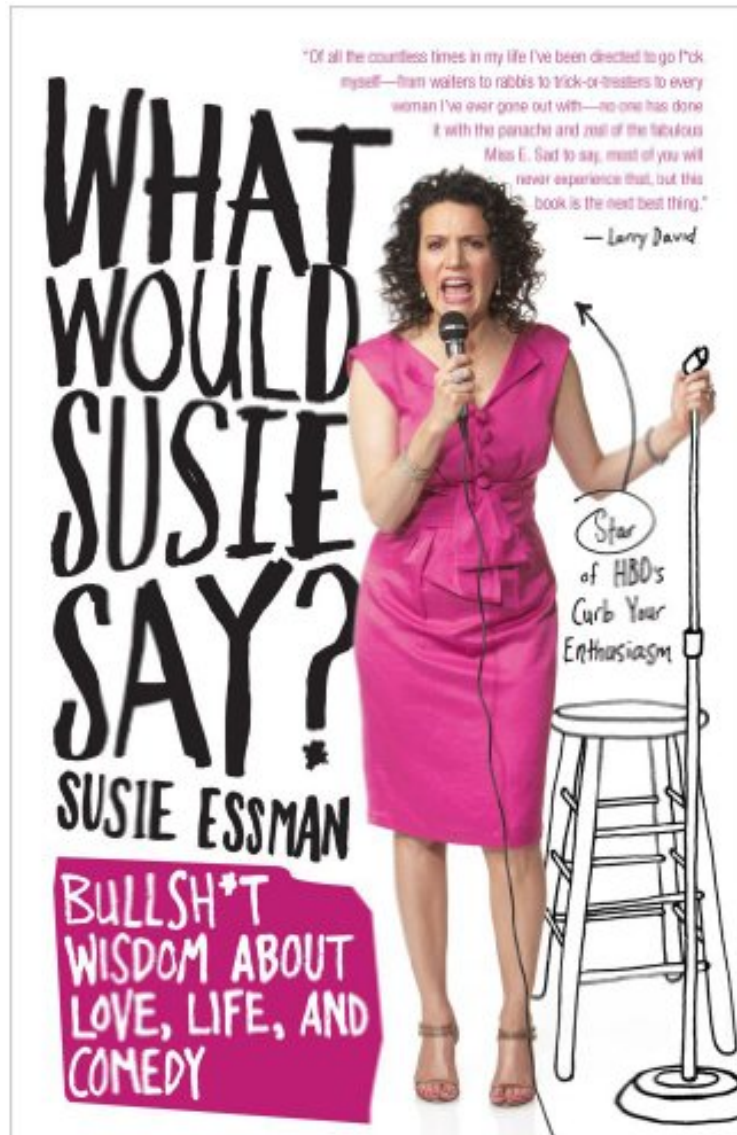


# What Would Susie Say?: Bullsh\*t Wisdom About Love, Life, and Comedy

Susie Essman

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**Susie Essman : What Would Susie Say?: Bullsh\*t Wisdom About Love, Life, and Comedy** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Would Susie Say?: Bullsh\*t Wisdom About Love, Life, and Comedy:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Sharp Susie Shines!By Bettyboy72First of all I recommend the

audio book, so you get the full Susie effect! I think Susie has written a very sweet, funny, and life affirming book. I love her authentic voice. I also disagree that this book is a "women's book." I'm a gay man and I believe that we can all learn something from listening to each other's stories, so to discount this book because Susie is coming from a female perspective is crazy! Susie embraces all people and is loving towards men, women, teens, kids, gays, straights, and especially animals. Susie loves her dogs! Susie's writing voice is conversational and she really does share her practical and down to earth opinions in a loving and hysterical book. It is like a close friend, girlfriend, sister or mother telling it like it is. I adore her unconventional wisdom and how she will be in the middle of funny thought and all of a sudden drop an f-bomb or a expletive. The funny thing is though, that Susie never comes across as inappropriate or dirty. She has the gift of gab and is so likable. I think she should have her own show. I highly recommend this book, especially the audio. I will listen to Susie's wisdom any day. She is a treasure and I look forward to more from Susie. 20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Riotously funny, interesting and insightful. By Book Lover My only problem with this book was that I had to stop reading it in public because my uncontrollable laughter and subsequent tears made people stare at me. That aside, I had the best time reading this book. I laughed and laughed and laughed. Prior to reading the book, I was unfamiliar with Susie Essman other than her portrayal of Susie Greene on Curb Your Enthusiasm. While Essman does write about her experiences on Curb Your Enthusiasm, and her development of the Susie Greene character, there is so much more info, insight and humor in this book. Not surprisingly, Susie Essman is very different from the character she plays on t.v., and it is thus very interesting to read about the woman and the comedian behind the character. Susie Essman is one funny lady, and this is one truly funny and fun book. A true pleasure! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read of the year! By Sky Greene Thought she was amazing as a stand-up comic and actress? She's even that much more amazing as a writer and keen observer of human life! Your interest will be peaked throughout the entirety of the book, as you'll find yourself nodding in agreement with her sagacious analyses as well as finding yourself in hysterics at certain moments. Its a must read for those who've come to know Susie over the years and those who are not as familiar but share an appreciation for outspoken candor about all arenas of life!

