



# **Should I Have Another Baby?**

## **A Decision-Making Guide**



# ABOUT MOMWELL

Our mission is to empower moms like you when and how you need it through free resources, education, courses, and therapy. At Momwell, we know what it's like to need support and not know where to turn. You're juggling new responsibilities, the mental load of motherhood, and a system that wasn't designed to help you with your needs.

Maternal mental health care should be accessible, easy, and available right at your fingertips. Whether you need hands-on mental healthcare with a mom therapist, or you simply need to know you aren't alone, we're here for you. Visit [momwell.com](https://momwell.com) or listen to [The Momwell Podcast](#) for more support!

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The decision of whether or not to have another baby is a difficult one for many parents. It's a complex, deeply personal choice—but it's one we often need guidance in. We have to weigh logic, emotion, practical realities, our own expectations, and hopes for the future.

**This guide includes practical exercises, decision-making tools, and reflection prompts to help you:**

- Approach the decision comprehensively, using both emotional and logical reasoning
- Weigh out the factors involved and determine which are the most important to you
- Find acceptance and empowerment in the decision you make

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to be worked through at your pace. You can choose to do the exercises six days in a row, or spend time reflecting and putting the pieces into action—whatever works for your schedule.

*Please note that this guided journal is not a replacement for therapy. If you are struggling, connect with your healthcare provider or visit [momwell.com/mom-support](https://momwell.com/mom-support) for our therapy services.*

## LESSON 1: WEIGHING YOUR IDEAL FAMILY AGAINST YOUR REALITY

Many of us have a picture in mind of what our families might look like before we have kids—the ideal family. This picture is created by our own upbringing, what we liked about our family, what we didn't like about our family, and what we envision for our future.

We might have pictured a big family, or only one child—or perhaps we wanted a combination of boys and girls or just one gender.

It's easy to get caught up in the ideal family—but it's important to remember that this picture wasn't created in our current reality. Our needs, wants, and desires change, and they might not always align with what we once wanted.

For example, perhaps you always wanted a big family, but you encountered physical, mental, or medical circumstances that changed your mind. It can be confusing when our ideal doesn't match reality. But it's okay to change, grow, and let go of what we once wanted if it feels right.

### Exploring Your Ideal Family

There's nothing wrong with having an ideal picture of your family in your mind—and understanding this vision will help you weigh it against reality.

Take a few minutes to close your eyes and truly picture your “perfect” family. How many children are there? Boys, girls, or a combination? What types of things do you do together? What experiences do you have?

**Write down a description of the family you pictured:**



# Reflection Questions:



How many children did you picture?



What kind of dynamic did you envision?



What kind of support, energy, and lifestyle are you living in this perfect ideal?



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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper...

It's not enough to just picture the family we want—we also need to dig deeper into why our ideal family looks this way.

Answer these reflection questions to dive below the surface and understand the why:



What did my family look like growing up?

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Where do my expectations about family size come from?

(upbringing, society, personal values)?

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

How did my childhood impact my ideal family?

What did I like, and not like about that?

What emotional needs or desires was I hoping this family would fulfill?

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_



## Comparing the Ideal to Reality



Our ideal family was typically created without the circumstances of our reality in play. If you're struggling with the decision of whether or not to have another baby, chances are there are some circumstances in your life that clash with the ideal family you had envisioned.

These might include financial circumstances, mental health challenges, relationship struggles, mental health concerns, or other practical challenges.

Think about what circumstances in your life have changed that might make the "ideal" family unrealistic now. **Check off any factors that might apply:**



Financial concerns have changed

☐

My relationship isn't where I thought it would be

☐

Having another baby would bring up a lot of changes (bigger home, bigger car, etc.)

☐

My career or my partner's career is impacting the decision

☐

There are mental health struggles, such as difficulty adjusting to motherhood, depression, anxiety, neurodivergence, or other concerns present that I didn't picture

☐

There are medical factors at play that I didn't expect (for example, birth trauma, difficult recovery, chronic medical concerns for you, your partner, or your children)?

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What aspects of my family life surprise or challenge me?

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Are there things that I once wanted  
but now feel differently about?



