

# *I Made a Booboo*

*A mom who had parenting all sorted...until she had a baby*

**SHIVANGI SHARMA**

Copyright © Shivangi Sharma 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in a retrieval system, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

The views and opinions expressed in this book are the author's own and the facts are as reported by her which have been verified to the extent possible.

## **Praise for *I Made a Booboo***

*“Author’s self-deprecating yet witty style of writing will make you glance through the pages even if you aren’t a first time mom.”* - DECCAN CHRONICLE

*“You will be tempted to give this (book) a shot.”* - THE ASIAN AGE

*“I made a booboo presents the good, bad and ugly of parenting peppered with wit and heart warming moments.”* - THE INDIAN EXPRESS

*“The book sheds the preachy tone, which is almost invariably resorted by countless parenting blogs and books. It’s an honest confession from a mom.”* - THE TRIBUNE

*“Being a mother is world’s most beautiful experience. This book is as interesting as the author’s experience of writing it.”* - DAINIK BHASKAR

*“Not your ordinary parenting book...Any parent, especially a mother will be able to completely relate to author’s story as if it is their own.”* - MILLENNIUM POST

*To my son, who proved every parenting book  
wrong and made me write one of my own.*

*If not for him, this book wouldn't have existed.*

*(Or perhaps it would have, but just like a Garfield  
comic strip without Garfield in it.)*

## Disclaimers:

- ❖ This book won't teach you parenting—because no book can. It will tell you what it might look like.
- ❖ No babies were left unattended when this book was written. (They had iPads.\*)
- ❖ Holy poop! I forgot what the third point was. Damn you, mommy-brain!

*\*Not really. Relax*



# CONTENTS

<b>First Words .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The Beginning—the Best Place to Start ...</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Stork Brings the Baby. Well, Not Exactly .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 3: So This Is What It Looks Like.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Breakfast (and Lunch and Dinner) of Champions .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Congratulations on Finishing Second in the Parenting Game. (So What If There Were Only Two Participants!) .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Dearly Beloved Sleep, I Hope We Shall Meet Again Someday.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Chapter 7: The Day(s)care Saga or How Babies Trap You Out of Your Own Will.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Chapter 8: Guess Which Job Is Tougher? (Hint: It’s the One Where You Don’t Get Weekends Off) .....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Chapter 9: Does It Get Easier? No, You Get Better at It.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Chapter 10: Meet the New Me, Who Is Nothing Short of Awesome (at Least While the Baby Sleeps).....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Chapter 11: His Majesty—the Invincible, the Unrestricted, the Toddler .....</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Chapter 12: It’s Still Not the End. Neither Do I Want It to Be.....</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>An Apologia to My Son .....</b>	<b>196</b>

**Appendix: The New Mommy Alphabet.....199**

**Acknowledgements ..... 203**

**About the Author..... 205**



# First Words

**Hi there, parents. How are you? Tired, but still going strong?**

Remember when your weekends used to be full of three-hour afternoon naps and sleeping in till late in the mornings?

Me neither.

But let me tell you, you are not alone. There is a virtual new parents' society that exists somewhere, and you were automatically affiliated with it when your little one was born. Today, I come before you as a representative of that society to remind you to sit back, brew yourself a cuppa and just tune out of everything. You deserve a break more than anyone else. I present to you my whirlwind journey as a first-time Mom—one that is full of insane, unforgettable and goofed-up moments. You may find here: things that you can relate to, things that will make you laugh and things that could possibly touch your hearts.

**Hi there, parents-to-be. How are you? Excited, right?**

First of all, congratulations on signing up for an experience that will shake you to the core—in a good way, of course. You might be bursting at your seams with advice from the whole world right now. But you really need to get into the water to learn how to swim and not just watch a YouTube video of swimming lessons. I will only say one thing—

just take everything easy. As long as you don't serve them drugs, your children will turn out to be fine. And so will you. You only need a bit of freely available common sense and some love to get you through.

