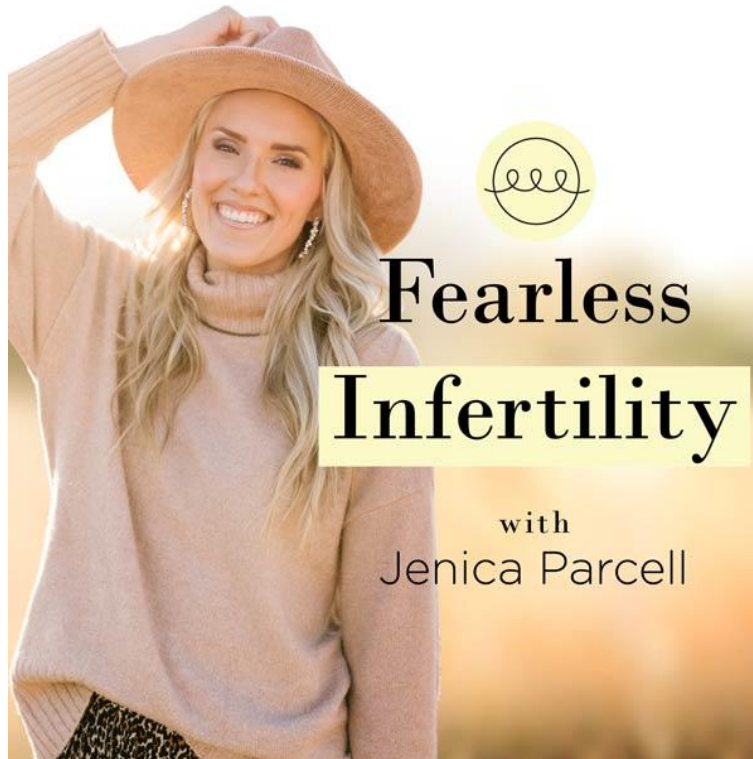


31. Our Infertility Journey: Your Questions Answered with Tyler Parcell



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jenica Parcell

[Fearless Infertility](#) with 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 *Fearless Infertility* episode 31 with my husband, Tyler Parcell. We are talking about our infertility experience so far, what we've learned, the ups, the downs, and how we've learned to better communicate through this process. And hopefully some of the things we have learned will help you as well. We answer all of your questions here in this episode, stay tuned.

Today's winner of the pajama and sock set from The Slice of Sun is the reviewer ReadyToGo. She says, "Such a blessing! Thank you Jenica for sharing your journey and being such a blessing to so many. The timing of finding this podcast couldn't have been more perfect for me.

I was struggling to keep my head above water and try to keep my faith in God and stay positive. The episode that talked about just feeling everything was truly eye opening. Thank you for telling me it's okay to have bad days. Praying over y'all, Jenica, during your journey to baby number three, as well as all the ladies listening."

I love this, please email me at hello@thesliceofsun with your size and address and we'll get your PJs and socks sent out to you. I love to treat one of you every single week to a pair of the pajamas and socks I sell on thesliceofsun.com. They're the most buttery soft incredible pajamas made of bamboo. And I designed them so that they could be a wrapping of love so you would always remember that you're a part of a really, really incredible group of women, you're not alone.

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And the reason why I love to treat those of you who review on Apple Podcasts is because when we have more reviews on Apple Podcasts, people who have no idea who I am or what I teach and how I can help them and this incredible community are completely alone and feel like they're alone will be able to discover the podcast more easily. So that's why it's so important to me.

Also, if you have not downloaded the Morning Mindset Magic checklist yet, it's free. I will link it here in the show notes. And it's the best way to start your morning. We're doing a challenge right now on Instagram, if you follow @thesliceofsun.infertility we check in with each other every single day. And it's the things that I've tailored to fit into my morning so that I give myself the best chance possible of having a clear mindset without any anxiety, without any doubt. And I'm able to accomplish the things that I want to. So make sure you join us there.

And let's get into my episode with my husband, Tyler.

Jenica: Hello my friends and welcome back to *Fearless Infertility*. I am so excited, I have my husband Tyler with us here today.

Tyler: Hello friends.

Jenica: He loves that I say, "hello friends." So what we did recently was on Instagram, it's @thesliceofsun.infertility. I told you that I was going to have him on and we asked you to submit any questions that you had about our infertility experience. And so we're going to be answering all of those today. And I'm really excited about it. I'm so excited to have him on. Obviously, he was a 50/50 partner in this relationship of creating two humans.

Okay, so first of all, I wanted to give you guys a little bit of background on how we met. I feel like our stories differ slightly.

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Tyler: So which version are we telling, the Jenica version or the Tyler version?

Jenica: People didn't specify. So, I mean, really, it's totally up to us.

Tyler: Okay.

Jenica: I'm scared.

Tyler: It's my version, just so everybody knows.

Jenica: Okay, let's go. Go ahead.

Tyler: So, we started dating at school at BYU. And we had mutual friends that we kept running into over and over and over. And one night I asked Jenica for her number because she was cute. But we had run into each other where she worked, at parties, and different scenarios, which is fun. And it's all part of the dating process. So I don't think it was anything too special. Except for that we were special.

Jenica: That's a very vague version. So the detailed version is that Tyler grew up across the street from my cousin, Amanda. Amanda and I would play when I was in elementary school. His sisters would come play with us and I would see him and his brother riding their bikes and obviously didn't think too much of it. But little did I know we would end up getting married one day.

And so when I went to BYU I roomed with Amanda and they had obviously stayed in touch. Tyler is four years older than us, but they had stayed in touch and we just kind of started hanging out as friends and one thing led to another. But that's a little bit more of a detailed version that we essentially knew each other since we were little tiny people.

Tyler: And today we were actually talking about if we could go back in time and see if we were at the same events or at the same grocery store at the

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same time or something like that. You know, one of the those crazy scenarios we were thinking about today.

