

4 Ways Infertility Affects Marriage – How to Stay Connected

If infertility is affecting your marriage negatively, how do you stay connected as a couple? Here are four common effects of infertility on marriage, plus tips for staying close.

Before the tips, a quip:

“All married couples should learn the art of battle as they should learn the art of making love,” said Ann Landers. “Good battle is objective and honest—never vicious or cruel. Good battle is healthy and constructive, and brings to a marriage the principle of equal partnership.”

And, here are tips for infertile couples...

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1. Emotional disconnection. Many couples struggle because one partner wants to talk about feelings, while the other thinks there's nothing to talk about! Often, it's the husband who is emotionally distant. He may not feel there's anything to talk about, or he may be embarrassed or even ashamed if he's dealing with male factor infertility. She, on the other hand, needs to talk about the options, her feelings, his feelings, and their future.

To deal with emotional disconnection, talk about each partner's needs (I know that's easier said than done!). It may be helpful to see a counselor who has experience with [marriage and infertility](#).

2. Money, fertility treatments, and debt. Paying for IVF (in vitro fertilization) treatments, surrogacy, genetic testing, or simple fertility tests can put a strain on the strongest of marriages!

Two coping tips for money issues: 1) make a [financial budget for fertility treatments](#); and 2) decide as a couple if you're willing to go into debt to get pregnant. Be aware

that debt and finances brings another strain on your marriage, and work to stay connected as a couple.

3. Different family goals. I'm content if we never have kids – I'll be sad, but not devastated. My husband wants children more than I do; he'll feel the pain of a childfree life more than I will. Our different perspectives can lead to friction because we don't always agree on how far to go with infertility treatments.

Working this out is different for every couple coping with infertility, but the bottom line is that both partners must agree on their family goals. Compromise is inevitable, but it can lead to a stronger connection.

4. A stronger, healthier marriage because of infertility. Not all [couples coping with infertility](#) are destined for disconnection or divorce! Some actually learn to communicate better and get to know each other more deeply than if they'd never faced infertility. On one infertility message board, I read that a couple going through infertility “never splits up.” I don't think this is true, but I do believe that some couples are stronger because of infertility.