Is there an emotional desire pushing  
me toward my ideal family, even if  
reality says otherwise?



What circumstances have changed  
that are contributing to the struggle  
of making this decision?

What's truly most important to me now in my family—quality of life, financial security, emotional capacity? How would having another baby impact that?

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## FOR EXTRA SUPPORT:

MOMWELL PODCAST: EPISODE 157 SHOULD I HAVE ANOTHER BABY?

## LESSON 2: THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Do you struggle, not just with the decision to have another baby, but with trusting your choices in general? This is a very common experience for modern moms. Many of us were never taught how to make decisions with confidence. We might have been conditioned to look to our elders to make decisions for us, not listen to our bodies, or to shut down our emotions rather than listen to them. Fast forward to adulthood and we often find ourselves struggling with people pleasing or an inability to trust ourselves.

Learning to trust ourselves in our decision-making takes a lot of reflection and unlearning. But one of the best places to start is practicing acceptance that there isn't always a "right," "best," or "perfect" decision. This is extremely difficult, especially in a society that bombard us with conflicting advice, contradictory information, and an immense pressure to be perfect.

The truth is that when it comes to big family decisions, like whether or not to have another baby, we're rarely going to feel 100% in either direction. Every decision comes with trade-offs, sacrifices, and outcomes we have to accept. But we can learn how to approach decisions with confidence and trust ourselves to make empowered decisions.

### Emotions, Logic, and the Wise Mind

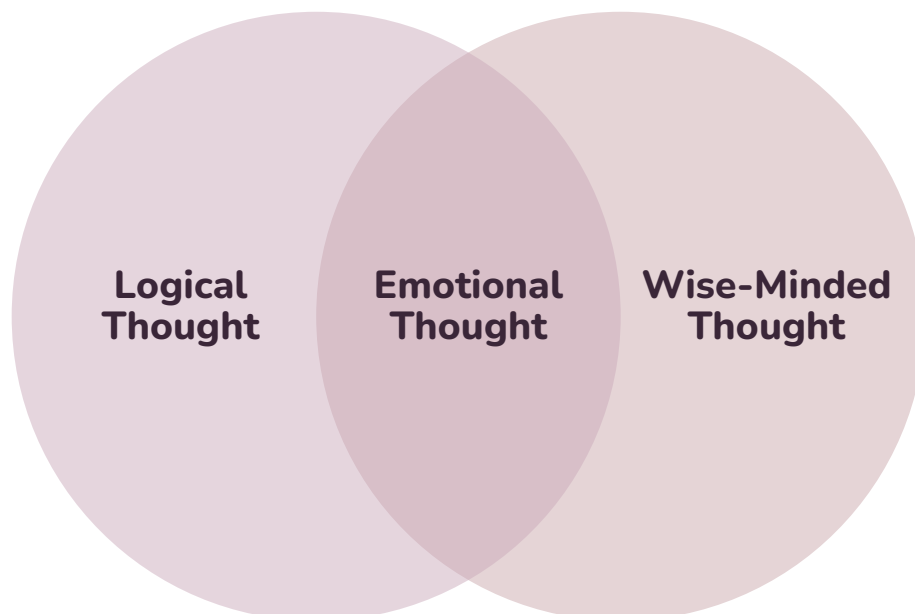
It's sometimes hard to find the balance between emotion and logic when it comes to the decision to have another baby.

We often think of decision-making as a rational process, but then get caught up in the emotional aspects of it. But our emotions and our logic are both important parts of decision-making—neither is "wrong" or "right."

When working with clients, therapists often use a tool called "The Wise Mind" to help clients see the balance between emotions and logic.

We have an "emotional mind" driven by our feelings (which are always valid) and a "logical mind," driven by intellect and analysis.

But to truly make empowered decisions, we need to tap into a third mind, the "wise mind," which blends emotion and logic together. In the wise mind, we don't shut down our emotions as invalid, focusing purely on logic. We also don't let our emotions take control. We view our emotions as valid and approach them with logic.





This chart shows what the wise mind might sound like when trying to decide whether or not to have another baby.