Jenica: Yeah, I'm sure we were at the same place at the same time multiple times and had no idea that our future spouse was right there. It's kind of cool to see.

Okay, so we are going to get right into your questions. We have been in this infertility game for a while. Neither of us had any expectation of experiencing infertility, I think that's probably a lot of you listening. I think it's one of those things that it's very surprising. So you kind of don't really know where to start when it happens to you. It's not something you plan for, like you're going to college for years in advance, you plan where you're going to go and what you're going to do. And this is something that kind of got sprung on both of us.

And it kind of goes back to when we were engaged, the first night. We got engaged on New Year's Eve and the next morning, we woke up, Tyler was staying at my family's house in Texas. And he was like, "Jenica," he's like, "let's start trying to have kids next year." And I was like—

Tyler: Pump the brakes.

Jenica: "Let's actually not do that. That's a terrible idea." I was literally 21 years old, I was an actual child myself. So I'm like, "You know, we're going to have to wait a little bit. If it's a red flag, it's great that you told me now because there's still time for you to back out." Luckily, he didn't. And so we got married.

And I was like the person that was like two types of birth control. If I hadn't taken my birth control and it was like a day late or something I'd be like, "Oh no, we're not doing it for like a week." And he's like, "Really?" And I'm like, "Yes." I did not want kids.

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Tyler: I do remember that happening. That's true, it did happen.

Jenica: I did not want kids for a while. Oh, come on, you loved it. No, I'm just kidding.

So anyway, finally, after what like seven? Six, seven years I finally got that motherly instinct. And I was actually really relieved because I didn't know if it was going to come. I was like I know, I want to be a mom one day, but I never, I don't know. It's hard to put into words.

I didn't have the motherly instinct yet. I knew that it would happen one day, but getting to the point where I needed to decide that we would start trying, I was very nervous about getting to that point. And then finally I did. How did you feel about that? Were you relieved?

Tyler: Yes. I remember that happening, but I don't remember when you finally became wanting your motherly instinct. I just remember thinking we're ready to have kids, or start trying.

Jenica: Well, I was sitting in church one day, and this little girl with brown eyes looked at me, I was in the primary presidency of our church. And so I was sitting in the front of all the little kids. And this little girl with brown eyes looked at me, and I thought, "Oh my gosh, there it is."

And it's so crazy now, because we do have a little girl with brown eyes now. So I think it must have been her telling me like, "Okay mom, we're ready."

Tyler: I don't think I knew that.

Jenica: Really?

Tyler: Yeah.

Jenica: Oh my gosh, wow.

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Tyler: I never knew that.

Jenica: Oh wow, this is a very revealing podcast episode. This is like therapy with Tyler and Jenica. Surprise!

Tyler: I'm still wondering if she did get her motherly instincts sometimes, you know?

Jenica: Rude.

Tyler: No, just like your— We'll cut that out, I guess.

Jenica: Oh my gosh, that's so rude.

Tyler: I'm in trouble, cut that out.

Jenica: Okay, so first things first, we're going to get through all of your questions that you had. And we're just going to go through these and kind of see what comes out. We will see.

So the first question is, what is IVF like day to day before the retrieval?

I guess Tyler can answer this for what it was like for him as a male, not getting the shots and all of that. For me it was very emotional, because your hormones are all over the place. And when you're doing IVF, your ovaries are really, really big, because you have way more eggs that are dropping than normal. That's the whole point, is to get a lot of eggs. And so you just feel very uncomfortable all the time. And it's just a little hormones ups and downs. I don't know what was it like for you?

Tyler: Obviously, I wasn't taking any shots or any medications for it. So to me, I was kind of normal, just trying to help coach you through this scenario. You're having a good day, you're having a bad day. Your emotions are up and down. And where are we at? What's going on? What's the next step?

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And so just to stay positive, I think, was the biggest thing, always. Because you don't know what's going ahead of you and we're hoping for the best. So that's kind of like what we were aiming for, right?

Jenica: Yeah, and Tyler was really good about it. I do think that there are a lot of times in this process that it feels a little bit isolating as the woman because you're the one that's having to do all the shots, you're the one that is getting all the ultrasounds. And it can kind of feel a little annoying to be the person that's like in charge of it all because I'm like, "Wait a minute, I thought this was supposed to be a partnership and I feel like I'm doing 99% of the work."

Tyler: It's 100, you were doing all of it. I did hardly anything except for say "You're doing great, babe. Keep up the good work."

Jenica: Yeah. And it's just one of the things that, for me, it just comes back to thought work. It's something for me that now that I know the model, which if you haven't listened to it and know what I'm talking about yet, the model is in episode three. And that's what I coach on in my Fearless Infertility Coaching.

And it's life changing, I didn't have it when I was first going through that first three IUIs and the first three rounds of IVF. But now that I know it, using the thoughts that determine how we are feeling, the actions we're taking, the results we're getting, I mean, it's a life changer. So you can use that model to help you through really hard situations where you do feel alone.

The next question is, did you always communicate what you needed or did your spouse know or just ask what you need?

Tyler: I would say that I'm not a good communicator. And when we first got married, I probably wasn't the best communicator at all. Probably still not very good. But I don't know, I would say a lot of guys probably do that, when they go to communicate, they almost don't communicate maybe. And

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so when I was having a bad day or a good day, I would just not say anything or not doing anything.

And now that Jenica and I have been married for so many years, she sees that, knows that. And so it's almost in this question, you have to look at what your partner needs. Where's your partner at? More or less infertility or not, this is a partner situation here where you have to learn to communicate, learn to talk to your partner in the way they want to.

