



Healing Together As A Couple

As a couple, you have lost your baby and both of you are feeling your pain. The pain of saying *good-bye* before you have had the chance to said *hello*. In addition, you have lost the future hopes and dreams you had for your baby. The death of someone you love is an experience that changes you forever and it takes time to understand and accept those changes.

- Each of you will live through the pain in your own unique way, using your own coping styles, and according to your own timetable.
- Couples often do not grieve at exactly the same time – while one grieves, the other can support and comfort the other -- Later the roles may reverse
- Because grieving styles are different, one partner may feel that the other did not care as much or is not grieving.
- Partners often look for meaning of the loss in their way. One may turn to faith, while the other may turn to something else.
- This is a difficult time for both of you. Remember, if your relationship was secure before the loss it can become a deeper relationship during this journey towards healing
- Your feelings of sadness are in part due to all the broken hopes and dreams. Each of you may have had different dreams for this special baby. Sharing your dreams may give you some insights into the feelings of the other
- It is OK to begin enjoying life after the death of a baby. Your baby would not want you to be sad the rest of your life. Sharing laughter and tears together helps each of you to heal.

Tips to Remember:

- When a baby dies, grief affects the couple at the same time. Unlike other life's stresses which do not always affect partners at the same time. Therefore, your closest support is not always able to respond to you because they are dealing with their own grief.
- Difficulties arise in the best of marriages/relationships. Keep talking to each other honestly about your needs and feelings.
- After a loss, the sexual relationship is also affected. Talk about your feelings openly. Remember that the human touch, i.e. hugging, holding, etc. can be healing during this time
- Everyone needs "private time" from time to time, especially during the grieving process to deal with private feelings and thoughts. Respect that and allow the needed time and space.



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How can we work together in order to get through this?

- ☛ Each of you may have different ideas about what to do with the baby's things, if you already have some. Talk about the differences, and try to compromise if you are able to do so.
- ☛ Seek out support (i.e. support/self-help groups, clergy, or professional counselors)
- ☛ Spend time together as a couple, and alone as needed
- ☛ Set a time aside to talk to each other every day – very often it is difficult to talk about the way you are feeling.
- ☛ Pray together, if that is your belief and it is comforting to both of you
- ☛ Give yourselves, and each other, time to adjust to the loss
- ☛ Your spouse / significant other does not have to be your only support.
- ☛ Consider remembering the baby with a new ritual – a way of saying “good-bye” while bringing you both comfort.
 - Planting a living memorial i.e. a tree, bush, or flower garden
 - Burning a candle at special time i.e. at mealtime.

How can we take care of our relationship and each other?

- ☛ Treat yourselves to a night out once in a while
- ☛ Take walks together
- ☛ Give each other back rubs
- ☛ Write love notes to each other
- ☛ Talk to each other about the feelings you have – and be accepting of their attitude.

Remember – Although you have lost your baby – You still have each other