

Q & A

WITH PAT HANKIN



1. Tell us a bit about your new book, *The Field Guide for Single Parents*.

The book is a resource that offers single parents the vital information and advice they need to thrive. It covers a range of important topics, such as legal and medical issues, childcare, relationships, and money.

2. There are plenty of single parent books available. What makes yours different?

There are actually not as many as we might think. We certainly have memoirs by celebrities who are also single parents, and we have books that have a religious bent, or that are focused on niche topics. I wanted to offer a book that not only touches on universal themes but that explores each one in enough detail so that readers can take action. It fills a gaping hole in the parenting book pantheon.

3. Speaking of detail, your book includes data that amplifies its credibility.

The book includes 133 citations as well as contributions by a clinical therapist. I wanted to go beyond the fluff that is so common in the parenting space. Single parents need no-nonsense and sound advice, and that is what this book provides.

4. Tell us a bit about the clinical therapist who contributed to this book.

Jessica Ames has a master's degree in clinical social work from Smith College, and she has worked at leading institutions including the Boston Children's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. She has a specialty in parent engagement.

5. Tell us about your professional background.

I have enjoyed a 40-year career in the financial industry, first as a banker, then as a consultant for customer engagement. In managing more than 2,000 people over the years in crucial, time-pressured projects, I have honed my skills to deliver innovative solutions to the biggest business challenges.

6. Thinking back to the 470,000-member online single parents' community you contributed to, what were two or three things you found them to be the least uninformed about?

The two most significant ones are how crucial a team is and how to put it together, and then how to put in place the life you want to live. My book addresses both of these themes.

7. What is the key piece of advice you want parents to gain from your book?

Fun and joy are still very much a part of the single parent life. You can put together entertainment, vacations, and community in any situation. It just might look different than the Joneses. The book helps with that.

8. How has single parents' societal standing changed since you yourself became one?

When I became a single parent, there was much stronger acceptance and willingness to work around issues like work hours. The Pandemic reinforced that, but now we are back to the "good old days" with lots of criticism and media reinforcement of stereotypes.

9. What are you working on next?

I am currently working on two more guides for single parents; one on travel and another on health. Single parents have unique needs in both these areas so we need to give them their own playbook.

10. Where can people learn more about you and your work?

My website, pathankin.com offers additional resources, such as worksheets, that complement the information in *The Field Guide for Single Parents*. It also provides books and articles for further reading, if interested.