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## THE INFERTILITY SUPPORT NETWORK NEWSLETTER

{The long walk to parenthood}

<http://www.infertility-support.org.za>

August / September 2009

2009 – Issue 4

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### WORD FROM THE FOUNDERS

On a daily basis, each of us is bombarded by all types of influences – ranging from the people we meet and socialize with to the negative and positive experiences we did not plan for. Through it all, we need to extract the best from each experience so that we can mature in our outlook on life, make the most profound difference in each environment that we are involved in and leave behind some sort of legacy. I encourage each of you to take the negative in your life and find a way to turn it into a positive. In the timeless words of Mahatma Gandhi, “**YOU** be the difference you want to see in the world !”. While you adopt this approach, surround yourself with inspirational people.

We thank God in this issue for the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday of The Infertility Support Network (TISN) in South Africa. We stand amazed at what has transpired since TISN’s humble beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008 of wanting to provide a support base for couples that are faced with the challenge of infertility. Derrick and I are grateful to God for opening doors to the media world who published many informative articles on TISN in a variety of magazines and newspapers, thereby extending its borders of influence beyond the city of Pretoria, the boundaries of South Africa into the international arena. The weekday evening cellphone messages continue to encourage those who receive it. Support group meetings have left people feeling uplifted and marriages have been healed where signs of tension previously were clearly visible. TISN is also registered now as a non-profit organization !

Thank you so much to everyone who has strengthened us with their kind words of encouragement as well as for your persistent prayer. We love and appreciate you very much !

*Derrick and Krishnee Kjssoonduth*

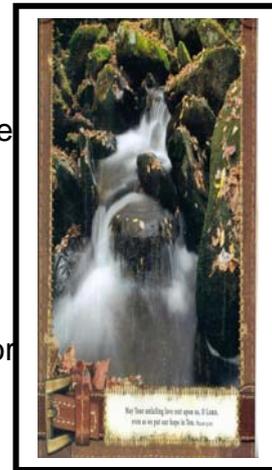


## THANK YOU LORD



Just this once Lord,  
I want to come to you without problems  
Without asking for anything  
Without telling you how to run my day  
Just simply to say "Thank You !"

For your forgiveness when we fall  
For the sheer joy of sleep when I am terribly tired  
For the silent strength of humility when pride over takes me  
For the justice of your laws when men are cruel  
For the remedies of sickness when I am ill  
For the simplicity of orderliness when I face confusion  
For the assurance that you have made a plan especially for  
me when I feel inadequate among my peers  
For the joy of helping others when I see people in need  
For the earthly evidences of your Will when I am trying to find out what life is  
all about  
For the reality of your world when I stray too far into fantasy  
For the rightness of reasonableness when I panic too quickly  
For the fun that refreshes when everything gets too serious  
For the renewal in moments of silence when I am dizzy from being busy in a  
hectic world



Thank you Lord for ALL these things  
But most of all, thank you for your abiding presence that makes every day I  
live, a day of thanks

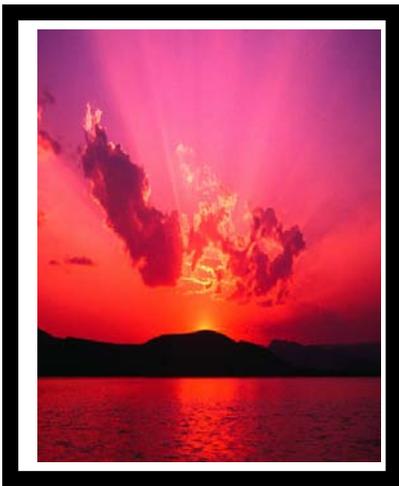


I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining  
I believe in love, even when I am not feeling it  
I believe in God, even when He is silent !

## THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF INFERTILITY

Infertility is not just a medical condition to be treated with fertility drugs, surgery or in-vitro fertilization, but is often a crisis that profoundly affects nearly every aspect of one's personality and life. A thwarted desire to have biological children may challenge one's sexuality, social roles and self image and may compound feelings of inadequacy, guilt, grief and loss of control. Very rarely are the symptoms of this trauma treated. Even worse, infertility treatment itself can compound psychosocial distress in ways that are rarely recognized or remedied.

