

Let Dad figure out his new role

Dear new mumma,

Congratulations! Welcome to the adventure called motherhood. It's an adventure filled with all sorts of excitement, exhaustion, fun, frustration and joy. Right now I can imagine you're wondering when you'll ever sleep again, or when you can sit without pain again.

You're probably also wondering where the manual for your baby is, and why official training isn't a prerequisite to caring for this tiny human. At least, that's what went through my mind after my first baby arrived. After bringing three small humans into the world, here are some things I've learned along the way:

1. You will never have this moment again. This is something I wish I had paid more attention to with my first baby. Despite the exhaustion, the never-ending feeds, puke and nappy changes, this is a precious time for your new little family. Savour the snuggles and take the selfies (you'll wish you had later).
2. This too shall pass. Each stage is only that - a stage. Eventually they'll sleep for longer stretches, become more efficient at feeding and even begin to smile and interact with you. So when you are death staring your husband as he sleeps while you're up with the baby, remember that this stage will pass but a jail sentence won't.
3. Parenting is humbling. We can't do it by ourselves. We aren't meant to do it by ourselves. Ask for help, or at least if it's offered accept it. Let that grandmother in the check-out line hold the baby so you can find your purse on what was supposed to be a 'quick trip' to the shops. Let your mother-in-law do your ironing. Look up mother's groups nearby - your baby might sleep through it but you'll feel so much better for having had adult conversation.
4. Dads work too. By work, I mean are capable of caring for your tiny human. Sure, he may do things differently than you, but that's ok. He's not you. But he is just as invested in your little one - he just might show it differently. The best thing you can do for your baby is let them be with Dad, and to let Dad figure out his new role. It doesn't matter if they bond over fast jets and Under oath (until bub starts repeating the lyrics), let them find their own groove.
5. Babies bounce. Once you're holding your little one, regardless of the kind of delivery you had, you realise that these tiny humans are tougher than we give them credit for. You will make mistakes - just like every single other parent throughout history. Don't get hung up on the mistakes. Just learn from them and keep rolling. Because your little one certainly will!

There is so much ahead of you, it's so easy to get caught up in the what-ifs and what-about. Don't worry about those. Sometimes just making it to the end of the day is good enough. Tomorrow is a new day. And before you know it, it will be your turn to pass on your thoughts and experiences to a scared, excited new mumma just starting on her journey of motherhood.

All my love, Your fellow adventurer.