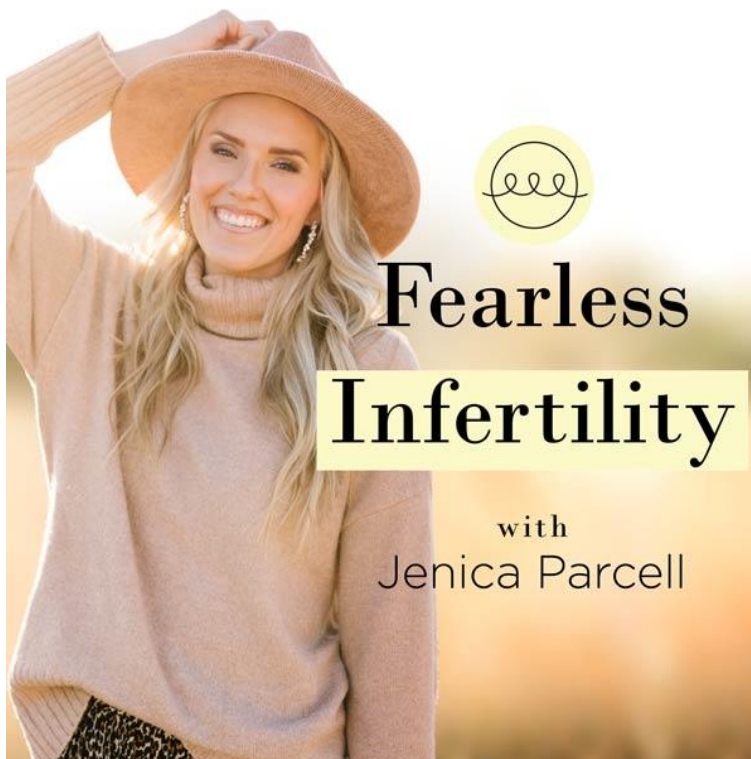


46. It's Okay to Have Fun While Experiencing Infertility & 7 Ideas How



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 *Fearless Infertility* episode 46, it's okay to have fun while experiencing infertility and ideas on how. In this episode we talk about seven ways to have more fun during infertility and how it doesn't have to be a one dimensional experience. You're allowed to be sad and angry. And you're also allowed to have fun and experience joy. Let's get into it.

Hey friends, welcome back to the *Fearless Infertility* podcast today. I'm so excited to have you here with me, as always. And if you're close to a mirror, go ahead and do me a favor and just give yourself a little wink in the mirror for me because, honestly, it might feel a little awkward at first, it just might. But I think it'll bring a smile to your face because you should feel very, very proud of yourself for continuing to show up for yourself.

And even just by pressing play on this podcast, it means that you are taking back control in your infertility experience and saying, "Hey, I know this is something that I would not have chosen for myself. But I'm going to go ahead and do what I can in this circumstance to help myself through it." And that is a big deal.

There are a lot of people in the world that think it's easier to remain a victim. And they're just really putting themselves in positions that are not benefiting themselves. And absolutely we should feel sad sometimes. Absolutely we should process our emotions.

But the fact that you pressed play on this podcast and are here with me, I just think it's so impressive, and I think says a lot about you. So you're incredible. Don't forget that.

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So, my latest update, if you're interested, which you might not be. But I'm going to go ahead and tell you anyway. My house is getting very organized. You can walk in my office, you could even do a full circle around my desk. You could not do that last time I popped on here.

So we've made some progress. It's been painful, I have suffered immensely through it because there are a lot of closets to go through and there are a lot of things that were happening in my home that I was like, I'd rather just not. Just pretend they're not there. But we did it. And I'm so much more organized.

I'll go ahead and share on Instagram stories and show you guys my closets. And the reason why it was so important for me to get organized this year in the beginning of year, I mean my house is always fairly clean, but it's so much easier to find stuff. When you are searching for things in the morning and you don't know where they are, that is very infuriating.

So I went ahead and had my own back and I've gotten so organized. And it feels so good to know exactly where things are at. I'm not over buying because I can actually see what I have. And I save so much time when I'm getting ready or when I'm in a rush, which feels like a lot of time.

So anyway, that is my latest update. I feel very proud of myself. It was painful, but I knew it'd be worth it. And in fact it is. So I'm going to go ahead and give myself a wink in the mirror for that one.

