



Glass Half Full

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2nd October 2014: Reader feedback is appreciated by all authors. As a result, Glass Half Full has undergone a revamp including a professional edit, added photographs from our journey and a professional book cover. I hope you enjoy the changes.

Is the glass half-empty or half-full? Ironically, sometimes life influences our view and alters our perception. Life changing events, up to 1997 almost destroyed me. At my lowest point, and just in time, I met Nigel. He helped me to discover how a positive attitude can change everything. I decided not to squander any more of my time or energy on undeserving people. This new positive approach helps me to perceive my glass as half-full, with my aim being to achieve a happy and healthy life for my family. Together, we live life to the full. In 2008, with good times ahead of us, my glass was half-full. As a family, we made the biggest and most difficult decision of our lives; part of our family would emigrate to Australia. We lived the Australian dream, embracing the adventure until adversity came to test us. A sequence of life changing events including a close family bereavement, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) following a road rage car accident and the shock of losing the roots to our Australian adventure as a result of the Brisbane floods tested us on many levels. Glass Half Full follows our journey into happy, sad and challenging times.

Find out what it takes to survive with the odds stacked against you. Do you fight back, and if so, at what cost physically and emotionally? Could we maintain our positivity and family values against the odds? This is our story.

Glass Half Full Details

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From Reader Review Glass Half Full for online ebook

Arthur says

Too much "Coronation Street" and not enough "Tales from a Sunburnt Country". Half the book is about the author's personal trials and tribulations. Some may enjoy that, but I am more interested in learning about the places they travelled than about the inner workings of her dysfunctional family.

Rebecca says

Sarah Jane and her husband Nigel are a quite remarkable couple. After visiting Nigel's father in Tasmania they felt at home in Australia and believed that living there would give them a more fulfilling life. Overcoming personal setbacks at home they finally left Cornwall to live their dream. They arrived in the remote Alice Springs where Sarah Jane had a two year contract as a nurse. Nigel quickly found work and their daughter Jaime enrolled in school. Life was not always easy however and they had the ongoing anxiety of being separated from family back in the UK. Unfortunately for them the dream starts to go wrong and they suffer a great number of setbacks which they faced with incredible courage and fortitude. If anything it makes them a stronger family unit. Sarah Jane's love for her family is evident throughout and certainly influences the decisions that are made. In spite of a succession of disasters they retain their optimism that all will work out for the best. Unfortunately things go from bad to worse and they lose everything when Brisbane is flooded and their house is submerged. They are forced to become bankrupt and endure the ensuing consequences. After a gruelling drive to Tasmania the family pick up the pieces and make a success of their new life. However, after receiving compensation from the road rage incident they decide to relocate to rural France! This memoir is very honest and makes the reader feel as if you are travelling with her. It's certainly not all 'doom and gloom' but it's a testament to their strength and determination. I can't wait to read about their new life in France. It's five stars from me.

Sofia Brito says

I love travelling and biographical books, it reminds me that is possible to move on and try life in another place if we really want to. I have always been interested in travelling not as a tourist but as a wanderer, a world citizen, absorbing culture and language of other countries. I hated this book. I hated the patronizing tone of the writer while describing the cultural shock she felt when moving to Alice Springs an Aboriginal town in Australia, I found the writing atrocious a mere report of family problems, EastEnders style, with no interesting information about the real travelling experience, what I was really looking for, information, about the country, experiences and cultural facts. Very disappointing.

Susan Joyce says

With vivid descriptions of people and places, this riveting story is about a family who leave England for a better life in Australia. They carefully plan each step of their long term goals; to get permanent residency in Australia, become financially secure, and maintain a happy and healthy relationship with their large and scattered family.

First stop is the dusty outback town of Alice Springs, surrounded by hundreds of kilometers of red desert in Central Australia's Northern Territory. Not their ideal destination, but as a skilled professional in healthcare services Sarah Jane is offered employment at the Alice Springs Hospital working with Australia's indigenous people (Aborigines). Nigel gets a good job as a security guard in a prison. They work long hours to get ahead and save money for their preferred destination near the coast in Queensland, where they buy a home and land. Another step closer to achieving their dreams.

Everything goes as planned until a sequence of life changing events stops them in their tracks, and then mother nature devastates their carefully laid out master plan. An amazing journey of people living life to its fullest. Inspirational!

Janet says

Sarah Jane Butfield and her husband are truly inspirational, what they have endured and survived is incredible. Her book "Glass Half Full tells the adventure of their emigration to Oz, in full techni-colour, warts-and-all detail, I defy anyone not to be touched by this eloquent memoir.