What's their love language? Which we've all heard about that. Is it touch, is it gifts, or whatever it may be? And how do you do that? And so make sure you know your partner's love language, definitely, to help you communicate better.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. And I think that it's always a learning process. So I think don't expect yourself to just know how to be a perfect partnership. I feel like we're still learning from each other. We're still learning how to communicate with each other. I feel like after 13 years, we've gotten pretty good at it. But I'm sure 13 years from now we'll say, "Oh, wow, we're so much better now than we were then."

So I think that really discovering together, like one thing that came up for me when I read this question was, there was a time where I was like sobbing. There was a ginormous shot that needed to go in my rear end and I was not happy about that.

And I was just exhausted at the time and I was just annoyed. I'm like, "Really?" I'm like, you know what? And I think I even remember saying out loud like, "I don't even want a stupid baby." Because I was just so bugged. I'm like, "Another shot?" I was just kind of getting resentful and frustrated. And Tyler pulled up my iPad and he looked up, he literally Googled cute babies. And I thought it was so dumb at first because I'm like, "Come on, that's not going to help."

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Tyler: You got mad at me, I think, by pulling it up.

Jenica: I probably did.

Tyler: It was one of those scenarios where I was like, "Maybe this isn't a good idea to bring this out." But we did it.

Jenica: Yeah, I feel like he defaults to humor in coping with things. And through the situation, it was so funny, because he pulled up this cute little baby. It kind of softened my heart a little bit because I thought the situation was so funny. I'm like, "You know what? Good for you for trying to help me out here." And it was funny.

And I think I realized through our infertility experience together that humor is one of the ways that I deal with really hard things. It just helps me to not take things quite so seriously. It helps me get that sense of relief occasionally that I need. And I learned that in this experience together.

Okay, next question, how does infertility affect sex and take the fun out of it at times?

Tyler: Well, when we talked about this one, it gets very monotonous, right? You got to do it every three days, every other day, over and over and over and it becomes almost robotic. So it's not fun.

Which talking before this came on, how would you liven it back up, right? And waiting a couple of days and then doing it spontaneously. Don't plan it at all. Just say, "Hey, when it happens, it happens." And make it fun again and exciting.

And you guys can, for your couple, whatever you want to do in that scenario to make it fun and exciting, that's up to you. And I would definitely try to not make it monotonous anymore. And go on a vacation.

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Jenica: Yeah, I think that it all really stems down to our thoughts. And knowing the model now, you can think to yourself, "This is going to be hard. This isn't fun anymore. This doesn't feel spontaneous like I want it to." Or you can choose something like, "I'm going to make this as fun as we possibly can." And it always stems down to your thoughts.

Tyler: What do you want to do? You make it happen.

Jenica: One thing also, when I interviewed Dr. Foulk, who's our fertility doctor that got us our twins, he mentioned, which I feel like I should have known this by now. But he said you don't need to be as rigorous with your timing as you think that you do because sperm can last in your uterus for, I think he said up to six days.

So he's like, if you're having sex twice a week, you should be good. Which for me takes a lot of pressure off because you're kind of scared. You're like, "Am I not doing it right?" Like there's other people getting pregnant, are we actually not doing it right? Are we not doing it often enough? And you can put so much pressure on yourself and so knowing that really helped me to feel a lot more relaxed.

And then also, I would highly recommend listening to that podcast episode. I believe it's episode 30, 29. I'll link it here in the show notes with Dr. Foulk.

What advice does Tyler have for men that are going through infertility?

Tyler: So one of the scenarios here is, a lot of times, as we discussed a few minutes ago, is Jenica was doing all of the work to get the babies here. Now, that might not be the case in your situation, the men might have a low sperm count or something like that. Or the situation is with the woman who has a uterus situation, I don't know what it is. And everybody's situation is different.

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But the biggest thing is to stay positive because you guys are going at it as a team. So whether, technically, it's in my body that has the issue or it's in Jenica's, or the male or the female, or whatever the situation is, you guys are a team so go at it as a team and do what you can to help each other get through it.

If someone's having a bad day, guess what, the other person might have a bad day the next day and be having struggles, whether it's with the infertility or it's just a base layer to another stress that happened in your guys' life, and the other stress broke down. But really, it is still the infertility that made you guys break down and they're compounding on each other.

So you got to stay positive and work as a team. Because in the end, it's both of you trying to have children no matter what the situation is. You're a team.

Jenica: Also, I wanted to go back to the communication thing. So with you, Tyler, I feel like you and I have gotten so much better at communicating over the years. And I feel like a huge part was me opening up that space for you to feel comfortable in sharing your feelings and not taking on that stress. Because I think Tyler was worried about if he told me certain things it would stress me out.

And I have learned through the model, through life coaching, not to take that on for you. But just to open up that space for you to help you communicate with me, but not actually get stressed out when you're stressed out for instance. Have you felt that? Is that better for you to be able to come to me?

Tyler: That helps a lot because you want to be able to bounce things off of your partner and talk to them. So I talk to her still about work stuff, "Hey, I've got this situation going on at work." And she knows that she's not going to come to my office and help me take care of my situation that's at work. She's just listening, gives me a little bit of advice.

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Or no advice. Just listen because as we know, sometimes you just want to have somebody listen to you and release that stress that you're feeling by talking to somebody and give them no advice back but just say, "Wow, that's interesting," or some other form of communicating.

Jenica: Like validating.

Tyler: Validating their problem and asking them how they're going to fix it or what you think they should do. And just listen as a partner, which helps out with whatever is going on with infertility and in other parts of their lives, which helps.

Jenica: Yeah, and I think for me, allowing him to have that space started with me and knowing that I don't need to fix him. I don't need to solve his problems for him. And I also don't need to internalize them and make them mean anything about me. It's just like, hey, I'm that safe space, you can come to me and dump all the problems that are going on in your head, which would every single human being has.

And I think another truth that has helped me come to that is just the fact that it's not supposed to be happy all the time. I think for so many years it was this toxic positivity that I had where I'm like, "If we're not happy and we're not positive, then something's gone terribly wrong and we need to fix it."

