



Our Fertility and the Mind

Teresa Robertson, RN, Certified Nurse Midwife, MS

Emily and Nicholas, a vibrantly healthy couple in their late 30's were unable to conceive despite all medical tests affirming their ability to do so. After two years of working with traditional infertility specialists, several insemination efforts, and three months of fertility drugs, Emily was still not pregnant. A friend gifted her with a preconception session. During this session Emily used a simple guided visualization exercise in which she explored and conversed with her ovaries, tubes and uterus. While communicating in this openhearted manner with her body, Emily discovered and healed the block that had prevented her from having this little boy being who was hovering just above her shoulder. Below, Emily shares her experience.

"When I looked into my right tube, I suddenly felt something dark stuffed there. Teresa asked me if I had ever experienced any sexual or reproductive trauma. I then shared with her that I had had an abortion when I was 19. When I dialogued with this tube further, I realized that this is where I had stored the trauma surrounding that abortion. My abortion experience had involved a great deal of heartache and pressure from my boyfriend at the time who begged me to have the baby and marry him. I loved him deeply; however, I was consumed with guilt resulting from a very religious upbringing that clearly defined premarital sex as both sinful and shameful. This, combined with the intense fear of my family's reaction and taking on the responsibility of marriage and a family, played heavily as I made the heartbreaking decision to abort, an act that also was prohibited by my church.

"Teresa helped me to make this connection that my body simply made a decision to protect me from any future trauma of this nature by never getting pregnant again! Once I identified this phenomenon, I was able to empty this darkness out of my tube by simply connecting it to the center of the earth and asking for it to release. I also employed a wonderful visualization using colors healing for me, to wash my uterus and to reline it with warmth and welcoming energy for this little being. Once this area was clear and clean I was able to easily connect with the little boy spirit who wanted to come to me and Nicholas. Upon going home, Nicholas and I constructed a "Baby Altar", in order to welcome this baby boy spirit to come into their lives."

Only a few days later, Emily conceived after making love with her husband, and joyfully gave birth to her son, Adam, 9 months later.

Emily's story dramatically illustrates how connecting and communicating with your body and your unborn child can increase your fertility and your ability to conceive. Over the past four years, during preconception sessions with women and their partners, I have frequently witnessed miracles like Emily's. The extent of fertility intervention these women have employed has ranged and included herbs, acupuncture, intrauterine insemination, IVF and donor egg IVF. Time and time again I have witnessed that when a woman authentically connects to her body, and begins to listen and honor her body's inner truth and wisdom; she cultivates a feedback relationship with her body and her unborn child. As a result, a dramatic shift occurs in her belief in and ability to conceive.

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The success of using meditation, visualization and journeying techniques to heal and cultivate fertility has been strongly documented by Alice Domar in *Healing Mind, Healthy Woman* and by Niravi Payne in *The Language of Fertility*. 50% of women who have participated in Domar's groups in which the use of meditation, relaxation, and journalizing techniques are employed, were able to conceive and give birth. In contrast, only 20% of women who solely used traditional "infertility treatments" were able to conceive. Niravi Payne's work focuses on illuminating and healing your family secrets and beliefs around fertility. Her program also reports higher pregnancy and birth rates for her clients.

We live in a time in which a commonly held belief is that our fertility is diminished and that we need outside help to conceive. This belief has become very evident for women in the "baby boomer generation" whom have embraced and mastered the male aspect qualities of doing and making things happen-yet conceiving alludes them. Creating a baby is a receptive act that requires embracing and using our female aspect. For many women, there exists an inner conflict and imbalance between their inner female and male aspects. As many women have learned to accomplish success by relying strongly on utilizing their male aspect, many have forsaken, forgotten and invalidated their female side. This female side includes qualities and abilities such as to be vulnerable, open and to receive. The all too common picture I witness, is the career woman who is creating, doing, and nurturing everyone else and has no time to receive or give to herself because to do so would be perceived as a weakness. Instead of interpreting their bodies not conceiving as a message or cry for help, often these women further invalidate their bodies as being "nonproductive" and "an infertile failure" and often force their bodies to create from an empty well. As Christiane Northrup MD writes: "Many infertile women are working 60-80 hours a week and are exhausted; then they pursue having a child as though they were writing a Ph.D dissertation. Conceiving a child is a receptive act, not a marathon event that can be programmed into your Day Timer."¹

How often does a woman who is on the fertility merry go round hear someone tell her to just go home and relax? Yet rarely does someone actually sit with this woman and demonstrate to her how to do this. I have heard countless stories of women who gave up trying to get pregnant, who then got pregnant after going away with their husband to just have fun. In the past year, I have witnessed two women conceiving on their own, after "failing" IVF cycles! Both these women had stopped focusing on their in-ability to get pregnant and had rediscovered their creativity when they conceived.

Sure, it is easy advice to say just let go of being in control or stop trying so hard. Anyone who has wanted anything desperately knows that can be a near impossible feat. That is where meditation, relaxation, journalizing and visualization techniques can be of vital assistance.



