

SISTERS *in loss*

Road to Healing



**A E-book Guide to Healing from
Pregnancy and Infant Loss and Infertility**

Welcome Sister in Loss,

I am so sorry for your loss. I am not sure what brought you to me, but I'm thankful that you are here to learn, grow, and heal.

Please know that the pain you are feeling is real, your loss is real, and you and your baby matter. God did not bring you to this e-book by accident, and you my Sister in Loss are loved, valued, resilient, and phenomenal.

All of those tears you cried did not go unnoticed and all those prayers you prayed have been heard. I am not sure if you know Jesus Christ as your personal savior or if you have not prayed in a long while. No matter what your story is, God brought you to me for you to read this e-book, and give you a roadmap for healing.

I started Sisters in Loss because I needed an outlet, a community of sisters who knew the pain I felt was real. I needed an outlet to express how my faith was shattered after my loss, and how I did not know how to exactly pray. I needed to know that God heard me even though I was mad and angry at him for taking my children so soon.

This e-book is for you my Sister in Loss to lay a foundation, a roadmap toward healing, gain clarity and peace, and become victorious after loss.

I have put together prayers, a devotional, and action plan for you to begin your healing now. Do not wait any longer to heal your broken heart. My prayer is that God touches you with his word, fills your heart with joy, and you find hope and peace after loss.

I love you, Mean it!

You Sister in Loss,
~Erica M. McAfee

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Moving from Grief to Grace

I lost my father at the tender age of 14, weeks before I started high school. I was daddy's little girl and always wanted to be with him. My fondest memories of him are spending time at my grandparent's home, his loving care of my sister and I, he always made a snack for us when we came home from school before he went to work the graveyard shift, my parents always doing things together, and always taking pride in caring for our home. I went throughout high school and college without truly coping with grief. I never took the time out to process my feelings. I just kept moving along and staying busy. Don't get me wrong, I went to counseling sessions after my father died, but I built up a wall that was hard to break down.

Losing my dad at such a young age impacted me significantly as an adult. It took leaving home after college, and moving away ~1500 miles by myself for me to face the reality that I would never see my father again. I was by myself so I had no choice, but to grieve and let those built-up feelings go. I started to read more about grief and how to process my feelings. I joined a Bible Study (shout out to [Bible Study Fellowship](#)) and was among other women believers who helped me see that God did not leave me. I saw a therapist/grief counselor to help me gain clarity and break down those walls that I continued to build. I had to learn how to praise God even though I would never understand why my father died.

I share this story to tell you grief is a process. It is a journey that you will never “get over.” Going from grief to grace is being able to bring your grief to God and trusting him to help you through it. God's Grace is what is going to get you through this grief journey, you must trust him!



Here are three ways to move from Grief to Grace:

Grieve – Take the time to grieve. Do not hold back. Don't wait almost 9 years after your loved one passed like I did with my father to grieve. Let everything you are feeling out. Maybe you journal or blog? Maybe you express yourself through the arts? Maybe you are transparent on social media about the grief process and how you are doing on this journey? Ecclesiastes 3:1-4, says "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance." There is a time for everything and just like Grief has 5 stages you may be in your time of weeping and mourning. Baby, I am here to tell you that laughing and dancing will come. However, if you deny or repress your pain it can lead to further emotional problems. If you feel like you are stuck and need help expressing your feelings seek a therapist or grief coach to help guide you. Contact [me](#) for more information on counseling/coaching.

Believe – We may never understand why God called your loved one home, but we do understand his promise. He says in 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 "All praise to the God and Father of our Master, Jesus the Messiah! Father of all mercy! God of all healing counsel! He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so we can be there for that person just as God was there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of his healing comfort-we get a full measure of that, too." Believe that God will be alongside you to comfort you during these hard times. You never know how your journey and story can inspire and bless someone else along the way.

Receive – God desires to give us comfort, but we must reach out and accept it. We must pray and meditate on his word so we can find peace in his presence. In Psalms 147:3 "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." God wants to comfort you and put his arms around you to console you. You must be open to receive his love.

What has God told you on this grief journey? Have you lost your belief in Christ? Have you stopped going to church?

Learning How to Grieve a Miscarriage, Infant or Child Loss, or Stillbirth:

Processing the Loss!

If you are reading this it is because you have recently lost your baby or have never properly grieved your loss. Please remember there are no timetables for grief. Losing a child by way of miscarriage, infant or pregnancy loss, child loss, or stillbirth is the most devastating and traumatic experience that a parent can go through. A piece of you is missing and you are forever changed.

How do we begin to process our loss? There is no right or wrong way to do so. Grief has no timetable. The question then becomes how to process our loss to make it more manageable over time?

First, there are no timetables for grief. There is a quote that I post often to Instagram that “Grief is like the ocean, it comes in waves, ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.” What I love about this quote is that we are all learning how to swim on this new wave of life.

Secondly, grief cannot be avoided, ignored, or put away. You must go through it in order to emerge on the other side. As much as you may not be able to believe it now, your grief will shift and become less all-consuming as time goes by, and you will smile and find joy again. But right now if you are reading this and wondering how I process my loss, you must allow your heart, mind, and body to grieve.



Thirdly, grieving requires patience and acceptance. Be gentle and patient with yourself and your family. Allow yourself to cry, to grieve, and to retell stories as often as needed and for as long as you need to. You will never forget your Angel baby; they will always be in your heart and memories for as long as you live.

