

Dealing with loss Due to Infertility



Judi Corbett

Family Planning Coach

3-200 Memorial Ave.,

Suite #112

Orillia, Ontario

L3V 5X6

705-484-5838

[Ontario Life and Business Coaching](#)

Infertility is a very complicated and stressful issue that an ever growing minority must deal with. Unfortunately the information and supports for the emotional aspects of this illness are very difficult to find. More importantly, many of them are often more of a hindrance than a help. I hope that this article offers support and assistance for those who are feeling alone in their grief and loss. Infertility is a severely misunderstood loss that is affecting an ever quickly population. It is very difficult for most, who are dealing with infertility, to share the day to day grief that we have in dealing with this loss and pain. Because of the complexity of infertility, and the fact that we are such a minority, we usually feel too alone and too afraid to discuss our feelings. Most people cannot understand the pain that we face on a daily, monthly, annually and life long basis. Even in this day of educated people, and the vast knowledge of infertility, many people still believe that we are crying over nothing. We still hear “just relax and it will happen”. We are mourning something we may never have, something that is so basic for the majority of the world creatures. You can’t lose what you never had, right? Every month, every year, every family reunion, etc. we feel this pain, fresh and new. Our loss is very real and very painful. As with the loss of any loved one, it is essential to our emotional well-being that we learn to deal with our feelings.

Most of us realize, but don’t really think of the fact, that each time something is born, it begins its journey towards death. Most of us want to pretend that death will not occur and for that reason, we never properly prepared to deal with death. We all have death, and losses, throughout our lives, it is part of life. It is surprising how something that is such a big part of life is one thing we are seldom taught to deal with. Many of us have spent our childhood with death hidden from us; many families go to extreme lengths to keep their children from facing the realities of death. In spite of that we, as adults, are expected to know how to deal with the death and loss. How are we supposed to deal with these major losses when they suddenly hit us personally? A tangible loss is difficult for anyone to handle, but infertility is a loss that people can’t see, know, mourn, miss, cry for. With the loss of an individual, others can share and understand our grief and pain. Most can understand what we are dealing with well enough to provide support. In most cases’ others can understand why we are grieving, even if they do not share in our loss.

Dealing with the loss of a loved one is never easy for any of us to handle. The death of a person is the loss of love, companionship, hopes and dreams to many people. When it is the death of a person that we know, and care about, it is a loss of our love, hopes and dreams for that person and ourselves. The loss of a child has to be one of the most difficult losses that an individual will ever face. Everyone mourns the death of a child, even one we never met. We feel for those

parents, for the loss of that child's life and the loss of that child's future. When it is our child, it is difficult to accept the loss. We are supposed to have children, then we are to outlive them. That is one of life's basic rules. So what happens when it is a loss of our fertility? What happens if the loss is that of the child that will never be? The loss of something that no one can see, measure or experience is even more complicated to understand. This is a loss of the children that will never share our life, the loss of our hopes and dreams, the loss of our future family, the loss of our social positions, and so much more? The physical loss of our fertility is something that we usually can't understand, how can anyone else understand our loss? How can they ever understand the emotional impact that the loss can have on us? The inability to produce a child can cause considerable feelings of loss. These losses are invisible to the eye; as a result they are severely misunderstood, even by those closest to us. These losses are also more difficult for both us and our friends/family to deal with. There is usually no tangible loss, as a result there is very little support available to us. How do we deal with a loss that no one else understands? Well we learn how to do it, we find supports that understand and are willing to help us and then we educate others, so they may understand what we deal with during our day-to-day lives.

My desire is that individuals, and couples, find support and understanding from this paper. I hope people use this site to assist themselves and others. Infertility is no different from other grief when it comes to being bereaved. It is necessary to go through the grieving period when dealing with any kind of loss. In addition to not being able to produce a child, many of us also must deal with a miscarriage and/or stillbirth. I am not sure if that makes things more difficult or not, but it is our inability to have a child that makes us a family. Societal pressure leaves us to feel that showing our grief is a sign of weakness. Infertility is one of the most stressful situations that a couple can ever experience together or individually. Each of us, who suffers from this anguish, feels it differently; no two people experience grief in the same manner. The losses that result from infertility can persist for years, even a lifetime. It is essential to bear in mind that grief is a natural emotion everyone experiences. Being bereaved is normal, but we need to be concerned when it becomes unhealthy mourning. This can be difficult because there is no mandatory grieving period for any kind of loss. The loss of our fertility is one that is a life-long loss; it is also an ongoing loss that affects our total life. How long, and how, a person grieves will vary from person to person.

