



What if I didn't get to bring my baby home?

Information and resources for bereaved parents about the option to bring your stillborn or deceased baby home.

If you're like me, you found this information too late. You somehow lived through the impossible pain of your baby's stillbirth or death. You said goodbye and handed over a piece of your heart. Now you're learning that your goodbyes could have been different.

I felt incredible sadness when I heard Vicki Culling speak about this for the first time, imagining my parents meeting their only grandson and my daughter meeting her brother. Tears still come often as I talk or write about what could have been. I've learned to accept this as part of my full experience of stillbirth, and I hope you'll find a way to gently hold whatever you're feeling as part of yours. I invite you to give yourself permission to feel any emotions that arise, without judgment.

In addition to the wonderful meditation provided by [Lianne Raymond](#), you can keep the following suggestions in mind as you process and feel into this new information.

Talk to someone. It's helpful to talk about your thoughts and feelings with a supportive, caring listener. Make sure this person is willing to sit and listen without trying to fix the situation, and without attempting to make you feel better. If you are talking to your partner, know that your reactions to learning about bringing baby home could be very different. Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong way to feel. Do your best to keep your love for each other and for your baby in mind, and to let go of any criticism or judgment around how he or she is handling it.

Write about it. You could write a love letter to your baby, a letter to yourself in the moment where you had to say goodbye, or simply journal about whatever you're feeling. If you have any repetitive, painful stories circling through your thoughts, getting them out of your head and onto paper can help you see them more clearly.

If you're not already involved with an online support community, you can find links in the resources section of this website. Sharing your experience with others who relate eases the sense of isolation that is common in grief, and can be particularly acute when it comes to the death of a child.

If you are feeling any distress as you think of what could have been, allow yourself to stop doing what you're doing and breathe deeply. Focus on the sensation of the breath going in and out of your body as your feelings wash over and through you. This might be a good time to return to any of the first three suggestions, or to the meditation.

Be gentle with yourself. Let go of any thoughts of how you should or shouldn't feel, or what you should or shouldn't be doing. Even if it's been years since your baby's death, this new information could bring grief right back to the surface.

Take extra special care of yourself when you feel raw and upset. Whether it's a bath, a long nap, comforting healthy food, a walk in the sunshine or time to be creative, listen to what your body and heart are telling you they need.

Lastly, if you have a desire to do something more, please share this website and the information here, so that more parents and medical professionals understand the options when they are confronted with the heartbreak of stillbirth and infant death.



The author: Alana Sheeren is a writer, coach, and mentor who believes passionately in the beauty and resilience of the human spirit. She is the mother of a vibrant little girl and a stillborn baby boy. You can find her at AlanaSheeren.com

For more answers to your questions about bringing stillborn and deceased babies home, go to <http://whenyourbabydies.com/q/>