Sister in Loss Action Items to Process the Loss:

- Begin to Journal your Feelings. Sometimes its easier to write and journal down what you are thinking and feeling rather than explaining them.
- Seek therapy when you feel that your grief is becoming too difficult to bear. I am available for coaching if you need someone to talk to.
- Join the '[Sisters In Loss FB Community and Support Group](#)'. This is a group of women who will pray for you and encourage you through your loss and grief and healing journey.

Learning How to Grieve a Miscarriage, Infant or Child Loss, or Stillbirth:

Journaling to Prayer and Praise

If there is one thing I would recommend for someone who is grieving, it is journaling. Keeping a grief journal helps with healing by providing an avenue to pour out your innermost pain and feelings. That pain you write and pour out will lead to you a sense of comfort, ease, peace, and understanding that God did not leave you in your loss.

A grief journal helped me pour my heart out to God to ask "why" and "why me". It also helped me turn my pain into prayer and praise because through the words I poured out on paper God revealed to me his purpose through my loss.

How do you begin to journal your feelings?

First, set aside a specific time to write. Find a pen and a notebook and start writing. If you are unsure what to write about, start with your name, the date, day, time of day, and where you are. Start with Dear God and state how you feel.

Secondly, write about what is happening around you. You can write about the history up until where you are in the exact moment. Or you can break it down in small chunks of time.

Lastly, end each journal session on a positive note. Pray and let God know through your writing what you are grateful for (Sunny Day, Life, Health, Smile, Kind Gesture from Stranger, etc..). Close your journal and put it away until your next session.

Journaling is not easy for everyone. So, for those of you who are stuck here are 3 suggestions for you to get out of a writer's block.

First, just write it down, whatever is coming up for you, whatever you are stuck on. Just write it down. Even if you find yourself writing the same thing over and over again, that is OK. You will begin to shift your grief.

Secondly, sometimes journaling can be challenging and difficult. Stop where you are and come back to journaling at another time.

Lastly, sometimes it takes to empty your heart out on the page by getting in a quite place or near water. For me whenever I am stuck I journal before bed and when I wake up. These are the times my mind wonders the most and getting the thoughts out before bed leads to me having a more peaceful sleep. Also, as soon as I wake up, writing out the thoughts of my dreams allows me to begin the day fresh.

Learning How to Grieve a Miscarriage, Infant and Child Loss, and Stillbirth:

Finding Passion After Loss

After journaling and therapy I began to rediscover myself and who I was after loss. After all, I was not the same Erica before losing two angels, I was different. I was getting better, but I was different. I wanted to find my passion for life again. I began to ask myself 3 questions about moving on with my life and finding my passion for life again. I had to make a choice between define, destroy, and drive.

Will this loss define me?

Will this loss destroy me?

Will this loss drive me?

What would your angel baby want for you? What will you choose? For most of us, it would be the latter.

For me I knew that this loss was a part of my story and it wasn't a part of my journey that I could erase. I wanted it to define who the "new" Erica was and not destroy who the "old" Erica I thought to be. This loss ended up driving me to help other women who have felt this pain. It is the reason why I started the Sisters in Loss Podcast.

I encourage you to answer these 3 questions to find yourself and your passion after loss.

Will this loss define me?

Will this loss destroy me?

Will this loss drive me?

What would your angel baby want for you? What will you choose? For most of us, it would be the latter.

Learning How to Grieve a Miscarriage, Infant or Child Loss, and Stillbirth:

Living Your Purpose

Losing a baby unfortunately reminds us that life is finite. We have to find our passion to live out our purpose.

We all have a purpose here on earth. What's yours? Finding your passion is directly related to doing the things that light you up and set your soul on fire. If it makes you happy to sing, write, and build things then go do it! You are worthy to walk into your purpose and live your life without the guilt of having lost a child. You have to give yourself permission to move on guilt free.

Honor your angel baby's memory. Find a cause or organization that is related to your babies interests. Volunteer; host a fundraiser in their name. Or you could even start a foundation in their name.

If you've experienced a loss, I encourage you to allow yourself to grieve, get professional help, if needed, be present for your family, and take care of yourself.

Most importantly, remember that loss does not have to equal lost. You are powerful! You are worthy! You are not what you have been through.



How does Miscarriage affect Marriage?

Back in January 2012 when my husband Brandon and I got married we did not know that we would end up pregnant a few months later. We had a wedding in May 2012, baby shower in November 2012, prepared our first born's room, and left the hospital empty handed in December 2012. This was all in our first year of marriage. I would be dishonest if I did not say that this rocked our marriage. Losing a child is one of the hardest things a couple will go through. It will either draw you closer together or further apart. For us, it did both. It drew us closer together because we felt broken from losing our son. We both questioned God. We both knew we needed help. We went to counseling and did what the therapist told us, but honestly I hated going. I hated having my marriage scrutinized by someone who never lost a child. I hated the feeling that I did something wrong to make my baby die. How my loss drew us further apart is me not wanting to stay in counseling, and being in denial I needed help. I felt God was punishing me for bad choices in my 20's. I felt abandoned by God. I felt my husband did not understand my pain.

How could I carry a child for almost 10 months and not come home with that baby? How could my husband understand what it is like to carry and grow a baby, feel him move and kick, and for that to be taken all away? How could I continue in my marriage when I'm so frustrated with God and grieving? After our second loss our marriage had gotten better with the help of a different therapist. Even after having our rainbow baby and him being diagnosed with cerebral palsy we still have some trauma we are working through with a therapist. But, we continue to stay committed, fight together instead of each other, and give each other grace because we have a bigger purpose as a Kingdom couple.

