

Professionally Speaking...

by Denise M. Paul MA, CT, CPLC

Mind, Body, and Spirit

Mourning the loss of your precious baby is tough work. It takes a toll on your mind, your body, and your spirit, all at the same time! Your mind is affected as you constantly think about your baby and how sad you feel. You probably cannot concentrate or think clearly in the weeks and months following your loss. A multitude of emotions fill your **mind** – anger, guilt, jealousy, failure, fear, etc. Your **body** has been through a difficult blow. Your body changed while you were pregnant and then the loss of your baby caused your body to go through even more hormonal and physical changes. Your **spirit** also has suffered because of your loss. You are no longer the carefree, happy person that you once were. You are getting used to a “new normal” that feels unfamiliar to you. While your mind, body, and spirit are negatively affected when your baby dies, it is those three things that need to be worked on in order to start feeling like yourself again.

Your **mind** can be stimulated by reading a book or newspaper, or doing a crossword puzzle. You may go to a movie, visit a museum, or look up something on-line that interests you. You can even watch something on TV that takes you out of your normal thought patterns. Try coloring with colored pencils in an adult coloring book. Allow your mind to be stretched in new ways.

Move your **body**! You don't have to do a formal exercise plan in a gym. Go for a walk outside or in a mall. Exercise releases feel-good brain chemicals and increases your body temperature, which may have calming effects. Any kind of exercise is a distraction that will allow you to break the cycle of negative thoughts that feed your depression. Yoga is a wonderful practice that will allow you to focus on your body movements and breathing.

Boost your **spirit** by reading something inspirational, or writing something inspirational. Keep a journal of the thoughts and feelings that you don't want to share with others. Take time to pray and ask for God's blessings on you and your baby. Do things to help others who are grieving the loss of their baby. Wear a pin, necklace, or other memento in honor of your baby every day.

God gave us two hands – one to hold our joy and one to hold our sorrow.

I want to make it clear that I am not suggesting that you do these things to forget your baby or take your mind off your baby. It is in feeling the pain of your loss that you will begin to heal. Do something every day to honor your baby. I would like to encourage you all to engage your mind, body, and spirit in some small way every day, and I promise you that you will begin to feel some changes in your heart.