

# The Sink is Full

and I am Not in the

Hall of Fame Yet

REAL,  
RAW ESSAYS  
ON WOMAN-ING,  
MOTHER-ING,  
AND HUMAN  
BE-ING

SARAH BADAT-RICHARDSON

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*The Sink is Full and I am not  
in the Hall of Fame Yet*

Real, Raw Essays on Woman-ing,  
Mother-ing, and Human Be-ing

*by*

SARAH BADAT-RICHARDSON





*To my husband and our daughter who always help with  
the dishes and treat me like a queen. I love you!*



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# *Introduction*



# *Introduction*

Who am I?

I was born and raised on Reunion, a tropical island in the Indian Ocean. A DNA test listed my ancestry as 60% Indian, 15.5% African, 15% Mediterranean, and 4.5% SouthEast Asian. My mother was Catholic. My father was Muslim. I attended a laic French public school during the week, studied at a madrasah (Muslim school) on Saturdays, and accompanied my grandparents to church on Sundays. I grew up speaking French and the local Creole dialect. I graduated from university with a German linguistics degree. I then met an American martial artist, moved to the United States and married him.

I speak six languages (English is my fourth). I have lived in four countries and visited twenty-two others on four continents. I was married one month before turning twenty-two. I have been a wife for twenty-eight years—a happy wife for about twenty-five (#KeepingItReal). Hawaii, our home since 1998, is where I homeschool our teenage daughter while also managing our martial arts organization<sup>1</sup>.

Ever since I learned to write, I've loved writing. I write about being a woman. I write about being a wife. I write about being a mother. I write about being. I write about the good, about the bad, and, sometimes, even about the ugly. While I write about thoughts, feelings, and life in a way that is unique to me, what I write about is universal. I'm human. I think thoughts. I feel feelings. I live life.

I hope the enclosed essays will inspire and encourage you. Thank you for spending some of your precious time with me.

1 [www.JKDUlimited.com](http://www.JKDUlimited.com)



# *On Being*



## *I am, Therefore I am...*

*I* am an infinite soul locked into a finite body. Here on a journey of which I do not remember the beginning and for which I cannot imagine the end. The script is mysterious and sealed.

Life is perfectly designed yet I am undeniably flawed. Making mistakes is inherently human but my mistakes have not diminished me. On the contrary they have made me better, have propelled me higher. The ladder I climb to reach Heaven is built upon them.

Desire.

Attempt.

Failure.

Perseverance.

Attempt.

Adjustment.

Courage.

Experience.

Expansion.

Progress.

Failure is success in disguise. It's a trick, an optical illusion. I can choose to be fooled or fueled by it. Learning from failure

is the quintessential expression of a divine spark we all hold within. What a gift!

The pine tree's only concern is to grow and get closer to the sky. So long as it lives, it will continue to do so, inch by inch, with patience and purpose. It will never give up. I know that I am here to grow too. I am here to learn. I am here to teach. I am here to fail monumentally. I am here to succeed humbly. I am here to love wholeheartedly. And this, I now believe with absolute certitude...

I am, therefore, I am enough.

## *Falling Down Is Not a Failure but Standing Back Up Is a Victory*

When I started writing in 2016 my goal was to publish one essay every week. I wrote so diligently that I quickly accumulated a two-month cushion of blog posts. Missing a writing session wasn't technically a big deal but it did affect my momentum. When I slowed down I had time to notice the doubts and fears lurking in my mind.

I woke up with a sore throat one morning and really didn't feel like writing. I was tired. I was uninspired. The mean voice in my head was telling me: *"You're empty now. You've got nothing more to write about. This is the end of it for you. What were you thinking anyway?"* So my job that day was to go on typing to prove that mean voice wrong. I had already skipped the week prior. The pause would not become a stop!

Life comes with a handy reset button. It was time to press that button.

Beginnings are generally exciting to me. Once I set a goal I am eager to start. I am hopeful. But when I am confronted with the hurdles, I have a choice to make. Do I find a way around them, do I knock 'em down, or do I quit? I've never been the most talented, nor the most disciplined, but I won't quit. I get an A+ for never giving up. Throughout my life, I've had to reset many times. I used to look at this as a weakness. I used to think that the falling down was the measure of my worth. I'd beat myself

up. I'd feel discouraged. I'd lose hope. I'd berate myself for not being perfect, for being...human!

I'm still human, still imperfect but I've realized that to keep on trying, to keep on standing back up, shows strength. It shows resilience. It shows perseverance. It shows courage. I have failed many times. I have stumbled a lot. I've done the wrong thing more often than I care to admit. But I keep on keeping on. When I set a goal now, I not only visualize the ideal scenario, but I also plan for the inevitable obstacles.

I may have a goal to eat healthy and be trim, yet a life without chocolate sauce and whipped cream is not realistic for me. So, I set Sundays as my day to indulge. Does that mean that I'll never again have fudge on a Wednesday night? Unfortunately no. Because of hormones. Or stress. Or happiness. Because I am human. But does that mean I should just stop trying?

