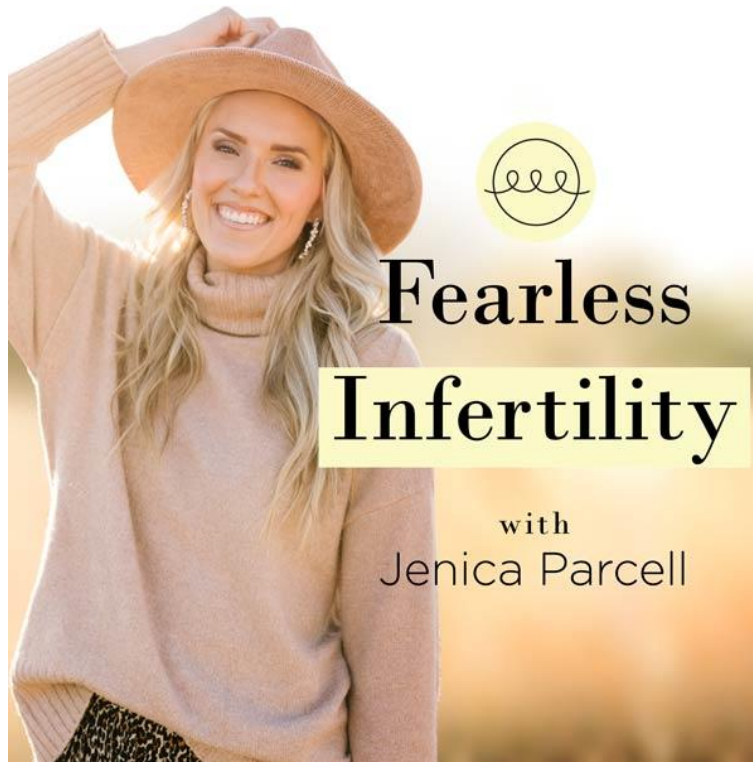


## 13. 4 Ways Infertility Impacts Motherhood



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Jenica Parcell**

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Hi, friends. Welcome to *Fearless Infertility* a podcast for women struggling with the mental anguish that comes with infertility. My name is Jenica and after suffering in silence for too long I was able to pull myself out of the dark, take control over my mind, and create joy during my infertility experience. I'm here to help you do the same, sister. Let's dive into today's show.

Welcome back to the *Fearless Infertility* podcast. I am so excited that you are here. And in today's episode I am getting very, very vulnerable, talking about the big feelings I was feeling starting the IVF process over again and deciding if we even wanted to try to have another baby. And I share with you the sheer panic I was feeling and the process I took to understand why and get to the place of peace that I'm at right now, moving forward.

I also talk about four ways that I am different as a mother because I experienced infertility. And these incredible gifts that I've been given through this experience as it applies to the mother that I am right now. Let's get into it.

Welcome back to the *Fearless Infertility* podcast, I am so beyond thrilled that you are here today with me, that you have chosen to put yourself first right now. Excellent life choice, if I do say so myself. I am thrilled to be able to continually share with you the tools that have absolutely changed my life during infertility so that I live a whole, peaceful, incredible life and accept myself as the dynamic human being that I am. And I'm very excited to help you ease the fear and pain that you are experiencing during infertility as well.

To start out today's podcast I am thrilled to announce that we have a winner of last week's giveaway. Right now I'm giving away a pair of pajamas and socks every week for someone who subscribes, rates, and reviews the *Fearless Infertility* podcast on Apple Podcasts.

And this does one of two things. One, I just like to treat you guys, I love that you're here, I think that you deserve joy and love and really incredible

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pajamas. And these are pajamas that I created, I literally spent a year creating because they're perfect. The waistband is a dream, the bamboo fabric is so cozy, and I really want you to feel wrapped up in love from this community, that you know you're not alone in your infertility experience when you wear them. And then I also created fabulous socks as well for the same reason.

So I give away one of those sets each week for those of you who rate and review and subscribe to the podcast. Because more ratings and reviews helps those women that are experiencing infertility that have absolutely no idea who I am or about these tools to be able to learn about them and look up this podcast more easily.

The winner of this week is EmilyJNYC she said, "Chicken soup for the infertility soul." Excellent title by the way. Do you need a job as a copywriter? Because I know some people.

She said, "I stumbled across this podcast through social media while navigating my own infertility journey. Listening to these episodes has been a breath of fresh air and a useful tool to train my thoughts during the moments when everything is out of my control. In a way, it has felt like therapy each week by spending the time to take care of my mental and emotional wellbeing. Only those that have gone down this road truly understand the depth of pain this experience brings.