Miscarriage affects Marriage in so many ways and here are 5 Do's and Don'ts to ensure you and your spouse fight and stay together.

- **Communication** - Do listen for understanding. Don't listen to just respond.

Marriage is hard and some days are harder than others. Communication and understanding is what will get you from one day to the next. Don't listen to your

spouse just to respond back. Do listen for understanding and acknowledgement of their feelings. One of my biggest lessons learned is how we grieved differently and communicated our feelings differently.



- **Meeting Each Other's Needs** – Do make time to connect. Don't just assume connection will take place.

Having a loss affects intimacy. Sometimes women don't want to connect with their spouses out of fear of getting pregnant and experiencing another loss. Schedule time to connect with your spouse intimately. I'm not just referring to sex, but really developing a deeper connection with him. Don't just assume your intimate moments will take place you have to create them and be intentional. Give yourself some time, absolutely, but don't give up on intimacy altogether. Allow this loss to bring you and your spouse together-not push you apart.

- **Dealing with Other People** – Do tell people in your own time about your loss. Don't assume they know your story and triggers.

If there is one thing I hated the most about losing babies is announcing to the world I lost a baby. I had to take time to process my loss, journal, and really grieve. Take your time telling people about your loss. Don't assume that everyone knows you are no longer pregnant or that your baby did not come home from the hospital. Please take your time announcing on social media or to your family and discuss your feelings with your spouse. When you both are ready then let others know your story. Also, many people may not be aware bringing a baby around or seeing a pregnant friend is a trigger for you. Give them some grace as they may not know your loss story.

- **Deciding to Try Again** – Do get the approval from your OB/GYN and therapist. Don't go into another pregnancy without help.

I went into my second pregnancy hopeful that I would bring my baby girl Brielle home. When I miscarried her at 18 weeks I felt even more broken. I was still grieving the loss of my son Brandon Jr. How could I be ready to handle another pregnancy? Losing Brielle made me sit down and realize I needed help. I made sure to get checked out by the OB/GYN and waited their recommended length of time. I also made sure we both were in a good place with the therapy we were receiving.

- **Keeping God as the Center** – Do worship together, pray together and for each other, and keep God the center. Don't leave God out of your marriage after loss. God should remain the center.

Most of you may know my husband is a Pastor so keeping God as the center is apart of his calling. However, when loss comes so does the devil who tries to literally break up what God joined together. To keep God as the center you first have to have a relationship for yourself. Remember when I told you I questioned God? I had to have some difficult conversations with God to get to a place where I wanted to continue to worship and praise him. I needed him to prepare my heart for another baby. I needed him to strengthen my husband and our marriage. I couldn't give up on God. Don't leave God out of your marriage after miscarriage or loss. He should remain center and you have to continue to develop a relationship with him yourself and as a couple.

Living through a miscarriage or loss tests your marriage. You can either choose to stay together or drift further apart. I pray these Do's and Don'ts help you and your spouse as you continue to fight for your marriage and be the Kingdom Couple God has destined you to be.

5 Ways to Manage Grief Triggers After Pregnancy Loss

Do you know what a Grief Trigger is?

According to the [Cope Foundation](#): A grief trigger can be anything that brings up memories related to your loss. They may be obvious and easy to anticipate – like a birthday or a holiday – or they may surprise you – like spotting someone who looks like your loved one in a crowd.

Well, last week I had a follow up appointment at my OB/GYN office. As soon as I walked into the office and saw other pregnant women it took me back to going into the office empty handed after each of my losses. I felt the anxiety, the fear, the doubt, the form of PTSD that I have taken over me. I was letting it control me and my blood pressure. I realized rather quickly after the nurses took my vitals when my BP was 140/90 that the OB/GYN office is a Grief Trigger for me. The irony is that this OB/GYN office is not the same office I frequently visited during my past pregnancies. This office is over 400 miles away. Crazy right?

I posted a question on my Instagram Stories. Does anyone else have PTSD or Anxiety when going to the OB/GYN? Many of my friends messaged me that they felt the same way or had some sort of anxiety, or fear, or anticipation of bad news from the doctor. I knew I had to write about these triggers and how we should recognize that they exist and how to manage and cope with our feelings.

A trigger for you maybe that anniversary or birth date, Johnson's Baby Products smells (I immediately think of a newborn when I smell baby lotion on someone), hearing another baby cry, attending a baby shower after your loss, seeing other pregnant women, all of your friends announcing their pregnancies, going into the Baby section at department stores, etc.. I'm not sure what feeling of overwhelm or anxiety is going to be triggered for you since your loss, but I'm certain that once you know what it is, there is an opportunity for healing to take place.

Here are 5 ways we can manage our feelings around Grief Triggers.

- **Be prepared.** I know this may seem very obvious. However, I can attest to those feelings of anxiety and fear going into an OB/GYN office as I have experienced them before, after my pregnancy losses. I knew this was a trigger for me, but I was not prepared for that grief to come back. Another way to be prepared is to know that those birthday date, anniversary dates are coming. Any reactions from these dates are normal. Knowing ahead of time that you may feel sad or down, during those dates can help you understand them and even turn them into opportunities for healing.
- **Plan a distraction.** Schedule a gathering or a visit with friends or loved ones during those times when you are reminded about your baby. Surround yourself with those who love you and your angel baby. [Reclaim your time and practice some self care.](#)
- **Start a new tradition and honor your baby.** Release some balloons on your babies birthday or anniversary date, or plant a tree in honor of your angel.



