

FERTILITY WELLNESS COLLECTIVE

ROOT YOUR FUTURE IN WELLNESS

3 Questions to Explore In Your Relationship During the Fertility Process

Mini-Playbook April 25, 2024 Created by <u>Dr. Vaneeta Sandhu</u>

About Fertility Wellness Collective:

Navigating the fertility experience? We understand the emotional and financial stress that comes with it. Our team of fertility wellness and financial coaches offers virtual support to individuals and families of all structures undergoing fertility treatments. We provide 1-on-1 sessions as well as educational and skills workshops, with a focus on compassionate care and inclusivity. Let us support you on your journey toward growing your family.

Connect with us to learn how to get support today.

Navigating the fertility journey as a couple can be a complex and emotionally charged experience, marked by a multitude of decisions. Research from 2020 highlights that both men and women often encounter significant conflict while making choices about expanding their families. The emotional and financial weight of fertility treatments adds another layer of stress. Effective communication between partners is crucial in managing these challenges. (Note: While single parents also face similar stresses in the fertility process, there hasn't been significant research specifically examining their decision-making conflicts.

Here are three important questions we suggest couples explore during their fertility journey. Remember, it's never too late to start these conversations!

Question 1: How will I know when you're having a tough time?

This question is a powerful way to acknowledge the challenges your partner may be facing and shows that you genuinely care about their well-being. Sometimes, expressing emotions or asking for help can be hard, especially when we worry about burdening others. By asking this, you're actively offering support and comfort when your partner needs it most.



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Example follow-up questions:

- 1. Is there any specific pattern to these tough moments?
- 2. Would you prefer a certain way for me to offer support when you're going through a tough time?

Question 2: What do you need from me right now?

Asking this demonstrates your readiness to support your partner in any way they need. It opens the door for them to share their feelings and requirements. Everyone handles stress differently, and this question recognizes that their needs may change. It shows your willingness to adapt and be there for them.

Example follow-up questions:

- 1. Are there any tasks or responsibilities I can take off your plate?
- 2. Is there anything specific you find that manages your stress that I can help with?

Question 3: What things do you need to handle on your own?

Fertility journeys can be deeply personal, and this question acknowledges your partner's need for space and autonomy. It respects their boundaries and recognizes that they may require time alone to process emotions, make decisions, or engage in self-care activities. It reassures them that they don't have to carry the weight of the journey alone.

Example follow-up questions:

- 1. Is there anything I can do to create space for you to have that time alone?
- 2. Are there certain activities or routines you find particularly helpful doing alone?



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Bringing up these questions:

It's natural to feel a bit awkward bringing up these questions, especially if they're not part of your usual conversations. Here are some ways to introduce them:

- "Hey, there's something on my mind that I'd like to discuss. I really want us to support each other through this fertility experience. When's a good time for us to talk?"
- "I've been thinking about how we can navigate this fertility journey together in the best way possible. Can we chat about it?"
- "I came across some tips on being supportive partners during fertility treatments, and I'd love to hear your thoughts on a question that's been on my mind. Are you up for a conversation about it?"

Call to Action: Choose 1!

- 1. Choose 1 of the 3 main questions from this list to get the conversation started.
- 2. Already have these types of conversations? Choose 1 of the follow-up questions!
- 3. Try these questions to support a friend instead of a partner!