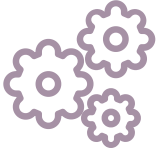
FACTOR	LOGICAL THOUGHT	EMOTIONAL THOUGHT	WISE-MINDED THOUGHT EXAMPLE
FINANCES	"We can't afford another child. Childcare and education costs would be too much for us to handle."	"I've always dreamed of having a big family, and I don't want money to be the reason we stop growing it."	"While I want a larger family, financial stability is important for my children's future. We can revisit this when we no longer have daycare bills to pay."
PHYSICAL HEALTH	"I had complications during my last pregnancy, and my doctor has advised against having more children."	"I want another baby so much, and I'm willing to go through anything to make that happen."	"While I desire another child, I must prioritize my health to be present for the family I already have."
MENTAL HEALTH	"I struggled with postpartum depression last time, and I'm not sure I can emotionally handle another baby."	"Even though the postpartum period was hard, I still feel like something is missing in our family."	"I need to prioritize my mental health. I'll seek work with a therapist to have a postpartum mental health plan in place to be emotionally and mentally prepared."
AGE	"I'm 39, and my chances of a high-risk pregnancy increase every year."	"Age is just a number, and I don't want it to stop me from growing my family."	"I want another child, but I need to consider the health risks. I can talk to my doctor about safe options moving ahead."
SUPPORT SYSTEM	"We don't have any family nearby to help us, and we already feel overwhelmed with our current children."	"I wish we had more help, but I still feel strongly about having another child."	"We need more support to manage another baby. I'll explore new childcare options before making a final decision."
PARTNER'S INVOLVEMENT	"My partner is already working long hours and isn't very involved in childcare. I don't see that changing."	"I hope having another baby will bring us closer and get my partner more involved in parenting."	"I need to talk to my partner about expectations. It's important we're both on board before growing our family further."

FACTOR	LOGICAL THOUGHT	EMOTIONAL THOUGHT	WISE-MINDED THOUGHT EXAMPLE
LIVING SPACE	"Our house is too small, and we don't have the room for another child without significant changes."	"I don't care how small the house is, I just want to have the family I've always dreamed of."	"We need to assess our space before having another baby. Maybe a move or renovation is possible in the future."
LIFESTYLE/ TRAVEL	"We love to travel, and having another child would limit our ability to do that as easily."	"I don't want to regret not having another child just to maintain our current lifestyle."	"While I love travel, I'll consider how a larger family fits into my long-term lifestyle. We can adjust our plans."
EXISTING CHILDREN'S NEEDS	"One of our children has special needs, and I worry we won't be able to give them enough attention with another baby."	"A sibling might actually help my child grow and learn new social skills."	"We can explore how another baby would impact our family dynamic and consult with experts before making a decision."
FERTILITY	"We've already gone through fertility treatments, and the cost and stress were very hard on us."	"I'm not ready to give up yet; I still feel like we're meant to have another baby."	"We'll take a break from fertility treatments for now and revisit our options in a few months to avoid further burnout."
LACK OF A SPECIFIC GENDER	"We have two boys and we always wanted a girl. But we know that if we had another child that doesn't guarantee we'll have a girl."	"I've always dreamed of having a girl, and I feel like something is missing in our family without one."	"While I had hoped for a daughter, I'm learning to appreciate the family I have and focus on what makes it feel complete."

When we become more aware of our emotions, logic, and how to blend the two, we can start wisely addressing the factors involved in our decision and move ourselves toward an empowered choice.

# Emotional and Logical Factors at Play

It's important to think about both the logical and emotional factors and how they come together into the decision to have another baby. In the final lesson, you will find a tool that helps you put these together to make the decision. For now, however, it's helpful to start thinking about the big picture and all the factors at play.



## Logical factors to consider when deciding whether to have another baby:

**Finances:** Affordability, cost of childcare, cost of living

**Age:** Age concerns, risks associated with older age

**Health:** Physical health, mental health, health concerns for child

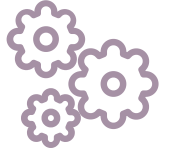
**Space:** House size, vehicle size

**Support:** Support system, lack of support

**Logistics:** Daycare availability, work schedules, travel

**Capacity:** Mental capacity, physical capacity

**Other:** Lifestyle, travel, future plans, life events



What are the most important logical factors you are weighing in your decision?