This week's podcast review is from the username is Neekachu02 and the title of the review on Apple Podcasts is renewed hope. She says, "I recently found this podcast after my second miscarriage. I felt lost and confused about why all of this was happening to me.

Jenica reminded me through her words in this podcast that I'm not alone and that my feelings were valid. I love the way she teaches. And I'm so grateful for the mindset she's helping me to create around infertility. Thank

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you, Jenica, for helping me to find hope again, and to keep pushing forward.”

I love your review. I specifically loved the word that you used, create, because I think we're all creators. And I think just by the fact of who we are, which is daughters of God created by the Ultimate Creator, that we have that DNA in us.

And so for me this last year, it was very eye opening for me to figure out the fact that maybe I don't love doing crafts, but that doesn't mean I'm not creative, right? And I think we all have the capability to create what we want. And so I love that you used that word in your review. If you could email me at hello@thesliceofsun.com with your address and your size preference, I'll get your PJs and socks sent out to you.

And for anyone else who is interested in helping me to spread the good word about this podcast to those women in infertility who are alone and lonely and can't find the resources that they need to support them, please leave a rating and review on Apple Podcasts. And I will choose a new winner every week, so make sure to listen back.

And this just helps the podcast to be a little bit more visible. So the more ratings and reviews we get, when people search for infertility support this podcast will show up and they can join our incredible community here.

Today's podcast topic I actually thought of today. And I constantly am thinking about podcast topic ideas because I love talking with you guys every week. I love constantly bringing you new tools that will help you in your infertility experience. And not only in your infertility experience, but in life in general.

That's one thing that I love about this, is that I think sometimes we can feel that our experiences are maybe happening in the way of our life, versus being our actual life, right? So we have a trial and we think to ourselves,

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“Oh, this is getting in the way of my life.” When in reality, this is our life. This is a circumstance we've been given to help us grow and learn through it.

And I love that through this particular circumstance, which none of us would have chosen for ourselves, right? We wouldn't have chosen this trial, we wouldn't choose it or wish it on anybody else by any means. But I love that we get to learn tools and resources that will help us with other experiences in our lives as well.

And that's why I love these tools and the model that I share with you so much. Because not only will it help you in this specific experience with infertility, it will help you in your marriage, in your relationships, in your career. In literally every aspect of your life it will touch. And so I just think it's beautiful work to be doing together. And I love to constantly be thinking of ways to apply the model into your life.

And obviously, we talk about infertility here. That's why I'm here to help you right now. But I want you to know that what you're learning here will be of benefit to you in every aspect of your life and in certain circumstances in the future that you'll need these tools.

Today's topic is it's okay to have fun while experiencing infertility. And I thought about this today because I had just finished cleaning up the kitchen, I was absolutely exhausted. I felt like I had been— Well, I had been. I don't feel like, I had been up since before the crack of dawn getting the things done that I wanted to get done.

It's not like I'm a victim here, I choose to do the things that I was getting done during the day. But I was exhausted. I'd been going, going, going. Had a really hard workout, got a lot of work done that I wanted to accomplish. I had a wonderful day, but I was kind of a little sorry for myself because I was very tired.

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And I was feeling a little bit heavy, like oh my gosh, why am I so tired? Poor me. You know what I mean? I'm not exactly saying these exact phrases in my mind, but it's just the general gist of poor me, I'm exhausted. And I started to think about that and it felt very heavy.

And I all of a sudden realized that it could continue to feel heavy or it didn't need to feel heavy. I could also choose to think thoughts that allowed me to have a little bit more fun. And what was the benefit of feeling that heaviness and feeling feel sorry for myself anyway? I was the only one that was paying the price for it because I felt exhausted. And the thoughts were just making me more exhausted.

And so it made me think about this experience. I think we have this experience in a lot of different circumstances in our lives, but specifically with infertility, that I think oftentimes we think that it doesn't need to be fun ever. It needs to be horrible all of the time. We need to always feel like it's heavy, and hard, and exhausting.

And we can. I don't think there's anything wrong with us when we choose that. But also, why? We are the ones that are being harmed by that. And I think it's so important to process those negative emotions to fully feel the experience. But I also don't think that infertility has to be horrible and awful all of the time.

And my husband Tyler was such a good example of this in our trying to conceive baby number one back in 2014 and 2015. I mean, obviously, let's get real, I had a lot more of the burden on me because I was giving myself the shots every day, I was having him give me shots every day. It's a lot on the woman, typically a little bit heavier than on the man in the relationship, or your partner in the relationship.