The general population is unaware of the bereavement needs of the infertile population. Each month we are constantly reminded of our inability to reproduce. Most people do not realize that each friend (or a family member) with a new baby, each person bragging about their child (or complaining), every little smiling face at the store, or park, are all constant reminders of something we can't have. The majority of people cannot understand the difficulty for those of us who cannot do something so natural for the rest of the world. Lack of knowledge and life in general combined with the basic insensitive things that people can say are difficult for infertile individuals or couples. Even after numerous years of dealing with infertility, (and giving up the fight) many of us still feel the pain of not being able to produce our own flesh and blood. Our loved ones may try to be as supportive as possible, but it is still our bodies and hearts that take the brunt of the loss. Our bodies constantly remind us that we have failed in something so natural. We must live with these bodies every day and face these losses every day, month, and year. Even our partners cannot fully understand our pain when we are unable to conceive, or we miscarry yet again. Most try, but often the pain they feel is because of our suffering.

We grow up being taught that if we work hard we can do, and be, anything. Obviously it is not always the case; it is very difficult to accept when we can't have our fertility. I know of women who keep trying to have a baby, regardless of the cost and length of time. Some women will still continue to try to produce a child after many others have reached menopause. Those of us who don't continue often wonder 'what if', maybe one more try, or test, might have been the answer. Unfortunately little help is available for the grieving, infertile person, in either physical supports (i.e., counseling), or written materials. We are a small, but unfortunately growing, group of people. Grief counseling has primarily been placed on more common bereavement issues, ones that affect the majority of society. Most grief counselors have little, or no, background on dealing with this kind of loss. As a result, most are uncomfortable in assisting infertile individuals. How is a person supposed to deal with the continual pain of these losses? Infertile people have a different intensity and type of grief, but they are still bereaved. We must learn to work through it. We can never get over our loss. We all suffer from the "Five stages of grief." The death of our fertility does not make us any different. We need to realize that we can be in and out of each of these stages over and over and in no particular order. Things become an issue when we do not work our way through and get locked into one or more of the stages. This is known as complicated grief and then it is time to find serious help!

The five stages of grief.

STAGE ONE:

"Denial and Isolation" are the first stages of grief. Along with the initial shock, our feelings of denial can be so powerful when we are first made aware of our fertility issues. Denial is a coping mechanism, instilled in us to help deal with difficult situations. Infertility is something we hear about. It is one of those things that happens to other people. We are taught how to acquire things, not how to lose them, so how are we to deal with this kind of loss? Everyone can produce children; all we need to do is look around us to see that. Children are everywhere. Many are being abused and abandoned. Many are accidental or unwanted births. We just want to have a baby, most of us have lived clean healthy lives, so it could never happen to us.

Some people are so deep in denial that they never give up hoping and trying. I have conversed with people who have financed everything far and beyond any hope of economical recovery. Some people have tried for more than 20 years; some women are in their early 50's and still trying. Others have sacrificed long-term relationships to have a baby. How does one determine when they need to draw the line? A good life coach can help you work through these issues. What extent will people go to have a little one of 'their own'? Only the individual knows, facing that reality can be very difficult. For many it is a biological child, or they won't stop until 'mother natures' makes them. It is a big step to accept that we cannot produce even one child of our own. There are other options out there for us, but do we want them? Do we want to accept the fact that we may never give birth to our own biological child? Who do we turn to so we can talk this out and figure out what we need to do? We feel all alone in this battle. Many people, dealing with infertility, feel utterly alone in their experiences. When we find ourselves feeling anxious, depressed, out of control, or isolated, we need to remember that we are not alone. Infertility is a personal thing, it can be difficult to talk to others about the subject, but there is help. We are usually left feeling that friends and family simply don't understand our pain or needs. We can

feel that our partner doesn't care about our feelings. It can become difficult to go to work, socialize, or even get out of bed.