And I genuinely don't believe that now. I think life is 50/50. So for me, I'm like, "Yeah, we had a hard day. Okay, cool. It is what it is, move on."

Tyler: Move on and have a better day tomorrow.

Jenica: Yeah.

Tyler: The highs and lows, you appreciate the highs when you've had the lows.

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Jenica: Right, totally. Okay, and then another thing I wanted to say too is one thing I learned from Tyler that I feel is so helpful for any couple is, I feel like his happiness doesn't depend on my actions. Like he's not codependent. And I think that's really a truth in the universe all of us know to be true, but to actually live it, I think is so important.

And one of the ways that I helped learn, I don't know how he knows this stuff. I feel like some of the things that I read in self-help books, I'm like, "Tyler, just does this. How do you know this?" It's like I'm reading 20 books and he just already knows all this stuff.

Tyler: I already read all those books, that's how.

Jenica: Oh, okay, gotcha, gotcha. So I asked him before, and I think it's important to communicate openly, but I've asked him several times, "What can I do better as a wife?" And he literally, every time he says nothing, you're perfect. Which let's be honest, like between you and I, that is not true. Okay?

Tyler: Well, when we were on vacation this last time the couples actually went around and they kind of said the same scenario question which Jenica and I have already said this previously. And they said, "Hey, what's one thing that our husband or the wife could do better? Or that you would change about them?"

And anyone that answered got themselves in the doghouse. I almost made a vow to myself, not really to say, "Jenica, you're perfect," but I didn't want to be in the doghouse is how that originally started. So I said, "You're perfect, I don't want to change anything."

Which I actually don't want to change anything about her, it's true. But at the same time, I didn't want to be in trouble so that's why I actually thought of it. And then I'm like, "Oh, wait, now I understand. It's actually working for her and for me." And it's the best answer you can come up with and it helps

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her to want to be better and be that perfect person that she sees herself, not what I see myself.

Because you're almost a harder critic on yourself and you want to be the best person you can. And so, I mean, other people judging other people almost hurts us. You can't say, it doesn't even matter, "I'd rather have you make the bed in the mornings right when you wake up, please." Something so simple and somebody might take that and be like, "Okay, I will make the bed first thing in the morning," or whatever the scenario is.

But somebody could take that wrong, "I don't want to make the beds for single morning." I mean, something so simple that they want them to do but at the same time, can take it wrong. So I've always said, you can't change them.

Jenica: Well, and that automatically makes me want to be a better person. Because I know it's a safe space that when I show up as my truest version of myself, which is so imperfect and I make mistakes all the time. But I know that that's a safe space to show up in. And I know the things that I need to improve on. And so it makes me automatically be so much of a better wife because it's that safe space.

So I think that it comes back to the principle that people are really, really good at just being themselves. And when we have certain expectations and what we call in life coaching manuals for people, right, the manual is essentially like all of these lists of items that if this person does, it'd be a perfect relationship. It just doesn't work out that way because we all have different life experiences.

And so what he just simply expects me to show up as myself, I'm really good at that. I can totally do that. And the trick is, is that I'm going to anyway. So if he expected all of these things of me, I'm going to show up as myself either way. So it's like this amazing relationship. It's just been

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fascinating to me to see like the psychology behind it as I've studied this model and life coaching.

And what I also want to say is that me and Tyler have had our ups and downs in our lives, all partners do. So I don't want any of you to use this information as a way to judge your spouse. Because Tyler is an amazing human, I'm really, really lucky to have him. But I also think it's in the eye of the beholder. And I think that any human being could pick another human being apart like, I'm sure.

Tyler: Easily.

Jenica: Yeah, so I could look and say, "Well, you didn't do this today." I mean, so I don't think that he's this perfect spouse, even though I personally do because I choose to, but also, he's really easy to love. But I don't want you to use this information to pick your spouse apart and say like, "Well, if he did this, then I would be happier."

Tyler: How you look at your spouse, it's not how your spouse is.

Jenica: Yeah.

Tyler: If you look at your spouse as being perfect or needs to change. If you look at her as being perfect, then she will be perfect and that's how you'll always think of her. But if you think of her needing to change this or that, then guess what? Once she changes that thing, if she does, or he does, then you'll have another list, "Oh, here's five things." Then you take care of those lists, I'm going to have five more because I want you to keep changing or they're perfect now. So how do you view your partner?

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. Okay, so next question is, how are things going with trying for baby number three? How does he feel through the process?

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Tyler: I think this one is a lot easier for us because we have kids. And so the first time when you go through it, you're worried that could you ever have kids? Could you not?

Jenica: Am I ever going to be a mother? Am I ever going to be a father?

Tyler: Is that going to be a problem? And obviously you all think that because you don't have children and we think that.

Jenica: Some people do listening, some people don't.

Tyler: I would think the thought has gone through everyone's mind at least once.

Jenica: What, if they're going to be a mom or dad?

Tyler: Yeah.

Jenica: Yeah, if you don't have kids and you're in infertility, I think that's very common and it's scary.

Tyler: Very scary and very true. And so this time around it's a lot easier for us because for us what we've been thinking is how far do we want to try until we can't have kids? Do we want to do three rounds? Do we want to not do this at all? Do we want to try naturally for a while then do a round? Then try naturally for a round, go back and forth, there's lots of scenarios.

And I think the stress level for us is a lot less, which actually makes it easier because it is less. And so I would not worry about it. I don't worry about it as much this time, hardly at all. Once again, the female does a lot of the work, she's got to go to the doctor's appointments. She has to get all the shots if we have to do shots and we get to that point.

And so, for me, it's just helping her, coaxing her along, telling her she's doing a good job, and communicating. Where are we at? What's going on?

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How can I help? And so randomly I do try to do random nice things for her. You can tell your wife is having or your husband is having a bad day, you got to learn that. And learn what their love language is, which I'm pretty sure Jenica's is service.

