconnected from the possibility of it happening. And then I discovered my power, and quite honestly, it turns out we do have superpowers!

Hello, I'm Dee Suberla. I help people figure out what they really want in their lives, and then I help them get out of their own way so it can happen!

I believe we are all aspects of the same thing, lovely facets of a single jewel, separate waves on the ocean, clusters of particles in the same universal soup. I believe that because inside the real me and the real you—at our very cores—are those tiny specks that God blessed us with; some call them souls or spirits. Everything in the universe is connected—yes, including my numb spots.

This took me a while to learn or, more truthfully, to believe. Now I know that I'm here to engage life through the passions that drive me. Part of all this, in my case, is that I have numb spots due to the fact that I need them; they help me in my work, and I believe I access them during times when objectivity is required. Turns out they're quite useful.

So how does one go about developing numb spots? I think there must be a million ways. I believe that my original numb spots were there when I was born. I can remember occasionally spacing out at a very young age. The earliest memory of this was the time I forgot to put my hand down after a vote was over. Some of the parents in our neighborhood were creating a new club for girls my age. They asked

for suggestions, and I suggested the name Us Guys. The lady in charge suggested we change it to Us Gals. By a show of hands, we voted and agreed. The name Us Gals won hands down—well, one hand was still up. I was talking to my girlfriend well after the vote was over, with that darn hand stuck up in the air like some sort of spaced-out flagpole.

“Put your hand down,” my friend Toni whispered. For a second there, I looked up at it completely confused. *What the heck?* As I slid my hand down to my lap, I wondered how someone could forget something like that and become extremely concerned. I immediately imagined that all those nightmares about forgetting to get dressed before school could really come true.

The numb spots, which are actually ischemic scar tissue, are located around the base of my brain and my amygdala. The doctor suggested that as a cave woman, I would have had a short life because the scar tissue would have messed with my “fight, flight, or freeze” responses—key instincts that would have signaled the presence of a gigantic dinosaur and triggered flight.

I started smoking cigarettes in eighth grade, about a pack a week. As time went on, I discovered the joy of altered states. By sophomore year in high school, I discovered the magical properties of marijuana, white cross, and psilocybin. After graduation, I fell in love with prescription barbiturates and diet pills, and for a while, I continued my experimentation. I occasionally became one gigantic numb spot. I think I may have seen a dinosaur or two and tried to carry on a conversation—literally incapable of running at some points.

My guess is that the numb spots I was born with must have been filled with lost memories of the sense my parents knocked into me. And realistically, I probably created a few more with “experimentation.” I

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am grateful to be here to tell this story. Many of my classmates didn't make it. Ah, the seventies. I am truly a survivor!

I was the baby of the family. Mom and Dad had five children. They had the first three, and when the youngest was around twelve, my mother prepared to go to work as a Welcome Wagon lady. She had lovely black-and-white photos taken that I found decades later. She never got to experience the Welcome Wagon lady job because she got pregnant. My sister Suzie was born, and my parents immediately decided to have another baby so Suzie had a playmate. Yep, that's right. That was me; I was born to play. In retrospect, I might have pushed the envelope a bit on that one.

My amazing parents never had a chance with me, partially because they were the same age as my friends' grandparents. There was a brief period of time when they thought that I might be losing my mind and considered sending me away, but instead we went to a craft store, and they bought me a tiger-striped rug craft project. They even let me pick out different colors—my favorites, red and black. But what was really going on was that I had discovered a few things about becoming a hippie at thirteen, and my parents never imagined that I was turning into an addict. They thought that my ability to sit and stare at a wall for so long was an indication of extreme boredom hovering on madness. I was just stoned.

I usually refused to take aspirin or any over-the-counter pill that Mom offered when I wasn't feeling well, primarily because it seemed pointless; there was absolutely no recreational value. Mom was certain that I just didn't like to take pills of any kind, unlike so many of those wild kids she heard about on the nightly news.

My parents let us taste the liquor they kept in the liquor cabinet and told us if we ever wanted to drink that we should do it at home. It all

tasted terrible to me, and as a result, Mom called me her little teetotaler. I was quite confident they would never figure out that I was a drug-crazed teen with a fake ID going to bars in a neighboring state—where I discovered the amazing elixir Lambrusco!

My sister and I were blessed with curly hair, but we thought it was some sort of cruel and unusual punishment. So we did the sensible thing and used Mom's iron and ironing board to straighten out each other's unruly locks. Then one day Mom showed me a picture of a girl in a magazine who had the same kind of hair as mine. But this girl had just split her hair down the middle and let it go wild. The magazine called it a *hairstyle!* It was wild, I loved it, and the text below the picture suggested that all the hippies were doing it! Then my amazing mother said these inspiring words to her very naughty thirteen-year-old baby girl: "Don't ever let me catch you doing this with your hair!"

I remember the first time I set my hair free and went out in public. I carefully selected an outfit to wear to the carnival. I chose my torn red, white, and blue-striped jeans, a navy-blue tank top, and my stars-and-stripes gym shoes. I finished the outfit off with a beautiful white fringed shawl that Mom had made for me. It was supposed to be dressy. It was shimmery, but I claimed it for this outfit. It had fringe, for crying out loud, and that made it perfect for this budding hippie! My friend and I wandered around the carnival doing our best to look cool, and then she gave me the most amazing compliment. "Dee, you really do look like a hippie."

I'd made it! I may have worn that exact outfit for a month, and yes, it was washed regularly. Mom did have some very firm boundaries.

So now I was a hippie, and I guess I took it to the extreme, but come on—I had the hair! And yes, this is the part of the journey that may have contributed to the expansion of my numb spots.