I am so thankful to have an outlet where I can go and know that I'm not alone. Even though it hasn't happened for me yet after experiencing two failed IUIs and now moving on to IVF I truly believe I will be a mother someday, somehow. It may just look different than what I have planned for myself.

Thank you so much Emily, please email me at [hello@thesliceofsun.com](mailto:hello@thesliceofsun.com) with your size and address and I will get that pajama and sock set shipped out to you.

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I am really excited to share with you today's podcast episode idea because I'm announcing something really big I haven't talked about. And that is the fact that we are going back to our infertility center and we are going to look to see what it will take to have another baby.

And this comes after a long mental battle with myself on whether we should have another baby or not. Because honestly, you guys, twins has rocked my world. It has been so challenging. It's been the best thing of my entire life, I wouldn't trade a day of it. And it has also been so incredibly challenging as a mother, to the point where I was like, "I don't know if I can do this again y'all." Anyone that has more than two kids I'm like literally how? With a capital H, like how?

And then my kids turned four and a half and Tyler and I went on a little trip and we were like, "Wait, what? They're just watching their iPads on the airplane?" Like, we would just like look at each other and be like, "This is actually fun. What's wrong? We need to change something."

And everyone had told me that has had twins that when they hit about age five it would get easier. And they are right, my twins turn five in July and I'm to the point where I'm like, "Oh my goodness, I can take a breath of fresh air." And this huge battle I've had in my head back and forth on whether we should have another baby or not, we've decided to move forward with pursuing having another baby.

And it's interesting because over the last year, I also was slightly open to it because we had stopped taking birth control, or I had stopped taking birth control last spring. So it's been over a year since I have been on birth control, we haven't been preventing anything. And there was part of me in the back of my mind that just hoped that we would accidentally get pregnant. And it would just be magical and I wouldn't have to worry about going back to the Fertility Center.

Even though I was also scared at the same time to have another baby. I was like, "Well, if it happens then it will just take away that decision from

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me. And that's really easy. That is simple." That's something I haven't experienced before, right? So many of you feel the same way, I'm sure.

And I've done a lot of work in the last year to be able to properly process my feelings in a way that allows me to be a human and experience the 50/50 of life. And I genuinely believe that it's very normal to have 50/50. There is happy, there is sad. There's light, there's dark. There's joy, there's pain. And I think for the longest time, growing up and just in general wanting to be a positive human being that I thought that it was bad to have negative emotions. And so I would do anything at all costs to avoid these negative emotions.

And a lot of that manifested itself when I was a mom to newborn twins. I had gone through infertility. I was so beyond grateful to have them and felt so blessed to have them that I didn't allow myself to acknowledge the fact that being a mom to newborn twins is hard.

Now again, I wouldn't change it for anything, right? I would do it all over again, I'm so grateful I have them. There are many benefits to having twins specifically because they have such an incredible relationship. But needless to say motherhood is hard, right?

Even while experiencing infertility, even before I had my kids, I knew that. I wasn't naive. And I don't think many of you are naive, where you think that magically your life is going to be so easy when motherhood comes, right? Being a mom is hard, raising human beings and allowing them to function and literally taking care of every single need that they have is not an easy task. I don't think any of us are blinded to that fact.

I however, thought that I shouldn't admit that, right? I had gone through infertility; I really wanted these babies. And in many ways, it was amazing because it did allow the hard days to be softened. I did allow myself to see possibilities in changing my thoughts to view like certain circumstances to where they were easier for me. And I'll go into all of the details on how I'm a

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different mother because I experienced infertility towards the end of this podcast.

So I didn't allow myself to acknowledge that being a mom to newborn twins or to toddler twins was incredibly difficult. I just wanted to be happy. I wanted to feel positive about it, right? And looking back on it, I didn't realize I was doing this at the time, I just thought that that was normal and that's the way that I wanted to live life. I truly didn't allow myself to feel my emotions and be a human being.

And being a human being means experiencing all of the emotions. It means the ups and the downs. I'm not a robot. If I was a robot, I'd be like, "Cool, let's just be happy all the time." But here's the thing about that, you wouldn't know if it was happy all the time if you were happy all the time, it would just be neutral, right? So there's so many good reasons why we are able to experience opposites because we can then appreciate the feelings that we're in because we know the opposite.

And I ended up hiring a health coach this past January, my friend Amanda Sanchez, which I'll talk more about when she's ready for it because she's creating a coaching program for losing weight and so much more than that, because it's like mental health.