And one night I was honestly very furious because all of a sudden, like they have all these shots that they give you an IVF, right? It's like this surprise

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that you just open up and you're like, "Oh, cool. There's a needle that's like three inches long."

And I opened it, it was like like this new medication and honestly at this point I can't remember what exactly it was. It's probably on the blogs that I wrote on asliceofstyle.com when I was documenting the third round of IVF, if you want to know specifically what shot it was.

But to summarize it all you really need to know is that the shot was like, the needle of the shot was like three inches long. And I saw this and I was like, Really? Really? We're doing this, huh? And I was pissed. Okay, I'm just going to say it, I was very angry.

I was like, "I don't even want a stupid baby anyway." I literally said that exact phrase because I was so annoyed by this point. This was our third round of IVF and I'm like, okay, whatever. Fine, fine. It got to the point where I was super angry.

And Tyler has always been good at this. He's always been good at having fun in any situation, which I really respect him for. And I've learned a lot about doing that myself from him. And that particular night he saw I was struggling, clearly if I was saying things like, "I don't even want a stupid baby anyway," she was having some issues, right? She was a little upset.

And so what he did was grab my iPad on my nightstand, which obviously, I thought was a really dumb idea at the time. And he Googled, I think, something like cute babies. And I'm like, that's also really dumb because I don't even want a stupid baby, remember? And he pulls up this baby that's like smiling and so goofy. And I ended up laughing and it ended up making the situation a lot more fun and lighthearted.

And, like I said, I think it's so important to process through those hard negative emotions. But I also think there's space for fun, too. And I think that we've been conditioned to think just based on how our brains were

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created, that we want to fit into the crowd. That we've been conditioned to think, okay, this is the circumstance that I'm in. How does one act when they are in this circumstance?

And we look for exterior examples of others who have also experienced that for guidance. And I think in many situations, this can be for our benefit. But I also think it really hinders us because it really limits our capacity to be creative in whatever experience we want to create for ourselves in that circumstance.

And so I would say, in general, that we think, okay, we're experiencing infertility and it's a really hard experience that I did not want to have. I didn't choose this for myself. And everyone else says it's horrible and hard and so I needed to think it's horrible and hard too.

And I think that I've never heard of anybody else that has said that it's a fun, exciting experience. And so I think based on how I've seen other people deal with this circumstance, that that's how I need to view it as well. And I also think there's really good intentions behind it, right?

I think we always have good intentions. I think, rarely, especially the people listening to this podcast are like, "You know what, I'm just going to harm other people by my actions." Or, "I'm really just going to put myself in a bad position today so I don't thrive."

I don't think that we ever intend on that. I just think we're confused about certain thoughts that we're thinking and how they are truly impacting our results. And so I oftentimes think that also, when it comes to infertility, that we think everyone else that I've seen experience infertility is having a hard time with it. And so in order for me to be sensitive to those other people and not hurt their feelings, then I need to have a hard time too and I need to not be okay too.

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And this is people pleasing, right? And when we know the model thoroughly, and we believe and have internalized the model, we know that our actions cannot actually affect how other people feel. And in people pleasing we are trying to manipulate their feelings, with the best of intentions. But still we're trying to manipulate their feelings so they feel good around us.

And when we know the model, we know that there's nothing that we can do that can impact how someone else feels because it's always up to their thoughts in their mind.

And so this is me giving you permission to experience anything in your life exactly how you want to experience it. Whether that is similar to other people's experiences or not. Ask yourself internally versus looking outward, how do I want to feel in this situation? How do I want to react to this circumstance that I may have not chosen but that is reality for me right now, like infertility?

An example that I can give of this is running a business. And this was several years ago, I'd actually broken my toe. This is the dumbest thing ever, I was walking down a hall and I was in a hurry. My twins were like a year old or, yeah, probably like about a year old. And I was walking down the hall and I had a cardboard box in the hall that was filled with something and I caught my pinky toe on it and just snapped it to the side and I broke my toe.

And this made it really difficult to exercise because I had to put my foot into a shoe and it wouldn't fit very well and it would hurt and I was like oh goodness, how am I going to continue to work out? And my husband had just purchased a bike for me a couple of months prior so it was perfect timing to start using that bike because that was the one exercise I could do without it hurting my toe.

