



Pulling Down the Moon's Life Coach and Patient Advocate Prepares You for the Holidays

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Struggling to create or expand your family is an extremely painful and challenging journey. Often, the pain of longing for a child is intensified during the holiday season. Let's face it, the holidays are all about families, with lines of adorable children waiting to take a photo with Santa, family gatherings focused on children opening gifts, and piles of holiday cards filling your mailbox.

When you're going through fertility care, it often seems like no one else really understands. At Pulling Down the Moon ("PDtM") our mission is to provide support, understanding and comfort to those struggling with their fertility. We help our patients to find the tools to enhance their fertility, ease their emotional distress and find a sense of inner peace. We are especially sensitive to our patients' pain as we approach the holidays.

I am Hope Firsell, not only the Patient Advocate and Fertility Life Coach at PDtM, but also a fertility patient. While most of us struggling with our fertility feel very much alone, it is estimated that one out of every five couples in the United States suffers from infertility. I work with our patients to find the tools to help cope with the fertility journey, offering them a unique perspective and deep level of understanding from my own fertility struggles.

Now I ask you, what if we were well prepared for the holiday season, rather than caught sinking deeper into despair? What if we were able to find renewed gratitude, love and joy? What if we took especially good care of ourselves these next few weeks and used this time to create new goals for our future? I am here to say that this is possible. With the support of the PDtM team we can help you get through the next few weeks more successfully.

As a Fertility Life Coach, I work individually or with couples, in person or by phone, to help support them in their own journey. Clients learn tools for dealing with this challenging time in their lives and for setting new goals. Each session is different, based on the client's needs. Below are some key suggestions to help you get through the holiday season.

Protect Yourself

Take preventative actions to avoid difficult situations. For instance, order your niece and nephews gifts on-line rather than going to Toys-R-Us, attend midnight adult only services, and leave family celebrations before the children open their gifts. While it's not healthy to become completely isolated during the holidays, it can be beneficial to avoid certain situations and places that make us feel worse. Learn how to protect and parent yourself by preparing for future events.

Create New Traditions & Rituals

Create your own traditions and rituals which acknowledge the pain you have experienced during the year, while regaining optimism for the future. This may include a candle lighting ceremony with your own prayer, placing ultrasound photos from failed pregnancies in the fire, and/or creating a new motivational mantra to use throughout the season. Consider joining us on December 13th at Pulling Down the Moon for a free ceremony titled "Dealing with Disappointment." This event is an opportunity to take the time to let go of loss and sadness, leaving space for love and gratitude.

Be Prepared

You cannot eliminate all difficult situations and you certainly cannot control how other people will respond. Prepare for these challenging situations as best as possible by determining what you will say and how you will react beforehand. One method I use with patients in an effort to prepare themselves is role playing. You can do this at home with your spouse or a trusted friend. For instance, practice what you will say when your aunt asks why you haven't started your family, how to react when your cousin shows you photos from her recent ultrasound, and what you will do when the other women spend most of the holiday party complaining about their active toddlers.

Live Consciously

Become centered and make conscious decisions about what treatment options will work for you during this time of the year. Decide whether or not to continue fertility treatment over the holidays by outlining the anticipated schedule if you were or were not to continue treatment. Determine how treatment will impact traveling plans, attending holiday celebrations and where you will be when you get the results. Ask yourself what will work best for you in advance.

Take Good Care of Yourself

Remember to continue to take good care of yourself physically to help cope with the stress of infertility. Try not to get into the trap of overindulging in food, drinks and activities. To help support this goal, give yourself the perfect holiday gift, a session with one of Pulling Down the Moon's nutritionist and/or massage therapists.

Find Love & Support

Focus on creating a loving partnership with your significant other during the holidays. Acknowledge one another for what you have been through this year and take time to celebrate your continued dedication. Set aside some quality time for your own romantic evening to rekindle your love and passion. Consider attending a free couples' massage event at Pulling Down the Moon to learn techniques that will enhance trust, intimacy, and communication between you and your loved one.

Be Honest

Be honest with friends and family about what events you can and cannot attend. Learn to be authentic with the people in your life about what works for you. Remember, this is a time for compassion, not judgment.

Ignite New Passion

Use this time to establish a new direction and purpose in your life. Create a list of all the things you want to do in the upcoming year, without any limitations due to your fertility struggles. Ask yourself, what would bring me joy and happiness? Nothing helps maintain energy in one's life like the act of meditation, breathing and yoga.

As a Fertility Life Coach, I can help you with tools and techniques to welcome peace and find gratitude in the New Year. This is the time to make a conscious decision about how to live a fulfilled life, today and everyday.

Best wishes for a joyful holiday season!

Hope Firsell
Fertility Life Coach