And I knew that I looked fine, right? My problem is that when those hard days came, which was every day, I would put my kids to bed and I would turn to food to make myself feel better and it works temporarily right? That candy bag calls my name in the pantry, I'm down there in a flash and I'm feeling pretty darn good when I'm just eating gummy bears. Okay? We won't get into that debate right now, I'm such a candy lover. Give me that lollipop and those suckers, and I'll be good. All the kid candy.

So I'm in the pantry covering up my emotions. And I genuinely didn't think until this point that when people said, I am emotionally eating that they were actually serious. Like I genuinely thought it was a joke and I thought it was funny. And then all of a sudden, two years into doing it myself, three

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years, who knows how long I had done it, I was like, “Oh, they're not kidding. Like emotional eating is a real thing.”

And I was turning to food so that I wouldn't feel sad, I wouldn't feel overwhelmed. But the problem is, is that whenever you buffer with something and not actually address the actual problem, it compounds itself. It grows, it lurks in the shadows. It's still there, just because you're looking at it doesn't mean that it's not there.

And I had gotten to the point where my excessive sugar eating at night to cover up that overwhelmed feeling of being a mom of twins was becoming a problem because I was starting to not feel very good. I was picking apart my body a lot.

And I brought this up to Tyler, I would say at least two years after I had started behaving like this. And I told him what I saw when I looked in the mirror. And I told him every time I look in the mirror, I see my thighs. And I say to myself, “Okay, Jenica, you've got this. You've just got to exercise a little harder, eat a little healthier.” And I started noticing, well, first of all, he was like, “Oh.” Like he had never experienced that before.

And I think that was the first time when I realized that that wasn't normal. That draining that much excessive energy into thoughts of I should be eating better, I should be doing better, my body should look a little bit better. The amount of excessive energy I was draining into that wasn't healthy and normal.

And I started being very curious about how much energy it was taking. And I literally felt like it was sucking the life out of me because I was just draining energy into it. And I thought to myself, “If I'm going to help women with infertility and coach women with infertility mentally and grow this incredible membership program to give these women life changing tools, that girl that does that is not this girl right now. Because this girl right now drains about 90% of her energy into wanting to change herself and that is not healthy.”

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So I reached out to my friend Amanda, who we met on Instagram about six or seven years ago when we were both going through infertility. And I'd asked her, "How are you feeling?" Because I noticed that she had not eaten sugar or flour in over a year at that point, because she had shared about it on her blog. And I said, "How are you feeling?" And she's like, "Honestly, I'm feeling good, but it's mostly mental."

And so she started asking me questions, and she said, "Hey, you know what I'm starting my own coaching program." Which she's still developing, I will let you guys know when it's launching. And she said, "I would love to coach you right now."

And 98% of it has been mental and seeing myself for who I am, which is a daughter of my Heavenly Father. And seeing myself without all the lies, all the lies stripped down. That my body is exactly how it should be. And allowing myself with that grace and with that love, to feel. To feel sad, to feel overwhelmed, to have a "hard day" and to process those emotions.

And then that combined with the absolutely incredible coaching program certification that I did, realizing that it all stems from our thoughts. Our feelings stem from our thoughts. Our actions stem from our feelings. And the results that we're getting in our life stem from those actions. And it all starts with our thoughts.

And once I started allowing myself to be a human being was the most beautiful thing for me. And so this all leads to what I wanted to tell you about today with starting that infertility procedure process over again. And I had felt the impression that we have another baby, that we have another baby that would like to be in our family. I've prayed about it; I've received confirmation from my Heavenly Father that this is the route that I want to go but I had this fear.

And I would start talking about it with people, whether they brought it up or whether I brought it up, about the possibility of having another baby. And



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this was back a few months ago when I was really debating back and forth about doing it or not. And I would get panicked.

I would be totally fine, I would feel happy, I'd feel peaceful. And we'd start talking about this and I would feel a sense of absolute panic and anxiety tightening in my chest, and I would just want to run. And I would want to cry. And I would feel tears welling up in my eyes.

And it was so surprising to me, because I've talked about infertility for years, right? That's what I do, I'm an infertility coach. And I talk about it all the time. And so the fact that this panic would arise every time I would talk about it was surprising to me. And then I really started to get curious about it. Why was I feeling like this? And I know, and we know around here, and I talk about this all the time, and I'll teach you that our thoughts always, always create an emotion.

So I started asking myself and getting curious, why do I feel this sense of panic every time I talk about perhaps having another baby? Perhaps having to do infertility treatments again? Perhaps having to do IVF again? And I was really curious about it for a few days, I just gave myself some non-judgmental space and I would just think about it.