- **Connect with a Grief Coach or Therapist.** In [Episode 4](#) of the Sisters in Loss Podcast, I discuss Grief Triggers with [Jheanell Adams](#) of [Angel Mom Alliance](#). If you haven't listened, please do so now, I know it will bless you. We discuss in depth as to why therapy is important in understanding what triggers us so that we are more prepared emotionally when it happens again. Find someone, a [grief coach](#) or therapist, who'll encourage you to talk about your loss. Consider joining a Support group like [Sisters in Loss Community](#) to help guide you through your triggers.
- **Allow yourself to feel a range of emotions.** It's OK to be sad and feel a sense of loss, but also allow yourself to experience joy and happiness. As you find out what your grief triggers are and share in special moments, you might find yourself both laughing and crying.



7 Struggles After Miscarriage and Pregnancy Loss

After every miscarriage and pregnancy or infant loss every women processes the loss differently. Some may question God, others may not want to go to church. Many don't want to be around pregnant women or children. We all have different struggles we wrestle with and through after a loss. Below are 7 Struggles after a Miscarriage and Pregnancy Loss and what you can do to heal through them.

- **Trying Again- Making Decision to try again to conceive and then not conceiving right away.** This one is tough because you want to be pregnant, but can't get pregnant. Sometimes you have to step back and really examine your why. Is it too soon? Do you have any stressors that could cause you to not ovulate consistently? Have you worked through your grief with your coach, counselor, or therapist? I lay out more questions to ask yourself on this in my [Trying Again Series blog posts](#).



- **Social Media - Pregnant women/girl friends/facebook friends.** Social media is a struggle for those who don't want to see other pregnant women, Facebook friends and associates after their loss. This was a major struggle for me after my losses. I had to disconnect from social media and not play the comparison game. I had to refocus my attention to my feelings of jealousy and envy and what was causing them. I had to work through my grief and feelings around my loss. I challenge you to take a social media break if you start to feel envy in your heart towards other pregnant women on social. Maybe start with 3 days off then actually do the work to understand why you are feeling that way. Gradually make your way back to social after you have worked through the envy of jealousy in your heart.

- **Failure of Body** - For many women I have interviewed on the #EMMPodcast they have experienced other complications of women issues that led to their loss. Feeling like your body has failed you is a struggle. If you don't work through this then you will take these feelings into your next pregnancy. For me, I had to really dig deep and ask God to give me confidence that my body could carry another child after my diagnosis with cervical incompetence. Go to God with your request. He will help you regain confidence that he created you in his image and your body can bear fruit and a baby.
- **Attending Baby Showers** - Sometimes going to Baby Showers, seeing baby clothes, or being around an excited expectant mother is a struggle after loss. If you are unsure of your feelings towards celebrating baby and expectant mom, please do not go. Politely decline the invitation and if they are friends, family, associates they should be sensitive to your request.
- **Losing Baby Weight** - Le Struggle to lose baby weight was difficult for me. After my son BJ died and I left the hospital empty handed. I still looked pregnant. Complete strangers and people I knew were like how many months are you a few months after my loss. I felt terrible because I could not shake this weight. I had to come to terms that it took me almost 10 months to gain the extra pounds and it will take me that long to lose them. I started to work on myself through counseling and then started to work out. The pounds melted off once I was able to let go and get out of my own head and way.
- **Not Being a Mother** - When you lose a child that you wanted so much, your mind is wrapped around that new role of a mother that wasn't fulfilled. You constantly struggle with Holidays like Mother's Day because you don't have a child physically here. I am here to tell you. You are a mother. Your baby did exist. A mother is not defined by the number of children you see, but by the love she holds in her heart.
- **Lack of Motivation** - Do you struggle with not being about to “do” or just not motivated to complete your tasks? This is very true after loss we typically revert inward and focus on ourselves that it is difficult to complete tasks. If this is you and you need someone to help talk you through this and hold you accountable send me an [email](#) to set up a time to talk. We can walk through an action plan to get you back on track and I will pray with you and for you daily to ensure you are working through your grief.

3 Ways to Survive Holiday Blues after a Pregnancy or Infant Loss

Thanksgiving and Christmas are always difficult times of the year. My first born son Brandon Jr. passed away on November 29th, 2012 days after Thanksgiving. So, I went into my first year of marriage and motherhood without a baby and this all occurred during the Holiday Season. I fell into a deep funk, experienced Holiday Blues, and was depressed from not being able to experience those Holiday firsts with my son, all while everyone around me was happy about the season. The Holiday season is still very difficult for me because of [Grief Triggers](#) and it takes me back to that dark place. However, with therapy and prayer I have learned to survive with the three (3) tips below to survive the Holiday Blues or Seasonal Depression after a Pregnancy or Infant Loss.

1. Don't Give In to Holiday Pressures

If you are not up for the traditional Thanksgiving meal, Christmas Tree Trimming, putting up decorations, Black Friday shopping, or spending time around family especially ones with children do not do so. Be willing to tell others, "I'm not up for this right now." It is okay to be okay with not giving into the pressures of being jolly around family for the holidays.



2. Begin a New Tradition

Try planning a family outing or vacation, instead of spending the holidays at home. Or even volunteer on the holidays. Helping others can also be very helpful for you too. You may want to try working at a soup kitchen. You can organize a gift or toy drive. Or even help your neighbor or family member around the house.

For us, we spent our first Christmas volunteering at a Homeless shelter, serving food, and giving back. It was enough to get me out of my holiday blues/funk and to realize that this season was not about me, but God who lived in me and showing love to others.