It is important that we fight this sense of isolation and maintain a healthy perception of the world. The number of people, dealing with infertility is growing but still feels like a small isolated group. Thank goodness for the computer age. Most of us would have no place to turn and no one to understand without it? We see children everywhere we look, we feel pain at the sight of a newborn child with its mother or at a young child's birthday party. Everyone talks about who is pregnant, but most do talk to those who are dealing with infertility. But most of us tend to keep it quiet or pretend we don't want to go there. If we know someone who suffers with infertility, do we approach him or her? Each situation is different. What if one person has tried for years and another one is successful as soon as they start treatment? Those with infertility tend to keep it to themselves, and the isolation continues. We all need to feel we are not alone, we need to talk to others who understand the pain we are dealing with. We need to help others understand the emotional losses that infertile people face. Places like 'Fertile Thoughts' help people meet with others who are going through the same thing. Worldwide, you can find lots of people who have been there, or are there. The support and information are what we all need. The computer allows us a chance to talk to others who have had similar losses. We make close friends with others who understand what we are dealing with. The Internet helps many of us deal with what we are dealing with every day. We are less isolated as a result of the new age communications.

STAGE TWO:

"Anger" is the second stage of grief. The anger that we feel, when we learn that we can't do one of the most natural things in the world, is very powerful. The anger that we feel, upon seeing others 'pop' babies out and don't want them, can be unbearable. We feel angry about being diagnosed with infertility, especially when friends and family members are having families. Everyone always wants to know when we are going to have ours. We ask 'why does she get to have babies and not me?' We wonder why some people keep having babies, but I can't have one. It doesn't seem fair when we look at the rest of the world. I know of a 32-year-old woman pregnant with her 11th child. Her first six children have been removed. I know of several of these kinds of situations. Is it fair? No! Is it life? Unfortunately! We can find ourselves feeling intense anger and jealousy toward family and friends who are pregnant. I think one of the most difficult things we face is when people complain about their children. We would have done anything to have a child to complain about.

One of the biggest questions we ask is, 'what did I do to deserve this?' Life seems cruel and we do not know why. My husband always told me everything is part of a bigger plan. Much has happened, in my life, to make me believe that. A lot of things have left me wondering why the Creator let this (and many other things) happen. No one could want a child more than those suffering from infertility. People who neglect or abuse children get to have them, and we don't! It certainly leaves room for a lot of anger to build. We can't help but have our 'anger' surface; otherwise it sits and builds. It is important to express anger even if it may seem culturally taboo to do so. Anger is a normal and healthy response to the losses that we face as a result of infertility. 'Why me and why now' are questions that are continually asked by people who cannot have children. Most of us have never put our fertility at risk, but it doesn't make any difference.

Even when we move on with our lives and through our grief, we keep visiting anger over and over. If we choose to adopt, or live childfree, we are put through even more heartache. If we choose to live childfree, we get criticized for not wanting children or being selfish. The fact that our friends and family don't understand is one of the most difficult issues that we face. If we choose to adopt, we have to be totally examined or we can't have a child. Again we ask ourselves, and the Creator, what did we do wrong. I once heard that we took the easy way out by adopting. I would trade everything to have been able to get my daughter through birth. It would have been easier and a lot less painful. Although I love her dearly, she is still not of my flesh and blood. My anger resurfaced when my husband passed away, the pain of infertility raised its ugly head again. Even though I no longer wish to try to have a baby, my infertility pain was there again. If we meet all the adoption requirements, the wait can be years. Again society does not understand what people, who deal with infertility, face. Even when we deal with our losses due to infertility, we are still faced with day-to-day reminders that we are not like other people. When we move on with our infertility, and our lives, we can still face issues that hurt us and make us angry.

STAGE THREE:

"Bargaining" is an attempt to postpone the inevitable. This is one of the least known stages of grief. One of the biggest reasons is because most of us do not talk to others about our bargains. We pretend that infertility isn't happening, we then get angry about it. Now is our time to ask nicely, maybe things will happen if we do this! We know we often get good things if we bargain and use our good behavior. No one wants to accept that they cannot produce children. It is such a loss that, like other forms of grief, there is a lot of bargaining that goes on. We try to bargain with our partners, we try to bargain with our doctors, and we try to bargain with the Creator. We even make bargains with ourselves. I will do ----- if I can just have one baby!!! Lots of times the bargaining helps cover the guilt and blame that we feel. It can be used to help us make up for whatever it was that we did wrong, to undo whatever the problem is. Most of the time we don't know what that was but we must have done something wrong, we will make up for it! 'Bargaining' is a very natural thing to do. We all bargain when we don't like the answers that we get, even as children. People who have never been there will never know what extent some people will go to produce a child. Most people would never believe some of the negotiations that get made, just for one successful pregnancy. The fertile individuals of the world could never begin to understand the sacrifices an infertile person would be willing to make, just to have a child!