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And so I started listening to podcasts. After a few weeks I got sick of riding my bike and listening to music. I just got kind of over that my music selection and I felt like I needed something a little bit more exciting to listen to. So I thought, all right, I've heard people talk about podcasts. But honestly, up until that point I thought that podcasts were something that really boring people listened to, to be bored.

Not really. I mean, yeah, kind of really, I just thought they were boring things. And I'm like, I don't know if that's for me. But then one of my friends, Allison, had started a podcast. And so I started listening to her podcast and it wasn't boring. And it was fun. And it was engaging. And it was exciting.

And that was kind of the first look I had into the concept of, oh, you can run a business or you can run a podcast, and you can be yourself and be successful in it by being yourself. Right? Not by being like other people who are doing it.

Because there are podcasts that I probably would think are boring. That are talking about a lot of things that are not interesting to me and that can be stuffy and boring, that I'm sure other people would find fascinating, but not me. I've labeled those boring.

But she was very vibrant. She was very funny. She was talking about things that were interesting. And I was like, oh, you can run a successful podcast or a successful business. And in fact, you can do it by being you and by being authentically you. And that will actually allow it to be even more successful.

And it was fascinating to me because it allowed that concept of fun in any circumstance become more alive for me. And it was like I had this little, small seed that was planted about this big lesson that I was needing to learn in my life.

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And I think when it comes to having fun in infertility, if you choose to, which I'll show you some specific ideas here in a minute and tell you how this could be possible for you, if you want it to be fun sometimes. This is not being insensitive to other people. I think that we can validate other's feelings.

Say you have a friend that's experiencing infertility, or you have a sister, or a cousin and they're having a hard day. Just because you're not that day, does not mean that you don't need to validate their feelings, right?

I'm not going to say, "Oh, well, I'm not having a hard day. I'm having a great day. And why don't you just think this?" I'm going to validate their feelings, right? I'm not going to say, "Why are you feeling that way? That's dumb." Obviously, I would never say that. But that type of thing where we're trying to manipulate how they feel.

We can hold space for them and their feelings, while also acknowledging that we get to experience infertility exactly how we want to experience it. And we remember that it's our thoughts that are causing our feelings, and not other's actions. And that goes both ways, right?

If I am not having a hard day in infertility and I want to be having fun, there are so many other people that don't want to have fun in infertility that day. They want to have a hard day, they want to process their hard emotions, and they get to. And the only thing that is affecting their feelings is what they're thinking. And that's perfectly okay. We don't need to experience infertility the same as anybody else.

So I wanted to offer you some ideas on how to have fun during infertility. And this goes for any trial, really. If you are listening to this, I know there's a lot of people actually that listen to this that aren't experiencing infertility, and so you can apply this to anything. And then obviously, after you experience infertility you can apply this to any other trial that you may come across in your life.

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So the first idea on how to have fun is to simply ask yourself, how can this be fun? And that sounds very simple. But you will be surprised at the possibilities that are opened for you in your mind when you simply ask yourself that question.

Because oftentimes, like infertility, you don't automatically think you're going to have fun during infertility, right? That just seems ludicrous. You're like, no, that's not what happens in this circumstance so I'm not even going to go there.

And when we open our minds to asking ourselves that question, we don't need know the answer right away. But when we ask ourselves, how can this be fun? It opens our minds to possibilities that we wouldn't have never seen before.

And this can apply to anything, like I said. So even with just doing the dishes tonight, like I'd mentioned I was exhausted. I mean, just so tired. I was like dragging in the kitchen and then I thought to myself, "How can this be fun?"

So I turned on the music, I turned it up high. Tyler gets mad at me for this, not actually really mad but he says that I'm not allowed to play songs over and over again. When I discover a new song or I re-discover a song that I had forgotten about, I love to play it 10 times in a row. So that's what I did tonight.

I discovered a new song in my workout this morning and I played that 10 times in a row and I played it loud and I sang. And doing the dishes and cleaning the kitchen was actually fun versus such a drag that it previously had been a few minutes prior.

The second idea on how to have fun during infertility is living in the moment today and knowing some things that will help you to feel your best. Have a

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small list of pick me up activities that you know will help you get out of your head and feel a little bit better.

And when I say live in the moment of today, today is all we have, right? We don't know truly what will happen in any circumstance, including infertility, tomorrow, six months from now. And so we can plan the best we can today but living in the moment versus predicting what might go wrong or even might go right in the future doesn't help us a lot in this moment today, because right now is all we have.