And I finally came to the thought that was causing me the most fear and panic. And that thought was that I had an entitled sense of I shouldn't have to go through infertility treatments again because I already did that. Check off the list people, I did three IUIs and three rounds of IVF. She done, she doesn't need to go through this again to have another baby. I've done that I've experienced that I've learned what I needed to learn, I'm done.

And that thought of entitled I shouldn't have to do this again to have another baby was causing me absolute panic and dread. And then when I really examined it, I thought to myself, "Do I believe that's true?" No, I don't believe that's true. In fact, the first round of IVF, second round, all of those initial infertility treatments to get my twins, the thought that always brought me peace every single time was that if it wasn't this trial it would be

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something else. Because I am a human being. And human beings have trials, you can't escape them.

That's why we're here on this earth to learn and grow from them and become stronger people and then look back and help others that are coming behind us, hold their hands through the process. Hold their hands through the trials that we have experienced that we can now use our experience to help them.

I genuinely believe that with all of my heart. And so that thought that I shouldn't have to do this over again wasn't true for me. It was this sneaky thought that I literally wasn't even consciously aware of that was causing me to feel panic. And a thought that I actually don't really believe. So once I was able to pull that out of the depths of my soul, because I gave myself space and asked myself those questions, I was able to release that.

And since I discovered that I feel at complete peace with going to the infertility center. I've given myself the time and the space that I need to feel that way, to feel the panic and then realizing why. And then calming myself down with the fact that I believe this is one of my trials in life.

This isn't my only trial; I'm going to have more. I'm a human being and this is what the world is like for human beings. And that thought has provided so much peace for me. And it all stemmed from asking myself those questions. Why am I feeling fearful? Why am I feeling so incredibly panicked that I literally feel like physical anxiety, tears, sweating?

And that's one suggestion that I have for you because feelings are easy to pinpoint. I think oftentimes if we start with a thought like what thought is causing me to feel like this? It's kind of a hard spot to start. But I think the emotions are easy to spot because they have a lot of indicators that they're there. You can feel physical reactions in your body. Are you feeling tired? Are you feeling tense? Are you feeling hot? Are you feeling a tightening in your chest?

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Those are some indicators of emotions that I was feeling. And when I pinpointed how I was feeling I could then ask why and just get very curious. And it might not come to you right away. You might have to ponder it; you might need to give yourself space. And then when you realize what thoughts are causing that you can see the results that you're getting.

And for me, the results it was getting for me is I was so incredibly indecisive because I wasn't willing to take the time to weigh out what I would need to do actually to have another baby again. I was so indecisive. I didn't know if it was right or wrong, I was just in a pure panic.

And doing this work has been life changing for me. And I know it can be life changing for you as well. And so as a suggestion for if you're new around here, ask yourself or pinpoint that feeling that you're feeling. And then be very curious about when you're feeling that feeling what thoughts are going through your head.

I am so incredibly grateful for my infertility and I know that it's easier for me to say that because I'm on the other side. And I know that if you're not grateful for your infertility right now, that's exactly where you should be. You're not doing anything wrong. If you're mad, if you're angry, if you're sad, you're not doing anything wrong.

As your infertility coach I always reiterate that I think you're perfect exactly where you are. Now, what I do is provide you with the tools that if you do want to change and take back the control in your life so that you could feel how you want to feel, that's what I teach you. And only you can know if that is right for you, and what you need.

I am different as a mother because I experienced infertility. And whether you are a mom right now and you're experiencing secondary infertility, or whether you don't have children in your family yet, or whether you're going through adoption, or surrogacy, I think that your motherhood experience will be deeply impacted based on your infertility.

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And for me that's been a beautiful thing, because I have been able to experience motherhood from a lens of wanting to be a mother so desperately that I was willing to put myself through so much to get it. And I sacrificed, and I worked, and I pushed forward and I'm so proud of myself. And I experience motherhood through the lens of the gratitude that only that has been able to give me.

The first way that I am different as a mother is that I allow my kids to be sad and process. Going through this whole experience for me has been such a beautiful acceptance of accepting myself as a human being that has dynamic emotions. And there is a gift and every one of those emotions. There's a gift of sadness, there's a gift in anger, we're not robots. And if I hadn't have gone through all of this and done the work, even since my kids have been born, to process emotions in a healthy way I don't think I would allow them to be as sad and process their own emotions.

But when my kids are crying, when they're upset, I tell them, it's okay. Sometimes mommy is sad too, sometimes I'm mad too. It's okay, it's normal. And to see them not judge themselves and not think there's something wrong with them for being sad, in my opinion is one of the greatest gifts that I can give them. To realize that they're doing it right. Sometimes people get sad. Sometimes people get mad. You're a normal human being.