Donna says

Truly awful book.

This is the worst book I have ever read. This self publishing author really should get a proof reader for grammar and spellings. The story is one long whinge about the authors haphazard approach to life.

I wanted to throw the Kindle across the room in frustration. Plan in detail what you're going to do, how you're going to do it and ruminate fully upon how your actions affect others. Don't wait for it to go wrong, moan and then say "oh well we always look on the positive". This IS NOT an inspiring positive book.

This book was chosen by my book club because of the five star reviews. I can see that Sarah Jane Butfield is giving herself 5 stars and reviews from her daughter, but who else? It is misleading for the reader. Putting the boring story to one side, I feel very upset that I have paid £2 for something that has not been edited correctly and is clearly not a five star book.

Frank Kusy says

I've read quite a few books now about Brit families uprooting at middle age and relocating to different

countries, but this is far and away the most impressive - author Sarah Jane and 'where ever I lay my hat that's my home' hubby Nigel leave cosy Cornwall and land in Alice Springs, Australia. Not the romantic Alice Springs I remember from the Flying Doctor radio show of my childhood, but 40 degrees of numbing heat, with lots of dust and flies thrown in. Plunged straight into an emergency resuscitation of a local boy in her new job as a nurse, Sarah Jane is quickly wondering what the heck she is doing there. But on she ploughs - through drastic weight loss as a result of TB exposure, the tragic death of mother-in-law Sheila on the heels of her romantic wedding in Scotland (so sorry for Nigel, my mum died on my wedding day, I became a bit of a "grieving bushman" too!), the terrible trauma daughter Jaime experienced at the hands of an incompetent surgeon, the struggle to build a log cabin in the middle of the desert, the road rage incident which left the author even more traumatised than Jaime, the awful bankruptcy which followed the family's wonderful home being submerged in the Brisbane floods, and finally the gruelling drive-through-four-states-of-Australia-with-no-sleep slog to relocate in Tasmania. There is an iron will at work here, and the family's mantra - "Work the plan, to achieve the dream" - sums up the nothing-will-stop-me pioneer spirit which runs through this great book. Every time something goes wrong, and it goes wrong quite a lot of the time, Sarah and Nigel just pick themselves up and try again. Glass half full? It never looked like being empty!

Samantha Parker says

My mum has worked so hard to make her dream come true and she finally has. The book is amazing, a fantastic read, even as a family member you learn new things. I'm so proud of how hard my mum has worked and look forward to the paperback release and the next book to be revealed

Julie Haigh says

A good varied read. Really enjoyed it.

For me, this is a combination of travel and medical memoir-two of my favourite genres. From very early on, it seemed easy to read, easy to get into. I can connect with the story having gone through marriage break up etc, left holding the baby-or babies as in her case. Photos are included and there is also an accompanying photo book available (which I got free at the time). The book details Sarah Jane Butfield and her husband Nigel's move to Australia and all the ups and downs along the way. Sarah Jane is a trained nurse and she finds work out there. The hospital is much smaller than she imagined. I read all these travel/ex pat memoir books and repeatedly ask myself: Why? Why do they do it? How come people go to live and work somewhere they've never seen before? It seems very foreign to my unadventurous self-but thank heaven they do!-it makes for some great reads! Very interesting, it tells about cultural differences. Differences in shops to the UK-eg. bottle shops. She's already been a nurse 20 years as she is due to start in Australia. Nigel also found work within weeks of arriving there so that's good going. There's drama even from her first shift and the crash trolley is needed, a man is quickly stabilised. This was to happen many times during her time as a nurse here. She was in her 40s and felt straight in at the deep end as she hadn't worked in this medical field for so long. Flying doctor services also active here in the Northern Territory. Nursing staff are given chance to go out for day with Flying Doctor Service. All interesting info for me. She tells about attractions in the area, about the surroundings and creatures. Some of the experiences: Samantha and Doug experienced Hot Air Ballooning at dawn, helicopter ride, camel ride just to mention a few. What a lovely tale about the two boys-the doggies. Then, it's back to Scotland. Oh my god!-I was smiling one minute, chuckling the next-then

