

# The Ten Stages of Sourdough

(Or, a cautionary tale for fellow non-bakers feeling the sudden urge to bake)



**Stage 1: Boundless optimism**  
Got starter. It's bubbly. Let's go.



**Stage 2: Confusion**  
How exactly do you get the dough out of the bowl?



**Stage 3: Renewed optimism**  
Dough is back in a round-ish shape. I've got this.



**Stage 4: Creeping self-doubt**  
Kneading is hard. Tap in buddy. Why is most of the dough stuck to the counter?



**Stage 5: Rapid descent into madness**  
Kneading was an unexpected challenge for all involved.



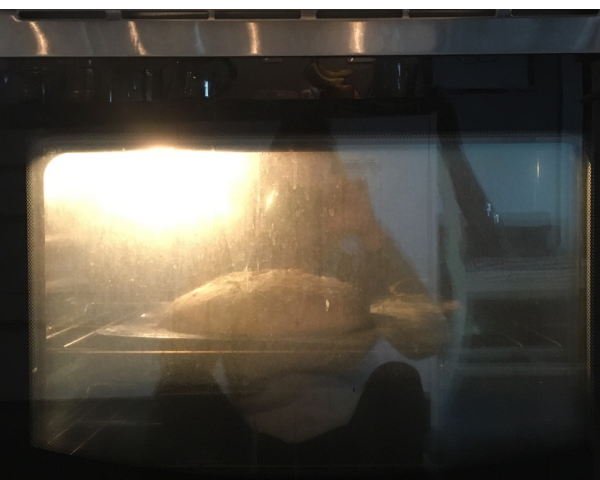
**Stage 6: False sense of security**  
Next morning. Dough actually rose! I'm a bread wizard.



**Stage 7: Utter despair**  
Flip dough onto counter and... it's completely fused to the towel. Shed a tear to two.



**Stage 8: Bargaining**  
Anna's recipe: *"The part that was at the bottom of the bowl now becomes the nice round top of the bread!"* Sure.



**Stage 9: Acceptance**  
Develop lots of empathy for Great British Baking Show participants.



**Stage 10: Success, redefined**  
Sourdough: just as delicious in flatbread form!