

# Dear Mama,

Let me start by saying hey, girl, heyyy!

Now let's go back to the day you found out you were pregnant when you had no plans whatsoever of becoming a mom. It may have been a moment of happiness and excitement, or it could've been a moment filled with nervousness and doubt. As I look back 8 years and reflect on the day that changed my life, all I can do is laugh. Now be mindful that on that day, my laughter wasn't joyous, it was more so nervous and a WTF moment. I saw a little pudge poking from my stomach that I deemed "happy weight," but my mother's facial expressions knew that it was a baby bump on the rise. (Literally)

At my 1st doctor's appointment, I learned I was 5 months pregnant, followed by "It's a boy." Still having a full-blown cycle, no morning sickness, and was a little fatigued, but I blamed it on working 2 jobs. It was so much happening at once. I didn't get to experience the feels of becoming a new mom and guessing the sex of the baby. It was straight to names and relying on my parents to help me get prepared because Lord knows I wasn't ready for this new journey life was preparing me for. I had so many questions: How do I swaddle a baby, to how am I going to stop the baby from crying, what if he doesn't like me, to how am I going to be able to afford everything? Often, the feeling of doubt would take over my mind, and I would question if I would even be a good mother to my unborn son. Being in a tumultuous relationship didn't help the feeling that I was having, and my desire to be a mom continued to dwindle. But I knew I had to buckle my seat belt and put on my big girl britches.



Here we are 8 years later, and I can say I love being a mother. Is it always easy? Of course not! But having the opportunity to raise a little person that's going to make a change in this world is something I wouldn't trade for anything. For all the mothers who have/had doubts about becoming a mother during pregnancy and even after, I'm here to let you know to breathe! Take it one day at a time. The journey will forever be unfolding itself, so here are some reminders to consider:

- Give yourself grace. (DO NOT think twice about it)
- Do what you feel is best for your child, not what others think you should do.
- Meditate, journal & pray daily. (If not all three, start with one)
- Make time for YOU! (You can't be the best mom to your child if you're not showing up for yourself.)

I am proud of you; I'm proud of us!

We are superheroes, and no matter what the journey entails, stay grounded in your solitude.

Continue to cultivate positive energy so that you can flourish effortlessly.

  
Ashlei