finally sat on the edge of my seat with the wedding dress happenings! The men-when in Scotland.....decided on kilts for their wedding attire. The book is particularly entertaining at these moments. I noticed some reviewers have said it's repetitive-I haven't found it so except perhaps the early repetition of the phrase 'Glass Half Full' a few times, then, 'Our Australian Adventure' a few times and 'the boys' but then it was all fresh again, the rest is fine. It was all very interesting to me as I've never been to this part of the world (Australia). Rich description of the surroundings, you could really get a feel for it, I loved the detail, it made very pleasant reading. Some beautiful moments, most of this is well written, just a few niggly bits. There are a few passages of travel-writing-mode; describing the area, shops, foods, attractions etc. Then, unexpected, health concerns. I totally understand the driving anxiety as I struggle with this too. More health issues, I don't fully understand the condition mentioned, I had not heard of this before. They then move again to Queensland. There are many ups and downs with her relationship with Molly, no parent should have to go through this. I felt that some things weren't explained fully, and when I'm reading a memoir, I'm quite nosy and want to know all the facts-having said that, I realise it is difficult for an author and sometimes they have to change names, certain things, miss things out to protect various people and themselves. They get hens for eggs, there was great excitement when the first of those eggs were laid! Growing produce and keeping chickens for eggs, she's found this very fulfilling. So much to enjoy. Ups and downs, twists and unexpected happenings. When talking about the surroundings, these bits are very well done and form an enticing description of the areas in question. Overall, this has been a good varied read and I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed it so much that I have started Sarah Jane Butfield's book two in her memoir series: Two Dogs And A Suitcase: Clueless In Charente.

Maretha Botha says

I loved reading this book, an account of Sarah and Nigel Butfield's living the 'Australian Dream', arriving there as the 'Pommes' from UK. Having lived in a country with a similar climate as the Australian outback, I thoroughly enjoyed Sarah Butfield's descriptions of the desert, the tremendous floods in Brisbane and Queensland, how they coped with such disasters and how they learned to move on. Without being preachy, Sarah and her family have a positive outlook on life, which she shares with her readers.

From stepping down into Alice Springs to start nursing immediately after arriving in Australia, she paints a vivid picture of life's ups and downs - her weight loss, her daughter Jaime's serious illness, the effects that distance can have on family relationships - with candour and a sense of humour - even during the toughest of times. For example, seeing her daughter Samantha after a few years, the death of her mother-in-law far away in England, their trip through the outback and much more, kept me reading well into the night.

This is a must-read for anyone who contemplates leaving their familiar surrounds to set up home in a foreign country. Throughout this book, Sarah tells us about their experiences as they happened; an admirable and brave move on her part, making for very good reading entertainment. Highly recommended! Glass Half Full

Urszula says

Since it's a true story about amazing women and her family I guess first what I am going to write is that I'd really like to meet them. It's so easy to become part of Sarah's world since she seems like a such a kind, heartwarming person. This book is a terrific story about something, what for Sarah seems pretty obvious and for most of us is not, it's about following your dreams. Asking yourself where, when and with whom you

want to be, how do you want to live and what to do? I admire her attitude. Even if she has fears and doubts she is so focused on her goals, especially one: to love. I know, this word is so hard, you can see it on pink postcards, but whoever tries to define it can end up miserable :) Anyway... while reading I had this feeling of meeting a very wise person, who has not been changed into narcissistic, neurotic misanthrope through her life struggles. Instead you can see a person who really cares about others, is committed to unconditional love for her family, but keeps healthy attitude about personal goals. I like very much how she writes and how she thinks. I definitely must read second part of this family's adventures! I got hooked, although you won't read here something you never heard of before - it's just the sensibility, empathy and love (I know I know) that you find inside what makes this book really worth reading!

Susan says

What a story! This books takes a family from their home in England to an adventure in Australia. The first year is easy and they live in town with a job and town life. The husband decides to buy his little piece of heaven in the woods. The family decides to clear it and make it habitable for weekends but ends up living there until disaster strikes. Disaster strikes the next house and a car accident makes life even harder. The family is lucky to have a family member in Tanzania so they move there to get their life back together. The only thing I would have liked would be more info on how their young daughter coped. I can't wait to read the next chapter of their life.

Jody Mahoney says

Adventure

What a brave family, loved the honesty. The story is well written and true to the nature of Australian people.

Cynthia Ulmer says

Most people only dream of doing what Sarah and Nigel did--leave their home and move not only to another country but one well over 9000 miles away. The adventure has its ups and downs. As a person who has lived in the same area since childhood, and at my last address for more than thirty years, I cannot image having the courage to do the same. I admire Sarah, Nigel and their family for not only dreaming of adventure but actually doing it. An enjoyable book. My only regret is there were no pictures. I would have loved seeing pictures of "Itchy Feet", "the boys", and "Plenty Highway". I'm looking forward to reading Sarah's next book.
