

This information is for the father of the baby: what to do and not to do when your partner shares that she is pregnant unexpectedly.

We need to remember that unless trust is first established, the mother of the baby may not be mentally, emotionally, or spiritually open to the compassion, hope, and help that is offered

## DO NOT RESPOND WITH NEGATIVITY

“If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all.”

Instead;

Tell her you are glad she decided to tell you

That you are here for her

That she is not alone, and you will walk through the situation with her

Consider how your response can affect her. If you are full of negative emotions during this time, take a deep breath and say nothing at all. A hug or another gesture to let her know that you love her unconditionally will suffice.

## DO NOT ELEVATE YOUR VOICE

Managing the volume, tone, and pace of your voice is wise. Avoid raising your voice or speaking in stern tones.

Show compassion while speaking truth, reminding her that there is always help and hope for her situation.

Be careful not to talk in a fast pace or talk over her while she is trying to express herself. Remember it is not about you, **it’s about her**

## DO NOT LOSE EYE CONTACT WITH HER

Body language, including eye contact and posture, represents a major component of our communication with others.

Observe how she uses eye contact and then try mirroring her.

Our facial expressions can send several messages. Be sure yours are compassionate or empathetic.

## DO NOT USE MANIPULATION

Manipulation is defined as “controlling or influencing (a person or situation) cleverly, unfairly, or unscrupulously.

Manipulation is never an option.

Avoid potentially manipulative tactics like overemphasizing abortion procedure terms, exaggerating abortion risks, or introducing words like *kill* or *murder*.

Remember that when she, and she will eventually, discovers that she has been manipulated she will lose all her trust and faith in you and what you have to say and it may never return!

## DO NOT USE CONFRONTATION NEGATIVELY

If your goal is to speak truth in love, negative confrontation represents a failure to love her, breaking trust, and potentially leaving her feeling like she is in an argument rather than a caring discussion with someone who loves her and has her best interest in mind.

Be careful not to talk over her. Allow time for thoughtful silences so you can focus the conversation on her needs.

## DO NOT INVALIDATE HER FEELINGS

This lets her know that she is not alone in how she is feeling. There are many women whose first thought is that abortion is best for them. Validating these feelings opens the door to discuss them.

Conversely, invalidating her emotions can happen when she states that she feels one way and you tell her she should not feel that way. When this happens, she may feel isolated, unheard, or uncared for. Instead, remember how alone and disconnected you have felt in moments of crisis

## DO NOT PLAY THE BLAME GAME

While there may be many reasons why a woman got pregnant, this is not the time to discuss the matter of who is at fault. When pregnant, women tend to be unusually emotional and in need of their support system more than ever. Trying to figure out how and why the pregnancy happened may be a discussion for later but not for the initial conversation.

## DO NOT COMPARE HER WITH OTHERS WHO DID NOT GET PREGNANT

**Comparing her with other family members or friends will likely make her feel insecure and judged.**

Remind her that she is fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13), she is loved by God (John 3:16), and He has plans to prosper her, not to harm her, and plans for a hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). We were all designed uniquely and God knows our beginning and our end.

## DO NOT TELL THE MOTHER OF THE BABY WHAT SHE SHOULD AND SHOULDN'T DO

No matter how much we love someone, we cannot force anyone to do what we think is best for them.

Don't break that trust by short-circuiting the transformation process by telling her what to do.

Listen well and often. If you are not a person that can listen without really hearing, guide her to someone who she trusts, and who does listen well. Remember: listening is the cornerstone of connection.

Encourage her to make a pro/con list for the options she is considering.

Give her space to reflect on that list.

After listening attentively, reflect her thoughts back to her to help her hear her logic. Point out inconsistencies in which her logic does not make sense.

## DO NOT SAY "I TOLD YOU SO"

"I told you so." However true it may be — is it loving?

By speaking the truth in love, you show honest, caring, and sincere compassion for her. However, by saying "I told you so," rather than displaying love, it shows that being right is more important to you in that moment than your relationship with her. So ultimately, she may view this as a selfish phrase, not a loving one.

If you are a Christ-follower, by speaking the truth in love, you show the love of Our Heavenly Father, preserving the bond of trust, and respecting her as an autonomous, capable individual

Note: Some of the above concepts taken from Care-Net's "10 things NOT to do when a woman tells you she wants an abortion."

### Don't bail

Don't just look for a quick fix for this "problem." The more you run, the worse it may be in the future.

### Don't pressure her

You two will do best working together as a team instead of fighting each other.

### Don't rush

There is no reason to hurry and make decisions that will affect the rest of your lives. Remember that if you choose abortion it is not a "quick fix," and can leave wounds that may never heal.

### Don't shut down

You had a role in the making of the baby; you need to have a role in the future and well being of your child. Think about what you are going to say before you say it and allow her to do the same.