STAGE FOUR:

It is common to come into contact with infertile individuals who are being treated for "depression". Like all other stages of grief, depression is one that is a natural occurrence. High stress, health issues, etc. can all lead to depression, so infertility would be no different in that aspect. With the continual exposure to everyone else's successes, depression is a very key factor for the infertile couple or individual. We often feel it is our fault we cannot have a child. This can lead to dangerous depression, isolation, and self-esteem problems. Infertile people also continue to have this pain hit them, each and every month. Over and over, they lose the child they wanted, the future they planned, and the family they dreamed of. On top off these losses, most women are also dealing with continually changing hormones caused by drugs and Mother

Nature. The hormonal changes alone can lead to depression. Not being understood by the people we care about and those who don't 'get it' are also extremely depressing. As a result many people, who have to deal with infertility are being treated for (or should be treated for) depression. Depression can be a very risky feeling that can lead to self-harm, and so much more. These people require counseling, not coaching.

This is one of the key reasons why those wishing to adopt are expected to have grieved and dealt with their infertility. Those of us, who have faced infertility, know that we never completely deal with it. Dealing with a loss of any type is depressing, when it happens over and over, without a break, it can be devastating! Unfortunately we must deal with infertility for the rest of our lives, regardless if we adopt, choose to live childfree or eventually produce a healthy child. We have faced a lot of losses; years later we can still have bouts of depression caused by not being able to produce a baby. I still find that there are times that I get feeling very low about the fact that I could not produce a baby of my own. Even though I have been a happy 'mommy person' for several years now. The depression from my infertility reared its ugly head when my husband passed away, even though I had already given up the idea of ever producing a baby.

STAGE FIVE:

"Acceptance" is considered the last stage of grief. Most people finally accept that this is the way they must live life. Just because we have accepted our infertility, and how it impacts our lives, does not mean we will not revisit the other stages again and again. It is not necessarily the end of our grieving. As part of this acceptance, some people choose to adopt and some choose to live without children. For those women, who have always desperately wanted to experience pregnancy and childbirth, the grieving process may be more intense and prolonged than for those who have not particularly yearned for the experience. Some of us are able to accept certain things easier than others. Different things aid people in reaching this acceptance point. Sometimes acceptance is reached as a result a lack of money to continue treatment, sometimes it is a time (age) factor. Some times we are forced into accepting our situation. For some people it is an attempt to save a failing relationship (from the stresses placed on a relationship due too continual, often consuming, trying), for others it may be accomplished as a result of the intensity of treatment (they just can't emotionally move onto the next step). Others find it an easier choice because the pull is stronger on wanting a child and not how it comes to them. Unfortunately there is a group of people who are unable to conceive and never reach acceptance. Some people just continue to try at whatever cost. This common form of grief is known as complicated grief. Regardless how we deal with the final result, we have had to grieve and much of it is alone! This is always very difficult to accept.

Finding help

Society is unaware that people who suffer with infertility are often in a constant state of grief. Many people, who deal with infertility, keep bouncing onto the next time they get a letdown. Infertility is becoming more of an issue in the lives of couples in North America. One out of every ten couples experiences difficulties conceiving a child. Specialists are realizing this and some can and do provide help. Most specialists, in bereavement, have neither suffered through infertility, nor had clients who see them for it. You might have to look hard to find the kind of help you want. It is a quiet secret with very few people to talk to. Fertility support groups are made up of men and women who experience infertility. These groups are great places to express

