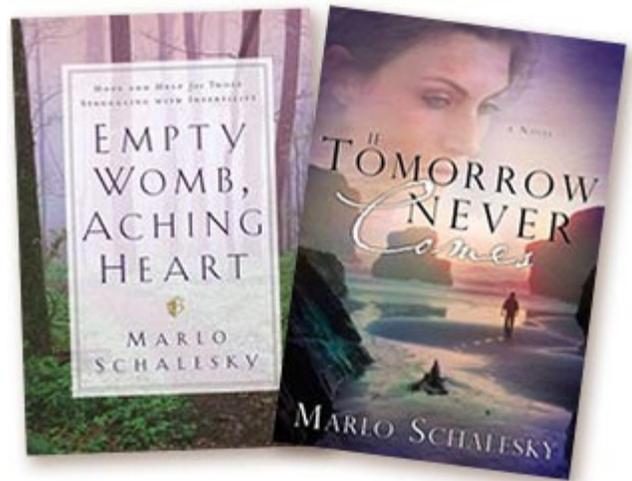


When Your Friend's Infertile

by Marlo Schalesky

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(provided courtesy of www.MarloSchalesky.com)



Do you know someone praying and hoping for their miracle child, someone dealing with the reality of infertility every day? Below are some suggestions on how you can help:

WHAT NOT TO DO:

- Don't try to make your friend feel better by complaining about your own children or by telling her she's "lucky" not to have to deal with the stresses of having children. As Proverbs 25:20 (RSVP) says, "He who sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, and like vinegar on a wound."
- Don't offer unsolicited advice on how to get pregnant. Suggestions such as "just relax" or "if you just adopt" are not helpful.
- Don't give assurances that "God will give you a child." There are no guarantees that every couple will be able to have children. Children may not be in God's plan, and if that's the case, your words will only make it harder.
- Don't avoid any mention of children or pregnancy. Your awkwardness will only make your friend feel awkward in return.
- Don't offer reasons or excuses for God like Job's friends did. Telling your friend why God may not want her to have children is not only painful, it's presumptuous.

WHAT TO DO:

- Do let your friend know that you're continuing to pray for her. Your support and caring will let her know she isn't alone, even in the hardest times.
- Do remember her on special days, such as Mother's Day. A simple note saying "I know this is a hard day for you. Just wanted to let you that you're in my thoughts and prayers" can mean much.
- Do be sensitive about asking her to be involved in children's ministries. Some infertile couples find joy in ministering to children, while others find it difficult. The same applies to attending events such as baby showers.
- Do feel free to ask questions. Infertility can be emotionally, physically, as well as financially stressful. Your friend will appreciate you asking how treatments are going and how she's holding up, rather than if the treatments are "working."
- Do provide your friend with a safe place for venting her spiritual questions and doubts. It is not unusual for those going through infertility to question God's love or fairness in the midst of this difficult time. A listening ear is more helpful than pat answers.

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