Vow to a Baby

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This past June I was fortunate to be invited to a remarkable celebration: a ceremony to welcome and bless a lovely baby girl, Noa-Lena. Like most powerful rituals it included words, song, symbols, flowers, laughter and some tears. Guests of all ages were invited to write out a wish for the little girl to be included in a book she could have and read later in life.

The one thing that stood out for me and that I thought other *Island Parent* readers might be inspired by was the vow that the mother read out to the wee daughter wriggling and cooing in her arms. There was a palpable power in what she shared. I thought of the words of Goethe:

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back…. The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred… all manner of assistance which no person could have dreamed would have come their way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."

Parenting is not for sissies. As parents we do hard; we *can* do hard. When we set an intention, our actions automatically yearn towards that intention. So for Kelly to set such a loving, practical and expansive intention to love her daughter to the best of her ability is inspiring and a call to a dynamic, life-serving, parent-child relationship.

My dearest Noa-Lena,

I promise to never give you reason to question my unconditional love for you.

I promise to hold your hand when you are learning to walk and later in life when you are unsure about any of life's challenges and you need guidance.

I promise to give you cuddles whenever you want regardless of time, need or your age.

I promise to let you run in the rain and play in mud puddles. I will even do it with you.

I promise to let you play dress-up in my clothes and make-up but will also teach you how to wear it properly when you are older.

I promise to teach you about the value of money and saving for your future.

I promise never to do anything for you that I know you are capable and strong enough to do on your own.

I promise to teach you to skate - not figure skating, but power skating.

I promise to let you play any sport you want and you can play with the boys too.

I will teach you to do crafts, grow a garden, sew on a button, use a drill and do the laundry…but for cooking you will have to ask your dad.

I promise to love your dad and to show you how much I love him on a daily basis.

We promise to avoid arguing with each other in front of you and to do our best to show you that we can disagree without being disagreeable.

When you and I don't see eye to eye, I promise to try hard to see things from your perspective and to take time to consider this before talking to you.

I promise to dance with you anytime, anywhere, and in any style, and to teach you not to be embarrassed to do it.
I promise to let you have at least 3 food fights at home in your lifetime…as long as you help clean up.
I promise to respect your secrets.
I promise to do everything within my power to protect you from physical harm, and everything within my power to teach you to overcome any emotional hurt.
I promise to make a special moment for you, every single day to let you know how much I love you.
I promise to sneak in and kiss you when you are sleeping – even when you are 18.
I promise to try and be the best female role model in your life.
I promise to support all your passions and the adventures they take you on. And then I promise not to complain when you actually follow them.
I promise to be thankful that you are my daughter every, single day and also to show you just how thankful I am.
I love you so very much.
Your mother.