



Kelly Rowland

No Child's Play

As Told To NINA HEMPHILL REEDER

Motherhood is hard work. Even celebrities such as Kelly Rowland aren't immune to the struggles, stresses and diaper mishaps that come with the territory. Author of the newly released book Whoa, Baby! A Guide for New Moms Who Feel Overwhelmed and Freaked Out (and Wonder What the #\$& Just Happened), Rowland shares her story of what (and who) actually pulled her through the darkest, most depressing parts of her new-mom journey.*

Motherhood is one of the most beautiful things one can experience. It teaches you so much about yourself and the kind of mother you want to be. But I'll concede that being a mother isn't always easy work. For me, the pregnancy was easy; the work started when the baby actually got here.

I remember having the toughest time getting my son, Titan, to latch on. Breast-feeding was really hard for me. They said, "Oh, you're not feeding your baby. You're starving [him]." That really gave me anxiety. Every time I thought I was feeding my baby, I wasn't; there wasn't enough milk coming. I put a lot of pressure on myself because at the time I didn't want to do formula. I remember crawling into bed one day and just crying.



In her new book, Rowland shares the highs and "whoas" of being a first-time mother.

There were so many other things I struggled with postpartum. For example, after I had Titan, I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, how am I going to get this weight off?' For a second, I grew frustrated with myself. But the toughest moment—the one when I wanted to scream the loudest—was when I lost my mother. This was the woman who was going to teach me how to be a mother, and I lost her three weeks after I had Titan.

I remember not wanting to be sad in front of him; I didn't want to pass off those emotions and that energy to him. When I had to cry, I cried. When I was out of my crying, I just wanted to be happy for the sake of my son. I put myself in this happy, happy place. I would listen to Pharrell's "Happy." I would almost psych myself out. I kept thinking about life and how God has his plan. I wanted to be in a constant place of gratitude—grateful for my child; grateful for my mother; grateful for our home; and grateful for my husband. My husband, Tim, was everything I've prayed and asked God for.

I'm also so thankful for my sisters and my girlfriends. It was perfect, actually, having girlfriends who'd either just had a baby or had kids. If I had any questions, it didn't matter what time of day or night, they were there. They always kept me calm and sane. It was a blessing that I had them there to tell me their own stories and offer words of encouragement.

Perhaps the realest piece of encouragement I got was the advice to handle everything one day at a time because each day is going to throw you something even crazier than the last. On most days, it's not necessarily something like the baby pooping on you—which has happened to me—but I have learned that taking things one day at a time can help eliminate all those pressures we moms sometimes put on ourselves.

Until I became a mother, I didn't know I had patience. And I now sometimes find myself emulating my own mother, even singing to my son some of the same songs she used to sing to me. My mother loved so hard. She just wanted me to be happy. She wanted me to live my best life, and that's all I want for my son.

Yes, I'm ready to do it again when the time comes. And I can't lie, there are so many things I have on the table that I want to get done before having another child. But I am looking forward to being an auntie to Beyoncé's twins. It's just going to be beautiful because now I get to do it again and be that support with her babies.