IN WHAT WOULD SUSIE SAY?, Susie Essman sheds the crasser layers to reveal how she went from an anxiety-ridden, struggling stand-up comic to being one of the funniest women on television, playing Susie Greene on HBO's Curb Your Enthusiasm. Emerging as one of the most successful performers in her field, Essman goes behind the scenes of a life in comedy with her funny cohorts, including Joy Behar, Rodney Dangerfield, and, of course, Jeff Garlin and Larry David, while also providing sidesplittingly funny wisdom on a range of topics that she's highly unqualified to expound upon, including men, sports, hypochondria, and stepparenthood. WHAT WOULD SUSIE SAY ABOUT... MARRIAGE? "It took me a long time to find the man I was willing to commit myself to. Even the word commit is troublesome. One is committed to a mental institution." MEN WITH DOGS? "As a dog lover, I've researched many different breeds and I've begun to realize that you can tell a lot about a person by what breed of dog they choose to associate with. A bit self-conscious about your cellulite? A guy with a shar-pei is for you. They're hard to find, but cheaper than lipo." THE BEAUTY OF MENOPAUSE? "I guess I just have to accept the fact that I'm going to end up a bald, fat, sweaty, irritable woman with a dry vagina and a full beard who never sleeps and has memory loss so I won't even be able to remember how hot I used to look!" STEPPARENTHOOD? "My mother used to tell me 'you can't buy your kids' love.' Bullshit. You can, and it's exponential. They're like Russian mail-order brides -- the more you spend, the more they love you." WHAT WOULD SUSIE SAY? is Essman's irreverent, refreshingly candid, and hilarious retort to the dubious facts of life that we all face.

"Of all the countless times in my life I've been directed to go fuck myself -- from waiters to rabbis to trick-or-treaters to every woman I've ever gone out with -- no one has done it with the panache and zeal of the fabulous Miss E. Sad to say, most of you will never experience that, but this book is the next best thing." -- LARRY DAVID "I have been on the phone with Susie Essman for twenty-five years. In every conversation there is wit, there is insight, there is vetching. Now she shares all this with the world. I am no longer the lone recipient of her singular sagacity, perception, and luminosity. But I hold no malice. In fact, this stuff is so good, I even hope Rush Limbaugh and Dick Cheney read it." -- JOY BEHAR "Susie Essman always makes me scream with laughter. If she were any wiser, she'd have witnessed the birth of Christ. What Would Susie Say? made me laugh harder than I have in years. After reading it, you'll never be at a loss for words again." -- BETTE MIDLER "If you don't already know that Susie Essman is one of the funniest people on the planet then pick up this wonderful book with her pitch-perfect comic voice on every page. Dorothy Parker with a lot more heart." -- DAVID STEINBERG "Don't get me wrong, I worship Susie Essman. That said, considering she knows absolutely nothing about life, love, or comedy, I'm thrilled that she managed to pull off such a brilliant hoax." -- RICHARD LEWIS About the Author Susie Essman has played the sassy Susie Greene for all seven seasons of the critically acclaimed HBO comedy series Curb Your Enthusiasm. Her hilarious bouts of withering sarcasm and her uninhibited insults have become her character's trademark, and her streetwise vernacular is perfectly suited for her life in Manhattan, where she has been a veteran of the world of stand-up comedy for twenty-five years.

