

## **Martha-Lee Bohn**

Originally a New Yorker, Martha-Lee Bohn moved to Mississippi in 2003 after she met a man, fell in love and got married. Her Gulfport home flooded like thousands of others along the Gulf Coast.

Bohn works with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in the wake of the 2005 Hurricane season. Four years since Katrina, volunteers continue to help families who have lost hope. For more information or to offer help: Mississippi InterFaith Disaster Task Force [www.msidtf.org](http://www.msidtf.org)

### **1. How did you get started writing?**

I've been journaling off and on since I was a preteen. In college, I was on the newspaper. Aside from letters and email, most of my writing since then has been political junk mail, fund raising appeals and church newsletter articles.

### **2. What do you do when you are not writing?**

- I love to cook. I have a special diet – gluten-free – which has made me learn more about food and my health.
- I travel. My work with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance involves visiting churches that have sent volunteers, sharing stories of hope and inspiring others to help a neighbor.
- I work/play with the teen youth group at church.

### **3. What would readers like to know about you?**

I'm a transplanted New Yorker (NYC suburbs) living in south Mississippi. For ten years I organized political campaigns in NY State, and I served one term as a Member of the Pelham, NY Town Council.

I've been to all 50 U.S. states, Canada, a half dozen Western European countries, as well as Egypt.

### **4. What inspired you to be a contributing author in *Overcomers, Inc.*,**

I told a group of friends I'd like to be published by the end of the year. A friend sent me the link to an April web broadcast of Kathleen Gage, Lynne Klippel and Marlene Oulton. When I heard them give the book title, I knew I had a story to offer.

### **5. Why is the topic of *Overcoming* important to you?**

I have seen people survive and keep faith in impossible situations. When I faced multiple disasters in my life, friends saw me facing another tragedy; I saw a homework assignment from God.

### **6. Why are you specially qualified to write about this topic?**

I walked through the valley and found that there is nothing to fear. Through life's challenges I've found how truly blessed I am.

### **7. How do you manage to keep yourself focused and on track when you're writing a book?**

That is one of the biggest challenges. Best tip for getting started is: two pages a day. Write two pages a day on any topic. Get in the habit of writing. Set up a space that is separate to minimize distraction and give the feeling of "going to work."

### **8. Do you write to make money, for the love of writing or both?**

Neither. Both. Other... I love to tell stories of hope and inspiration. I tell stories in emails, letters and church newsletters; to friends and strangers. I've delivered sermons and workshops to hundreds of people. Writing and publishing my stories allows me to share the stories of my brain and my heart with an even larger audience.

**9. What makes you proud about your involvement with Overcomers, Inc.?**

I am a published author for the first time! I'm thrilled to have my story included with so many others who kept on walking when they were going through Hell. I believe in Divine Intervention. I sent in my story fully a month late. Lynne Klippel responded enthusiastically, asking only if I could work quickly to catch up.

**10. Will you write more books?**

Yes. I have a series of stories of coincidence, as well as a longer version of my Overcomers, Inc. chapter. I'm also working on book about my theatrical agent, former Vaudevillian grandmother's descent into Alzheimer's disease.

**11. What do you have in the works now?**

Funding and volunteers for the Katrina recovery effort are ending. I'm praying for discernment about what is next for me. I plan to continue public speaking and leading workshops while I polish what I've written and get more stories out of my head and onto the page.

**12. What does the future hold for you and your books?**

I have more chapters and stories in progress. Working on this book has been a great learning experience. People tell me my Overcomers story sounds like a made for TV movie. Maybe it will be.

**13. What sparks your creativity? Any tips to help others spark their own creativity?**

Listening to snippets of stories in public places. People-watching and then making up names and stories for the people you are watching. Laughter. Stimulating conversation. Word association.

**14. What do you think motivates people to become authors? What motivated you to get into this unusual industry?**

Scratch the surface and we all have a story to tell – a story about their life or their dreams. In January, I declared I would be published this year. People always say they're going to write a book, but intention, coincidence, a good story and the help of Kathleen, Lynne, and Marlene made it happen.

**15. If a potential reader thinks that your book wouldn't interest them, what would you say to convince them to buy? I'm thinking something better than "It's the greatest book ever." Give me something more specific :)**

There are 38 stories to choose from. Pick one and see if it speaks to you. For my chapter, I'd say, "It will make you laugh and cry. It might even raise the hairs on the back of your neck."

**16. What is your final message to our readers?**

This is one of my favorite quotes: From Nelson Mandela's 1994 Inaugural speech, "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you NOT to be? You are a child of GOD. Your playing small does not serve the World. There is nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel unsure around you. We were born to make

manifest the glory of GOD that is within us. It is not just in some of us; is in everyone. As we let our own Light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

To get your own copy of Overcomers, Inc., True Stories of Hope, Courage and Inspiring AND enjoy dozens of wonderful gifts with your purchase go to <http://overcomersinc.com/booklaunch>