Jenica: 1,000%, yes, service. You do the dishes, it's like your life is made.

Tyler: The dishes are great. The other day when she was not feeling well I told her to go up to her room, take a hot bubble bath, and not worry about anything else. Her day is over as of right now.

So I took care of the kids, put them to bed, fed them dinner, whatever, wherever we were at, which I don't remember. But I told her, I'm like, "Go up to your bed right now." And just letting her feel the pressure release of saying she didn't have to stay down, she actually did stay down for an hour still.

And I kept telling her, "Jenica if you don't go up to your bedroom, I'm going to go up to the bedroom and lock myself in the door and I'm going to watch TV." Because I wanted her to feel relaxed and start relaxing for the night. Which, I mean, it was like a two step process. I told her she didn't have to, so she was like, "Oh, okay, that's nice." But obviously, she loves our kids and so she wants to still hang out with them and be with them and me when I get home from work.

But either way, it was a stress reliever for her. And then I pushed it even farther and said if you don't leave and go upstairs, then I'm going to because I want you to relax. And so I think that type of scenario, whatever, I mean, you can obviously think of different ways to help out your spouses and move forward that way.

Jenica: And I think that him knowing what to do has come from me communicating to him what I need. He wouldn't know that that would really help me a lot had I not communicated with him that. So I think that first I

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think with any situation, including infertility, you first need to figure out what you need. And then communicate clearly with your spouse. And maybe your spouse isn't going to do it, but that's a really good first step. And oftentimes your spouse will help you out where it's needed.

And like Tyler said, I've been way more stressed during trying for baby number three. I hate being down, the surgery to get the polyps out of my uterus was absolutely awful. And I got on birth control because they wanted to help regulate my hormones. And it was not good, I was like crawling out of my skin. And so I was doubting it, I'm like, "Why am I doing this again? This is an absolute nightmare."

And so for me it's been totally different, I mean, I really don't know where the limits are to how far I'm willing to go to have another baby, because I don't want it to affect the mother that I am the kids that I have right now. And I just think we all have our limits.

So I think, for me, I'm just really taking it day by day. And literally I say to myself, like multiple times a day, just Jesus take the wheel, because I just can't. I can't control all of this anymore. And so it's been an up and down roller coaster, but we're working through it.

Okay, another question is, what did you want your spouse to tell you to help you through infertility?

And we were talking about this before, I would say just be really, really clear about what you need. So for me, I don't expect Tyler to read my mind. I don't think that that's healthy.

Tyler: Your husband can not read your mind.

Jenica: Just in case anyone was unclear, we want to dispel that myth. And he just can't. So, for me, yeah, doing the dishes. I'm like, "Tyler, do the dishes, please." I say it nicely.

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Tyler: She wants me to want to do the dishes.

Jenica: I don't even care if you want to, just do them. Just get it done. So I just think that openly communicating, and I've kind of put myself in his position and I'm like, "You know what? If Tyler didn't ask me to do certain things, I probably wouldn't do them." Because who wants to do the dishes? You know what I mean?

So if I wasn't clear and just kept on doing all these things by myself around the house, he'd probably be like, "Cool." And if the roles were reversed and he just literally did all the housework and never asked me to help, I'd be like, "Cool."

So I think just being very open and honest about what you need and what would really help and support you, I think is just really the first step, is just being very clear. I never expect him to know what I want. And do I get annoyed sometimes having to repeat it? Maybe. But I'm willing to do it over and over again. And he's awesome because we just try again and again, every day. You wake up and you try again every day.

Okay, anything to add to that?

Tyler: No, that's all.

Jenica: He's like, "I'll do the dishes."

Tyler: I'll do the dishes.

Jenica: Tyler actually just left the podcast. He actually just went to do the dishes right now.

Tyler: Sweetie, I'm back. The dishes are done.

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Jenica: Oh my goodness. Okay, next question is how do you decide what parts of your journey should be private? This is a big divide for us. So I believe she's talking about how—

Tyler: She wants to share it with people or family, friends or put it on a Facebook group. With our story, I would say that I was actually nervous for Jenica when she was going to even write it. She wrote it all out and I read it. And I remember talking to her and saying, “You're going to publish this. Why?”

Just because with the internet, there's haters out there. And there's people that will say rude things to you and say rude comments about the way you want to live your life. Which we've all seen it, right? And so I was nervous, I mean, I don't want someone to hurt Jenica, right? I don't want someone to verbally say, “Hey, you're doing this wrong because of X, Y, Z situation.”

So I didn't want someone to have the ability to do that and say, “Hey, here it is, here's a platform, just throw some shade on me.” And I didn't want to do that. And so we thought about it for a couple of days and then we decided to put it online. And it actually was really good.

So we took our fears and stepped forward with it. Which has been really, really good. In the end I think more for Jenica, obviously, because she got to put it out there. And then instead of all of the hate that I was thinking she was going to get, she got a lot of love.

Jenica: Yeah, I was really surprised.

Tyler: A lot of people came back to her and said, “This is amazing. This is wonderful.” And then I had people coming up to me and saying, “This is great that your wife put this out there, this is fun.” And so it turned out to be a lot better in the end.

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And everyone's situation is different. This person who put in the question, I don't know if it's the male or the female that wants to put it out and the other one doesn't. I would say you can put it out anonymously, and see what people say about your story.

And put it on the Facebook group page and let people hear it where that's a safe place. And a lot of people are in the same scenarios, going through the same problems or similar problems. So let them go in there and read your story and comment on it and actually give you love back, not shade.

And I think that's going to be very therapeutic for a lot of people to actually share in that group. Which is exciting, right? And I felt like it's good for everybody to share your feelings, tell your family, tell your friends.

Personally, I was scared for us in the beginning. But this isn't a disease, this isn't a problem, you don't have something that you chose to do. This is random.

