

TELECONFERENCE COACHING GROUPS; FACE-TO-FACE GROUPS; ONLINE EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS; MESSAGE BOARDS

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INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY ALLOW US TO COMMUNICATE IN NEW WAYS AND TO MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION WITH A GROUP FAR LARGER AND MORE GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE THAN WE EVER WOULD HAVE KNOWN WITHOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY. Cell phones and computers have become so ubiquitous in our society, that many people are unwilling to be disconnected, even temporarily. Yet many, if not most, individuals experiencing fertility difficulties report feeling alone, isolated and disconnected. Thus, in an effort to connect people throughout the United States who are struggling in their efforts to build their families, The AFA offers several options.

Our many message boards give members an opportunity to ask questions of both experts in the field and peers that are usually answered within 24 hours. Online sessions bring a physician, mental health, attorney, or complementary medicine expert for a one-hour interactive session on a particular topic of interest to our members.

In addition, the AFA has created an innovative program involving your telephone. How would you like to have a group of understanding people as well as an experienced fertility coach available to you from the safety and comfort of your home or office and all you have to do is dial your telephone? That's what The American Fertility Association is offering you through our Teleconference Fertility Coaching Groups.

Giving and receiving support has been found to bolster both women's physical and mental health. While men under stress may tend to follow the "fight-or-flight" model, women are more likely to "tend and befriend." The awareness of commonality among group members helps foster a sense of community and connection with others experiencing the same life crisis, reducing the sense of aloneness and isolation that many individuals feel.

The Coaching model builds on the premise that all people, including those experiencing a life crisis, possess inherent

strengths and capacities that allow them to effectively overcome the challenges they face in order to realize the life that they want. Our coaching groups have many goals, including discussion of topics of interest to the participants, helping participants with their decision-making, and assisting participants in creating as meaningful and fulfilling a life as possible for themselves, both during the family-building process and thereafter.

AFA, in coordination with our NO BARRIERS program is happy to offer these groups FREE of CHARGE to our members.

HOW DO THE AFA TELECONFERENCE COACHING GROUPS WORK?

- AFA Teleconference Coaching Groups meet over the telephone via a bridgeline that can connect people throughout the country. The group is accessed via a special phone number and PIN that will be provided to participants after they register.
- Coaching Groups are facilitated by a professional coach who has had personal experience with fertility issues.
- The group experience affords participants with the opportunity to connect with others who are experiencing similar fertility challenges. Groups typically involve lively and informative discussions that can assist participants in clarifying short- and long-term family building options and goals and problem solving ways to reach their goals.
- Groups are completely confidential and on a first name basis, unless group participants agree otherwise.
- Currently AFA Coaching Groups meet for one hour, typically for one or two times, on a day and time that is convenient for group participants.

HOW DO TELECONFERENCE COACHING GROUPS BENEFIT PARTICIPANTS?

An AFA Teleconference Coaching Group can help participants to:

- Cope effectively with the powerful feelings surrounding fertility diagnosis and treatment.
- Explore family building options and determine which is the best route for them.
- Manage interactions with family and friends.
- Enhance connections to the important people in their life.
- Cope with holidays, baby showers, and other family events.

OTHER BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN AFA TELECONFERENCE COACHING GROUPS

- **Convenience:** Participants can call in to the coaching session from wherever they are, allowing them to participate in the calm, comfortable and secure atmosphere of their own home.
- **Innovation in Support:** AFA Teleconference Coaching Groups are positive and strength based in their focus. They help bolster resilience and thereby are personally empowering for participants. Participants can learn new communications skills to facilitate family, doctor, and marital relationships. They can gain fresh ideas and perspectives from their coach and fellow group members.
- **Time Efficient:** Participants will save the time and hassle of traveling to a group.
- **National Support:** As a national fertility support organization, AFA is pleased to be able to offer our Fertility Coaching Groups to members throughout the 50 states of the United States, as well as Canada, including those who may have no local fertility support services whatsoever available to them. All participants can benefit from input and support from their peers living in locations throughout the country.

The AFA is currently offering Fertility Teleconference Coaching Groups for individuals and couples covering various topics. Watch for your AFA e-blasts and "Connections" e-Newsletter for information regarding dates and topics of upcoming groups.

For further information, contact either AFA Director of Support Services:

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AMERICAN
FERTILITY
ASSOCIATION

FERTILITY COACHING

AFFORDABLE COACHING GROUPS
ARE ORGANIZED BY TOPIC FOR:

- COUPLES
- WOMEN
- MEN
- ADOPTION
- OVUM DONATION
- AND OTHERS, AS WELL

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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All groups are run by mental health professionals