Allowing them to process those emotions and accept themselves in love even when they're feeling those things that are “undesirable” is such a gift for me that I'm able to give my kids because of my experience with infertility and all the work that I've done since to allow myself to be a human who has these emotions.

Another way I'm different as a mother is that I think it's okay to cry. And I think it's okay sometimes for my kids to see me get upset. I think it's okay for them to cry. I think it's healthy for them to process those big emotions. I don't think it's good for them to hypothetically go in the pantry and eat gummy bears like their mom did.

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It sounds funny because it's so ridiculous looking back on it. But it's so interesting at the same time, because I didn't see that it was a problem at the time until it was a big problem sucking the life and energy out of my life.

Another way that I'm different as a mother is because I am grateful in the trying times. I was never the mom or the human that wanted to be a mom desperately when I was growing up. I wanted a career. I wanted to get married. I wanted to be successful in the workplace.

And to be honest, it was quite the relief to me when I had that motherhood instinct after my husband and I had been married I think probably like six years. I was like, "Oh good, I have it there." Because I knew I wanted a family eventually. You know, just like in my mind I did but in my heart I didn't yet. You know, I wasn't like, "Oh, I can't wait to be a mom." Because I'm a very realistic person, I know how hard it is to be a mom even before I had my babies.

But the gift that infertility has given me is that gratitude and the trying times. The times were both of my kids were screaming and I needed to give them both a bath and like they were kicking me and didn't want to do what I asked them to do. I was able to take a deep breath because I thought to myself, first of all, this too shall pass. I've been through really hard times, this is nothing.

And to be grateful and see the gifts in the moment that I had two precious babies that I had tried to have for so long. It softened the pain; it softened the sharp edges of life. The wanting them for so long enabled me to be happier during motherhood in those times that weren't "happy."

The last way that I will share with you, I'm sure there's a million other ways I'm different as a mother after experiencing infertility. But the last one I'll share with you today is that I know that the hard times won't last forever.

I get emotional talking about it because life can be hard, right? Life is hard sometimes. We all go through it. There's not a single human being on this

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planet who experiences happiness all the time. We all go through really heartbreaking, gut wrenching, drop us to our knees pain. And I know, because I went through infertility and because I was at my lowest that will not last forever.

So when those times where my kids are sick and they're waking me up five times in the night, and I feel like I'm going to pass out because I'm so tired during the day, I'm okay. I'm okay, I know I'll be able to do it.

And those times where I get really bad news that I'm so frustrated, and I just don't want to keep going, I know that won't last forever because I experienced infertility and because I went through those hard times.

I'm so incredibly grateful for the gifts in infertility. And if you're not seeing it right now, you're not doing anything wrong, it's a lot easier seeing it looking back. And I think that your experiences in your life will teach you that when they're supposed to.

So if you're like, "Girl, I'm not feeling you." If you're like, "I don't know about this, this whole gifts in infertility thing." You are in the right place; I will teach you how to accept yourself and love yourself exactly as you are right now. And to use the tools to take back control in your life so that when you want to feel happier, you can. And when you want to sit in the sadness, you can and you accept yourself in both.

I love you all so incredibly much. I am beyond thrilled to announce that I will be launching my infertility coaching membership program here in the next several months. And in the next few weeks I'll be launching my founding members launch. And I will cap it at 50 people who will want to work closely with me. And I will help you manage your mind and coach you during your infertility experience.

And in exchange, I'll offer it at a highly discounted price, in exchange for helping me create the membership program of your dreams for infertility. Providing you exactly the tools, support, and resources that you need to

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know that you're not alone and you're supported in this experience of infertility.

So go to the show notes and the link is there to sign up for the newsletter. And it's also on [thesliceofsun.com](https://thesliceofsun.com).

I love you all so much. I think you are exactly where you should be and you're doing an absolutely incredible job. I will talk with you next week.

To celebrate the launch of the show I'm going to be giving away pajama and sock sets from The Slice of Sun that I have personally designed. They are the most buttery, soft, delightful things you'll ever put on your body. And I'm going to be giving away five bundles to five lucky listeners who subscribe, rate, and review the show on Apple Podcasts. It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you love the show. I genuinely want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome show that provides tons of value to you who are experiencing infertility.

Visit [thesliceofsun.com/podcast](https://thesliceofsun.com/podcast) launch to learn more about the contest and how to enter and I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.

Thank you for listening to *Fearless Infertility*. If you want more tools and resources to help you during your infertility experience visit [thesliceofsun.com](https://thesliceofsun.com). See you next week.