**Hi there, whoever-does-not-fall-in-the-above-two-categories-of-people. How are you? Good, I hope?**

If you want to know what you were as a small child, read this book. It might make you respect your parents a wee bit more. Or help you take a decision (either way) about your future procreating plans.\*

---

\* I can't be held responsible for anything, however. Just to give you an idea—this book has positive words like laugh, love and happy mentioned over 99 times, cry 74 times and poop about 20 times.



## Chapter 1: The Beginning—the Best Place to Start

**T**o reproduce is the most natural thing to do in this world for all species. But we are not birds or animals; we can easily crack the utterly distorted *captcha* codes in three attempts. And hence, we think. We think if we should have a baby, when we should have a baby, how many we should have, with whom we should have, where we should have, what are the return policies in case we don't like the baby, etc. Discounting for accidents, the common belief is that you should have one only if you really feel like it and can take the mountain of responsibility and hard work that comes along with it, head on. So before you go any further with this book, I would like you to take a quick test to see if you are the parenting type:

1. Are you fine with counting out loud till three, with some extra excitement at three—more like '*thareeeeeee*' at least 56 times a day? 'Let's sit in the car—one, two, *thareeeeeee*.' 'Let's stop sticking our heads out of the car window—one,

two, *thareeeeeee.*' It doesn't matter if the activity is not done after the counting; you start again, and with the same level of excitement as the first time.

2. Are your feet strong enough to bear the excruciating pain of stepping on a Lego block while sleepwalking? Mind you, this is no mean feat. Only a parent knows where a toy pinches.
3. Do you agree that wearing sparkling clean and ironed clothes to work is highly overrated? And that it is absolutely fine to refresh your yogurt-stained black pants with a baby wipe when leaving for an important meeting? (After all, you *have* worn those pants twice before in the week, since everything else was dirty too, so it's not like you are not capable of sporting yogurt free clothes.)
4. Do you think it is morally right to insist on playing hide-and-seek with your kid, just so you can hide in the kitchen and gobble down some chips and/or chocolate? If not, then are you okay to permanently live with a little moocher who wants to eat whatever you are eating, whenever you are eating?
5. Do you ever feel that you don't have anything to do on the weekends? That there is nothing on TV that you haven't watched before? That you are spending way too much time in the bathroom?
6. Can you live with getting physically abused by a person a third your size every day and not being

able to do anything about it, not even yelling back?

7. Are you a morning person? And a night person? And an afternoon and evening person? Basically, a person who is on call duty 24x7?
8. (Philosophical question): Do you think that your life has no purpose?\*
9. (Practical question): Suspend a football from the roof with a string. Stick some faux hair on it. Now, give the ball a push so that it starts oscillating. Try giving that moving ball a haircut, without poking or harming it in anyway. Were you successful? Of course, you can say you will have a hair dresser do that for your kid. Stop rolling your eyes now and roll that ball on the ground instead. And while the ball is still rolling, try to put pants on it. Were you successful this time?
10. (Multiple choice question): What is your opinion of bodily fluids (not your own)?
  - a) You don't mind dealing with them every day.
  - b) You don't mind dealing with them every day.
  - c) You don't mind dealing with them every day.

---

\* About question 8: Having a baby will not give you a purpose in life, silly. It will just not give you enough time to ponder on such things anymore.

11. Do you want to laugh your heart out; find happiness in the tiniest of things; release more endorphin than ever before; put yourself second, not because you have to but because you want to; love and be loved unconditionally and unfathomably; feel proud; cry silly; spread your arms wide for a hug that can set everything right; feel like you have ‘come home’; be elated; mean the world to someone and give a thousand kisses—all in the same day, every day?

That’s it. End of quiz. If you answered yes to these questions (and attempted the multiple choice question), you have it in you to be a successful parent. So go ahead, there is a life waiting to be created by you—one that will teach you what life is actually about.