3. Share Your Feelings With Family

Once you are ready to be around family. Remember that it is OK to mourn your loss with family. People can support you best if they know what you need. Remember that people who have never experienced a pregnancy loss may not know what you're going through, and they may be more supportive if you let them know how you feel.



4. BONUS - Seek support.

After a miscarriage, infant loss, or stillbirth it may help to talk with someone who's been through the same experience, or to join a [support group like Sister's in Loss](#) that shares openly about experiences. You may also need to talk to a coach or therapist.

Trying Again: Making the Decision

Making the decision to try again is not an easy one. This decision may trigger many different emotions and bring on anxiety, fear, guilt, inadequacy, hopelessness, and a sense of failure. In this series I plan to equip you with the questions to ask yourself and your partner to prepare your mind, body, and inner self for another pregnancy.

Below are 3 questions you should ask yourself before you and your partner make the decision to begin to actively try to conceive after your loss.

1. Emotional Stability - Are you emotionally ready for another pregnancy?

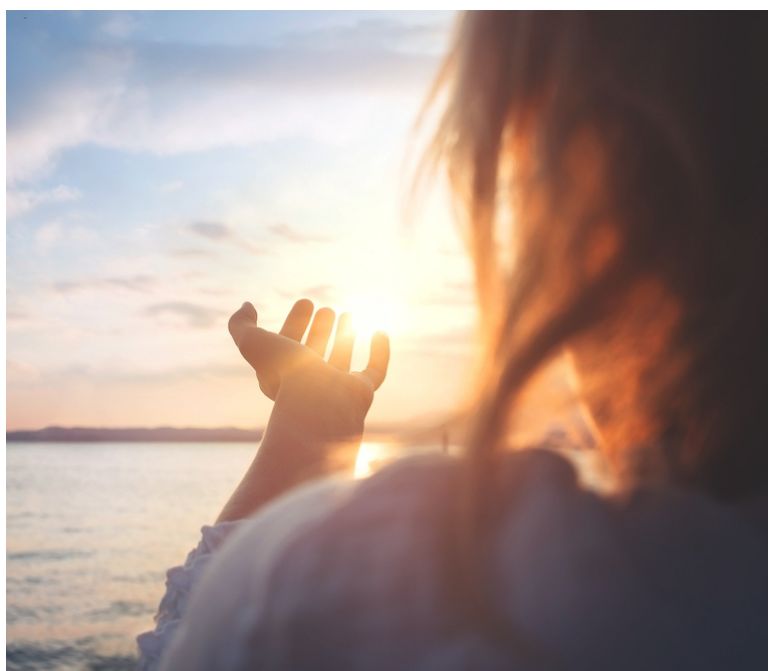
Do you still have guilt, fear, anxiety in your heart and mind?

I remember after I lost my son BJ thinking there is no way I could go through another loss again. Every thought that consumed me was what I could've done differently, ate better or even worked out more. I took that time to journal my thoughts to get my emotions out. I prayed even when I couldn't to God that he would give me another child one day.

Have you been able to pray? Have you prayed to ask God is it time to begin to try again? Is God apart of your decision process?

Work through your emotions, pray even when you don't think you can, and ask God is it time to try again.

“For God has not given you the spirit of fear, but of love, power, and a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7



2. Working through your grief - Have you taken time to grieve about the death of your baby?

I say death because that's what it was even if you experienced an early miscarriage, your baby died. Giving yourself time to grieve can help reduce those feelings of guilt, anxiety, fear and hopelessness. Grieving helps you heal. If you don't allow yourself to grieve you will continue to feel unsettled, disconnected, and hopeless. You need to work through your grief to move to peace and happy anticipation of the next pregnancy.

Now, don't get me wrong, those feelings will find their way into your next pregnancy. However, working through them will free you from the grip of those emotions.

When it was time for us to go to Grief counseling I did not want to go. I was happy and content in my negative feelings because no one in the world understood the pain I felt so I thought. My grief counselor shared his story of how he grieved the loss of his daughter who was taken away from him when she was young. He didn't know if she was still alive, but he had hope. He recommended I journal my thoughts, as journaling helped him through his loss. Journaling changed my negative thoughts into positive ones and is how I healed from my son's death. The guilt, shame, and hurt feelings did not magically go away, but they did diminish so that I could try again for another baby.

3. Cautious Excitement - Are you mentally prepared for the challenges of a subsequent pregnancy?

How would you cope if you had fertility issues? How would you cope if you had another loss? Do you want another baby or the baby who just died?

These are a few questions to ask yourself if you are mentally prepared for the challenges of another pregnancy.

These are questions I had to ask myself after my second trimester miscarriage due to cervical incompetence. I knew my next pregnancy was going to be a challenge and could end up in another miscarriage if I wasn't mentally ready. I had to take time to get out of the fog. I had lost two babies in less than 10 months time. Once my good days outweigh my bad days, I was ready to make the decision to try again.

Are you ready to make the decision to try again?

Angel Mom Prayer

Father God,

I thank you that children are a blessing from the Lord. I stand before You today and declare YOU are faithful. I will enjoy the blessing of children for you have given me your promises.

I declare that I will bring forth a healthy child out of my womb. break the power of every negative word over my body, my family, my future, and children yet to come. I declare I will not experience placenta previa, placenta abruption, leaking of amniotic fluid, premature miscarriage, pre-eclampsia, abnormal bleeding or any other complications. I declare that you have an appointed time for childbirth and I will not give birth before that appointed time.

I declare that the placenta will adhere normally and be of correct size and in the right position to support a healthy pregnancy. I declare the fetus will implant in the right place and be securely attached to the uterine wall. I declare that all cells will divide normally and each cell will produce healing and perfect soundness as it forms new life inside of me.

