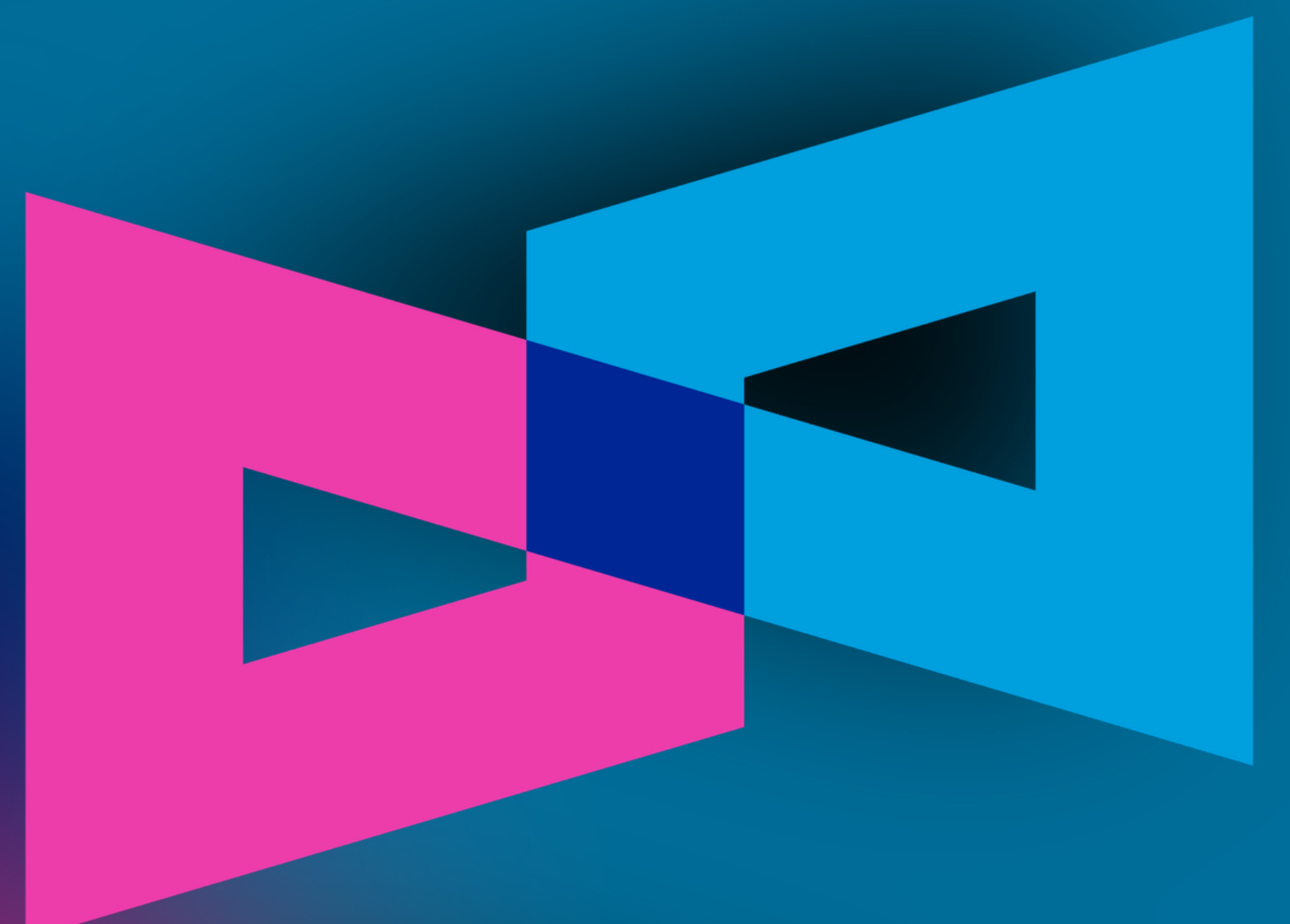


SURVIVE

A Baby Loss Guide
For Bereaved Fathers



dad always

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You do not have to do this alone.

Baby loss can bring shock, numbness, anger, disorientation, and powerlessness. Strength does not mean ignoring what you need.

SAFETY IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

This guide is not a substitute for mental health or crisis services. If you feel unsafe or have thoughts of harming yourself or someone else, call 911, your mental health provider, or 988 in the US. Outside the US, contact local emergency services.

Kelly Jean-Philippe

THE FRAMEWORK

Seven anchors. One next step.

Move in order—or begin where the need is most intense.

S **Shock**
Fewer decisions. One point person. Basics first.

U **Uplift the body**
Water, food, a sleep attempt, movement.

R **Regulate**
Contain overwhelm and anger with grounding.

V **Verbalize needs**
Simple asks. Short check-ins. Same team.