Jenica: I think what he's trying to say is it's essentially like you didn't ask this to happen to you. It's like any other medical condition. Like you get cancer, right? Is that kind of what you're getting at?

Tyler: Yeah, let people help you through this and everybody will be kind to you, I would say. I mean, I don't see why they would be rude because you're trying to have kids and you can't. You're not doing anything wrong.

Jenica: Well, I mean, there are some people that can say certain things, you do open yourself to that criticism. So I think that you definitely do, you can open yourself up to criticism, but it's just like with anything where you open yourself up there's a lot of love and support that can come in as well.

And for me, I saw that the support that came in helped us lighten the load that we were carrying so much more. I had no idea how common infertility was at the time when we shared. But if you are nervous to share it super

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publicly, I think that's totally normal and fine, and you need to do what's best for you.

And like Tyler mentioned, we have a private Facebook group, it's called Fertility Family by The Slice of Son, which I'd highly recommend joining. There's about 1100 members at the time of this recording. And it's just a really incredible, safe, supportive space where you can ask questions and answer other people's questions and helps you to feel less alone.

And then there's also a really incredible group in Fearless Infertility Coaching that's private as well. You can connect with other women and men there. And I just think stepping out at your comfort level, whatever that may be is the right way.

Okay, another question is, I felt so much anger when dealing with this, or I feel so much anger when dealing with us. How do you deal with that?

For me, I feel like I don't think that there's anything wrong with feeling anger. For me, I had certain thoughts, which is what we teach in the model in Fearless Infertility Coaching that's so incredibly helpful. And every thought leads to a certain feeling. But that doesn't mean to say that I want to feel good all the time. Sometimes I want to feel angry about it.

And I think life is 50/50 I don't think we're supposed to feel happy all the time. And I think there's a lot of lessons that can be learned in feeling those uncomfortable feelings. And so I think let yourself feel angry. Let yourself be mad sometimes. There's nothing wrong with you for feeling that way and don't beat yourself up for feeling like, you know, "Oh, I got mad and I shouldn't have and I feel guilty."

And that was me in the beginning. I was like, "I have a good job, I have a great husband, I'm not allowed to feel sad." Which I feel like is so on healthy. It doesn't benefit me, it doesn't benefit anybody else. And comparing your situation to anyone else's also doesn't help as well. So

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sometimes let yourself feel angry, but also realize that there are thoughts that that will allow you to feel peace as well.

One of my thoughts was that human beings are on this earth to have trials and we grow and we learn from them. And every single human being has trials. And, for me, this is it right now, if it wasn't this trial, it'd be something else. So that specific thought brought me a lot of peace when I did feel resentment creeping in, or anger creeping in and I wanted to switch that narrative in my head because I didn't want to feel those feelings anymore.

And something else to note is that it just needs to be true for you. So hold on to a thought that's true for you. If that thought that I just said doesn't feel good to you, then don't think it. I think you think the thoughts that give you that peace to move forward and allow yourself to be a human that feels the good and the bad.

Tyler: Yeah, that's a huge step. You want to feel the bad so you can appreciate the good. But I wouldn't dwell on the bad, and then move on and then go back to your joy.

I remember one time I was feeling very stressed and had some issues at work. It was a work scenario, not really infertility. But I had a saying that I said to myself to help myself get out of it. And you can create your own saying that is positive and good things about you, which will help you want to be positive and move forward. So when you're ready to move forward and you're ready to move on, you've felt that, we'll call it, what was the word hatred or anger?

Jenica: Anger.

Tyler: When you felt that anger and you're mad about the situation, and then when you're ready to move on create something for yourself to help put yourself in a good mood, whatever that may be. Which mine was my

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saying, where I was feeling anxiety, or anger, or mad, I would have this saying.

Jenica: What was the saying?

Tyler: I didn't know if I wanted to say it.

Jenica: Don't hold back on us, bro.

Tyler: Basically the saying is like, "I'm amazing. I'm awesome. I can accomplish things. I can be good at what I'm doing." And I keep saying this to myself until I actually start feeling that way.

Jenica: I love that.

Tyler: I was feeling a lot of anxiety and I was having a lot of stress at a certain situation. So I kept going and I kept saying it, taking deep breaths at the same time. Almost putting myself through this like, I don't even know what.

Jenica: Like meditation?

Tyler: Meditation, yeah, that would be a great scenario. I was meditating myself, bringing myself to a positive state so that I could. And then when I start to go down the negative of the anxiety of the same situation, that doesn't do any good for me except for want to make me curl up in the fetal position on the floor.

Jenica: Yeah, not good.

Tyler: And I didn't want to get that far down it and so I would start to say this. And now I know I can do good, I know I can accomplish what I need to accomplish. And in the infertility world, we will have children and you will be able to move forward. So just stay positive and keep moving forward and

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doing the steps that the doctors tell us to do and the different things we've learned to do to help us move forward.

Jenica: Yeah, it all stems from our thoughts. And I love that another really great concept for me has been to realize that just because a thought pops in my head doesn't mean it needs to stay there. I can just say, "Okay, thanks for that, brain, for offering me that option. But I'm not going to hold on to that now. Next, please." And just let it go gently. Don't get mad at yourself for thinking that thought that made you feel a certain way.

But when you want to feel better, you have those thoughts that you can hold on to that allow yourself to get to that better space mentally.

Tyler: Yeah.

Jenica: Okay, another question. Did you choose genders, and what are your thoughts on that? So we did not. We had nine embryos. We did not do genetic testing the first time. I probably would recommend doing genetic testing now that I know what I do now because it can prevent a lot of miscarriages. But we didn't and do whatever you want.

Tyler: And, yeah, choosing a gender, I don't feel like we would want to.

Jenica: Yeah, because honestly, we don't care. I'm just like we want some children.