If you still have the book in your hands, you do seem serious about parenting. Good, so let’s get on with the real stuff.

Typically, in about two to three years—and I say that based on my research of non-parent married couples around me—the novelty of marriage starts to diminish. You are still happily married, but now you are used to each other and their snoring like the family you grew up with. You no longer try to control your belches in front of each other and you may even discuss your gastrointestinal issues with your partner on a date night. The wedding DVD that you watched over and over again cosying up on the couch, catches dust in a corner and is only found when you move

houses. Even then, the latest *Die Hard* is more fun to watch.

You don't necessarily have to do everything together now, so you stop faking your interest in your husband's football match finals and wife's cruising through malls for aimless shopping. You are on an auto pilot mode—wake up, get ready, go to work, come home, eat, watch TV, sleep; with some socializing, grocery shopping, individual hobbies and spa visits on weekends. In your conscious attempt to give each other enough space, you have created a lot of room around you that can easily be utilized if tried.

Then you get invited to baby showers and first birthdays. The frosted cupcakes, the primary colours, the ridiculously tiny baby shoes and the beaming mommy as the centre of attention light a spark in your mind. All those years until then, you had been brushing away any broody ideas that ever cropped in your head—thinking you still wanted to work on that promotion, bungee jump in New Zealand, finish the list of hundred books you always wanted to read, learn to make chocolate and post pictures from all seven continents on your Facebook page— before you entered the no-exit world of parenting.

But you are somehow unable to ignore those ideas anymore. Suddenly, everyone around you is pregnant. The long lost friend from college you borrowed jeans from, calls to tell you that she is expecting a baby in three months, and so is your aunt's daughter. Your biological clock is ticking and there would never be the 'right' time to do this, you tell yourself. Not to mention, that the whole

world around you is expecting you to multiply, and really quickly at that. You need something to look forward to every day, you need a new activity to do, new things to shop, a new place to visit, a new person to come home to. So having a baby seems like that foreign country you visit for an unprecedented experience or like that exciting start-up venture you own and grow with your responsible hands as against your very predictable and mundane daily job.

And one fine day you take the plunge. And how!

Never has peeing been as thrilling as it is now, with the pregnancy test stick in your hand. The two pink lines that flash on the stick are going to change your life forever.

Congratulations, you are pregnant! Shout-from-the-rooftops, PREGNANT!

You don't have the slightest idea what you have signed up for. Ready or not, the baby is coming.

I hit a similar point about three and a half years into our marriage. I have always liked the idea of having kids, so I knew I would have at least one at some point in time. That I would actually start getting dreams about being a mother, was something I had never thought would happen. Cheesy as it may sound, I think motherhood really called me. Although we had started to plan a baby, I never expected to get pregnant this quickly—within a month. This was probably the fastest thing that I had ever done, except, perhaps, for a slow-cycling race at school where I had lost for riding the cycle faster than everyone else.



I found out about my pregnancy while holidaying in the US, at my sister's place. We had gone to a Mexican restaurant for lunch and a certain aroma put me off so much that my husband and I had to walk out without eating anything. We went to a mall later, and I was alternately feeling either extremely cold or extremely hot and sweaty every 15 minutes. The moment I'd bought an XL size frozen yogurt cup, I felt like having a hot steaming coffee, and right after I was done with the coffee I wanted to drown myself in a tub of ice cubes.

On our way back from the mall, we stopped at a pharmacy to buy pregnancy tests. I bought two, just in case I didn't believe one and wanted to double check. Surely, I couldn't already be pregnant? Of course I had decided that I wanted to have a baby, but this was similar to deciding to bet all your money impulsively in one shot at the roulette table. The idea of taking a plunge gives you such a high, that sometimes you forget that the plunge is actually going to land you at an altogether different place from where you had jumped—a place from where you may never be able to go back.

