



# **An Arrow Through the Heart: One Woman's Story of Life, Love, and Surviving a Near-Fatal Heart Attack**

*Deborah Daw Heffernan*

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**In the words of Mehmet Oz, MD: “*An Arrow Through the Heart* is an epiphany for women who mistakenly believe that they are immune from the ravages of heart disease. Using her heart as a magnifying glass, Deborah Daw Heffernan provides readers with a window into their souls.”**

This groundbreaking memoir was first mentioned on Oprah Winfrey’s life-saving 2002 show announcing cardiovascular disease as a leading cause of death among *young* women. That tragic fact is still true. With both depth and humor, Deborah Daw Heffernan recounts her first year of recovery from the massive heart attack that ambushed her in a gentle yoga class—during the prime of her life and despite her impeccable health history.

Ranging from high-stakes action in the OR at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston to quietly unfolding seasons on a lake in Maine, *An Arrow Through the Heart* is a moving and informative story of what it takes to find one’s own path to true healing. Ultimately, Heffernan combines allopathic and complementary medicine to create a sensible recovery strategy for our times. She touchingly describes her husband’s devotion and the toll that her cardiovascular disease takes on him, as well as how he, too, grew from the experience. Weaving their story with the lives of family and friends, Heffernan demonstrates how illness can be transformative for all involved.

Not only an empowering companion for cardiac patients, this medical classic is a guide to recovery from catastrophic change of any kind. Above all, it is a powerful testament to the unexpected joy that can come from leading a life of acknowledged impermanence. Updates include cardiovascular data for today’s reader, links to the author’s website and other resources, a new section on SCAD (spontaneous coronary artery dissection), and— spoiler alert—a heart transplant in 2006. All author’s proceeds are donated to cardiac causes.

Deborah Daw Heffernan is a graduate of Georgetown and Harvard Universities. She has worked as a teacher in Switzerland, an associate dean at Boston University, and a freelance writer. For fourteen years she was vice president of a leading Boston-based corporate training/consulting firm—until a near-fatal heart attack changed her life forever. She lives with her husband, Jack, on a small lake in Maine.

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