

things instead, such as confusion. The early stages of finding out that you may not be able to easily have children can be very confusing. You're struggling to do something that you always assumed you could do. But the most difficult thing for a man to say is - 'I don't have the answers and I can't cope'.

Being the rock

“ If I let my guard down and say I feel like she does, we wouldn't function as a couple. I'm trying to be the solid person in the relationship. ”

– John, 33

Your partner could have cut herself off from the world because it hurts so much seeing other people having the children she desperately wants or because you don't want people to know. That means she needs to talk to people who understand what she's going through. Most times, that's you.

If you see your partner really down, upset and struggling in life, it's automatic that you'll adopt the 'rock' attitude. 'She needs someone to lean on, so it will be me'. It's a very male response and there's nothing wrong with adopting it. But it can be hard to judge the line between being strong and being compassionate. You want to be strong, but you didn't want it to appear that nothing matters to you. There's a fine line there.

Talking about it doesn't necessarily mean finding a solution at the end of the conversation. Most men think that. If they talk, they'll need (or be expected) to come up with an answer. But in most cases, a woman just needs to feel validated or supported. She's not necessarily expecting you to provide a solution and won't view you as weak for 'letting the side down'.

One of the downsides of not talking through your situation and finding out what your partner wants is you start to play a game called 'I think that you think'. This is the game of assumption that involves a lot of second-guessing.

Here's how the game is played. The guy says to himself, 'I think that you want to talk to me about our inability to conceive because you want me to fix it'. Then the woman may say to herself, 'I think you're not talking because you don't care'.

Now neither may be right. But until you express your opinion and hear your partner expressing her opinion too, it's what you're going to believe.