



**Kristen
Adamson**
Public Figure

A Quick Guide: **Helping A Loved One With** **Fertility Problems**

Suggestions By:
Kristen Adamson

Table of Contents

How they're likely feeling.....Page 3
What they might be thinking.....Page 3
What you can likely expect from them.....Page 3
What they need from friends and family.....Page 4
What they do not need from friends and family.....Page 4
What about me?.....Page 5

About Kristen Adamson



After facing a stream of adversity, including being hit by a car and being diagnosed infertile, Kristen decided to take control of her life by transforming her body and mind and becoming a multidimensional public figure. Focused on inspiring & motivating others, it's Kristen's goal to help improve the quality of other people's lives. To do so, she devotes her time to writing about her adversities, demonstrating to others how they too can overcome their struggles and providing guidance and/or support to others in need. Kristen is also active in introducing others to the life-changing power of health and fitness.

To contact Kristen visit her website and her blog entitled 'Exhale & Elevate' at kristenadamson.com or email her at Kristen@kristenadamson.com. She can also be found online on Facebook, Pintrest, Google+, LinkedIn and Bodybuilding.com.

Disclaimer: Please note that I, Kristen Adamson, am not a medical professional. The suggestions and information in this quick guide are based on my own experiences as a diagnosed patient with Premature Ovarian Failure (POF), as well as based on conversations I've had with various other infertility patients, Doctors and specialists.

How they're likely feeling:

An infertility diagnosis, or any diagnosis that decreases one chance of naturally conceiving a child, is often hugely devastating. Because of the significance that society – and we as humans – place on procreating, many diagnosed patients are so deeply impacted that their reaction is identical to how it would be if there had been a death. They will quite literally mourn the loss of their future children.

It is also likely that the person who's been diagnosed will begin to doubt himself or herself as a man or a woman. Since providing the egg, the womb or the sperm is something that society tends to deem as our 'duty', it can often cause one to question their purpose when they cannot. Likewise, growing up, people tend to assume that having children is very easy. Between the excessive commercials about safe sex, the constant reminders from Doctors to use protection and the typical parent conversations regarding the 'birds and the bees', we tend to grow up fearing a child too early and never consider preparing ourselves for the possibility of not being able to conceive at all. This is why an infertility diagnosis can come as quite a shock.

What they might be thinking:

The diagnosed person will likely spend some time drowning in negative thoughts, some of which may include:

- I am worthless.
- What is the point in me being alive?
- Why would anyone ever love me?
- What does this even mean?
- Why me?
- This isn't fair.
- What did I do to deserve this?
- I am not a man/woman

Additionally, when they are around people who have recently become pregnant or have small children, they may think such thoughts as:

- I'm jealous.
- This isn't fair.
- Why do they get children and I don't?
- They didn't even want children as much as I ever did.
- Why are they trying to rub it in?
- I don't care or want to hear about their kids/pregnancy

What you can likely expect from them:

You can expect your diagnosed loved one to follow the standard five phases of the grieving cycle. However, please note that everybody takes different lengths of time to move through each phase, and each phase does not necessarily go in order. Many people will flip back and forth between phases until they reach acceptance.

The phases of the grieving cycle are as follows:

- Denial/Isolation
- Anger
- Bargaining

- Depression
- Acceptance

You can find more information about the grieving cycle online.

What they need from friends and family:

Naturally, loved ones often want to try and solve the problem. However, as family members and friends you must first accept that you cannot fix it. Infertility is rarely straightforward like a mathematical equation with one answer. Rather, it is a complex spider web of possible causes and possible solutions that need to be investigated and often paid for. Getting to the bottom of the diagnosis can be highly frustrating, very lengthy, extremely exhausting and quite expensive, so the best way to support your loved one is to simply be there for them or to help alleviate one of the above grievances.

Some emotional ways to help:

- Listen to your loved one and try not to come up with answers or solutions. Let them vent and know that you do not need to say anything.
- Remind them that you will be there every step of the way.
- Tell them that you know they are strong and that you know they will get through it – empower them.
- Let them cry when they need to.
- Encourage them to get social, or get out of the house, when you see they are isolating themselves.
- Remind them that this is not their fault.
- Suggest that they see a specialist to talk about their feelings and offer to attend with them for support.

Some practical ways to help:

- Consider buying your loved one a book about Infertility. Or do research of your own and share it with your loved one. ***Be cautious of doing this too early as it may overwhelm them.***
- Whisk away your loved one for a retreat (resort, spa etc.) to help reduce their stress levels and take their mind off of things.
- If you are able to, consider helping them to save money for their journey to getting children. Fertility treatments, procedures, medications, adoption processes etc. can be outrageously expensive.
- Drive them to and from their Doctor appointments where you can.

What they do not need from friends and family:

This is very important and often overlooked. Please pay careful attention, as there is some things you do not want to do around your loved one. Doing the following may cause them to go backwards in the grieving cycle, become overwhelmingly distraught, lash out or fall into depression.

Don't Make Jokes

Many people feel the need to alleviate the awkwardness resulting from such intimate and serious conversations as infertility. Therefore, they resort to making jokes such as, "You can have my kids" or "You wouldn't want kids if you knew how difficult they were..."

etc. These types of comments come across as inconsiderate and rude. They are not necessary and not helpful, so please refrain from making jokes around your loved ones.

Do Not Encourage Denial

The grieving cycle is delicate so it is important for you to realize that if your loved one is making strides, comments such as, "I'm sure none of this is true." Or "I think the Doctors are wrong" are counter-productive. The idea is to support your loved one in moving towards acceptance. Such statements could give them false hope, putting them back into the denial phase of the grieving cycle.

Avoid Belittling The Significance Of It

Some people on the outside will try to downgrade the significance of the problem for a few reasons:

- 1) They feel that the diagnosed patient is too much the center of attention
- 2) They're tired of hearing about the problem
- 3) They're trying to eliminate the loved one's worries by making the diagnosis seem less significant

As a result, some people will say things such as "suck it up" or "It's no big deal, science has come a long way so you'll be fine", which are not helpful at all. Similar to making jokes, these comments are inconsiderate and rude. Statements such as those above will likely prolong the grieving cycle or result in resentment towards you.

Don't Bombard Them With Questions

It's natural for loved ones to have questions. However, if you're constantly prying at the diagnosed person it can overwhelm them substantially – especially in the beginning. Either wait until you see them making good headway through the grieving cycle or space out your questions appropriately if you are looking for answers. Also, consider doing your own research or asking the diagnosed person if you can ask them some questions before you go ahead and do it.

Do Not Focus On How It Affects You

As a concerned family member or friend, you may find yourself grieving as well. However, do not under any circumstances try to turn the situation on yourself by saying such things as, "I can't believe I'll never be a [grandma, grandfather, father, mother...]" or "this affects me just as much as it affects you". This will almost surely result in resentment towards you and cause the diagnosed person to avoid you. Additionally, it will prevent them from being able to heal, as they will feel like a huge disappointment and failure.

What about me?

If you are personally having a difficult time with the diagnosis of your loved one with a fertility problem, do not ignore your emotions. Be aware that you too will need to go through the grieving cycle in order to reach acceptance. However, try your best to avoid saying anything that may make the diagnosed person feel like a failure. Remember that it is not their fault, it is just the cards they've been dealt.

***For more information or to contact Kristen directly, visit
www.kristenadamson.com***