She divides her time between New York City and upstate New York, where she lives with her husband, four stepchildren, and two dogs. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. CHAPTER 6 THE "PAUSE" I'm perimenopausal, and I know that I am because I have the symptoms and I know I have the symptoms because I spend 80 percent of my free time checking out the myriad medical sites online. I spend the other 20 percent looking for lumps. I feel so blessed to live in an age where medical information is available on the internet. Internet info is a hypochondriac's wet dream and a doctor's worst nightmare. I spend a lot of time on these websites checking symptoms for illnesses and conditions I'm certain I have. So far, this month alone, I've had Lyme disease, hysterical blindness, and an enlarged prostate. Whenever someone I know, or someone I know knows someone who has an illness -- minor, major, or terminal -- I immediately assume I have it too and plan accordingly. Much to my delight and chagrin, almost all of the commercials on TV these days are for some kind of pharmaceutical treatment for diseases I've never heard of but am sure I've contracted. One after another, fifteen-, thirty-, and sixty-second spots for pills and ointments that must be taken at your own risk. I know I'm not alone in this. Otherwise there wouldn't be so many goddamn commercials for this stuff. I've even thought of starting a symptoms checkers support group. I'll call it Dead by Tuesday Anonymous. The beauty of the internet is that there are so many choices. There's WebMD, MayoClinic.com., MedicineLine.com, Medicine.net... Plus hundreds of specialty sites, too numerous to mention. Let's say I go on WebMD to check a symptom of a disease that I suspect I have, and they inform me that I'm in good health and have nothing to worry about. Needless to say, that prognosis doesn't sit well with me, so I can simply dismiss it and check out the other sites until I find one with an outcome that pleases me, one, that if not fatal, will certainly be very dramatic. The sheer volume of medical websites gives me hope that somewhere, somehow, I can find a site that lists my symptoms and will reinforce my belief that I have something that I most probably don't have a chance in hell of having. A lot of symptoms are universal. So many diseases have symptoms I can easily have. Fatigue. Who's not fatigued? Lethargy? Isn't she the twin sister of lazy? Or bloating? I'm bloated twenty-nine out of thirty-one days of the month! And you can fake yourself out on some symptoms and convince yourself that you have them even when you don't. Dizziness, for example. Dizzy is my middle name. I can easily convince myself that I felt dizzy because I lifted my head up too quickly the other day. I don't mean to trivialize the pain and suffering of people who are really sick, and it's not that I really want to be sick, but the hypochondria is something that is out of my control. Illness is frightening. If I gain weight I'm convinced it's because I have a tumor growing inside of me that weighs a few pounds. If I lose weight, it's because the tumor is causing a diminished appetite. I can't win. To ease my fears I tell myself that if I'm vigilant about my health, then I'll remain healthy. But there is anecdotal evidence everywhere I turn that proves that this approach doesn't necessarily work. Honestly, I'm not that bad, comparatively speaking. I've got a few friends that are pathological hypochondriacs. They make me seem like the bastion of mental health. Their hypochondria colors every moment of their lives, whereas mine simply informs it. You can see the movement behind their eyes the moment someone sneezes in their presence. By the time the sneezer says, "Excuse me," they've already been on the phone with the Centers for Disease Control, three immediate family members, and the head obituary writer for the New York Times. The gripping fear makes them incapable of really being a friend, because when you tell them about something wrong with you, all they're really thinking about is whether or not it's going to happen to them. They ask you about your symptoms as though they're being empathetic, but their motives are so transparent. We all play these games. You hear that a friend has lung cancer and know that they're a smoker. That's an easy one because the cause and effect are so clear. But then another friend has lung cancer and they're not a smoker. Now we're into different territory. Is there a family history? Were they exposed to asbestos? Secondhand smoke? Do they live near a power plant? Did they ever spend a summer with Erin Brockovich? And when there doesn't appear to be any reason for them to have gotten lung cancer, when it's random and arbitrary, then that is proof positive that I, and my severely hypochondriacal friends, must have cancer too. I grew up in a household that loved disease. Not like, loved. Sound weird? My father was a doctor and made a living off it, and my mother, according to her self-diagnosis, has been dying since 1963. My father always had medical paraphernalia around the house, syringes and tubes of blood in the refrigerator, and promotional items from drug companies in drawers and cabinets. I remember the pad next to the phone for writing down messages was in the shape of a colon. I'm not kidding. Disease was discussed at the dinner table with regularity. Between the soup and salad we usually had botulism, stroke, and retinitis pigmentosa. Someone in the family or extended family always had something. For as long as I could remember, each of my parents would pull me aside, individually, to tell me that the other one was deathly ill and dying and then they'd go for a million tests, which they loved, and then there'd be nothing wrong. It was kind of a wish and a fear all rolled up in one. For example, my mother would pull me aside and say, "I think Daddy has a brain tumor." And then he'd have tests tests tests and there would be nothing wrong. Or my father would say to me, "I think your mother has rickets," and then she'd have tests tests tests and there'd be nothing wrong. It was nutty. Maybe they needed the distraction from the realities of life, I don't know. My father did ultimately get cancer for real and died in 2001, but my mother is still frequently telling me that she's about to die. She's eighty-three, and while she's not in perfect health, she's nowhere near death. She's got lots of aches and pains and trouble with her eyes and ears, but none of her maladies are life threatening. Still, she told me just a few weeks ago that she'll be dead within a few months. "Really? What from?" I asked. "Oh, lots of things."

