

thing's not working, they just close the door on it and move on. It can be the same with family planning. A man's first thought might be 'oh well, let's concentrate on something else for a while'. He may rationalise things. He can argue that the balance for not having a child means double incomes for a little longer, or taking that unplanned holiday.

This in no way says that the possibility of losing fatherhood doesn't mean anything to a man. It hurts. Admitting it is not a sign of weakness or a lack of manliness. Having a child can be a large part of The Game or a smaller part of The Game.

Men can also be practical about having children. While pregnant women are out browsing baby shops for size 0000 Winnie the Pooh cardigans and booties in eleven different shades of pink, men are looking at issues of finance, such as how to afford to put the children through school. It's a different approach.

So when things don't work as quickly as expected, a man can approach it differently to a woman.

Changes over time

“I was being supportive but I guess I could justify not having kids because there was financial gain. My wife not being pregnant meant she was working for another month, with another month's income and we could set ourselves up a bit more. But then, over time, it became less important. It wasn't even compensation in the end. We were in two reasonably well-paid jobs – very busy and run off our feet – but miserable. We had money and a busy life, but it wasn't the life that we wanted.”

– David (author)

All of the waiting seems to have an effect in stages over a period of time. The changes that it brings to you can come at any point in time. No matter what you first thought about not getting pregnant, putting it into compartments and seeing the positive side may well not continue for too long. As it goes on, the waiting game can affect:

- How you feel about yourself. You're redefining yourself all the time.
- How you feel about others. How people react to you will change how you feel about some of them. You'll learn a lot about people, as they are either a help or a hindrance.