Common Myths about Parenting after Infertility

Experiencing infertility can be such a difficult and emotional journey that couples may feel actual parenting will be a breeze. However, just like anyone else, parenting is tough. There are a few myths that many parents may believe about parenthood after going through infertility.

1. **Since it was so difficult to get pregnant, I will have no problems with postpartum depression or bonding with my baby.**Despite your infertility experience, you have the same amount of difficulty as any other parent. Postpartum can occur if you have a history of depression, either with yourself or in your family. This is especially true if you were depressed during pregnancy, or if you have twins or other multiples. Bonding also may not occur immediately, especially with the trouble of delivery/C-section, diapers, and sleepless nights. A bond will come with time, do not worry if it is not instant.
2. **Having twins or multiples will be easier than having a single child.**Some parents wish for twins to wrap up their entire family unit in one fertility treatment cycle, yet there are many additional risks. It is more likely your babies will be born premature, that they will have a disability, or that the mother will suffer from PPD. While it may seem easier to have twins, there are multiple stressors, demands, and risks in the long run.
3. **I won’t worry about or remember the problems of infertility after I have my child.**The memories of infertility are similar to women’s memories of childbirth dulling, allowing them to have the desire to have more children. Most likely you will remember the painful emotions that came with infertility. It may subside over time, but those feelings will flare up, especially when your kids begin trying for their own children, or if you decide to have more kids. Secondary infertility is more common than primary infertility, and the inability to have more children can result in guilt that you cannot provide your child with a sibling and even more sadness.
4. **I won’t be a real parent if I have my child through a nontraditional method.**Donor egg, sperm, and embryo, adoption, and surrogacy are all nontraditional methods of conception and most couples who go through infertility have to use one of these methods. Yet this is not at all true, unless you place an extreme weight on the importance of genetics. No matter what, you will be the one raising your child, teaching him to walk and fixing scuffed knees and helping them with homework. That makes you a true parent, no matter how you become one.
5. **It is better to explain to my child how he or she was conceived when they are a teenager and better able to understand the mechanics.**Yes, your teenage child will understand the complicated process better, yet waiting until they are older is not considered the best option. By then, they have beliefs about their family and themselves that have been concrete since they were little. Explaining when they are older can cause psychological duress and a break in trust with the parents. It is better to inform them at a young age and continuing explaining as they get older. This way, they understand who they are and where they came from.

Even though parenting after infertility may seem simple after what you and your partner went through to have your baby, it will be as difficult as any other family. Just remember what a blessing it is you finally have the family you have worked for and enjoy your time, because it moves quickly.

Galst, PhD, Joann. "A Dozen Myths of Parenting After Infertility." *American Fertility Association*. Web. 28 May. 2013. <http://www.theafa.org/article/a-dozen-myths-of-parenting-after-infertility/>.

Douglas, Ann. "Misconception: Secondary Infertility."*Parenting*. Web. 28 May. 2013. <http://www.parenting.com/article/misconception-secondary-infertility-0>.