## Emotional factors to consider when deciding whether to have another baby:

**Mental health:** PPD, anxiety, depression, stress, birth trauma

**Emotional well-being:** Adjusting to motherhood, feeling complete, not feeling done,

**Current children's needs:** Current age and stage, any particularly strong emotional needs

**Relationship:** Partner's wishes, relationship health, support from partner

**Personal feelings:** Feeling ready, not feeling ready, wanting to give your child a sibling



What are the most important emotional factors you are weighing in your decision?





## Reflecting on the Past



When we start to wonder if we want to have another baby, it's common to look back and think about the best stages of parenthood—especially as our children start to get older and we grieve the loss of the “little kid.” The snuggles. The love. The cuteness of a toddler. We might forget about the hardest parts too. Meltdowns or tantrums. Navigating the lack of time and capacity postpartum. Sleep deprivation.

On the other hand, we might look back and only remember trauma or how hard things were, forgetting about the more positive parts. It's helpful to reflect on the past with a more grounded, realistic view, remembering both the good and the bad.

Think back about the parts of parenthood you struggled with the most, as well as your favorite ages and stages.

What were some of your favorite experiences or stages?



What were some of the stages you found hardest, or experiences you aren't looking forward to again?



### FOR EXTRA SUPPORT:

[MOMWELL PODCAST: EPISODE 162 HOW TO MAKE DECISIONS WITH CONFIDENCE](#)  
[MOMWELL PODCAST: EPISODE 182 MAKING THE “RIGHT” PARENTING DECISIONS](#)

# Reflection Questions:



Am I prepared to go through the hardest stages again?



Will I be happy with any gender outcome?



What logical and emotional factors lead me to want another baby?



What logical and emotional factors have me concerned about having another baby?



Am I prepared for a child who is completely different from the one or ones I have now?



Do the parts I enjoyed the most and am looking forward to the most outweigh the parts I struggles with?



What is something that I want to try but don't currently have the capacity for?



Is there a different way to bring that same thing into my life?



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## Thinking About the Future

Sometimes we make the decision to have another baby when we begin to gain capacity in our motherhood role without considering that we could fill that capacity with something else. Maybe having another baby is what you ultimately want—but perhaps you are so strongly tied into your motherhood identity that you haven't considered what else you could do with your capacity.



Work through these questions to visualize the future with and without another baby:

What is something that I sacrificed when I became a mom that I would like to revisit?

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What is something that I don't currently have time for that I would like to pick back up again?

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What will having a baby bring into my life that I am wanting?

What is something that I want to try but don't currently have the capacity for?

Is there a different way to bring that same thing into my life?

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 3: MAKING AN EMPOWERED DECISION

### How Grief, Fear, and Trauma Impact Our Choices

Sometimes, our desire to have another baby or stop having another baby doesn't come from an empowered place—it comes from fear or grief.

#### When we experience situations such as:

- ✓ Birth trauma
- ✓ Medical trauma
- ✓ Children with neurodivergence or disabilities
- ✓ Difficult postpartum periods

...we might find ourselves grieving or grappling with the difference between what we wanted and envisioned, and what actually happened.

This can lead us in two different directions when it comes to family decision-making. We might find ourselves wanting a “do-over.” For example, if we had a traumatic birth, we might want to have another baby to reclaim the experience that we hoped for. (Sometimes birth trauma physically takes our choice away, which can be even harder to accept. In this situation, we might find ourselves looking at surrogacy or adoption as a way to fill the hole or reclaim the experience).

On the other hand, we might find ourselves deciding to not grow our family because we fear what will happen and are unwilling to go through the experience again.

All of these experiences and feelings are valid, and the choice to have another baby or not is personal—but making decisions from a place of fear or trauma can lead us astray.

#### Wanting a Re-Do:



It can be tempting to choose to have more children because of our trauma or grief. But we have no way of predicting what the next experience will be—it might not be the “reclaiming” that we imagine.

