

7 Moms Who Dared to Do It Their Way



by Paige Bennett

3 years ago

This week, I've gotten on a serious mama memoir kick. These short memoirs (I read 'em each in an hour or two via Shebooks.net) had me up laughing, commiserating, and crying my eyes out. Here are a few of my favorite tales of bold motherhood—one for each day of the week!

Monday: The mom who...home schooled her kids across 6 continents

The Mother of All Field Trips, by Jeannie Ralston

When her two boys were 9 and 11, this adventure journalist (and her *National Geographic* photographer husband) decided to hell with boring old school. What better way to learn about history, culture, languages than traveling together around the world? (Ugh, I wish MY mom had been this cool.)

Except for the fact that it made me green with envy, I was completely enthralled and entertained by this mega family travel story.

Tuesday: The mom who...braved motherhood after age 40

The End of the World As We Know It, by Marion Winik

“If you think a perimenopausal woman goes right back to sleep when awoken at midnight, you are quite mistaken.” This is a collection of nine brutally honest, wicked funny essays by award-winning author Marion Winik about new motherhood and the trials and tribulations of a blended family. Love!

Wednesday: The mom who...never felt hindered by her disability until she had a baby

On the Whole, by Ona Gritz

“She asks if I want to test for Down syndrome or spina bifida. ‘No,’ I answer quickly. My C.P. clumsiness may embarrass me, but I know life with a disability is worth having.”

Ona Gritz' short memoir about how new motherhood put her face to face with her own physical limitations reads like poetry. This should be required reading for all new moms, those living with a disability, or those who simply need a healthy dose of inspiration to get through hump day.

Thursday: The mom who...doesn't stop fighting for a miracle

Hope for a Sea Change, by Elizabeth Aquino

Elizabeth Aquino has been to hell and back with her baby daughter Sophie's untreatable medical condition but she never gives into the fear and always lives into the hope. This is parenting at its most extreme—a story that reaches its hand into your heart and squeezes tight.

Friday: The mom who...will go to any length to find the perfect egg donor

A Good Egg, by Anonymous

I've read so many infertility stories that frankly, I sometimes think I can't bear to read another. But this essay is just so damn funny—and poignant—that it's become a favorite. If everyone could poke fun at our baby-obsessed society as well as this writer does, the world would be a happier (and less neurotic) place.

Saturday: The mom who...traveled the world searching for the meaning of motherhood

Will You Be My Mother?, by Jennifer Haupt

In this memoir triptych, journalist Jen Haupt leads the reader from the devastating aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and back to her own childhood in the United States, trying to make sense of the vulnerability it takes to be a compassionate mother. These stories really made me reflect on what being a mother means in a globally connected world—a message I won't soon forget.

Sunday: The moms who...shared their stories brilliantly

Every Mother Has a Story, by Jackie Mercurio, Jacinta Hart Kehoe, and Cynthia Leonard

The winners of the Shebooks/*Good Housekeeping* memoir contest offer three slices of life as a mother. My favorite of these was “Pulling Rabbits from a Hat,” Cynthia Leonard's real-life story about growing up in a magic act, with a magician mother who disappeared and reappeared nightly. A sweet read for a lazy Sunday afternoon.

I'll end with a quote about brave parenting from a recent interview with Jeannie Ralston, author of *The Mother of All Field Trips*:

“Don't be afraid to do the thing that other people say is crazy. People thought we were nuts for taking our sons to Mexico to live. They couldn't understand the homeschooling step. Both turned out to be the best moves we've made as a family. I try to remember when I'm getting resistance that sometimes people react strangely because your actions are making them question the decisions they've made.”

All these stories go for \$2.99 a pop at [Shebooks](#), but I [subscribed](#) and got access to their whole library—which was only \$5 bucks for the first month. You can also get a subscription via their “Equal Writes” Kickstarter campaign to start [a fund for women writers](#).

This is an article written by a member of the SheKnows Community. The SheKnows editorial team has not edited, vetted or endorsed the content of this post.