

BEREAVEMENT AND THE COUPLES' RELATIONSHIP

TIPS IN COPING

- Your marital relationship is the most important relationship. Let it take precedence over all others.
- When a baby dies, the grief affects the couple at the same time. Other stresses in marriages usually don't impact on both simultaneously. Therefore, your closest support is not always able to respond to you as he/she is trying to deal with their grief too.
- Each person in the relationship will grieve in his or her own individual way. Learning to accept your spouses' way can be difficult.
- Difficulties can arise in the best of marriages. Keep working at communicating your needs emotionally.
- Your spouse doesn't have to be your sole supporter.
- There could be stresses on your sexual relationship. Communicate openly your feelings. Remember human touch and hugs can be healing.
- Each person in a relationship may need some privacy with his or her feelings. Respect each other and give the space needed.
- Each person who has experienced a loss is not the same person they were before their baby died. It may take time to accept and understand these changes.
- Each of you will search for the meaning of your loss, one may turn to faith, and one may not.
- It is okay to enjoy life. Your baby doesn't expect you to be sad all the time. Sharing laughter and tears together help you to heal. Search for some relaxing things to do, it helps give you a new perspective.
- This is a difficult time for both. Remember if your relationship was secure prior to your loss it can become a deeper relationship during your healing.
- Each may feel different regarding the choices of your child's memorabilia. Talk about your differences and if able work out a compromise.
- Your losses are from broken hopes and dreams. Each person may have had different dreams for this special baby. Sharing your dreams could give you some insights into each other's feelings.

WAYS TO SURVIVE AS A COUPLE

- Seek an outside peer support group, clergy or professional help.
- Take time for each other.
- Set a time to talk each day.
- Work on your communication skills.
- Pray together.
- Give yourselves the time needed to adjust to your loss.

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