I may have a goal to go to bed early every night, yet it won't happen all the time. Because of Netflix. Because of awesome conversations with my hubby. Because of the moon cycles. Does that mean I should just stop trying? There was a time in my life when I would have answered yes. I couldn't get past failing over and over and over. I couldn't see the point of falling short. Now I applaud my trying again, my getting closer even if I'm not on target. I don't mind falling a thousand times as long as I stand back up one thousand and one.

Progress over perfection.

## *All in a Week*

As the weekend approaches and I look back on the past week, it's easy to see where I fell short.

This week, there wasn't any exercise.

There wasn't any grappling.

There was chocolate, wine, one lemon bar and shortbread cookies.

There wasn't any meditative quiet time.

There were no morning pages written.

There was a lot of going to bed and waking up late.

This week there were five days of homeschool. (We usually shoot for 4 days per week).

There was frustration during the math lesson.

There was a kiss on a sweet cheek and a comforted child on my lap.

There was a worksheet finished in good spirits instead of tears.

This week, there were many meals cooked from scratch—more than the week before.

There was split pea soup.

There was yellow lentil curry.

There were bean and cheese quesadillas with caramelized onions.

There was a beautiful mixed veggie omelet.

This week, there was work done in our freshly organized office.

There was a brand new computer delivered.

There was a much-awaited Facebook business page.

There were orders packaged and sent and e-mails replied to.

There was a lot of paperwork shredded.

There were calls unanswered by the tax office.

There was a mortgage refinance scheduled.

There were some checks deposited and lots of bills paid.

This week, there was a husband dropped off at the surgery center for his monthly procedure.

There was a last-minute lunch date with a friend.

There was Wednesday as my mommy day off.

There was browsing the used book shelves at the local library.

There was a new stack of borrowed picture books to take home to my daughter.

There were spanakopitas and Greek salad for lunch.

There was a wonderful afternoon at the beach park. A comfy pillow in my new comfy beach chair.

There was the shade of beautiful trees.

There was strong wind that delighted the kite surfers.

There were foamy turquoise waves, courtesy of two storms heading our way. (That's when the lemon bar came out.)

This week, there was a book started and finished. Book #32 for 2016.

There was a case of pinworms (our daughter's fourth this year) and me trying to hide it from my friend.

There was my friend finding out anyway and me feeling very ashamed of myself.

There were written apologies and gracious forgiveness.

There was learning once again that honesty is always the better way.

This week, there was hired help and a deep cleaned house.

There were dishes done every night.

This week, there was slamming the front door in anger and escaping with the car.

There was driving aimlessly around the neighborhood.

There were thoughts of buying a plane ticket for a far away

destination or at the very least spending the night at a nearby hotel.

There was owning up to my misbehavior and feeling the healing power of the words I'm sorry.

There were hugs and embraces and even a hand massage.

This week, there was finding out that two of my essays were chosen for publication on PowerofMoms.com.

There was a happy six-year-old sleeping in our bed, her reward for a good week of school.

There was a playdate with the French people we recently met.

There was joining the co-op's Science class.

There was learning that bad ice cream is not worth eating.

There was creamy chocolate gelato savored afterwards.

This week, there was bawling our eyes out and laughing ourselves silly watching *Up*.

There was drinking hot cocoa and going to bed at 2 am.

There was a bit of rushing getting ready for Capoeira because I'd slept in.

There was preparing breakfast to go. Serendipitously, there was a neighbor delivering fresh out of the oven cornbread.

There was forgetting my purse and phone at home and driving back to pick them up.

There was trying not to rush even though we were late.

This week there was rain in Hawaii.

There was a solar eclipse in Reunion Island.

There was a small cyst cut out from my husband's back.

There were sheets washed and blood stains removed.

This week I fell short many times. Ironically that's what made me grow. When my flaws had me act up, I showed the strength to get my act back together. What the worst parts of me damaged, the best parts of me fixed.

There is no light if you don't know darkness.

There is no warmth if you don't know cold.

There is light and darkness, warmth and cold within me.

There is love and fear, joy and pain within me.

There is music and silence within me.

There is me within me.

Gloriously imperfect... but glorious all the same.

## How Saying No is Changing My Life

I don't like to hear other people tell me *no* but I've learned that telling myself *no* serves me well. By denying myself in the short term, I earn the greatest rewards: long term happiness, fulfillment, and self confidence.

Discipline is the foundation of a life created by design not by chance. With discipline we get the trim body, the balanced bank account, and healthy gums. With discipline, we can make life more worthwhile.

By telling ourselves hundreds of small No-s, we make room for the bigger Yesses. No to the chocolate tonight. Yes to jeans that fit beautifully. No to sleeping in. Yes to exercise and healthful living. No to the angry outburst. Yes to having control over one's own thoughts and choosing love instead. Each time we say *no* to what is clearly bad for us, we make space for more goodness to enter our life so I'm saying:

*NO to negativity.* I want to focus on what's good: what's good about life, what's good about people, what's good about myself. If I have nothing nice to say, I say nothing. Simple? Yes. Easy? No. Worth it? Absolutely.

*NO to complaining.* I have a lot on my plate. We all do. I have a home to take care of, a business to run, a daughter to raise and homeschool, a husband to love, cherish and honor. If I don't keep a close watch, I can easily let resentment and lamenting take over: "*Life is hard. I have too much to do. It's not fair.*" My own