Even if our next experience is positive, it can bring our grief to the surface even more strongly rather than giving us that reclamation we want.

No experience or do-over will heal our grief or our trauma—and making decisions as a way to try to heal can set us up for failure.





## Avoidance

It's completely valid to choose to not have another baby, just as it's completely valid to choose to do so. But if our decisions are made out of fear or grief, it might be a sign we need to heal.

Avoidance because of fear or grief won't take away our pain or offer healing. It's one thing to understand potential outcomes and make the choice to not put yourself in the position to go through them again—but it's another to operate from a trauma response.

If you suspect that fear or trauma have a strong hold on you—especially if you feel on edge or hyper-aroused and anxious when you think about having another baby, it might be time to work with a therapist on your healing journey.

The feelings you have are valid—and should all be part of your decision. But if you're making your decision from a place of fear or grief, it could be a sign that you need healing and support.

## Check-In: Is This Decision Coming from Grief, Trauma, or Fear

So, how do you know if your decision is coming from an empowered place? The key is checking back in on yourself and your motivators.

**If you've endured trauma or grief and are wanting to have another baby, ask yourself these reflection questions:**

**Why am I wanting to have another baby?**



**Is this to grow my family?**



**What will having another baby bring into my life?**



What will happen if I encounter another trauma or grief-inducing situation?



What would I say to another mom in my situation?



If you've endured trauma or grief and don't want to grow your family, ask yourself these reflection questions:



Is my decision coming from a healed place? Or am I avoiding emotions I need to address?



Is my partner on board with my decision?



How do I feel when I think about having another baby? Do I experience any physical trauma signs, such as heart-racing or clenched stomach?



Do I have logical reasons supporting my decision?



And if not, could this be a sign that I need to seek more support and work with a therapist?



**FOR EXTRA SUPPORT:**

[MOMWELL PODCAST: EPISODE 165 HOW BIRTH TRAUMA IMPACTS OUR FAMILY DECISION MAKING](#)

## LESSON 4: PAUSING THE DECISION

The decision of whether or not to have more children can feel very high-stakes—and sometimes we create a sense of urgency around the choice that can take a toll on us.

For example, if we always envisioned having children close together, perhaps because we were close in age to our siblings and want to recreate the gap—or because we were spaced out far and felt disconnected—we might feel pressure to make the decision before we're really ready.

Sometimes there are reasons why a family needs to make an ultimate decision on whether they should have another baby sooner rather than later, due to medical or financial circumstances. But often, we don't actually have an impending deadline for the decision.

Putting a pause on the decision can give us time, space, and a new fresh viewpoint—especially if we find ourselves feeling distracted, consumed, or anxious about the decision.

### High Peaks or Low Lows



When we're experiencing big emotions, we are often tempted to make big life-altering decisions. But it's often the worst time to make those choices.

Check in with yourself now—are you trying to make a decision at a time when you're experiencing big feelings or are in the thick of a struggle?



**If so, can you wait and put a pause on the decision?**

**Is there a pressing reason why I need to decide now whether or not to have another baby?**



**If it does feel like there is a sense of urgency, is that urgency due to immovable circumstances, such as medical reasons or aging?**



If not, can that urgency be viewed in a different light?  
Can I make adjustments to my timetable based on the reality at hand?



What would happen if I decided to put the decision aside for a year, then revisit?









Would I experience relief from putting a temporary pause on this choice?



## LESSON 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER AND MAKING THE CHOICE

Now that you have explored all of the factors at play and considered the different aspects of your decision, it's time to put it all together.

**While only you and your partner can make the choice, it's helpful to approach the decision with a framework:**

-  Consider the emotional and logical factors at hand, and question where they came from.
-  Think about your favorite parts of parenting so far—but also consider your least favorite stages.
-  Reflect on your ideal expectations of a family and whether they still match your reality.
-  Think about your values, lifestyle, and what you truly want—and whether or not having another baby would impact that.
-  Ask yourself if you need to make the decision now or simply delay it.
-  Question whether there is something else you would rather do with your time and mental space, or if you are ready to fill that capacity with another baby.

