

In late 2021, Lake Ridge Academy alumna Mary Delia Allen '91, published her very first book, *Enjoy Your Solo: How To Be Great at Being Single*. This self-help guide is a testament to how, contrary to popular opinion, being single does not equate to being sad.

Writing a book has been a lifelong dream for Mary Delia, which ultimately came to fruition in March of 2020, when she checked into a hotel and dedicated an entire weekend to nonstop writing. Of the writing process, Allen states, "It was a hard process, but completely worth it in the end. To write something like this, you have to be ready to share very personal things with the world."

To help her gain the confidence to publish, Mary Delia selected three close friends, including one former Lake Ridge Academy classmate, to offer their feedback on her work. "I knew that if my friends liked the book, then I would not care what anyone else had to say," said Mary Delia.

Prior to becoming an author, Mary Delia spent twenty years as a luxury event logistics professional. In this role, she has had the opportunity to work at fifteen Super Bowls, the Olympics, MLB All-Star Games, MLS Finals, NCAA Final Four Games, political conventions, and countless corporate meetings. Each of these experiences helped shape her opinion of single life, but one position in particular that she held for ten years showed her the meaning of "single and happy".

As Lead Travel Director for Singles Travel International, the #1 travel company dedicated to creating life-changing experiences and unique opportunities to "meet the world" for singles, Mary Delia was able to spend roughly forty to fifty days a year at sea traveling with and entertaining singles. Through this role, Mary Delia was able to experience the joys of single life and began to learn from herself how best to build a life perfectly suited for her. Her time with Singles Travel International paved the way for her book, as it gave her a new perspective on single life that she could not wait to share with others.

During our discussion, Mary Delia shared that nearly 48% of US adults are single and nearly 30% of US households consist of a single person living alone. She also adds

that Pew Research predicts that one in every four adults between the ages of twenty-six and forty-one will never marry. With that in mind, she notes that for every person, you are 50% of your next relationship, but you are 100% of your relationship with yourself for the rest of your life.

With her book, Mary Delia hopes to shed light on the positive aspects of being single. She shares how so much of modern day marketing and advice is targeted towards singles, in terms of finding, attracting, marrying, and recovering from intimate relationships. While these topics are valid, Mary Delia poses the question, what about building a life you can love alone?

Her book is just a start to answering this question. “The solo is a DIY project that is ‘one size fits one’ that compels each of us to build a life for ourselves.” Of her book she says, “Enjoy Your Solo seeks to help singles spend their limited resources on creating a full solo life in the times between partner-driven relationships.”

Since publishing her book, Mary Delia shared how proud she was to receive a review of her book on Amazon from her now retired former LRA English teacher, Teresa Jenkins. Mary Delia is especially grateful for the support of the Lake Ridge Academy community, and looks forward to sharing her future endeavors with us. Mary Delia is active as a wellness and women’s empowerment keynote speaker on all things single life and alone time.

To buy Mary Delia’s book, Enjoy Your Solo: How To Be Great at Being Single, visit the following Amazon link: <https://amzn.to/3vVeA0R>.