

AN INTERVIEW

**"EMOTIONS SHOULD BE TALKED ABOUT. EVEN WITH TODDLERS."**

**SALOUA EL MOUSSAOUI**

*Author "Knuffeldief"*

**#She  
DIDIT**



# Read life, it's teaching you something

A mom of five, an author, a recruiter, pedagogies of the young child, and owner of Atelier Niyaah,..the multi-talented Saloua still had one thing she wanted to check off: become an author. When she was writing her student dissertation years ago, she wrote her first toddler book. In love with challenging her creative side, especially when holding a pen, she then didn't dare to explore the book market. So just as her dream, her book was put on the shelf awaiting its moment...

... then that day came. When she came across Studio Sesam's program to publish a book, no moment was spent to doubt. From the +250 applicants she joined the exclusive 9. A new experience that made her feel like a kid again, so exciting and exhilarating! Whenever she reads to pitter-patter humans, she loves how they get carried away in the fantasy of a story. Now it's her time to create a fantasy.

**Saloua strongly believes in writing stories that confront subjects of their daily live that help them grow.** It's a balanced give and take. Let's not get started about the lack of educational books for toddlers with diverse characters. And finally the moment came when she had her own book: Kruimeldief. A story about Ali's life experiences.



***“I write about emotions to open that type of conversation. We all have a story, baggage that we carry. How beautiful would it be if we learned from each other through our experiences in life?”***

— SALOUA EL MOUSSAOUI

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# Why are you the way that you are

Her book is truly loved by toddlers. But what makes Saloua's book a Catch in the Rye? The roots! Ali, the main character of her book, has Moroccan roots to underline how representation matters. Especially now that we have reached the 4th generation of children with Moroccan roots. Not only recognition by Moroccans is an aim, but every toddler should recognize him-/herself in Ali. With this objective in mind, she hopes to leave her mark in the world of toddlers.

Another important aspect of her book 'Knuffeldief' are the emotions at play. We are nowadays hyper focussed on tasks that toddlers' experiences of emotions are neglected. **We don't look for the reason why they are feeling the way they feel, and they themselves don't understand.** In her book, Saloua aims to tackle this issue by challenging the toddlers to think about what they experience through interactive questions. Luckily Ali's experiences are not over yet!

Besides her love for toddlers books, Saloua also uses stitch markers for knitting and crochet with Atelier Niyaah. She likes the fact that her stitch markers are handy, light, and beautiful while knitting or crocheting. A feeling she wanted to share with others. However, there were some who would rather use her stitch markers as earrings or as pendants for jewelry. So, she is still figuring things out. **When life gives you creativity, start a business.**





## **SALOUA'S 3 GOLDEN RULES**

**Believe in yourself!  
Whatever may happen,  
follow your intuition.**

**Be yourself and be proud  
of your roots.**

**Open yourself up for new  
things, even if they might  
look scary.**