**With that framework in mind, work through this tool to give yourself some perspective on the factors impacting your decision:**

(ex. Wait until after we hear about a promotion or I worry that having another baby would impact my identity and career)

Factor	Your Reality	Weight (How Important Is This Factor? )	Which decision is this factor pointing you to?	Personal Notes
FINANCES	<input type="checkbox"/> We are in a good financial place to have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> It wouldn't be easy, but we could handle having another baby financially <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby would put us in a financial strain	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
LIFESTYLE	<input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby would positively impact our lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby wouldn't create major changes in our lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> Having a baby would change our lifestyle quite a bit	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	

Factor	Your Reality	Weight (How Important Is This Factor? )	Which decision is this factor pointing you to?	Personal Notes
MENTAL HEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/> My partner and I are both at a strong and stable spot mentally <input type="checkbox"/> My partner or I have some struggles but are managing well and could handle another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby could create a mental health struggle for my partner or for me	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
PHYSICAL HEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/> We have no physical health concerns about having another baby <input type="checkbox"/> There are some worries or physical health concerns present <input type="checkbox"/> There are big physical health issues with having another baby	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
CAPACITY /MENTAL LOAD	<input type="checkbox"/> I have the capacity to handle the mental load growing <input type="checkbox"/> I am concerned that we would need more support if we have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> The mental load is all-consuming and I don't have much capacity for more	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
THE IDEAL FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> My family matches the ideal family I have in mind <input type="checkbox"/> My family is close to the ideal family I have in mind, but I still might want to have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> I am not at the ideal family yet and this is leading me toward a decision	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
PRACTICAL ADJUSTMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby wouldn't bring up major adjustments, such as a new car or house <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby might bring up some changes that we need to consider <input type="checkbox"/> We would need to make major practical changes if we had another baby	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
GOALS FOR THE FUTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby would still align with my goals and what I want from life <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure if having another baby would allow me to live the life I want. <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby would be a challenge or prevent me from reaching my goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	

Factor	Your Reality	Weight (How Important Is This Factor? )	Which decision is this factor pointing you to?	Personal Notes
WHERE IS THE DESIRE COMING FROM?	<input type="checkbox"/> I am torn on growing my family for a number of emotional and logical reasons <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure why I am torn on this choice <input type="checkbox"/> My choice might be coming from a place of grief, trauma, or fear	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
SUPPORT SYSTEM	<input type="checkbox"/> We have plenty of support or financial resources to bring more in <input type="checkbox"/> We have enough support currently, but it might be difficult if we have more children <input type="checkbox"/> We're lacking support as it is and it would be very hard if we had another baby	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
RELATIONSHIP	<input type="checkbox"/> My relationship is in a strong, supportive place <input type="checkbox"/> I have some concerns about my partner's involvement or my relationship stability <input type="checkbox"/> My partner and I aren't in the best place right now	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
EXISTING CHILDREN'S NEEDS	<input type="checkbox"/> We are able to meet everyone's needs and could handle that even with a baby <input type="checkbox"/> It would be difficult but we can do it <input type="checkbox"/> Having another baby would make it difficult to meet everyone's needs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	
LOWEST POINTS OF PARENTING (the stages you least enjoyed)	<input type="checkbox"/> I am ready to handle the stages I found the most difficult again <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not looking forward to certain stages, but the good might outweigh the bad <input type="checkbox"/> I dread the thought of going through certain stages again	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Not that Important <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Somewhat Important <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Very Important	<input type="checkbox"/> Have another baby <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have any more babies <input type="checkbox"/> Pause the decision for now	



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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the factors at play pointing me toward?

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Am I able to accept that as my decision?

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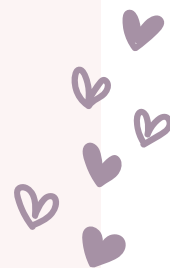
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Do I trust myself to make the right  
choice for me and my family?



Is my partner on  
the same page?



Am I ready to make a  
permanent choice either way?

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## LESSON 6: FINDING ACCEPTANCE IN YOUR CHOICE

Whatever decision you end up making, you can find acceptance and move forward. Remember that it is absolutely okay and valid to process and grieve on the journey to finding acceptance.