I am not sure if there were the usual butterflies flitting away in my stomach or pregnancy was acting up, but my stomach felt really odd and my heart was almost in my throat. I was wearing a bluish-green sweatshirt that day that I can't even bother to look at now. I associate that colour with being pregnant and feeling queasy. No wonder the curtains in many hospitals are made in that colour, the colour has vomit

written all over it. Writing about it, even now, makes me feel weird. It is the same with red onions that I ate that day. I can never eat those again in my life. They still make me nauseous.

So, this was it, I was going to take the test.

5 minutes later I came out of the bathroom, crying.

‘Yes, the test is positive,’ I told my husband.

‘What is there to cry about, then?’ he asked.

We hugged.

I was crying out of happiness, excitement, achievement and surprise. But most importantly, I was crying out of the guilt of having had tequila shots at a friend’s Christmas party about two weeks before.

Damn, I have wrecked my baby. I am possibly the worst mother and the worst woman on the face of this planet.

Apparently, the moment a man’s sperm attaches to a woman’s egg to create a baby; it also injects a lifetime’s supply of guilt into her system—one that haunts her at every step of motherhood. Right from feeding formula to your baby, to dropping him at a day care to join work and to accidentally throwing away one of his twenty-six ninja warrior toys—mommy-guilt stays with you until...well until you are a mommy.

So I did what any 21st century pregnant woman worth her salt would do to appease herself when faced with traumatic situations like the one I was in.

I Googled.

My dear friends—‘Baby Centre’, ‘What to Expect’ and a million other pregnancy forums full

of expectant stranger women came to my rescue. My sister had a copy of the hard bound *What to Expect When You Are Expecting* from her pregnancy days. There was an entire section devoted to people like me, who had unknowingly had a little to drink during what possibly were the first few days of their pregnancies. It did not do any harm, said the book, since you didn't even know when exactly you got pregnant. Even if there was an embryo inside by then, it was too tiny to get under the influence.

The book also said that right from calculating my due date to actually bringing the baby home, it had everything figured out for me in its thirty-two odd chapters. The book was pregnant with information on what happens inside your body during pregnancy and how a foetus grows, complete with tips and tricks. I spent the next nine months cramming the book, learning from it how my son was growing from a peanut to a peach to a butternut squash, and balancing it on my belly in the last trimester. I must have thought that the mere physical proximity of the gospel to the site of action could work more in my favour.

It would be wrong to say that I had a tough pregnancy. I mean, there was the usual discomfort that everyone has to go through and the twenty-eight extra kilos I added to my body in the name of feeding the baby well. But other than that, it went pretty okay. I had become very broody during my pregnancy—from decorating the baby nursery all on my own, to rearranging all cupboards, giving myself facial treatments and ironing baby burp cloths purchased well in advance—I did everything

that was originally very unlike of me.

I was ravenously hungry all the time right from day one, despite feeling bilious. So I used to stock my bedside drawers with cheese sandwiches to satisfy my 2 a.m. hunger pangs and gorge on an entire box of mangoes on a summer day. If you ask my husband, whose only frame of reference is Hollywood movies where pregnant women are shown hugging the toilet every morning with their hormones going wild, he will definitely say that I got a good deal. He wouldn't know much anyway, since he was away half the time in day long cricket matches, when poor, fat bellied me had to go maternity clothes shopping with his credit card, all by myself.

Can you imagine? All that my husband did to support me was to drive me to work and back every morning, getting late for work himself, bring me whatever I wanted to eat whenever I wanted, soak my feet in a hot water bucket in the evenings, be there for every single check-up appointment, and make sure I slept well.

While I was absolutely in love with my pregnancy—with my belly growing to be like my very own Lamborghini that drew attention from everyone around me—there were days when I wished for my husband to take the pregnancy over from me, like, give me weekends off or something. Or for me to go back in time to stop Eve from making Adam eat that goddamn apple. Or simply, for my husband and I to be born as seahorses—as, with them it is the male who carries the baby. (Additionally, the sea horses get to live in the sea, which is nothing short of heavenly for a woman