your feelings and connect with others on a meaningful level. The 'GROWW' site has a special support group for those who are dealing with grief due to loss of a child, miscarriages and stillbirths. Many other sites such as 'Fertile Thoughts' offer excellent support for those who are dealing with infertility. What should we do about these difficult times and how we deal with them? Go ahead and grieve and find people to support you. You have to do this! Don't worry about others and their opinion of you, and your pain. Most of the population has never experienced the hurt that you have. Infertility diagnoses, and treatment, go together with a variety of difficult emotions. Do not let people tell you what to do; you are the only one who can decide what is best for you. Try, if you feel you should, and quit when you want. You are under enough stress, so do not let others dictate to you. Most importantly educate others on what you feel, and what you are going through. I hope that this article gives you, and those around you, the information and support that you require. A good therapist can help you sort through feelings, strengthen coping skills and develop new ones, and communicate more clearly. Dealing with infertility can be an opportunity for life-enhancing individual growth. Therapy is needed by those who are dealing with the emotional difficulties faced by many. Everyone needs to have medical counseling, to be aware of what they are dealing with physically. Coaching is relatively new to all facets of life, but is there to help you work through the stages and help you decide what you feel you need to do and how you need to do it!

Who you seek to counsel with, and how they can help, are important things for you to consider. Talking with a professional can do a world of good by helping you to deal with all those emotions you may have bottled up inside. I think it is important that everyone who is dealing with infertility and specially in treatment, find a counselor, therapist or coach to talk to one-on-one.

\$ A social worker can help you look at different options and deal with family dynamics.

\$ A psychiatrist can be there to counsel you on what kind of impact this is having on your mental health.

\$ A mediator can help you to work with your partner and find what will work for both of you.

\$ A medical health practitioner can help you with the medical end of things.

\$ Look into finding a fertility coach, who can provide emotional support, someone with whom you can talk to, who can help you figure out what you need to do for your overall well being.

Whoever you decide to talk to, ask them for their credentials as well as their experience with infertility issues and treatments, ask if they are currently seeing, or have worked with, other people with infertility. Some will tell you that they don't need to have been there to help, well, I disagree with that. This is a very persona and very misunderstood condition, it helps that the person who is helping has deal with their infertility demons. Getting help for this difficult time can help you strengthen other parts of your life as well. Any of these individuals can aid you in coming to terms with your loss. You may want to look into finding an infertility support group where you can talk with other women and couples who are going through the same experience as you. Family and friends can be a source of strength and support during this difficult time, although you may find some only makes the situation worse. Be honest, and up-front, with family and friends, this includes with your partner! It may be difficult to verbalize how you feel, but it is

important to discuss it with each other. If you are not ready to talk about your loss, be honest and let your family know. Remember to let them know when you are. Don't be afraid to tell them when you need them to 'be there', or when you need to be alone. You can end up feeling angry and hurt by your friends and family, but don't withdraw from those closest to you. Remember, they might not discuss the situation because they do not want to upset you.

As well as getting supports in place, you need to sit back and look after you. Like all stresses in your life, learn to sit back and reflect. Get yourself into healthy behaviors. Remove some of the stresses that you can remove. Look after your bodies and remember to eat healthily and keep active. Consider joining a gym. Look after your mind, getting help can make or break your treatment and your relationships. Often we give this kind of stuff up (costs too much and we want to put all our money into treatment) but we need to keep our bodies, and minds, healthy. If you are not mentally and physically healthy, you are putting more stress on your fertility. Remember your partner's mental and physical health. Although this paper is all about your loss, you need to remember to let your partner share his emotions. It is a big loss for both of you. Infertility has the ability to take over lives. Treatment requires time, money and intense emotional commitment. We need to be sure not to lose sight of your daily activities. Remember, take some time to step away from your infertility battle.

Make a date with your partner, one that does not work around your cycles. Try to have it 'off cycle' so it does not have to lead to sex. Sex sometimes needs to be optional. The physical act of trying to get pregnant can be one of the most trying things on a marriage. It can have a permanent impact on your sex life. Unfortunately what impacts your sex life also impacts the intimacy with your partner. You need to be there for each other to get through the pains of infertility. If you can do more, take a break from the realities of infertility, remember you need to care of you. Go on a holiday, no medication and no pressures. Forget you are dealing with infertility, even if only for a few hours, few days, few weeks or a few months! Sometimes we need to take a break from treatment. These mini holidays from treatment can be good for both our bodies and our minds.

Some times we need to look closely at where we are going and what we are doing. At one point I told several people I could not be involved with them, and their new babies, at that point in my life. I personally was dealing with three births, by very close family and friends. My last miscarriage would have been due to be born at the same time as their successful pregnancies. It was way more than I could handle. I had to pull myself away. Make things easier for yourself, and for those around you, by letting them know which, if any, topics are off-limits. I know this hurt some people, but it would have been much worse for all, if I had not done what I needed to do. It can be very difficult but it is important to talk with your family, especially your partner, about what you are feeling.