Accepting doesn't mean shutting down your emotions or being 100% sure you are making the "best" decision. Instead, it means acknowledging your feelings, even if they are mixed, and accepting the situation at hand, choosing to move forward within the existing reality.

### Signs that You Are Struggling to Find Acceptance:

- ✓ You might find yourself struggling to accept the decision, even after you have made a choice one way or another.
- ✓ For example, maybe you have decided that it makes the most logical sense to not have another baby, but you are struggling to let go of the idea.
- ✓ Or maybe you have decided to have another baby, but you are grieving the loss of your career or starting back over in the baby stage.
- ✓ It's normal to have a mix of feelings—in fact, it would be more concerning if you didn't have some reservations either way.
- ✓ But if there are signs that you have not come to terms with your decision—you might need to re-evaluate, or do some self-work to help yourself through it.

### Check in on yourself for these signs that you are struggling to find acceptance:

#### Thoughts

- "This isn't fair."
- "Things shouldn't be this way."
- "I can't believe this is happening."
- "What if my child ends up resenting me for this choice?"

#### Feelings or behaviors toward yourself

- Focusing on what you envisioned and not accepting where you are now.
- Feeling angry or on edge.
- Turning toward unhealthy coping mechanisms.

#### Feelings or behavior toward others

- Criticizing or arguing with your partner over the decision.
- Feeling resentful toward others and their family dynamic.
- Feeling the need to give unsolicited advice to others or "prove" your rightness.

# Processing Grief

It's okay to grieve the loss of your ideal family, even if you feel confident in your decision to have or not have another baby.

Work through this journal exercise to help acknowledge, accept, and process your grief:

## Step 1: Acknowledge the Loss

I'm grieving the third child I always imagined.

I'm sad I didn't get to have a daughter.

I'm worried about sacrificing my career for another few years.

Write down what you are grieving.

I'm grateful for the love and joy my two children bring me.

I appreciate the deeper connection I now have with my partner.

I am excited about the relationship I will have with another child.

## Step 2: Acknowledge What Is Still True

Now, reflect on what remains positive and fulfilling in your current family dynamic.

With every decision in life, there are sacrifices and gains. Sometimes thinking about both what we're letting go of and what we're gaining can help us reach a place of acceptance. **Answer these questions to help you move toward that place:**

## Step 3: Reflect on What You're Gaining and Letting Go Of

What are three things that make me happy about this decision or three things I am looking forward to from here?

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What are three things I am letting go of that I am glad I will avoid?

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# Setting Boundaries Around Your Decision

If you're facing external pressures (from family or friends), it can be helpful to have plan responses to set boundaries around your decision. Use these go-to scripts, or create your own using these as a starting point:

This is a deeply personal decision, and we've made the choice that's best for our family right now.

We aren't making any decisions about having more children right now, and we are happy with that.

We aren't interested in discussing our family situation any further.

We are happy with the choice we've made and are confident it's the best for our family.

Write your own:





## MOVING FORWARD

After you have worked through this guide, you will have the tools in your toolbox to make an empowered decision about whether or not to grow your family with confidence.

But it's important to remember that this decision is highly personal and emotional—it might be difficult to work through your feelings or find acceptance.

If you find that you need more support, working with a mom therapist can help. **Find out if we serve your area and book a FREE 15 minute consult at [momwell.com/booking](https://momwell.com/booking)**

### MOMWELL THERAPY SUPPORT



#### MOM SUPPORT

From conception to postpartum and beyond, our mom therapists can help you navigate the unique challenges of motherhood.



#### PARENTING SUPPORT

Learn how to break cycles, heal old wounds, and parent with confidence. Our team of qualified therapists offer personalized support for you and your family on your parenting journey.



#### PARTNER SUPPORT

From conception to postpartum and beyond, our mom therapists can help you navigate the unique challenges of motherhood.



#### RELATIONSHIP SUPPORT

Discover how to process the changes and strains in your relationship, open up the lines of communication, develop boundary-setting skills, and work through resentment.