



Becoming Myself: Reflections On Growing Up Female

By Willa Shalit

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In the tradition of *The Right Words at the Right Time*, a collection of original essays on the joys, trials, and unexpected outcomes of growing up female by dozens of celebrities, writers, and exceptional women

An inspiring collection of essays from a wide range of notable women, on the experience of being female. Sixty-seven original essays from celebrities and writers, including Meryl Streep, Kate Winslet, J.K. Rowling, Julia Stiles, Maya Angelou, Kate Spade, Helen Hunt, Zane, Patti LaBelle, Joyce Carol Oates, Lily Tomlin, and many more. Subjects covered include everything from how it felt for Vanessa Williams to be stripped of her Miss America crown to Meryl Streep's definition of real freedom. The essays are funny, poignant, indignant, nostalgic, and powerfully female.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Sculptor and *Vagina Monologues* producer Shalit asked a group of celebrities and writers to recall a significant memory of growing up female. The result is an uneven collection of 67 short pieces, with unfocused or perfunctory contributions by such notables as J.K. Rowling, Kate Winslet, Vanessa Williams, Brooke Shields and Janis Ian. A few of the pieces, such as those by Patti LaBelle, Rue McClanahan and Lily Tomlin are frustratingly short. Longer and more literary pieces by Joyce Carol Oates, Kitty Carlisle Hart and Tawni O'Dell stand out as moving, thought provoking and completely to the point. Oates writes about her disturbing experiences as a sexually naïve undergraduate in the late 1950s trying to navigate the chaotic rituals of a fraternity party at which her drunken female peers were taking sexual risks. In an affectionately comic piece, actress Hart, born into a comfortable New Orleans family in 1910, describes how she suffered and evolved under a domineering but loving mother, while O'Dell paints a stark picture of herself as a tough, sensitive 10-year-old in the 1970s coal-mining region of western Pennsylvania, coming to grips with the critical difference in girls' and boys' natures. (*Apr. 18*)

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Review

"Candid stories will shock, inspire, and touch you -- and make you proud to be a sister." -- *Marie Claire*

"In *Becoming Myself* . . . famously self-assured women share their I-am-woman epiphanies." -- *Glamour*

"This book is a pleasure to read and will uplift women of all ages." -- *Library Journal*

About the Author

Willa Shalit is the daughter of Gene Shalit and produced *The Vagina Monologues*, which became a global phenomenon. She is also the co-founder and first Executive Director of V-Day, the worldwide movement to end violence against women that grew out of the play. It was named one of *Fortune's* 100 Best American Charities of 2002. She is also an internationally recognized sculptor and is the founder of The Touch Foundation, creating the Please Touch! Exhibition, which allowed the sight-impaired for the first time to "see" people of all races as well as famous people whose faces they had only imagined. She is the subject of the Emmy-winning PBS documentary *Willa: Behind the Mask*, and author of the book *Lifecast: Behind the Mask*. Willa is the founder of the Rwanda Path to Peace project which is bringing economic prosperity to the women of Rwanda through global crafts exports. She lives in New York.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Barbara Spangler:

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