

My name is Jennifer and I am a member of the Joyce Fertility Support Centre Uganda. I would like to have links with other families in ACCESS Australia who are leading a childless family.

I am now 33 years of age. I am a nurse by profession.

I have been married for over ten years. We celebrated our marriage ceremony as it is celebrated in all African cultures, which was a transition from youth to real adulthood. I started a new home and responsibility in life.

We had great expectations as for a married couple, our families, friends and the societies around us.

As you know, the coming of the baby was expected to be received with great joy and many cultural ceremonies be carried out. We waited for the baby within the first two years and could not come. I within my family unit, I felt very insecure as bad signs shown in mines but practically stigmatised because of infertility problem.

I had to undergo many infertility treatments, hydrotubation laparotomy. And I remember when my husband disagreed because of the stigma I had. I went secretly to the hospital to take the surgery and my husband cried on seeing me in hospital after it was done. In fact it is very painful to admit the painful journey infertility and as a widow at the same time.

Infertility is an isolating experience that I have never seen. Failure to reproduce makes you isolated and as a couple, you have not fulfilled the process of bonding and this makes you feel very incomplete.

My husband was so good to me, so caring, gave me new hopes and used to comfort me and feel as if I did not have problems. My husband loved me so much and our love was stable

My not having a child did not lead us in separation but made me more hopeful and prayerful to God who is the owner of everything.

His care discouraged friends, relatives and the entire public, which kept on talking to me that; I was the liability to the family. His comfort was the treatment to my heart, which had very big wounds and sores of barrenness and his encouragement was my fighting weapon in this world until death parted us in May 2003. He died of cardiac failure.

I felt guilty, rejected and stunned. It seemed so cruel to have our hopes dashed after over 10 years of trying so hard to bring life to a child. I don't like to remember that morning when my husband passed away and what happened because I had no children

After all those years of suffering with treatments, operations and all sorts of things, we were referred for I.V.F treatment. Laparoscopy was done on me as the first treatment to prepare me for I.V.F. in April 2003 and I.V.F was to be done in June.

It was too bad for me because I had great hopes of getting a child and my husband passed away in May. It was total darkness on my side. Since I lost my husband, my life has been the most challenging one. I have been confronted by the harsh reality that, I will not realise my dream of becoming a parent. This is personal sadness I will always live with.

I am still continuing with that pain of being childless and the total isolation. So after realising that people, relatives and friends needed to take away whatever I had with my husband, as a childless person, I try to keep away and then live in isolation.

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