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Meditating and relaxation exercise can serve as empowering processes which can assist you to reconnect to your core self as the creator of your baby. They also teach how to relinquish control. As mentioned before conceiving a baby is a receptive creative act. So often the work and exercises I explore with my clients includes exercises which connect a woman to her female creative power (as described in Emily's story) and cultivates skills to relinquish control.

Physiologically, meditation and/or relaxation exercises are known to decrease blood pressure, to lower heart rate, and to decrease the production of stress hormones. A study in Italy found that "an increased vulnerability to stress is associated with a poor outcome in in-vitro fertilization—embryo transfer treatment."² Dr. Lorraine Bonner explains this connection with stress and decreased fertility. "The mind-body knows that in situations of extreme tension our sex organs are our most expendable parts. The mind-body knows that when times are tough, that is not the time to make a baby."³

Meditation also stimulate the pineal gland. This gland produces several hormones; two of which are; serotonin(necessary for libido and well being), and melatonin(another hormone connected with feelings of relaxation and well being), which in turn stimulates the pituitary gland. The pituitary is the gland which predominately regulates female reproductive hormones such as FSH (follicle stimulating hormone, which matures the eggs in the ovaries), estrogen, progesterone, and oxytocin in labor.

It is possible for meditation/visualization techniques to work with your body to enhance and/ or change the level of certain hormones in your body. For two years my dentist extensively tracked the relationship between food, supplements and saliva pH in order to learn which foods more optimally affect the pH of the saliva. One day he realized that his patients could simply convert their saliva pH by thinking about eating, or thinking about the desired pH level!

Susan and David integrated communicating and meditating with their unborn child to infuse into the medical procedure of an intrauterine insemination their individual sacred and loving essence as a couple. During a session a week before their anticipated insemination, they connected specifically with their unborn child and dialogued with her about her specific needs and desires for this insemination. They learned that she wanted candles, soft music and connection with her specifically before and during the insemination. Susan remembers that "I remember her asking for chocolate truffles because I was avoiding sugar and chocolate at the time."

During the break, before the insemination, Susan and David went to a nearby park, cuddled and shared a luscious picnic lunch and connected with Amanda. David shares, "a year before Amanda was born I wrote lyrics to a song which I feel was channeled by our baby. During our picnic lunch



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and the insemination we read her lyrics. We continue to celebrate Amanda's conception day as a day to honor and to reaffirm Amanda as a spiritual being, this always includes reading her lyrics."

I urge you to not approach meditation/relaxation as another regime, project or task to get you pregnant. I would, however, invite you to covet this quiet time as a time to rejuvenate, refresh and to give to yourself regardless of what the outcome will be. Create for yourself opportunities to go inside to release the pressures and stresses of trying to get pregnant. Use this time to nourish yourself by authentically communicating your body and to develop a relationship of working in cooperation with your body, instead of commanding and directing your body to perform and to produce. Love your body for where she is right now instead of invalidating yourself for failing to conceive. As you embrace this quiet space don't be surprised to find yourself feeling more empowered, alive and fertile.

The next installment of this article will explore more exercises to investigate and celebrate your fertility, including a more in-depth description of the baby altar Emily described in the beginning of the article. Until that time I invite you to explore the references list. Most book stores have a large selection of relaxation and meditation tapes. You may also wish to create your own relaxation tape. Have fun and receive.

Teresa Robertson conducts private preconception sessions to assist her clients with prebirth connection with their unborn child, to promote fertility, to heal pregnancy losses such as miscarriage and abortion, and to assist adoptive parents with connecting with their unborn children. Long distance sessions are available.

Teresa Robertson RN, Certified Nurse Midwife, MS, Birth Intuitive

Teresa provides information, support and tools to assist her clients to connect with their unborn children. Her work aids clients: to promote fertility; to heal and to resolve pregnancy losses such as miscarriage and abortion; to heal and/or minimize pregnancy complications; and to assist adoptive parents in connecting with their unborn children.

Her strong and varied clinical background and education allow her to serve as a translator between the worlds of intuition and western allopathic medical approaches. She offers suggestions about communication between mothers and their unborn children.

Information about her services can be found on her website at www.LivingIntuitive.com.

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Endnotes:

1. Christiane Northrup, *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom* 2nd edition (New York: Bantam, 1998) page 418.
2. "An increased vulnerability to stress is associated with a poor outcome of invitro fertilization-embryo transfer treatment." *Fertility Sterility*, vol. 67 (1997); pages 309-14.
3. Niravi Payne, *The Language of Fertility* (New York: Harmony, 1997) page 37.

Suggested Books

Alice Domar, *Healthy Body, Health Mind*, Doubleday and Company 1997

Julia Indichova, *Inconceivable*, (talks about conceiving in your forties)

Niravi Payne, *The Language of Fertility*, Harmony Books, 1997

Other Articles and Documents by Teresa:

Interview with Teresa about Baby Altars

The Two-Week Wait Activity List-14 Things to Do When 14 Days Seem Like Forever

Low Sperm / High FSH information

"They're Playing Your Song"

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