

Dear Dad,

I'm sorry for the pain you're experiencing at this devastating time. I'm sorry for the loss that you are struggling to comprehend. And I'm worried that you are not getting the support you need.

When this happens to a family, the father sometimes doesn't know how to process or grieve. Understandably, the mother is usually the focus of others' support. After all, the mother carried the child. She experienced hormonal and other physical changes, and then her body was put through a traumatic experience. She has experienced the loss in a way that you cannot fully understand. You want to be there for her, and you are.

But you are also going through an unspeakably troubling time, and because we share this experience, I encourage you to make time for your own grief. Be sure that you are processing the loss and thinking about your self-care. Right now you may not fully grasp your own needs, but be sure to allow yourself the time to ascertain what those needs might be.

I'm not suggesting that your healing can't happen in tandem with the mother. But your needs may be different, and that's okay. Find a way to fully express your emotions. Find an outlet to vent. Find time for yourself.

Know you're not alone. Miscarriages are common. More people in your life than you realize have gone through a similar experience. Share your loss with them, and you may find comfort in hearing from people you love and trust.

You are likely not going to forget the day you lost your child, and that pain will resurface often. You won't forget the due date, and the pain will revisit you then, too. Just when you think you've healed, emotions will become raw yet again. When this occurs, allow yourself once more the time and grace to process your feelings and determine what you need. It's not a setback. It's not a sign of weakness. It's natural.

I wish there were a formula for healing. There isn't. You will never forget your child, and you will carry him or her with you for the rest of your life. From one dad to another, I send you my positive thoughts, good wishes, prayers, and blessings that you can process this loss on your own terms and with love and support.

Sincerely,

Steve Schappaugh  
Lucas Schappaugh's Dad