And so living in the moment of today and asking yourself, what can I do right now to help myself have a little bit more fun during this experience is very helpful. And it can be a way to help you get out of that anxious feeling and into the moment of I can't control that future moment, but I can control who I am being right now and what I am doing right now.

I made a list of friends that I can reach out to when I'm having a moment where I need to just get out of my head, reach out, maybe go to lunch, maybe just have a quick conversation on the phone, texting back and forth. I made a list of friends on my phone that I can access and say I love these people, I love them. And being around them makes me feel that love and that happiness. And so I will reach out to them in those moments.

The third thing that you can do is ask yourself, what would be a fun way to document this journey with infertility? And this is something that I asked myself, probably not in this way necessarily. But I asked myself what would be beneficial for me in my infertility process to help me to process my emotions better?

And that was documenting my journey through letters to our future child last time. All those can be found on asliceofstyle.com under the infertility section. And I just wrote letters to my future child and said to my beautiful child, this is what we did today, these are the medications that I took.

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I shared funny moments. I shared sad moments. But that made the process a lot more fun. This time around I'll probably make some more videos where I document the actual process of going into the IVF clinic and things like that. I will probably do some writing as well.

But figure out a way that will be fun for you to document and then I promise you in the future, you will look back on it and be so grateful that you had that. And your future family will be so grateful that they have that, it's a treasure.

And there's so many things that I completely forgot about in my experience that I can look back on and say oh my gosh, I completely forgot that that happened. I'm so glad I documented it. And I have these photos and these words that will then be a treasure for me as well as my family someday as well. I mean, can you imagine my kids reading these journals one day? It'll be really, really cool.

Number four is to stop feeling sorry for yourself. Feeling sorry for yourself isn't fun, it feels heavy. And you can choose for it to not feel heavy when you want to. I think feeling sorry for ourselves is disempowering. And we are suffering and we're draining our energy.

And even just tonight, like I mentioned, I was feeling exhausted. And I realized because I was carrying thoughts like I have so much stuff to do, I don't get as much rest as I would like to, I was making my life feel a lot heavier than was necessary. And I realized I was doing this, and although the circumstances didn't change, I changed my thoughts around them. And I immediately felt lighter.

And so I absolutely think it's so important to process through negative emotions and let ourselves feel them. And I think that that is completely different than feeling sorry for ourselves. Because when we're feeling sorry for ourselves, we put ourselves in that victim mindset. Like I can't believe that this is happening to me and there's nothing that I can do to help myself

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feel better. Thoughts like that put us in a feeling sorry for ourselves mindset, which really disempowers and drains our energy.

And I actually want you to also note that you don't have to do most of the things that you think you have to do. So when we find ourselves feeling weighed down by responsibility, I want you to realize that you don't have to really do any of it. We're really choosing to do most of it. And that takes away a lot of the heaviness.

For example, even just tonight we're doing the dishes, I don't have to do the dishes. They could sit there and they can be dirty. And I mean, everyone's going to be fine, right? If I didn't do the dishes tonight, my family would have been fine, I would have been fine. And so it's taking off that heaviness from whatever circumstance you're in and saying, I don't actually have to do this, but I'm choosing to do this because I know it will benefit my future self.

Number five is know that there is a space for all emotions. And I think that we set rules for ourselves. And we think that we need to have a sad day and then there's going to be happy day tomorrow, right? You can feel sad in the morning and have fun in the afternoon, and it doesn't need to be a whole day thing.

You get to make the rules. So shed those rules that you might have. This is kind of an all or nothing mindset that I think is very disempowering and I don't think benefits us, is when we think that, well, I had a crappy morning. I am not allowed to have a good rest of the day. This day is shot, I'd better try again tomorrow.

And so I think that we can hold space for both. We're going to have really hard moments in this experience of infertility, physically and emotionally. And we're also going to have really fun moments too. And you don't have to commit to one per day. I think it's such a fascinating all or nothing mindset.

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I mean, I think all of us are seeing it too, with a lot of people with setting goals in January.

You don't have to wait till January 1st to set a goal. You don't even have to wait until Monday. And so I want you to know that that principle holds true for the days as well. If you have a really hard, crappy morning, you can process through that and you can have fun in the afternoon. And the only thing that is holding you back from that is your mindset.

Number six is that you are allowed to process through your emotions. And I know this doesn't seem fun initially. But I really wouldn't allow myself to be sad because there were so many things that were going right in my life. So when I would have a hard moment, I would feel it for like point two seconds. then I would think to myself, oh, well, you're not allowed to feel sad because you have a really incredible husband, and you have a really great job, and you're allowed to feel sad.