I will not experience ectopic pregnancy, congenital defects, inherited disease or other abnormalities. If it is not allowed in heaven, I do not receive it. There is no disease in heaven, Father. I resist those things and declare all possible inherited generational curses broken now in Jesus name.

I declare that I am a new creation in Christ and there is life in the blood. I thank You, Lord Jesus, that Your DNA flows through me to make me whole and complete in every way. I thank You for your Holy Spirit that is full of life, strength and power. Let the perfect soundness and wholeness that is in Your Spirit flow through me and release healing throughout my body.

Father, I ask for a double portion of restoration. I thank You Father for continuing to show me how to pray specifically as I believe for a healthy pregnancy.

In Jesus name.

Amen!

Trying Again: I'm Pregnant Will My Body Fail me?

Congratulations! You are now pregnant and are ready to embark on another journey of bringing forth life. It can be a very difficult journey of pregnancy if you are not ready to face fear, anxiety, and any other preconceived feelings of pregnancy after loss.

Most women who become pregnant after experiencing miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death find themselves hit by a flood of different emotions when they first discover that they're pregnant again. Below are some different emotions you may be feeling throughout your pregnancy and how to deal with them.

Mixed Feelings - You are excited about the pregnancy, but deep down are like what was I thinking? Am I really ready for another pregnancy?

Hesitation and Detachment - Many parents who become pregnant again are afraid to allow themselves to become overly excited about their pregnancies, both because they are afraid of “jinxing” themselves by getting too attached to the pregnancy and because they've learned that there's a world of difference between being pregnant and ending up with a healthy baby in your arms nine months down the road. I know I felt this way I had to sometimes emotionally detach myself and treat my pregnancy with a we will see attitude. This is where the faith component comes in because I had to learn to trust God and have faith in him that he will give me the desires of my heart.

Anxiety concerning the timing of the pregnancy - Sometimes the timing of a pregnancy can cause much anxiety, either because the new baby's due date is very close to the due date of the baby who died, or because the parents aren't ready for another pregnancy just yet. I remember when we got pregnant with Brielle, I was shocked and felt like it was too soon. It only had been 3-4 months after we lost our son BJ. At that time I knew I wasn't ready for it and the possibility is that we could've had her close to BJ's birth/death date. Having someone to talk to helped me through my anxiety throughout my pregnancy after losses and I highly recommend you to get a Grief Coach, Therapist, or Counselor.

Guilt - Sometimes we feel guilty for feeling happy about the new pregnancy. That guilt may come from not knowing how to grieve and experience joy at the same time.

Trying Again: Anxiety & Stress during Pregnancy After Loss

Below are some coping tips that worked for me on how to Handle the Anxiety, Fear and Stress that comes with Pregnancy After Loss.

Focus on one day at a time. Easier said than done, right? But I always keep my favorite verse with me that "All things work together for the good of those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28 If God has called you to be a mother especially for you to have another child it will happen, it is his purpose for your life. I learned to take my pregnancy one day at a time because I celebrated what was good, different, and better about my new pregnancy. I paid attention to what's going well each day and how I was feeling and how the baby was moving and healthy. Remember each pregnancy is different, and the fact that you miscarried, had an infant loss or stillbirth does not mean this pregnancy will end that way.

Don't always expect to be happy and joyful all the time - We all have good and bad days when we are not pregnant so don't expect it to be joyful and happy all the time. Remind yourself that being pregnant again can be a scary experience.



Pray - Every morning when I opened my eyes I thanked God for allowing me to still be pregnant. Sometimes it is that simple. I was in constant conversation with God, especially when I went to the bathroom. I expected God to hear my prayer that I would see no blood, no spotting, or no signs of miscarriage. Pray, pray, and pray some more. Below is a simple pray to pray over yourself during pregnancy.

Father God,

Thank you for being you and you alone. Thank you for blessing me with the gift of this precious baby. Thank you for comforting me each day my baby stays in my womb. Thank you Father God for easing all my worries, fears, anxiety, and negative thoughts. I decree and declare in the name of Jesus that I am strong, peaceful, in perfect health, and this baby and I are safe. I thank you Father for releasing all the fears and guilt surrounding pregnancy that I have felt in the past. I thank you for healing my broken heart from the pain and sadness from our last loss, and I ask you to comfort all women who are struggling to conceive.

*In Jesus Name,
AMEN!*



Journal -

Writing down your feelings can heal you throughout your pregnancy after loss. For me writing lets me express myself in the purest form. I could not edit my thoughts like I could if I typed them out. I had to truly feel what I felt when writing. Journalling will also help you process your grief. Your feelings of grief will still be there and having a personal journal to vent in will help you process those feelings of grief and the new feelings of being pregnant.

Celebrate Milestones -

Many women say that their anxiety and stress diminishes when they get past the date of their loss. Celebrating those milestones in pregnancy helps you focus on the next goal. Celebrate your milestones at 8 weeks, 12 weeks, 20 weeks, 24 weeks, 28 weeks, 32 weeks, 36 weeks, and 40 weeks if you get there. These weeks are critical in pregnancy whether it's going from one trimester to another, viability (24 weeks), lung development (32 weeks), and full term at 36 weeks helps you look forward to what is to come. For me when I got past 18 weeks with my Rainbow baby I knew that I was in the clear from having another 2nd Trimester loss.

