



Melissa Bernstein

Author and Survivor of Existential Anxiety & Depression; Co-Founder of Melissa & Doug

Melissa Bernstein, along with her husband Doug, is the Co-Founder of the toy company Melissa & Doug, which has created over 5,000 children's products and sold billions of dollars of toys since its inception. Not only that, but Melissa and Doug were married at Temple Israel, and all six of their children have had their Bar Mitzvahs at Temple Israel!

Raised by educators, Melissa and Doug started the business in their parents garage, long-time Westporters and Temple Israel members Bob and Bobbie Bernstein, and

they've been on a mission ever since to provide open-ended, inventive, non-technology playthings for young children.

Throughout Melissa's remarkable career, she kept secret her lifelong battle with depression and anxiety. She reveals her struggles in *LifeLines*, her first book, which she wrote to help others who are also suffering. Melissa's book heralds the launch of *LifeLines.com*, an online ecosystem she and Doug are underwriting to support those seeking support, guidance, and community on their mental health journeys.