"Name one." "Well, I've got a heart murmur." "I've never heard of anyone dying of a heart murmur. And besides, you've had it for years." "Well, I could drop dead of an aneurism." "Yeah, well, so could I!" So you see, I come by my own issues honestly. I get my mammograms and sonograms and pap smears and blood workups and even the dreaded colonoscopy on a regular basis, and I have the dermatologist check my moles and everything is just finefinefine and then I read about some flesh-eating supervirus and I'm instantly convinced that I contracted it on my way home from my checkup. How the hell am I supposed to protect myself from that kind of deadly scourge? By eating more broccoli? You have no idea how much broccoli I already eat, and carrots and beets and even kale, and I don't think a trans fat or anything with corn syrup has crossed these lips in a very long time. I wash my hands frequently, not sick OCDishy frequently, although some non-vigilant types may think so, but I can't deny that antibacterial hand lotion and I have become the best of friends. Allow me to offer you a little hint about antibacterial lotions and gels. To me, they're one of the greatest inventions of all time, right alongside fire, the wheel, and ribbed condoms. Now I know there are naysayers out there who claim that they do nothing, and some say they actually foster bacterial growth. Bullshit. I don't believe a word of it, and I don't care to see the evidence. I choose to believe that these products work and that they're effective and protecting me. A placebo effect perhaps, but whatever gets you through the night. There are germs everywhere. Go to the ATM and use that touch screen and the chances are that the guy who used it before you had the flu virus all over his fingers. What are the odds that not one person who touched those buttons before you was a nose-picker? You'd better get that gel out, because a sink with soap and hot water is not part of the operation over there. Hand shaking is also a lightning rod for the spread of germs. People make you out to be crazy or antisocial if you don't want to press the flesh, but I think it's simply self-preservation. Do you know how much crap is spread by hand-to-hand contact? Donald Trump and Howie Mandel do. They don't shake hands with anybody -- in fact their hands are probably in pristine condition, clean enough to perform major surgery. On Deal Or No Deal, not only does Howie not shake the players' hands, he doesn't even touch those freaking briefcases. A number of years ago, when Donald Trump was running for president, a big deal was made over the fact that he wouldn't shake hands. To me, that's the smartest thing he could possibly have done. I'd vote for him on that issue alone. I roasted Donald Trump at a Friars Roast a couple of years after he ran for office and said, "Everybody thinks that Donald doesn't shake hands because he's a germaphobe, but the truth is, he jerks off so much that he considers anything else cheating." Okay, that was a joke at a roast -- and a good one, I might add -- but in reality I admire his convictions about hand shaking. I'm too chicken shit and afraid of offending to make that rule, although I should follow his lead. Sometimes when I do a meet and greet after a show and have to shake literally hundreds of people's hands I feign illness and tell them that I have a cold or getting over the flu so I don't want to shake, as though I'm actually protecting them from my germs. My altruism is never...