Tyler: We have one of each and so we just want more children or a child.

Jenica: Yeah.

Tyler: I mean, if somebody chooses, that's their decision and that's fine if they want to choose. We didn't choose though.

Jenica: Yeah. Next question, what did you hate that people would say to you?

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Tyler: I don't know if I had somebody say anything that I hated.

Jenica: I'm the same way and, honestly, it really stems from, for me, again, it goes back to the thought. I genuinely believe, whether it's true or not, I believe that people's intentions are good. And so I'm sure there were things people said to me that could have been taken in a negative light. But I'm like why? I don't want to do that to myself. I think people have good intentions. And honestly, even if they don't, I'm going to choose to believe that they do because that makes me feel a lot better.

Tyler: And I think a lot of times the shade that gets thrown on the internet, they're not necessarily trying to say in a bad way, but we take it in a bad way. That's what we talked about a little bit here, how are we looking at it? How are we viewing it? Somebody could say the exact same thing and you're like, "Oh, that person hates me," or whatever. But really, they're not hating you.

Jenica: So one scenario that I thought about for this is I've heard so many people say this, that they'll be at the grocery store, and somebody will comment. They'll have a lot of kids with them and they'll comment, "Oh, you look like you have your hands full." And some people take this very offensively. For me, I'm like, "Oh, my gosh, thank you. I do. Thank you for validating me."

Tyler: I'm working really hard with my children.

Jenica: Yeah, and so it's so interesting. I just think that literally everything that you feel stems from your thoughts. So people that are offended by that think thoughts that make them feel offended. For me, I'm like, "Honestly, I do have my hands full. Absolutely. Thank you for validating me. I feel seen right now." But other people take it totally opposite.

So really, I don't think there's sentences typically that are offensive and that are not offensive. I think it's just how you choose to see them. And maybe

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you want to be offended. I'm not saying like, don't ever be offended. Maybe you want to, that's fine. I'm just saying that it's really from whatever thoughts you're choosing to keep about that situation.

Okay, how long did it take us to conceive?

Oh boy. It was just like a process, you know. So we got off birth control.

Tyler: The long answer or the short answer?

Jenica: We got off of birth control in 2014. We tried for a year, nothing happened. And we ended up seeing a fertility specialist. Luckily, it was literally right around the corner from where I worked.

I worked in software sales at the time as an account executive selling to the company's resellers. And it was actually amazing because I really kept our fertility experience to ourselves. And so I would just like sneak away during lunch to go to my appointments and then sneak back because it was literally five minutes away.

So we did three IUIs, which is intrauterine insemination. And then two rounds of IVF. And I ended up having a miscarriage on an airplane in China. I didn't even know it was a miscarriage at the time. I don't think we processed it till after. Really, I thought it was just like a really, really bad period.

We had just done our second round of IVF and they told us it essentially didn't work. But it was like I passed stuff into the toilet and I was like, "What is happening?" I was like sweating, it was very painful. And I don't think I realized until after what happened.

Tyler: Not to mention that the airplane was broke down and it was very hot, which didn't help the situation.

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Jenica: It was like 90, honestly, like legitimately it was probably 85 degrees, 90 degrees on the airplane.

Tyler: No air conditioning with 200 people in an airplane.

Jenica: It was not an ideal situation, we'll just say that. But anyway, so we did that. So that's when I shared our infertility experience, our journey thus far. When I got back, I wrote out the whole experience and we published it a couple of weeks later on my blog. And then ended up sharing the entire third IVF journey with letters to our future child.

So I don't know, what was that like a year of of all those things? We did a lot back to back. There are certain things I would change, I probably wouldn't do all of that back to back because I think I got really sick because of it, all the different hormones. I think I'd give myself more of a break. Which I actually have this time with the third round of IVF.

We did the polyp removal surgery and then we were supposed to go ahead and do a transfer but there was a cyst. And I'm like I just honestly need a couple months anyway. And so I've just really learned to give myself a rest.

Tyler: Time, yeah.

Jenica: Okay. Next question, was their blame during it all toward each other?

Tyler: When we went to the different doctor, as we were going through the doctor's process they would say, "Let's try this scenario to make sure this isn't a problem." So we're checking this, then you check this. And so I don't think we had blame towards each other, I think that this was the first situation that we were testing or trying to see if it was a problem. Then we went to the next one, the next one. We kept going through the process.

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Which maybe we had blame at the time, I can't really remember. I think at one point didn't they say that I had a low sperm count?

Jenica: I think they're talking about did we blame each other?

Tyler: Well, then you got mad at me because I had a low sperm count.

Jenica: I did?

Tyler: Yeah.

Jenica: No I didn't.

Tyler: The truth is out.

Jenica: And the truth shall set you free. I got mad at you? What did I say?

Tyler: I don't remember, it's been five years now.

Jenica: I didn't get mad at you. I feel like he's making this up, that sounds horrible.

Tyler: No, and it's not mad. I think you used to tell people that I had a low sperm count.

Jenica: Well you did, didn't you at first?

Tyler: Right. And once again, this was me taking offense to it.

Jenica: Interesting.

Tyler: And it wasn't my fault, it's the situation, right? We're a team and we were going at it together. And then as we kept going, my sperm count is okay, but I don't remember what the numbers were at all. But then we just kept moving forward.

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And I think maybe I took it because the first situation was like, “Oh, my sperm count is low, maybe we can’t children because of me. Okay.” And so then I think to myself internally, when in reality that's not the whole scenario. And so you got to learn to accept the situation you're in.

Everybody's in a different situation. Mine was low sperm count at the time, but maybe not. I don't even know what it is now. But you have to learn that, accept it, and figure out how to work past it, and move on as a team.

Jenica: Well, that's so interesting too, because I was never like, “This is your fault.” That's so interesting that you took it like that.

