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Since losing her beloved mother at age 60, actress and author **Elisabeth Rohm** has become passionate about health—for herself and her 3-year-old daughter.

by CHRIS MANN

I Healthy PASSIONS

She rose to prominence as outspoken, socially conscious Assistant District Attorney Serena Southerlyn for four seasons on “Law & Order.” But when Elisabeth Rohm left the hit NBC series in 2005, she found a deeper, more profound voice within—as a writer, health advocate and, with the birth of daughter Easton in April 2008, as a mom. While juggling movie and TV appearances, including a gig last year on the final season of NBC’s “Heroes,” Rohm, 37, published her first novel, *Nerissa*, while raising her voice for cervical cancer awareness and embarking on a full-time journey of discovery with her baby girl. Sadly, during this creative and maternal period, Rohm suddenly lost her best friend, mother Lisa Loverde—a former scriptwriter for the long-running soap “Guiding Light.” Loverde passed in November 2009 from a heart attack at age 60 after struggling with weight-related health issues. But her mother’s “life force,” Rohm says, remains a daily presence in her life, even inspiring her to partner this year with the American Heart Association’s Go Red campaign for women’s heart-health awareness.

Rohm’s healthy, active lifestyle and zest for learning serves as a testament to her mother’s spirit and as an example to her daughter, who often ventures with Mom on nature hikes. An investor in the Brentwood, Calif.-based gym Circuit Works, founded by personal trainer Raphael Verela, the 5’ 8” actress juggles daily workouts and a gig as “spokesmom” for Juno Baby’s line of children’s products, with careers on camera and behind the scenes. This year, she has three high-profile films slated for release: the indie comedy-drama “Chlorine;” the Joel Silver-produced thriller “Transit;” and the John Singleton-directed drama “Abduction,” in which Rohm plays mom to “Twilight” heartthrob Taylor Lautner. In this exclusive interview with *Wellbella*, the actress opens up about her healthy passions (she loves eating raw!) and the special mother-daughter connection.

KIMBERLY METZ

wb | You recently blogged about embracing change. How have you changed since Easton was born?

er | Easton is helping me time-manage in a way that's made me 1,000 times more efficient than I ever was before. Because I have to be so focused on her during the day, when I find the time to work I'm much clearer on what I need to accomplish. She helps me get rid of the fluff.

I love hanging out with Easton. Today we're taking a hike. One of my New Year's resolutions was that she and I would have a physical activity at least once a week that we do together. So I'm not just sending her to ballet or gymnastics or horseback riding—we're participating in an athletic, outdoorsy life together so both of us can be healthy.

wb | You and your late mother had a special bond, too. How has she inspired you?

er | In every way. Even today, without her being here, she is the life force inside of me—just like I hope Easton will feel I am for her. I feel her every day and think of her all the time. I miss talking to her. My mom was my best friend. She was a single mother so we were very, very close. We talked on the phone every day. She was a writer, an artist, and she was very spiritual. The bond between a mother and daughter is very, very profound. If you're up for the job and really love being a mother, it's a bond that will never break.

wb | And now you're sharing this connection with other women.

er | Because I lost my mom at the age of 60, I'm incredibly conscious of my health. I went this year and did my annual checkup and did my EKG and tested my cholesterol. I've partnered with the Go Red campaign to bring awareness to women about how to take care of themselves and their hearts, and live a life that's supportive of that.

wb | What lifestyle changes have you made?

er | I've started eating differently. I'm having more fruits and vegetables, and being conscious of what's happening with my body. I'm very athletic but as far as food goes, I was more flexible in having my cheeseburgers and fries. Now I'm doing that less. I'll be 40 in three years. I've always done an annual exam, but now I'm much more like, *OK, I need to do an EKG and make sure there are no irregularities*. These are our lives we're talking about. We don't want to lose the ones we love, or leave behind the people we love.

wb | What motivated you to lose the 70 lb of pregnancy weight?

er | I admit I loved being pregnant and hibernating like a bear and eating and taking a nap or taking a long stroll at the beach and having an ice cream. My pregnancy was totally blissful. Those 70 lb were not a result of me being unhappy; they were a result of me taking a bite out of life and the local ice cream shop. But at the end it wasn't healthy for me or my heart.

wb | So you really lost this weight from a healthy place?

er | Yes. I've always been athletic and weighed about 150 lb. I've never been a skinny, small girl. I know what my healthy body

weight is. We all have a different blueprint. Being skinny isn't a goal; being fit is a goal. Being healthy is a goal. It took me a year and a half to lose the weight. I did it gradually. I wasn't going to be neurotic about it and beat myself up over it. I didn't feel bad putting on the weight, and I didn't feel bad trying to get it off. My goal was to be happy and healthy.

I know what my healthy body weight is Being skinny isn't a goal; being fit is a goal. Being healthy is a goal.

wb | What's your diet like now?

er | Recently I went raw for two months, and I loved it. I feel it's impossible to do it with a young child, for whom I want to roast chickens and make lasagna. But it really did change me. Again I lost weight. Now I would say I'm 70% raw: I'm raw in the morning and at lunch, and then at night I'm making something warm and comforting.

wb | What's a typical raw day like for you?

er | I juice kale and carrots and cucumbers and spinach and berries. I make yummy juice in the morning. If I go to work out, I might grab a banana or have nuts. I eat a ton of nuts—raw, not roasted. Then I'd have a salad with everything in it for lunch: kale, greens, pine nuts, mushrooms, peppers—a cacophony of vegetables. I love raw hummus! And I'll have sashimi. The only things I don't eliminate are rice and grains. Dinner might be stir-fry. We're now eating meat again. It wasn't a moral issue; it was more that just eating raw felt so good.

wb | You're passionate about fitness. Tell us about your workout.

er | In the last four years I've been working with Raphael Verela doing circuit training. It really works for me. Pre-pregnancy I was really in great shape from it. And after I gave birth I felt like it was really doable, even though I had so much weight on me. So after my mother died—she had some weight issues—Raphael came to me and asked me if I wanted to pursue doing this together. I do his class three to five times a week. I like to throw in a daily run, and I like to hike.

wb | What are some benefits of circuit training?

er | What I love about it is that you can start at your own level. You do a minute of cardio and then a minute of bands or weights. If you have a lot of weight on you and you're taking it slow, you can do a minute of walking and then a minute of light reps of arm raises or bicep curls. It gets more complex as you're able to handle it. Since you're doing nothing longer than a minute, you don't become so exhausted. Yet an hour has passed and you've really worked out and broken a sweat. You'll be like, *That was a real workout!*

elisabeth's favorites



Springtime activity:

Hiking. I love being outside.



Healthy, energizing snack:

Almonds



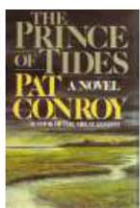
Activity with daughter at playtime:

She's sort of my pal all the time! And I'm a fan of Juno Baby and Juno Junior. The music is a great way for her to learn. I found that she really gained the ability to express herself.



Beauty product:

I love everything made with coconut.



Favorite book:

That's a tough one! *The Prince of Tides* is a classic that I always turn to.



"Me" activity:

In terms of well-being, it's getting a massage.



Online activity:

I'm on Facebook and Twitter. I love keeping in touch with people.



RIGHT: KIMBERLY NETZ