Take Care of Yourself -

Do what you need to do to make this the most healthy pregnancy. Pay attention to what you eat, increase your exercise routine, watch your activity like standing and sitting throughout the day, and do those activities that make you feel good. Celebrate your milestones by scheduling yourself a prenatal massage and let them know you have a stressful pregnancy and need to relax. Try Prenatal Yoga and also meditation to help reduce stress as well.

Seek a Therapist, Coach, or Grief Counselor -

Do not go through this pregnancy alone without talking to someone if you have constant feelings of anxiety, fear, and stress. All of these feelings are normal, but if you want extra support seek out a therapist who can support you and provide you with some coping skills to make this pregnancy as calm as possible. If this is something that you need.

7 Days of Healing Devotions and Prayers

Day 1 - Hope After Loss

You are reading this e-book because you may be feeling down or stuck in your grief and want to remove the fog that is clouding your head. I am here to let you know that there is hope after loss. You may not feel it right now at this moment. You may have lost it on this journey. You may have experienced a glimmer of the light at the end of the tunnel. Your hope is not in your own ability to “get over this,” or that you will forget and “move on.” Your hope, my sister, is in the Lord and him alone. Psalms 42:11 says “Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again— my Savior and my God!” Your hope is in his promises to you in his word, and in the joy that if you know him and his forgiveness of sins, have embraced him and surrendered to his will, you will see your baby again. Continue to put your hope in God although you may be sad and discouraged, he will give you strength to continue.

Day 1 - Hope Prayer

Dear God, I am still feeling down, lost, and stuck in my grief. I miss my baby. I know that my hope should be in you and your word, but Lord I feel let down. Please give me the strength to get out of bed every morning, to do stellar work at my job, and to continue to seek you as I go through this grief and healing journey. Lord, I may not understand why my baby is not physically with me, but I'm going to trust you that I will see my baby again someday because I know the promises you have for me. You know the desires of my heart to have another child one day. Give me the courage, tenacity, and resilience to withstand all that I'm faced with today. I may not understand, but my hope is in you and I trust you! In Jesus Name, Amen!

Day 2 - Grow After Loss

Growing in the Lord is difficult, hard, and very complex after loss. You may be very mad at God for taking your baby. You may be filled with anger, rage, anxiety, and fear of the future. You may not know exactly what to pray, or even how to pray. Growth is necessary after loss. This growth comes from the lessons learned. Lessons of faith and trust that God intended for you to learn through your grief and mourning. Do not pass these lessons by. Take time to meditate, pray, and think about what God is doing in your life, in your heart, in your personal relationship with him. Take time to think about the new truths that God reveals to you about his will for you to walk in. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. —Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

Day 2 - Growth Prayer

Dear God, I am not sure how to grow in your word and grow closer to you. My heart still aches and I am still mad and angry that my baby is no longer here. Please open my heart to trust you as I grow in you. Please keep my mind stayed on you and strengthen my faith in my grief and mourning. Give me comfort when I cry. Let me know you hear my prayers. Speak to me through your words. Open my ears to hear the new truths that you will reveal to me about your will in this new season. Give me the will to read my bible, open up my phone to listen to a sermon, and attend church this week to learn more about you. In Jesus Name, Amen!



Day 3 - Therapy After Loss

It is so easy to shut others out of your pain. Not to receive the love and consolation, but rather to withdraw into a shell of seclusion where you are left to pity and nurture your heartache.

It is time for you to get off the island and get out of your shell.

Therapy will help you out of your shell by sharing your pain with someone who does not know you. There are so many taboos about going to a therapist especially in the black community. I'm here to erase those taboos and tell you that therapy is needed and critical after loss. As much I don't like the workout for my brain, I still see my therapist regularly. Talking to someone about your grief, your fears, your anxiety, your doubts, your worries, and your pain is critical to begin healing. Therapy will help you communicate with your spouse, learn more about yourself, help develop your relationship with God, and give you the tools so you can begin to heal your broken heart.

Find a Therapist Resources

<https://www.therapyforblackgirls.com/therapist-directory>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/african-american>

Day 3 - Therapy Prayer

Dear God,

Open my heart and mind to therapy and talk with someone about my inmost thoughts. Guide me to that therapist who is sensitive to my needs, understands my loss, and will give me sound biblical advice to heal. I'm scared of what therapy will bring, but trust that it is what I need to heal. Give me the patience to deal with the hard parts of therapy, give me the will to stay the course, and heal my broken heart during each therapy session. In Jesus Name, Amen!

Day 4 - Gratitude After Loss

It can be difficult to get to a place of gratefulness after loss. The best place to start with gratitude is by meditating and praying on the excellence of His blessings in your life. Those that are too many to count. The ones that you see. And those that you don't. The ones that you take for granted. The children that He has already gifted you. Those walking miracles. The children that God has promised you in the future. Let your heart overflow with thanksgiving for it all.

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gratitude starts with making your requests be made known to God so that God will give you that peace that passes all understanding.

Day 4 - Gratitude Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for loving me even when I did not love myself. Thank you for giving me the strength to put both feet on the ground and tackle the day ahead. Lord, help me get to a place of gratitude for life, love, happiness, peace, joy, my loss, and growing closer to you. Help my unbelief that there is joy and peace after loss. Help me understand that there is purpose after loss, and my pain can turn into joy. Thank you for all that you have done. I'm grateful for the blessings you have bestowed upon me, and the ones I know you will bless in the future.

In Jesus Name,
Amen!