Tyler: Definitely, you never said it and got mad at me for it. It's me thinking that you're resenting me for it, but really you're not. And that's communication, right?

Jenica: Yeah.

Tyler: And we were still learning to communicate at that time.

Jenica: That's so interesting. Well, that's another thing. It's so fascinating to me how we all internalize infertility and there's so much shame around it. And it's so fascinating, because none of us did this to ourselves. So it's like it just ends here.

That's really something that's so important for me in my coaching, is just to really like nip that in the bud and be like, Why? There's no reason for it. You didn't ask for this. You didn't do anything wrong to get yourself here. There's no reason to be shameful. It's like someone getting some disease that they didn't expect to get, there's no shame in that. And so, infertility is a medical condition, nobody's fault.

Okay, next question, how did you tell your family? I think we were pretty open about it with our family right from the start. It was just being more

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open with more friends and broader family. With our family, initially, we're like pretty close with both of our families. And so we were pretty open about seeing a fertility specialist.

Tyler: Yeah, the whole way through it because we wanted their help. We wanted their support. When Jenica goes to the doctor, they're going to ask, "Well, what's she doing at the doctor?" I mean, "I had to take Jenica to the doctor today." "What for?" They were going to ask. And so we're open with our family and we told them what's going on.

Jenica: Yeah, I felt like we needed that, we knew we needed that support. There was a lot of support that I didn't know I needed mentally and emotionally. And now that I look back on it and have the life coaching experience that I do, I know how crucial it is to get support mentally and emotionally through this process, whether you see it or not. I think that every person listening to this needs that mental and emotional support.

And the one thing I love as well about this coaching model that I teach is that it applies to literally any problem. So any problem you experience in life, whether that be through relationships, anything, it applies to that as well. And it allows you to see your brain in a way that you understand it and can then move through any problem you're experiencing.

How to not give up hope?

Tyler: How to not give up hope, I would just set a clear goal of what you guys want. And if you want children and that is your goal, you need to go out of full force. I think that's something that I've learned in life with everything, is if you want it, go get it. Figure out how to do it and keep trying.

I mean, but some of these people, I know you guys are going through a lot of hard things and it's been years, and there's lots of struggles. It doesn't matter what the scenario is, that's a tough thing to keep positive and have

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hope throughout all the years. And everybody's going to have something different.

I don't know how to always have hope. I don't think you can always have like, "We're going to make it. It's going to be great." Because you're going to get depressed but keep moving forward. I don't know if there's one good answer for that.

Jenica: I think my answer would be, for me, it's my faith. And I know who I am, which is a daughter of God. And I know that even though God puts me, maybe not he puts me, but I have experiences in my life that are incredibly difficult. I know that I have the tools with Him and with Jesus Christ to help me move through those things that are presented to me.

So I think that if I have a desire in my heart that's really, really important to me, I know it's really important to them as well. And I know that even though there are paths that lead you to really, really dark places that you would never choose for yourself. I know there's a way out of those places through my Heavenly Father and through my Savior Jesus Christ. And that has always been a source of light for me, no matter how dark things have gotten.

Okay, so we have a bunch of other questions. We'll have to honestly do another episode eventually on this. But one thing that I also wanted to mention was the financial aspect of infertility is challenging. And I remember, Tyler, you mentioned this earlier that you had heard that invitro was incredibly expensive. And he's like, "Where are we going to get the money for that?"

Luckily, at the time I didn't realize it when I started working there, but my insurance was really great with the company I worked with. So we were able to get a lot of our stuff paid for, and that was helpful. But many people don't have that option. We don't have that option now, because I don't work

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there anymore. And so will you tell us about the infertility insurance you just discovered?

Tyler: Well, jumping into that scenario I remember sitting in the doctor's office asking, how much does this cost? How are we going to pay for this? What is this procedure? And what is this going to— I mean, I didn't know any of the terminology at the time. And so it was very frustrating for me.

And Jenica goes, “It’s okay, my insurance is going to take care of it.” Where my background, I sell insurance, and so knowing most health insurance don't cover infertility I looked at her and I go, “Are you sure? Because my knowledge says they usually don't cover it.”

But once again, like she said, her company had a really good insurance. And they covered it, which is awesome. And so yes, it's really nice. This program is called a health matching account. And it works very similar to a health savings account where you put money into it, and then it grows, and you're able to actually pay for all of your doctor visits and your medications and different things that you have.

Which there's a video that you can watch, it's linked at the top of the website to explain the whole system, how it works, how the process, how to access it. And then if you have more questions about it, obviously you can reach out to us and we can help you to take care of it.

Jenica: The video is linked on the top of fearlessinfertilitycoaching.com. And Tyler and I just signed up for it ourselves to get us through this third round of IVF. So you can watch that and then reach out to him with additional questions there.

Thank you so much for being with us today. I'm so excited for you that you are really taking the time to fill your own cup and taking time for yourself and super glad that you're here. So we will see you here next week, my friends. Bye-bye.

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Tyler: Bye friends.

I know how tough it is to struggle through infertility. If you're ready to get ahead of the pain and frustration, the best way is to give yourself an ironclad mindset. I have a free download for you, it's my Morning Mindset Magic checklist where you'll get the seven tips I use to conquer my mindset each morning.

I spent a couple years of trial and error before I finally came up with this list of things to do or not do each morning that help my mindset every single time. And I do these things especially when I don't want to because I need them the most during the hard times.

Throughout my own battle with infertility these seven simple morning habits have helped me regain control over my thoughts. They will also help you, like they have helped me, take back the power over your feelings and emotions, prevent anxiety, and accomplish all you want to achieve each day. They clear out shame and guilt from my mind and prepare me to win each day no matter how tough things get. Download for free in the show notes or at fearlessinfertilitycoaching.com.

Thank you for listening to Fearless Infertility. If you want more tools and resources to help you during your infertility experience visit thesliceofsun.com. See you next week.