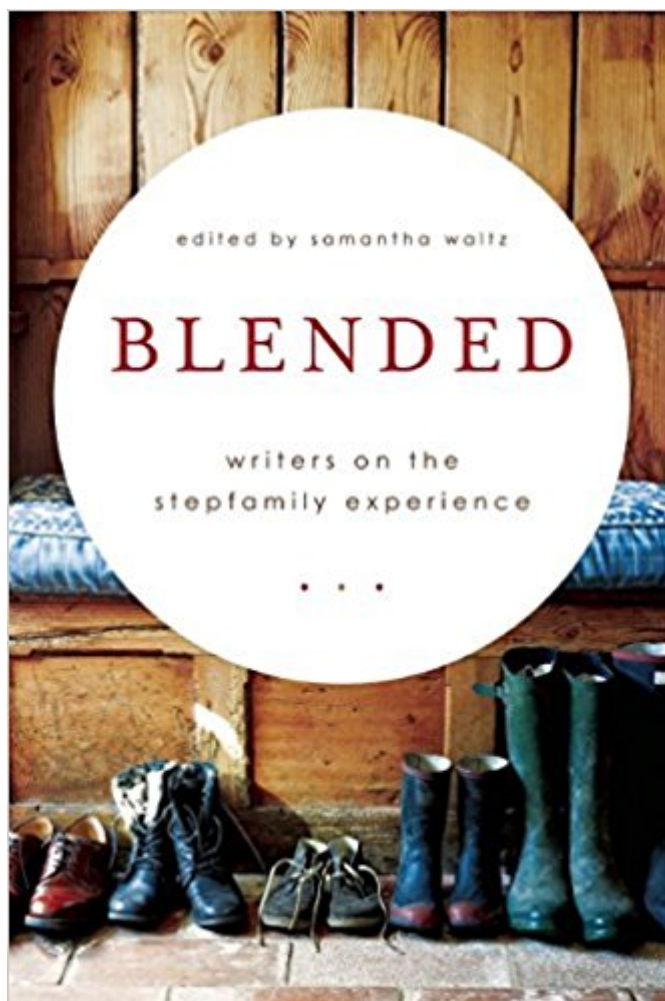


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# Blended: Writers On The Stepfamily Experience



## Synopsis

95 million adults have a step relationship, according to a 2011 report. That's 95 million unexpected experiences; 95 million unique perspectives; 95 million laughs, 95 million tears, and 95 million new families. *Blended* explores stepfamilies from the inside out through the perspectives of thirty writers who know what it's like first hand. Sometimes funny, often poignant, and always deeply personal, the stories in *Blended* capture the essence of stepfamilies in all of their weird and wonderful varieties. The journeys range from the first encounters between new step-relatives, to marriages, honeymoons, daily experiences, and divorces. The diverse voices in *Blended* reflect the realities of today's world, in which yesterday's ideas of family structures and types just don't cut it anymore. Parents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins: all of these relationships change when families are melded into one, and the writers of *Blended* help explore the truth of what these new relationships look like, and, especially, feel like. *Blended* offers something for everyone: laughter, wisdom, empathy, and guidance, and, above all, the knowledge that you are not alone.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Samantha Waltz has been writing since childhood. She sold her first story at age eleven to a local newspaper. Her next stories were published in *American Girl*, and she later worked as a guest editor and assistant editor for *Mademoiselle*. Her books include *Parenting: Four Patterns In Childrearing*, *Parenting Gifted Children*, and *Gifted Child: Master Piece in the Making*. Currently she has over sixty personal essays in anthologies including the Seal Press anthologies *Ask Me About*

My Divorce and Why We Ride. The development of *Blended* calls on her experience as a stepparent, a family therapist, and a teacher of classes and workshops on parenting and child development. She has received awards for her nonfiction writing from the Oregon Writers Colony and Willamette Writers, and was the Grand Prize winner of the Redbook/Cup of Comfort Love Story contest. Waltz has extensive editorial experience. She taught English composition for fourteen years, and has been in critique groups of professional writers for 18 years. Currently she teaches "Tell 'Em and Sell 'Em" workshops on writing and selling the personal story, and has worked with hundreds of workshop participants to craft excellent pieces. Her early writing is under the names Samellyn Jones and Samellyn Wood.

A family may be disassembled through divorce, death or desertion. This creates an emotional (and perhaps physical) upheaval with a disconnect from the familiar. As the family is re-assembled through the addition of another person or persons, it must adjust, adapt and grow into a new unit. This is a collection of stories - a wide variety of circumstances and challenges - about people combining their lives into new family units. Each is well written. Each writer is interesting and expresses well the unique challenges he or she faced with new children and other relations in their circle. Those brought along without choice into a new family structure (children, in-laws, ex-laws, etc) might react poorly. I found the variety fascinating as well as the similarities. With great patience and determination on behalf of some members to love those who are unwilling, or perhaps willing but cautious about loving a newcomer ~ this book covers it. The challenges of identity (what names mean), traditions and custody exchanges are there. Having power and using it unfairly or not having power and dealing with it, are addressed. Many stories were fascinating in the manner that people adapted and grew and learned to love or accept not being loved. This book gave me a greater appreciation for my dad's second wife's effort to blend with us. I would recommend "Blended" to anyone contemplating marrying ~ whether first marriage or otherwise. Relationships, adjustments and a desire to succeed in love are the universal human element.

*Blended* is a collection of stories written by writers about that crazy combination of people that makes up a family. Families come in all shapes and sizes and always have. Society used to sweep the untraditional ones under the carpet and still does, even though we are working on becoming more accepting. As a member of my own personal version of a blended family, I share the joys as well as the struggles that are the fabric of a step family. Families are assembled and disassembled in a variety of ways. Each set of circumstances is unique. This collection of heartfelt stories shines a

bright light on what it really means to be a part of a step family. No one asks to be part of one, the ebbs and flows of life lead some of us there. I happen to know a little something about step families. I recently supported my step mother of 50 years through her end of life challenges. I have a host of nieces and nephews who came into my life through my sister's second marriage. Even though I have never given birth to a child, my granddaughter called me today. She's 16 and I'm helping her navigate the world of college admissions. The combinations that make up a step family are endless. One thing is for certain, no two families are alike. The stories in *Blended* teach us that. Whether you are part of a step family or would just like some insight into the strength of the human spirit, *Blended* will take you there. It will make you laugh and cry and face head on every emotion in between. Life no matter how it is handed to us, is the life we are meant to live.

Beautiful collection of heartfelt stories from various types of blended families. Great insight for anyone involved in these unique situations on any level. My teenaged daughter was able to appreciate several stories and relate them to some of her friends' experiences with their families.

Beautiful book with so many varied stories. Each one is interesting, honest, and revelatory of many facets of the blended family experience. It's a definite must-read and bound to appeal to a wide audience and touch many hearts.

This book touched my heart and resonated with me in so many unexpected ways. So well written that I absolutely could not put it down. What a stupendous compilation! Many gracious thanks.

A lovely collection of stories that truly touched my heart. God bless all the authors who rose above their difficulties and shared their stories.

Every bit as good as *Chicken Soup For the Soul*!

*Blended* consists of a collection of heartfelt stories about step-families. Whether you are part of a blended family or just want to read these inspiring stories, *Blended* is a great book! My favorite story in the book was Betsy Graziani Fasbinder's essay about her relationship with her step-son, Max. This book talks about so many different kinds of blended families; we read about parents who are widows, divorcees, or part of the LGBT community. The book has something for everyone. I definitely recommend checking it out! I received a review copy from NetGalley.

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