When you find out that you are going to be a parent, many emotions go through your mind: euphoria, trepidation, joy. Will I be a good parent? Can I provide the guidance, love, financial support? Will I be a good role model for another human being? You look to your own failings… worried they will pass on to your child. But these things are blown into insignificance when the child is born…when you hold your new born child in your arms, it clutches your finger… holds on tight. Life becomes a learning curve for you as well as for the child you bring up; the highs, the lows, the laughter and the tears. As your children grow, you find yourself growing too. You realise aspects of yourself that you never knew you had, never knew existed. There is no greater gift than when your children bring their own children into the world and you can watch them proudly do what you did. Parenting has so many emotions, happiness, disappointment, pride, frustration but I would not change any of it.

What I expected of parenthood… well to be honest I never really had many expectations. Everyone always said different things. I knew it would be hard… giving up work, only having one income coming in, the sleepless nights. Would I be able to cope every single day? Would I be able to bring them up properly…teaching them right from wrong, getting them through school and getting good grades. Teaching them valuable life skills. Did we need a bigger house? A bigger car? I wouldn’t be able to go out with my friends as often. I’d have to become more responsible.

But now I’m a parent to three wonderful kids who I love with all my heart… all those expectations, although true, I needn’t have worried, as all three have turned out undamaged and are their own people with their own personalities and opinions. Yes, there have been tough times… a bigger house and car *was* needed… kids don’t come cheap either. But you learn to cope with the dirty nappies, the broken sleep patterns and the lack of money, the temper tantrums and stroppy teenage years.

The joy of knowing you have created this little person… this person you have nurtured, loved and helped grow into the wonderful adult they are today. I know parenthood can be tough but I wouldn’t change my three for the world. Parenthood is like a book – lots of surprises, you never know what’s going to happen in each chapter.