A useful book to read is called "Men, Women and Infertility : Intervention and Treatment Strategies" by Aline Zoldbrod. The final chapter of the book



presents a unique and compelling account of **rape**; when a woman has repeatedly lain on her back with her legs apart, exposed her genitals to any number of barely known doctors and nurses and experienced genital pain during the procedures, the subjective experience of vulnerability and loss of control over her genitalia can be quite like that of being raped.

Because the woman herself chose to undergo such procedures, she may develop an image of taking herself or her sex organs in for repeated abuse. The form of "self-rape" plausibly leads to dissociation from sensory experiences, especially those involving genitalia and feelings of guilt for what she has done to herself; it is no wonder, then, that many patients undergoing infertility treatments develop sexual dysfunctions similar to those experienced by rape victims. This analogy may be very helpful for patients to understand their complicated and conflicting emotions, and for therapists to help patients identify and resolve the feelings of guilt, anger, humiliation and withdrawal that may accompany voluntary medical treatments.

## THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

Feedback received from infertility support groups has been that gynaecologists should consider having a full-time psychologist on their staff to provide counselling to patients that are challenged by infertility. TISN acknowledges and applauds infertility specialists who have already made counselling facilities/support available in their practice eg. Dr Richard Joubert (Pretoria East Hospital). In motivating for such support, a comparison was made to counselling support that is compulsory to patients who discover they are HIV-positive or have contracted Aids. Please note that The Infertility Support Network (TISN) has forwarded an official letter in this regard to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). We await a response from the HPCSA and will keep you updated on progress in upcoming issues.

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In celebration of “Women’s Day” on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2009, we would like to honour four women (unsung heroes) who you consider to be making a difference in life through their participation in the community to uplift the less privileged, selflessly giving of themselves and/or their resources etc. Such women don’t seek recognition for their efforts and very seldom receive any verbal gratitude. Yet, like Mother Theresa, they deserve the Nobel Peace Prize !

In order for your nominee to stand in line to win one of four (4) R500 grocery vouchers, forward your story by **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009** to

[krishnee@infertility-support.org.za](mailto:krishnee@infertility-support.org.za) or The Infertility Support Network (TISN), PO Box 66351, Woodhill, Pretoria, 0076. Motivate in detail why you feel she deserves to be honoured as an extraordinary woman.

Please include the name and contact information of your nominee in your letter. The winning entries will be published in the October / November 2009 newsletter but winners will be informed in the first week of September 2009.

Results of competition in the TISN June / July 2009 newsletter :

- Question** – What does the acronym “ICSI” stand for ?”  
**Answer** - **I**ntrac**cy**toplasmic **S**perm **I**njection

Congratulations to Lasantha Naidoo (Gauteng) and Beth Pretorius (Bloemfontein) who each won a R500 Woolworths cash voucher.



The insert on egg donation in the previous issue of this newsletter generated a great deal of enquiries. To opt for donor eggs if you do not ovulate, will raise many ethical questions within an individual. Therefore, counselling is essential if you decide to walk this road.

It is important that a couple think the process through; the implications of a child not being genetically from the woman in the relationship, possible consequences years later etc. I would personally suggest over and above the counselling that is provided via a donor egg agency, a couple should also seek spiritual counselling so as to be at peace with their final decision.

- [www.baby2mom.co.za](http://www.baby2mom.co.za)
- [www.nurture.co.za](http://www.nurture.co.za)
- [www.globaleggdonation.co.za](http://www.globaleggdonation.co.za)
- [www.donorlife.co.za](http://www.donorlife.co.za)
- [www.eggdonationsouthafrica.co.za](http://www.eggdonationsouthafrica.co.za)

Have you ever noticed what a difference passion makes ? Passion opens the door for achievement. When you are passionate about what you are doing, commitment naturally follows. You don't have to produce perseverance – it sweeps over you like an ocean wave. Passion will keep you going when the chips are down, the odds are high, the obstacles are many and the resources are few.



THE POWER  
OF PASSION

When it comes to passion, there are 2 kinds of people : FIRE FIGHTERS AND FIRE LIGHTERS ... Stay away from the fire fighters and this is why :

- ❖ Fire fighters focus on what's wrong with an idea rather than what's right;
- ❖ Fire fighters possess a doubting spirit;
- ❖ Fire fighters work behind the scenes to cause dissension;
- ❖ Fire fighters hate change;
- ❖ Fire fighters love the words "Yes, but ...";
- ❖ Fire fighters keep people with great potential from going to the top.

