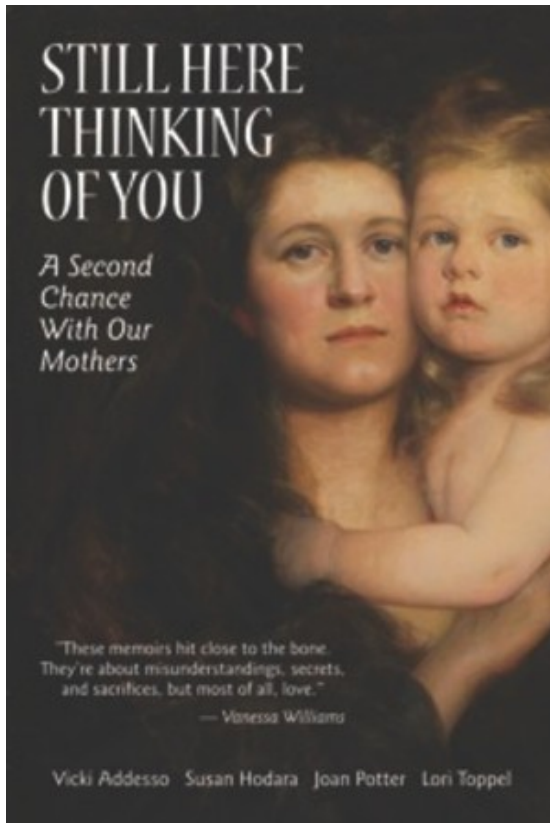


## Mount Kisco Authors Write Book On Mother-Daughter Bonds

by Liz Button Neighbors 9 hours ago Comment



Mount Kisco residents Susan Hodara and Joan Potter joined with two other female writers from Westchester to write "Still Here Thinking of You: A Second Chance With Our Mothers," which presents memories both funny and painful. Photo Credit: *Courtesy of Harrison Edwards PR*

MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. — When Mount Kisco-based authors [Susan Hodara](#) and [Joan Potter](#) formed a writing group with two other women in 2006, one topic kept coming up in their discussions: their mothers.

Hodara and Potter teamed with [Vicki Addesso](#) of Eastchester and Pound Ridge resident [Lori Toppel](#), all accomplished authors, to write "[Still Here Thinking of You: A Second Chance With Our Mothers.](#)" It presents funny, tender and painful memories of their mothers, from both their moms' lives and the writers' lives.

The stories in "Still Here," to be released March 1, seek to inspire women to re-examine their relationships with their mothers – and with their daughters – in a different and more accepting light, according to a statement from their publisher, Big Table Publishing.

The four met in Potter's memoir writing class. When it first convened, Potter brought stories about her mother, along with a 20-year-old cassette tape of her mom talking frankly about growing up in the Adirondacks, the statement said.

In listening to these tapes 12 years after her mother's death, Potter learned about the pain her mom experienced growing up, losing her own mother at a young age, and later, losing her father to suicide,

the statement said.

Potter and Hodaras' memoirs, essays, articles and other writings have been published in magazines, literary journals, anthologies and newspapers, including The New York Times. In 2012, a piece by Hodara was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in Literature.

Hodara, the only writer of the four whose mother is still alive, had spent six years in Potter's memoir class and has taught her own memoir classes since 2003.

There, she frequently wrote about her father, a strong-willed man who berated her and her mother as she was growing up in an observant Jewish home in a middle-class suburb of Boston, according to the Big Table statement.

During the writing group, Hodara began to look at her mother as more than just a passive figure.

"For the first time in my life, I caught a glimpse of who my mother really was," she said in the statement. "Now I recognize this quiet acceptance, this tolerance without judging ... was one of her redeeming strengths."

Hodara, educated at Harvard and Columbia, conducts memoir workshops at the Hudson Valley Writers' Center in Sleepy Hollow and the Pelham Art Center in Pelham.

Potter has taught memoir writing at the Hudson Valley Writers' Center, the Mount Kisco Public Library and the Northern Westchester Center for the Arts.

Potter's most recent book is an updated version of her 2009 book, "African American Firsts: Famous, Little-Known and Unsung Triumphs of Blacks in America."