# **About Diane Grant**

*As a spirited child I was raised in a blended family. My Mom had three children and my Step-Dad, a widower had three children. I fell in the middle of two brothers who were younger than I and two older brothers with our sister being the oldest of my siblings. Lucky for me there was always someone to have fun with. We were mostly one grade apart in school and shared many of the same friends and memories.*

*My Grandfather and my Uncle Ralph placed a baseball in my hand at age four and I have loved the sport ever since. Playing as the only girl on an all-boys baseball team, gave me plenty of reasons to prove myself for a starting position at a young age. I was a tomboy who knew how to dress like a girl.*

*I was raised in New Rochelle, New York, a suburb of the city, loving the culture and variety of people which contributed to a memorable upbringing with many stories to share. At ten years old, I started selling my homemade, hand-painted notecards. As my artistic skills improved, I painted tee shirts, baby items, and creative murals on children’s’ bedroom walls. I loved children and was a natural, popular and very successful babysitter. I welcomed any job that provided an opportunity to earn more money to support my love for pretty clothes.*

*From a very young age I can remember studying people. I watched from a distance at how they communicated with one another. I was especially interested to see Mothers and Daughters relationships, how they changed as the daughters grew older. I dreamed of having children one day and thought about all of the fun memories I would make with them, how I would encourage them and of course the kinds of adorable clothes I would dress them in.*

*I experienced a number of misfortunes throughout my young life. These misfortunes made significant impressions on me. My birth father abandoned our family when I was three years old. I spent many years wondering what I had done wrong to make him leave us. This made me more determined when I had children of my own that I would always be there for them. It took many years for me to forgive my father. I turned this loss into his loss, not mine. I was fortunate to have a Step-Dad who truly loved me and helped me feel special.*

*I was sexually molested when I was in my preteen years by a close family friend. I carried guilt and shame well into my thirties, and spent many years not respecting or loving myself. After some counseling in my thirties, I was able to forgive and to trust again. Learning to love and respect myself was the key to my healing.*

*I became pregnant at seventeen, during my senior year of high school. After choosing to have my daughter and marry my plans changed quickly. I found myself having to change my focus from going to art school in the fall to instead preparing to be a Mom. I made a promise to myself and to my unborn daughter that I would be the best Mom I could possibly be. Learning to care for my daughter came natural to me. I read many articles about parenting and trusted my gut on many occasions.*

*What I didn’t expect was the way most people looked and acted towards me because I was such a young mother. There were disapproving eyes and negative comments everywhere I went. I found myself not fitting in anywhere, being cut off from the world only added to my already damaged self-worth.*

*Determined to live by the promise I made to myself and my daughter, I evolved into a well-respected, loving, supportive and encouraging Mom. After a few years many Moms started to ask my advice on child rearing. I redeemed myself, learned to respect and love myself. Realizing I too had a right to be happy!*

*I remarried at the age of thirty-three to my best friend and love of my life, Jim. Combining our five children was an undertaking to say the least, yet we were both committed to making our family a success. I knew first-hand about step-families and wanted very much to be a supportive Step-Mom.*

*Raising teenagers became my passion. I worked tirelessly at the relationships I have with all of our children and I take pride knowing I was able to make a positive impact on all of them. We are so blessed that all of our children get along well and have accepted each other as siblings and friends. A wonderful addition was the birth of our youngest daughter, now a teenager herself, a special part of all of us and she continues to strengthen the bonds of our family.*

*Determined to continue to make a difference in young teen lives is what inspired me to write “Brave Smart and Beautiful, Communicating with Teen Daughters”. Not wanting another teen to feel disconnected, lonely or unloved. Amazing accomplishments come from girls who are confident, who love and respect themselves and who have strong, empowering role models to help guide them through the difficulties of teen years. Who better to be that role model, than their Mother?*

*As Mothers we have an awesome power to positively influence our daughters. From the time our daughters are born they are watching us, looking to us for reassurance, guidance and approval. Let’s be the Moms they deserve.*