**"YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED IN LIFE ONLY FOR YOUR PASSIONS" – JOHN C. MAXWELL**

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**ARE YOU EATING FRUITS CORRECTLY ?**

According to experts, fruit should be eaten on an empty stomach. If you eat fruit like that, it will play a major role to detoxify your system, supplying you with a great deal of energy for weight loss and other life activities. Let's say you eat two slices of bread and then a slice of fruit. The slice of fruit is ready to go straight through the stomach into the intestines but it is prevented from doing so. In the meantime, the entire meal ferments (rots) and turns to acid. The minute the fruit comes into contact with the food and digestive juices in the stomach, the entire mass of food begins to spoil. You will feel bloated because the fruit cannot have its full

nutritious effect. Do yourself a favour and eat fruit either on an empty stomach or before you dig into your full meal !

## FERTILITY DRUGS – ARE THEY WORTH THE RISK ?

Over the past few years, there seems to be an increase in the amount of couples that have used fertility drugs to have biological children. Fertility specialists generally refer a couple to the route of fertility treatment if either or both parties have a medical problem that hinders normal conception after twelve consecutive months of unprotected intercourse that does not result in pregnancy. The media has covered stories of families having multiple births, when the couple might have initially wanted just one child. The effectiveness of fertility drugs such as Clomiphene and Bromocriptine are overshadowed by their many, and often very harmful, side effects. Are fertility drugs worth the cost that possible side effects have ?

Multiple births occur in about 50% of cases, especially among women in their early 30's or younger. In most cases, risk can be lowered through careful monitoring and controlling dosages of medications. For IVF, if a high number of eggs are seen on the ultrasound, doctors are able to remove them and place back two or three embryos. Eggs can be frozen for use by the couple later on. If a couple opts to use all eggs and embryos and if all embryos implant, the newborn babies have a high risk of neurological complications if they survive. Multiple births are also risky because they can result in the birth of sickly, premature babies. Premature babies face serious complications, including lung problems and bleeding in the head, which can cause long-term physical and mental impairment.

Fertility drugs are often fingered as a risk factor for **ovarian cancer**. There are several factors that may increase a woman's risk of ovarian cancer. One factor is that an increased number of uninterrupted ovulations in a woman's lifetime, increases her chance of developing ovarian cancer. This may explain why events that interrupt the constant cycle of ovulations, such as pregnancy, breastfeeding and oral contraceptive use are associated with a decreased risk of ovarian cancer. Another factor is that increased levels of certain hormones associated with ovulation, such as human chorionic gonadotropin, increase the risk of ovarian cancer. Perhaps the best advice one can receive is to read the medical

*The New England Journal of Medicine*  
*Serendip's Exchange*

information inside each package of fertility medication. In addition, ask the fertility specialist administering the medication what the side-effects are of fertility medication before commencing

with its use. If one's health is at stake, no question is insignificant !

## DETOX AND SUPPORT YOUR LIVER AND KIDNEYS

Good health is a gift that flows from harmony. Problems occur when one of these elements goes out of balance and causes a cascade of negative effects through the body. Many naturopaths believe that the body's health is dependent on the regulating action of both the liver and kidney. These organs are the filter system of the blood. Sometimes the human body shows signs of liver and kidney problems long before pathological tests do. How do you know that your liver and kidney functions need help ?

Typical **liver** warning signs include : waking between 2-3am without any reason, moodiness, tiredness, light headedness, high cholesterol, weak resistance to illness, dry itchy skin, red itchy eyes, bitter taste in the mouth, excessive thirst, indigestion, constipation, piles, nausea, irritable bowel syndrome, inexplicable pain on the right side of the body.



Typical signs of **kidney** problems include high blood pressure, sore joints and muscles, pain on top of the head, behind the neck and along the spine, swollen eyes after sleep, too little or slow urine flow, pain on the inside of the left leg, pain behind the knees, eczema / fungus on the soles of the feet, burning/sweating/aching soles of feet, athletes foot. Take care of your health – every part of the body is connected to each other. A chain is only as strong as the weakest link !

*The Sunday Times – Lifestyle – 19 July 2009*

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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION NUMBER (NPO 069-682)



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