

WHY THE LOSS OF A BABY IS DEVASTATING

The loss of a baby is one of the most devastating losses in life.

The moment people find out their baby has died, is often a moment they never forget.

Expectant parents can feel utter disbelief and shock.

They can experience devastation and heartbreak, as their hopes and dreams shatter.

This is a profound existential anomaly. It's not the natural order of things.

The mother has given up aspects of herself for the pregnancy and for her baby.

The mother is primed in pregnancy to nurture & protect her baby.

The parents' relationship has often evolved to become ready for and emotionally invested in this baby and their imagined family life.

Other people may be excited about the baby's arrival and the meaning of this baby in the broader family and friendship circles. The baby might already be part of the family, and plans including this baby may have already been made with friends.

Bereaved parents typically feel overwhelmed, shocked, and devastated by the news that their baby has died.

There can be profound sorrow.

Bereaved parents can feel "suspended in time" "stuck in brokenness".

When there is a late term loss, the birth and death of a baby happens at the same time, which is harrowing.

In some cases, there is no explanation of what went wrong, which can lead to guilt and self-blame.

There is a loss of innocence.

A loss of self.

A loss of the future.

People often feel isolated, feeling that no one really understands.

Losing a baby is life changing. Bereaved parents can question how they will ever be happy again.

Reference

Davis, D. (2016). *Empty cradle, broken heart: Surviving the death of your baby*. Fulcrum Publishing.