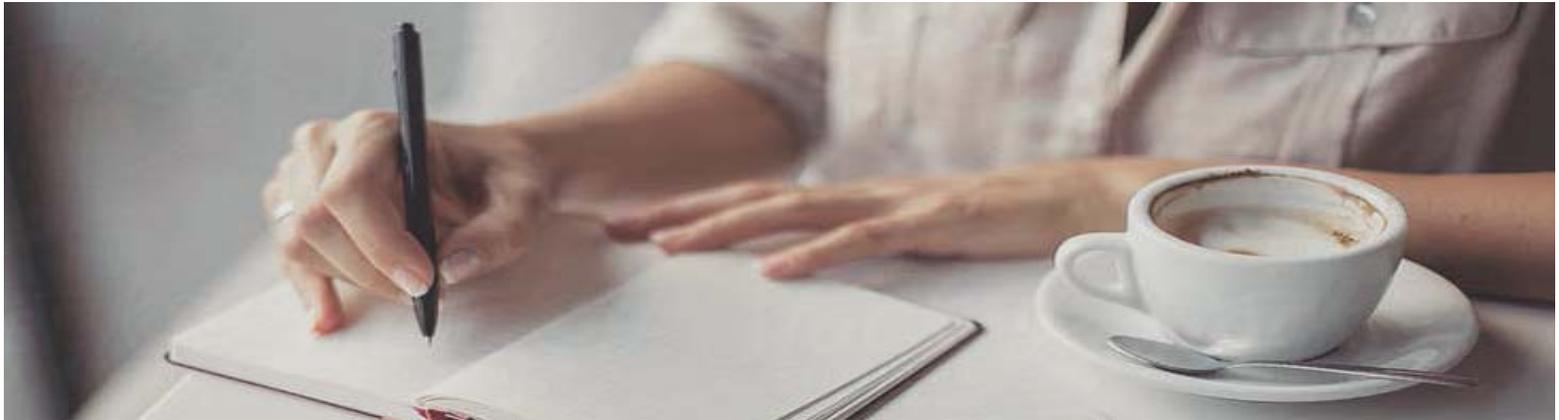


Emotional Support for Someone Going Through Fertility Treatment

Do you ever find yourself in a sticky situation around the topic of fertility? Here are 9 ways to reframe common pitfalls.



"I am sorry you're going through this"

Although this may seem like the right thing to say, pity is not what most women going through treatment want to hear. Instead, offer your presence. What this means: make sure the patient knows you are there for them every step of the way. Be a listener and let them tell you how they are feeling rather than you telling them what they should be feeling.

"It just wasn't meant to be. Take this as a sign. Maybe you should start to consider other options like adoption."

Avoid any type of jargon like this because adoption is not an option for everyone and can be a very sensitive topic. A patient going through the fertility process wants to have kids of their own so be supportive of their decision. In the end, it is going to be up to the patient whether they explore other options.

"Well you already have one kid do you really need another?"

Whether the patient wants one more kid or five more kids through the fertility process, it's not your place to tell them they can't or they shouldn't. If they express wanting another one be supportive of their decision and don't question their sadness when it comes to this topic.

"Do you think you're getting unsuccessful results because of your age?"

Although this may be an issue for some people, stay away from the topic of age. No one wants to be told they're too old when they have the dream of expanding their family. Remember that you're supposed to be the shoulder to lean on.

"You should be in no rush; you have so much time left to try."

Be careful who you are saying this to because some patients either don't have "so much time" left or personally feel like they don't have "so much time" left. Just remind yourself that the patient is going through this process because THEY feel like this is the right time in their life to go through with it. Be there to support their decisions and listen more than you talk.

"Just relax for now and enjoy your freedom while it lasts."

Telling anyone going through fertility treatment to relax may sound insensitive. As previously stated, if a patient is going through this process, they feel like it is the right time for them and are comfortable with giving up their "freedom" to start a family. If you catch yourself wanting to say anything along those lines, remind yourself that just being present for the patient is what counts more.

"Oh I didn't know you were trying to have multiples!"

It is a common myth that fertility patients always have multiples. This statement can be offensive for a patient and if this is something you're thinking of saying, stop, and consider how you are going to support them through their fertility treatment. One idea to show support could be to take an interest in the patient's journey and know when to invite them on a stress relieving activity or outing.

"You're going to get pregnant the minute you stop treatment. I just know it."

Take into consideration the patient's time and money spent going through this process before you say anything like this. Remind the patient about her strength and positive attributes they bring to the table and remind yourself that your role is to support the patient, not find solutions for them.

"I heard this thing on the radio..." "I read this thing online that can help." "My friend Sally said that she did this..."

Comparing one patient's experience with another patient's experience is not ideal. Every patient has a different battle they are facing and although two patients may both have endometriosis, it does not mean that both of their fertility treatments are going to be the same. Although, it is nice to know of things people have done to help their process along, some are myths and had no correlation to the success of the fertility treatment. One way to mention another patient's success or an article you read is to say, "Have you asked your physician about Sally's treatment protocol, I wonder what they would have to say about it." This may come across better than, "Remember what worked for Sally, it may work for you too."

All in all, the process of fertility treatment can be mentally, physically, and financially stressful. Each patient's experience will be different and sometimes, there won't be a reason why. Consider the mentality of the patient, whether it be your friend, family member, or significant other and try to remain connected.

For more information about fertility or to find a fertility specialist in your area, visit www.Fertilitylifelines.com.

References

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