When in reality, this wasn't allowing myself to process through the emotion, it was just shoving it to the side. It was still there in the closet, trying to bust out, but it was this feeling of resistance. And so allowing yourself to process your emotions will allow you to then relax. And you'll be able to know when you are processing through because it will feel like resistance is breaking through to relaxation.

For example, I was having a hard day a couple of months ago. And I downloaded, this is like the goofiest thing ever, I swear to you the Apple was reading my mind that day. I was looking at Apple Music and this playlist popped up called heartbreak songs or something like that. And I'm like, well, these people are sad and I'm sad, so let's be sad together.

So I was listening to this Apple Podcast playlist, or excuse me, this Apple Music Playlist and it was so amazing. I was singing along to it, I was probably crying a little bit, and I felt so angry and sad. And even though these people in these songs were heartbroken probably about other things

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that were not about infertility, it was the same emotion and I just allowed myself to feel it.

And it felt so good because it wasn't this resistance. It was like this ease into feeling, versus trying to shove it away. And I'm like, no, no, I'm okay, everything's fine. Well, it's not fine. You're a normal human when you're having normal human emotions, the ups and the downs, the 50/50 of human life. And life will feel a lot more light when you allow yourself to process through those negative emotions that are completely normal and that you're supposed to feel just by the fact that you're a human being.

The last idea on how to have fun is to do things that you wouldn't be able to do as easily with a larger family, or kids at all, like say you don't have any kids right now. This is something that really helped me and Tyler a lot. And this was even before I even knew about the model that has helped me so immensely since then.

But I thought to myself logically that I didn't want to look back and waste my 20s. And I didn't want to be in my 30s with kids and say, "You know what? I have kids." I wouldn't have changed how I tried to have children if I had fun or not. And so I might as well have fun in the moment in my 20s and not regret looking back saying, "Why did I waste those times?" I could have had so many good experiences, but instead I was stuck on being sad all of the time because I thought that was how you were supposed to process through.

And obviously there's a lot of ups and downs and emotions in infertility. And it's confusing, especially when you have different medications you're on. But when I stepped outside of that and got some more clarity, I was really kind of protecting my future self and thinking to myself, I don't want to hold myself back from my life and wait for a more ideal time to be happy. I don't want to wait for an ideal time to do certain things that I want to do.

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And this was so helpful for me because it allowed me to see things that were a lot easier to do. For example, go to the movies, right? You can go to the movies anytime you want when you are a couple that doesn't have kids. You don't have to get a babysitter, you can leave when you want, you can come home when you want.

Another thing we did was buy dirt bikes. Which I mean, I don't necessarily know if I'd recommend, but we sure had fun. It was the most random thing. My husband loves dirt biking and so I bought a dirt bike too. And that's something that I think I've gotten on the dirt bike once since I had my kids. And we'd go dirt biking every weekend.

So I consciously thought about things that I can do right now, in this moment, that will be much more difficult to do once we have kids. And that was a lot of fun.

So I just wanted to give you permission that even though infertility is a circumstance that you have not chosen for yourself, and you would not wish upon yourself, this is the reality of your life. I truly believe that you were made for this specific trial.

In my personal religious belief, I honestly think that we knew what we were getting ourselves into before we said yes to coming to this earth, to having these trials. And I just think that you were capable of it and you knew you were capable of experiencing whatever trials came your way with help and support and reaching out for tools like the tools that I share here in Fearless Infertility, the podcast and the program.

So I want to give you permission to have fun during infertility. There is nothing wrong with you when you are sad in the morning and happy in the afternoon. I want you to know that there's a space for both and that you were allowed to have fun in your life now and always. I love you guys, I will see you here next week.

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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 create an ironclad mindset. That's where it all starts. I have the best free download for you, you're going to love it. It's my free morning mindset magic checklist. You'll get the seven tips I used to create my mindset each morning so I can create a life I love despite my challenges.

You will lower your anxiety and increase your peace. I spent a couple years of trial and error and finally came upon this list of actions I take or never take every morning, even when I don't want to because they work every single time. Download for free at fearlessinfertility.com/mindsetmagic.

Thank you for listening to *Fearless Infertility*. If you want the best infertility support and community on the planet visit fearlessinfertility.com, see you there.