



## Interview with Elizabeth Chennamchetty

- 1) How important are names to you in your book? How do you choose the names you use?**

All of my characters are real people that I love and care about. Many times I ask them what they want their name to be and use it. They know their alter-ego best.

- 2) What do you consider to be your best accomplishment?**

My children! It was a long, sometimes heartbreaking road, but I can not imagine my days without them in it.

- 3) Where do you see yourself in 10 years?**

In San Diego, enjoying our friends and neighbors and living with teenagers!  
TEENAGERS!!!

- 4) Were you already a great writer? Did you always like to write?**

Life happens. Sometimes you just have to write about.

I never thought of myself a writer. I started journaling on my first trip to India and realized how rich an experience I was having. My journal began with fleeting impressions. But eventually it evolved into something much bigger.

- 5) What writing advice do you have for other aspiring authors?**

Write what you know and write from your heart.

- 6) Do you read your reviews? Do you respond to them, good or bad? Do you have any advice on how to deal with the bad?**

Yes. I read everything, even if I don't want to hear it! There are always haters out there. My Indian family has given me many wonderful gifts, but the most valuable one of all is a thick skin. Keeping it all in perspective is also important.

**7) What is your best marketing tip?**

Be yourself. Be genuine.

**8) Is there one subject you would never write about as an author? What is it?**

Private information regarding my children. Their story isn't mine to share. They deserve to own their own truth and share with whomever they choose.

**9) What are you working on now? What is your next project?**

I'd like to continue to write inclusive books that explore real people and places.

**10) If you had a superpower, what would it be?**

To create peace and tolerance in the world.

**11) If you were a super hero, what would your name be? What costume would you wear?**

My name would be *Jumbo-Jumbo* and I'd wear sweat pants, flip-flops and a hoddie over a speedo.

**12) What secret talents do you have?**

I can do a flip turn like nobody's business.

I can also go into a public restroom stall with three children under 5-years-old successfully. If you don't have three children under 5 you'll just have to believe that balancing a baby on my lap while preventing the other two children from picking up previously fallen toilet paper off the floor is totally a talent!

**13) Where is one place you want to visit that you haven't been before?**

Oh this list is so long...

First stop is always family, but it'd be awfully nice to travel throughout Asia.

**14) Do you dream? Do you have any recurring dreams?**

I do! I dream wild and crazy dreams. They usually involve things like riding on the back of a crocodile in a sea of lava.

**15) If you were an animal in a zoo, what would you be?**

Had to ask the family for input on this one:

Isabella says, "an elephant"

Malik says, "a nice alligator."

Blu says, "a mama."

Vijay says, "a lioness."

I say, "a giraffe."

So there you have it.

**16) What is something you want to accomplish before you die?**

Life is so random. You just never know what's going to happen. Which is why I frequently say, "life is a happy crap shoot." I try to always appreciate the time I have and pack in as much as I can. I hope to see my children grow up and live content lives. If I can somehow help affect positive change in the world while I'm raising them, I'll be a happy camper.

**17) What was one of the most surprising things you learned in creating your books?**

That I, in fact, have created books.

**18) Do you have any suggestions to help me become a better writer? If so, what are they?**

Write, write, write and re-write. Your story is in there somewhere! You just have to get it out. It doesn't happen overnight.

**19) What is your favorite kind of food?**

Thai food! When I was pregnant I squashed morning sickness by eating a ridiculous amount of pad thai and panang curry!

**20) As a child, what did you want to do when you grew up?**

I wanted to live in the sea - as a mermaid. Doesn't everyone want to be a merperson?