I **Interact with boundaries**
Protect privacy, energy, and work capacity.

V **Value your baby**
Remember in a way that belongs to you.

E **Expect waves**
Plan for next weeks. Repeat what helps.

S Shock

Get through the next hours

WHAT SHOCK CAN FEEL LIKE

Numbness · disorientation · anger · detachment · panic · unreality

BASIC FIRSTS

Drink water · eat something simple · reduce decisions · minimize noise, visitors, stimulation · choose one point person

IN A MEDICAL SETTING

Ask for clear next steps in writing · request privacy · ask for chaplain, social worker, music therapy, child life specialist if available · take options one at a time

“You do not have to carry everything at once. You only need to get through this moment with as much care and safety as possible.”

Kelly Jean-Philippe

U Uplift

Stabilize the nervous system

SMALL CARE COUNTS

Water · protein or easy food · regular eating · power nap ·
quiet time · deep breathing · personal hygiene

BODY MOVEMENT

Literally shake hands, arms, legs 30–60 seconds · long walk
without phone · carry something heavy for 2 minutes ·
stretch what feels tense · wall push-ups or slow squats

MAKE SLEEP MORE POSSIBLE

Dim lights before bed · avoid doom scrolling · if you can't
sleep, do something quiet out of bed · warm shower + cool
room

“Good enough *is* enough.”

Kelly Jean-Philippe

R Regulate

Contain the flood

THE 90-SECOND RESET

- Press both feet into the ground
- Slow inhale for 4 seconds
- Slow exhale for 6-8 seconds
- Name 5 things you can see (everything counts)
- Say, "I will get through this."

WHEN ANGRY OR OVERWHELMED

Splash cold water on face · wall push-ups or slow squats ·

90-SECOND RESET · clench fists and legs 8 seconds then release slowly 10 seconds · set verbal boundary (*i.e. "I'm not okay right now. I need 20 minutes to myself."*)

"Regulation is not weakness. It's how you keep yourself from drowning in the moment."

Kelly Jean-Philippe

V Verbalize

Stay on the same team

ASK FOR SPACE

- “I’m feeling very overwhelmed. I need to go outside for 20-minutes, then I’ll come back.”
- “I need to quiet my mind so I don’t snap.”
- “Can we pause right here and come back to this later?”

3-MINUTE CHECK-IN*

- “What was the hardest part about today?”
- “One thing I need right now is...”
- “My small win today was...”

ASK FOR DISTRACTION

- “I need a break from the heavy stuff.”
- “Can we do something simple like going out on a walk?”
- “I need half hour to watch / play a game.”

“Needing space or distraction doesn’t mean you care any less. It means you’re trying to survive.”

Kelly Jean-Philippe

*for use between you and your partner · check-in around the same time each day if possible

I Interact

Handle work and others without surrendering privacy

KEEP IT SIMPLE

- "I experienced a loss in my family."
- "I'm not ready to discuss details."
- "I don't want to talk right now."

IF SOMEONE PRESSES

- "I'm not looking for advice. What I need is..."
- "I appreciate your concern, but I'm keeping details private."
- "You do / do not have my consent to..."

ASK FOR WORK FLEXIBILITY*

- "I may need some flexibility as I transition back."
- "I may need to start/end earlier on some days."
- "I'd like a lighter load for the next few weeks if possible."

"You don't owe people your story to
deserve support. Privacy is allowed.
Boundaries are allowed."

Kelly Jean-Philippe

*explore leave with HR · communicate needs to your hiring manager

V Value

One small act of remembering

WAYS TO REMEMBER

- Carry a small token
- Jewellery with your baby's name on it
- Frame an ultrasound or memory item
- Choose / compose a song
- Participate in / create an annual event
- Plant something
- Create a private ritual
- Write a poem
- Create art
- Write a letter

"Remembering is about doing something with all of the emotions trapped inside."

Kelly Jean-Philippe

E Expect

Plan the next few weeks

BUILD A THREE-PERSON CREW

PRACTICAL food + errands

SUPPORT check-ins · listening · raw talks

LOGISTICS updates + work

HARD-DAY KIT

Easy food + electrolytes

90-SECOND RESET* + THREE-PERSON CREW

Comfort item + sleep supports

EXPECT TRIGGERS

Social media · holidays · due dates · anniversaries · kid's parties · pregnancy announcements · baby isles · sex · Father's Day

"You can always expect grief to be unexpected."

Kelly Jean-Philippe

*outlined in Regulate

A CLOSING NOTE

**There is no perfect
way to survive.**

Focus on the next moment, the next hour, and the next decision that helps you stay grounded and present.

**NEXT MOMENT.
NEXT HOUR.
NEXT DECISION.**

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