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 Center

Hello, I'm Julie Blackburn. I think it only fair I be authentic with you and share just a bit beyond my work experience. I do have the education, licensure and experience to support you during your current struggle. However, I certainly have more than professional experience that informs my support and knowledge.

I have my own personal experience with infertility. My husband and I were able to become parents through foster care adoption. I'm here to tell you, there is hope. Life may seem uncertain right now. After significant deaths, my life was different. After infertility treatment, my life was different. After becoming a foster & adoptive parent, my life was different yet again. I have and will continue to grow and deepen my relationship with my spirit through these experiences.

I created Chartreuse Center to help you develop a deeper connection within yourself and find growth through your struggle. No two griefs are the same - your experiences are unique to you. You do not need to cope in isolation any longer. I can resonate that life can seem unsettled while you are trying to determine the next step.

I recognize not everyone needs therapy. You may be in the process of searching for more information about the terms learned in a doctor's office or why this may be happening. You may be experiencing intense responses to everyday life that leave you wondering if therapy may be helpful for you. I work to provide support for different needs you may have: podcast on iTunes & GooglePlay, positive intentions on YouTube, articles delivered to your email inbox, online self-help courses and in-office counseling.

Fertility Concerns... More Common Than You Might Think

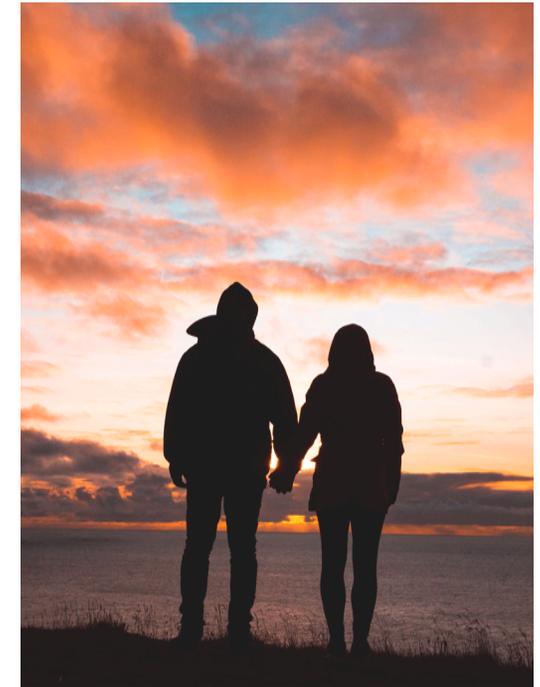
You may feel alone or isolated as you explore your Infertility or pregnancy loss. Perhaps you have chosen to remain private about your fertility... you may feel there is a cultural silence of the issue... maybe you experience a lack of social recognition of your losses, overall, a grief unrecognized. And you look healthy on the outside. Though women and men are beginning to be more open, I can assure you, you are not alone.

1 in 8 couples
 of childbearing age will experience
 some type of fertility struggle.

30% are due to female factors.

30% are due to male factors.

1 in 4 pregnancies end in loss.



Emotional Heath During Fertility Struggles

Chartreuse  **Center** www.ChartreuseCenter.com
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 Phone: 815-556-9471
 Hours: By Appointment Only

Fertility Struggles & Infertility

What to Expect

Fertility struggles and infertility are often identified as life crises for couples.

Frequent fluctuation of intense emotions, coping with view of health and the unknown, grieving past life & losses, and juggling life with appointments are only some of the contributing factors that complicate building your family.

Fertility issues touch many aspects of life:

- Love relationships
- Family & friend relationships
- Work commitments or focus
- Social engagements
- Identity & confidence
- Spiritual questioning
- Finances
- Unexpected emotions, grief & loss

Each person has ways to cope with life struggles. Sometimes those tools work and sometimes the responses to the fertility struggle are so intense and unexpected that it may be beneficial to seek support. Infertility is not a mental health condition, though adjusting to the diagnosis, treatment and results of treatment can be complex and intense.

Types of Support Available:

- Support from family & friends
- Blogs, podcasts, or email support
- Peer-led support groups
- Online chat groups & classes
- Professional-led support groups
- Therapy with a mental health professional trained in regarding fertility concerns
- Complimentary Therapies ie. massage, acupuncture, aromatherapy



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Day, Evening & Saturdays Available



Ways to Help Yourself

- Connect with your partner – open dialogue for family building, enjoy the relationship & focus on love
- Exercise as you are permitted – benefits both mental & physical health
- Eat a balanced diet, reduce caffeine, increase water, avoid comfort foods
- Get plenty of sleep, maintain a relaxing bedtime routine
- Attend to intense changes in feelings and what activated the tough emotions
- Adjust your social events as needed
- Practice kind & gentle self talk
- Take time for yourself – you are worth it!

“Courage, dear heart”

- C.S. Lewis

When to Seek Professional Help

- Personal or family history of mental health issues
- Other chronic illnesses
- History of miscarriages or other pregnancy losses
- Explore options or next steps
- Relationship issues (partner, family, friends, work)
- High level of physical or emotional stress
- Significant changes in sleeping & eating
- Feelings of loneliness, sadness, helplessness
- Lack of interest in life, feeling sluggish, fatigued, exhausted
- Feeling overwhelmed or out of control
- Guilt, regret, bitterness, or anger
- Anxiety, panic, excessive worry
- Hyper-focus on health or family building
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or those around you

Books, Blogs & Websites

- Coping With Infertility, Miscarriage, and Neonatal Loss: Finding Perspective and Creating Meaning by A. Wenzel
- Empty Womb, Aching Heart: Hope and Help for Those Struggling With Infertility by M. Schalesky
- The Infertility Workbook: A Mind-Body Program to Enhance Fertility, Reduce Stress, and Maintain Emotional Balance by B.Blitzer LCSW-C MEd & R. Abbasi MD FACOG
- Silent Sorority: A Barren Woman Gets Busy, Angry, Lost and Found by P. Mahoney Tsigdinis
- Male Infertility - Men Talking by M. Mason
- www.bigheartlittlebeat.com blog, secondary Infertility, surrogacy
- www.averys-garden.com/blog/ blog, infertility, miscarriage, art
- www.artofinfertility.org traveling art surrounding fertility concerns
- www.resolve.org Resolve, The National Infertility Assc.
- www.nationalshare.org Share, Pregnancy & Infant Loss
- www.reproductivefacts.org created by American Soc. for Reproductive Medicine
- www.sart.org Soc. for Assisted Reproductive Technology

Chartreuse Center Services

Support for Fertility Struggles & Infertility

- **Anytime, Anywhere Online, Interactive Self-Help Courses** – Embrace YOU! Survive Fertility Individual Courses or Bundled Group of Courses
- **In-Office or Distance Counseling** for Individual & Couples Counseling for Illinois Residents
- **Explore** changes in life and relationships
- **Identify & calm** anxiety, worries & fears
- **Integrate** stress relief, relaxation & coping strategies into everyday life
- **Reclaim** confidence, identity, balance, contentment & joy