Western Cape Government
Education
FOR YOU

Coping with the emotional toll of fertility challenges

If you are struggling to conceive, the fertility journey can be filled with uncertainty, stress, and heartache, as well as moments of hope. It's important to acknowledge these feelings and find healthy ways to manage the emotional ups and downs.

Here are some coping strategies that may be helpful during this challenging time.

Allow yourself to experience your emotions

You're probably feeling a range of difficult emotions at the moment, from stress, sadness and frustration, to envy, anger, and even guilt. While it sometimes feels easier to push the discomfort aside, putting on a brave face can be emotionally exhausting.

Let yourself feel your emotions, even if they're hard to bear, and remind yourself that you're not to blame for what's happening. When you're more in touch with your feelings, you'll be able to work through them, and make clearer, more informed decisions about your fertility journey.

Communicate with your partner

If you have a partner or spouse, you may find that, even though you're going through this journey together, you experience and cope with your emotions differently. This can lead to frustration, misunderstandings, and resentment.

It's really important to communicate as openly as you can with your partner. Share how you're feeling, express what kind of support you need, and check in with them regularly. Ask how they're doing and what they need from you, and listen with genuine care and understanding.

Be good to yourself

Try to focus on the here and now, and what you can do for yourself today to feel a little calmer. Self-care looks different for everyone, but it's important to cover the basics: nourishing your body with healthy food, getting as much rest as you can, and exercising.

Try not to take on too much, and be honest with yourself and others about what you can realistically handle right now. It's OK to protect your time and energy, and to politely decline plans that don't feel right for you. You might also find it helpful to take a break from social media or to steer clear of certain content, especially if you're seeing lots of pregnancy-related posts on your feed.

Find out about your options

When life feels uncertain, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by worries and fears about the future. The emotional toll of fertility struggles can leave you feeling hopeless, and you may struggle to see a clear way forward. Talking to a fertility specialist and learning about the different options and support available can help you regain a sense of control. The more you know, the more confident you'll feel in making decisions and facing what's ahead.

Open up to others

Going through fertility difficulties can be an isolating experience. If you feel comfortable opening up to them, your friends or family might be able to offer emotional support or valuable advice. If you don't feel like talking about your fertility journey, it's OK to let them know - chatting about something totally unrelated can be a helpful way to take your mind off things.

If you prefer not to talk to people you know about your fertility issues, you might feel more comfortable joining an infertility support group, online or in person, where you can connect with others who understand what you're going through.

If your emotions feel overwhelming and you'd like to talk to someone, contact the Lyra Wellbeing EWP via your dedicated toll-free line or scan the QR code to get in touch with the Lyra Wellbeing team via the Services tab.