Day 5 - Joy After Loss

After gratefulness, there comes a point in your healing journey where you are filled with joy. You know that the joy of the Lord is your strength. Every moment that you spend with God should be filled with joy. God can handle the hard questions and even though you may have felt he let you down after loss. He has always been ever-faithful every step of the way. This should bring you joy. He has never left you or forsaken you. With all of this you can rejoice knowing that the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Think about what other ways that you can receive joy this day.

Isaiah 40:31 But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Day 5 - Joy Prayer

Dear God,

I may not be experiencing joy this day and haven't experienced it since my loss. I know having joy will bring strength by trusting in you. Thank you in advance for this joy, this peace, and for never leaving me or forsaking me. Thank you for waiting until I grew closer to you to show me joy. Thank you for being faithful every step with me throughout my healing journey. I can rejoice in knowing that you are sovereign, you are all knowing, and you will grant me the desires of my heart. Thank you for the joy becoming my strength.

In Jesus Name, Amen!

Day 6 - Compassion After Loss

If there is one thing we know now after loss is how to show compassion to others. Especially those who have and are experiencing the hardship and heartache of miscarriage and infertility. The bible teaches us that It is you who can comfort a walk of knowing. And can point the suffering to the God of all comfort. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). God is the ultimate comforter and when we get to a place in our healing journey we will begin to point others to God and his word for comfort.

Weeping my endure for the night but joy comes in the morning Psalm 30:5

Day 6 - Compassion Prayer

Dear God,

Please give me compassion to love on those who have gone through this healing journey after me. Let me be a light to them in their darkness. Use me as a vessel to bring others back to God when they don't have hope, joy, or someone to turn to. Give me grace as I continue to heal and show compassion towards myself. I know that your joy is in the morning and I thank you for giving me compassion in advance to support those who have experienced this pain of miscarriage, pregnancy loss, and infertility.

In Jesus Name, Amen!

Day 7 - Life After Loss

Life After Loss is a life that may not look as you had expected, and sometimes that is a hard pill to swallow. Grief comes in waves and it will take time to understand what life looks like for you. Your baby will not be forgotten if you continue on with life. They will always be in your heart and in God's heaven. You need to continue to Speak your baby's name, Share your story, and Strengthen your relationships with God, your family & friends, and with a community of Sisters in Loss. One of my favorite verses in the bible is Philippians 3:13-14 where it states to continue running the race towards the prize that God has called us. Keep on living the life that God has promised you. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. He will give you the desires of your heart.

Philippians 3:13-14

Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

Day 7 - Life Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for keeping me in my right mind. Thank you for still loving me when I did not know how to pray, how to feel joy, how to give myself grace, or show compassion for others. Thank you for staying by my side and revealing yourself to me and showing me that I can still have joy and peace after loss. Thank you for giving me the gift of motherhood. Thank you in advance for my next positive pregnancy test and pregnancy. Lord, please use me as you see fit to help others grow closer to use. Use my testimony to help others understand that there is life after loss. Keep my mind, my health, my spirit, and my goals focused on pleasing you. Give me the discipline, consistency, and tenacity to step out on faith and follow my dreams. I know and have faith that you will give me the desires of my hearts. Thank you in advance for giving me a baby here on earth! I love you forever!

In Jesus Name, Amen!

31 Day Journal Prompts

- 1 - Loss Story or Infertility Journey
- 2 - 10 Things You Want Your Angel Baby Know about You
- 3 - Write a letter to your angel
- 4 - Favorite Bible Verse and Why?
- 5 - Best Advice Received from a Bereaved Mom
- 6 - Indispensable Possession
- 7 - Mom Lesson Learned
- 8 - What about your faith keeps you going?
- 9 - What about your relationship gives you purpose?
- 10 - What Makes You Feel Safe?
- 11 - What Makes You Laugh?
- 12 - What are you doing today to make time for you?
- 13 - Write out what kind of mom you want to be
- 14 - How was Mother's Day for you?
- 15 - What Makes You Nervous? Why?
- 16 - What Makes You Feel Proud?
- 17 - What do you do with your Free time?
- 18 - Invention That Makes Life Better
- 19 - What Makes You Feel Happy?
- 20 - What are your Parenting Goals
- 21 - Write a letter to your younger self
- 22 - 5 qualities you love about yourself
- 23 - 5 things about being a bereaved mother you wish you would've known.
- 24 - What Brings You Joy
- 25 - What Brings You Pain? Why?
- 26 - What does your Best friend not know about you?
- 27 - What triggers your grief? Why?
- 28 - 10 things required for a Perfect Vacation
- 29 - What is stopping you from taking that perfect vacation?
- 30 - Favorite Inspirational Quote
- 31 - What is your biggest goal and how will you achieve it?

Hey Sister in Loss,

Thank you for taking the time to read this e-book. I pray that it brought you some comfort on your grief and healing journey. This book is just a roadmap on how to navigate this journey, but this journey is yours.

Sis, we are now apart of 1 of 4 women who have experienced loss. As a black women we experience loss even more at 2 of 4 women. We have joined a sorority we did not want to be apart of. Now we can not deny our membership. The bond we share is indescribable. To know that our little ones are dancing and playing in heaven, just like in The Shack movie, together brings tears to my eyes.

Our husbands may not know our pain, our family and friends may tell us to get over it. But you my sister have welcomed me in with open arms. Thank you for allowing me to just be in your presence. For understanding me even when the words couldn't form and come out my mouth. For sending gifts and texting me just to let me know you cared. For being there when my family and friends did not know how to get me out of my funk. For loving on me and on my angel in heaven as if they were your own.

I love you my sister in loss. We are forever bonded by our angels in heaven!

Your Sister in Loss,

~Erica