

Author blurbs

Nothing could prepare Karen DeBonis for the moment her eleven-year-old son, Matthew, was diagnosed with a brain tumor. *Growth: A Mother, Her Son, and the Brain Tumor They Survived* is a meditation on how we endure and heal throughout the struggles we encounter. Heartbreakingly painful and movingly inspiring, this memoir goes straight for your heart.

—Judy Goldman, author of *Child: A Memoir*, a 2022 Katie Couric Media Must-Read New Book

In this engaging debut, Karen DeBonis describes the challenges of motherhood while navigating a frustrating and mysterious medical situation for her son. This is the perfect book for any mother who has searched for answers for a child or a greater understanding of herself.

--Julie Vick, author of *Babies Don't Make Small Talk (So Why Should I?): The Introvert's Guide to Surviving Parenthood*

With honesty and awareness, DeBonis shares a journey not many of us can fathom. Beautiful storytelling pulled me into the author's and her son's journeys and held me captive. I'm a better person for having read this book.

—Ronni Robinson, author of *Out of the Pantry: A Disordered Eating Journey*.

DeBonis has written a raw, honest account of her son's medical condition both before and after his surgery and of her own fierce struggle to get him the help he needs from professionals who often refuse to take her fears seriously.

—Judy Barron, author of *There's a Boy in Here: Emerging from the Bonds of Autism*.

This book will resonate with anyone who has navigated--or is navigating--raising children with a long-term health condition, or who wants to be able to advocate effectively for themselves or their family. DeBonis illustrates again and again how listening to that quiet, inner voice we all have and actually *trusting* it, helps us summon the power to speak up and speak out when it matters.

--Helen Snape, Award-winning Healthy Relationships Coach

In language that ranges from pragmatic to poetic, suspenseful to insightful, Karen DeBonis invites you into her life as she evolves from a struggling, uncertain mother to a woman still facing trials but doing so with a new and stronger voice. This book holds universal truths for anyone who has been held back by the need to please others more than themselves.

—Judith Hannan, author of *Motherhood Exaggerated*.

Karen DeBonis's personal evolution is the compelling spine of a memoir that also walks a rapt reader through her son's convoluted diagnostic journey. *Growth* is a vulnerable and relatable glimpse into the heart of a mother who loses sight of the risks to herself when she is advocating for the child that she knows best.

—Patti M. Hall, author of *Loving Large: A Mother's Rare Disease Memoir*.

This brilliantly written book tells the struggle of a mother searching for answers while she watches her son's health deteriorate. The effort to overcome being a "people pleaser" to questioning professionals takes Karen DeBonis on a journey of growth. This is an excellent book for families who face numerous challenges--whether medical or educational--on the fight we all face to provide the best opportunities for our children.

—Lois Letchford, author of *Reversed: A Memoir*.

In her universe, DeBonis's peace-loving nature urges her to please everyone. In her reality, her maternal love will fully manifest only when she honors her own integrity. DeBonis's struggle and triumph illuminate the universal human effort to embrace one's true self. She writes with honesty and verve, her vulnerability and candor balanced by intelligence and wit. *Growth* is an exquisite offer. The reader emerges transformed.

—Allison Hong Merrill, author of *Ninety-Nine Fire Hoops*

The name says it all. This is a book about growth in every direction and for everyone. This is a passionate, fast-moving and page-turning story about a mom who goes from the ultimate nice girl to a fierce fighter for her child. *Growth*: It's also a mystery story and a race against time—and the medical services system. This is a book for all of us for parents, educators, and child advocates. And for every woman who wants to be nice, until nice is just too dangerous.

--Diane Cameron, author of *Never Leave Your Dead: A History of Military Trauma*, and *Out of the Woods: A Woman's Journey to Long-term Recovery*

Karen DeBonis's book instantly engaged me, as I identified with her journey. Her skillful writing proves itself with her clear-cut view into how her past affects her present. This book takes you on an authentic, heartfelt ride and had me smiling at the end.

--Ivy Tobin, author, actor, *The Society for Recovering Doormats*.