Over the years I have had a lot of people push me about journal writing. Studies have shown that [journal writing](#) can help speed up the healing time in difficult times. I have finally done it in the last few months. I know it can be a powerful tool for many people. For me, I needed to do it when I started to finally try to get my life back on track. (Not just limited to my infertility). You are best if you can write down your thoughts and feelings. What I did was start writing this, and this in book form. My husband

encouraged me to put things down on paper. I am a person who always needs to help others, especially when I can't seem to help myself. I seem to be able to write and between my experience and training, I can help in other ways.

WHO AM I, AND WHY DID I WRITE THIS?

I am a [trained grief counselor and life coach](#), as well as an individual who has struggled with the many emotional and physical losses due to infertility. I hope that this article assists people who are dealing with this dilemma. I have a coaching service that allows people to receive coaching either in person or over the phone. I specialize in infertility coaching, been there done that! I have been a guest speaking at several infertility meetings in Ontario. I will include my contact information at the end of this update so people, who are interested in my personal support, will know how to reach me. I am presently getting back to finishing the book I started back when I originally wrote this paper. Hopefully I will be able to get that completed in the next little while.

I spent more than 10 years trying to have a baby; some of that time was with infertility treatment. I have several physical problems, but no one could ever pinpoint why I was unable to have a baby. Over the years I had several miscarriages, one which was twins. The only time I had a positive pregnancy test was one time when I ended up in the hospital. I was a couple of months along and had just had a period. They never did find the baby and were planning on going in; I think it wasn't even in the tubule area. I showed trace hormones for being pregnant so they put me on morphine and monitored me for a few days to be sure that the numbers went down. Had that pregnancy gone to term, I would have been due to have my baby three months after my stepson and his wife, two months after my brother and his wife and one month after a girl I had raised and her husband. It was way too much for me to handle. The Creator had other plans for us. A month after I would have had my baby, a wonderful little girl came into our lives, for what we thought was too only be a short time. Well 'a couple of days to a couple of weeks' turned out to be forever. We had not planned on adopting, but this little girl came into our lives and stole our hearts. I am the proud mother of an amazing girl. She has brought so much joy and so many people into my life. But that is an entire other story that I will be sharing on a very interesting adoption.

I didn't do much for treatment, no one was ever able to determine why I couldn't do things on my own. I did have extensive testing in hopes that we could find an actual problem to treat. My husband and I decided I would continue treatment until my 37th birthday, spring of 2000. At that point my husband (who already had two grown children) was 49 going on 50. I stopped treatment, but we continued with unprotected sex until I turned 40. At that point we decided that the risks were far too high for us to try to produce a 'healthy' child. As much as we love our little girl, it was apparent she was going to have a lot of needs. A funny thing is, that my uterus has always caused me problems and I have really been trying to get a hysterectomy since I was 22. No one has ever been willing to do it and are still not willing. I always felt that if they had taken that thing out when I first started having problems, I would have been fine. I have never been a baby person, but as long as I have it, I always wonder if there is a chance. Even in my mid 40s and widowed, I still have the occasional thoughts about 'what if'!!!!

The emotional turmoil that one faces really never ends. My daughter's birth mom has produced her 11th child. That is still very difficult to deal with. I just wanted to be able to have one. Not that I really ever wanted a big family and one child is fine. I just often wish that she had come from my body. Just wish that she had been created out of our love. My husband died last year and I still face the pain about not having a child I gave birth to. Even though we had stopped and agreed that there was no chance, it still hit me very hard when he passed away. I guess there was still always that hope, that possibility? I don't know why and I guess I will never know. I just know it still hits me some times. It certainly doesn't mean I would ever trade my daughter for another chance, or that I feel could love another child any more than her, just that it is still there!!!! I accepted my inability to produce a child many years ago, but the other stages of grief still like to visit me every once in a while. In spite of my acceptance of my infertility and my age, I still often think that it all might be worth another try. Like all forms of grief, you never get over it, but you do get through it. Those of us who never get to produce a child still face day to day reminders of our infertility and even with acceptance, we still hope, wish, dream...