



**TheAcorn
Centre**

Making decisions



*Charitable Incorporated
Organisation No: 1163154*

It is important to explore how any decision will affect us holistically. This leaflet will help you to do this

Options can seem fact-based, we need to bear in mind we are physical, mental and emotional. This leaflet will help you take each option and review how our decision with any one will affect us physically, mentally and emotionally. It will help if you have a pen and paper to work through this process.

Circumstances

Circumstances can make an unplanned pregnancy hard to face. That can be because we are afraid of what may happen. Sometimes it can be because we are afraid of losing things that are important to us, not just practical things like time and money, but things like freedom, peace of mind and relationships.

You may be afraid that you won't cope with having a baby, particularly if it means having a larger family to care for. Your partner or husband may feel unsure about the situation too. Perhaps you feel your marriage or relationship wouldn't take the strain of a new baby. Or you may feel you are too young or have no support. It is also hard not to be too concerned with what others may think.

All of these things can impact on our mind and cause us to be overwhelmed by thoughts, it can be hard to find the space to sit and think these things through. We can feel as if we want to run away from these problems but facing our fears can often help us find the way through them.

Write down

- ◆ What thoughts are in your mind?
- ◆ What are the circumstances?
- ◆ What are your fears?
- ◆ What emotions are there for you and your partner?

Emotions

In identifying the circumstances you will have found out how these are impacting on your mind. The next circle speaks about emotions. All decisions affect us in all three areas of our lives, what are your feelings (emotions) saying to you about keeping the baby and parenting?

By looking at all three areas you will be looking at the decision you make being based on how you as a whole person feels. If we do something we consider that is outside of our circle of values, it can cause various feelings. What do you think some of your feelings may be if you have crossed your own boundary lines?

What are my deeper feelings?

We can allow our instinctive feelings and the awareness of our personal values to surface or we can suppress them. We need to allow ourselves the space to consider ourselves as a whole person.

In other words you need to be totally honest with yourself how you feel about each option before making a final decision.

By now hopefully you will have a much greater understanding of how you feel about each option, you will have explored this from three angles, your circumstance, your mind, and the inner you.

Whether you feel it or not you do have choices about what to do. It is important you don't rush your decision, especially as at this time your hormones will be affecting you both physically and psychologically. Take time to discuss the feelings both you and your partner have about the options.

If you need further help, then please phone us at The Acorn Centre where we have trained counsellors who are available to meet with you and talk through any thoughts that are there.

Try and think positively about what could be done to improve your circumstances rather than accept the situation the way it is. This is important because if you make a decision based on the way things are now, consider how will you feel if your circumstances change?

Instinctive feelings

A sense of urgency can mean we do not take time to consider other important aspects of ourselves, such as our instinctive feelings and personal values.

Write down

What did I feel about each of these options before I found myself having to make decisions now?

- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Abortion

Ask yourself what your instinctive feelings are about each option. It might help if you can think what you felt about each of these options before you found yourself facing an unexpected pregnancy. Try and write down these thoughts.

Now think about your own personal values?

This is to do with what you believe is right and wrong – your personal values, for instance you may feel it is not acceptable to steal, whereas driving safely is a highly valued principle. Draw a circle to represent your circle of values.

Put a dot in the middle to represent you. Think about abortion, adoption and parenting separately, where are they in relation to your circle of feelings. Inside, outside, somewhere else?

Put a cross on the diagram where you feel they go.

(1) Keeping the baby and parenting

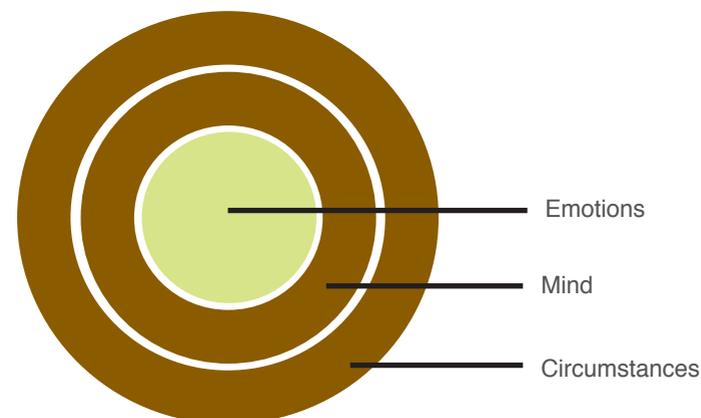
It can start to help if you can ask yourself, what needs to be in place for me to keep the baby and parent?

There is a diagram that you can use to explore all the options available to you but will also help you look at yourself mentally, physically and emotionally. The first circle is all about practical issues.

These can be called the circumstances.

What are the circumstances in you considering parenting?

What are the circumstances telling your mind, how does that impact on your emotions?

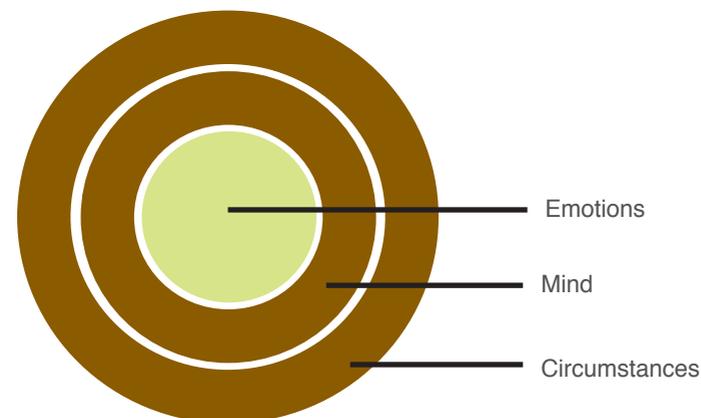


(2) Adoption

Again use the same diagram as before as you consider this option.

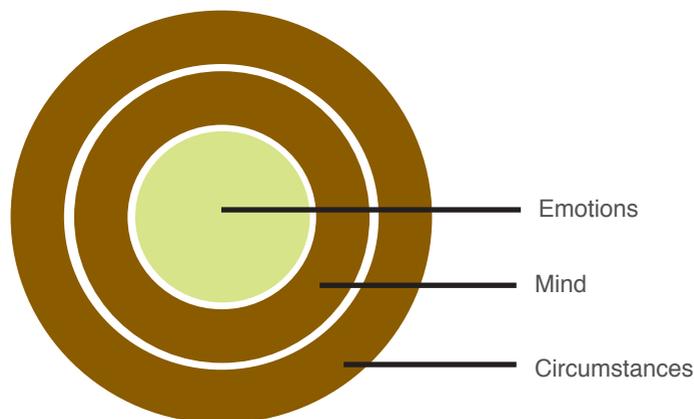
What are the circumstances in you considering adoption?

What are the circumstances telling your mind, how does that impact on your emotions?



(3) Abortion

As you consider this option use the diagram. When you consider the option of abortion, how do the circumstances affect your mind, and how does that in turn affect your emotions



Another way of looking at it is to consider when we have choices to make, first it is hard and that is often because we often gain something but also lose something as well.

With each of the options open to you, there are gains and losses involved. Some are large, some are small and some are unique to your situation.

It can help if you write a list of things you think you may lose with each option. These may include things like money, accommodation, time, freedom, and the baby itself but also other things that can affect us emotionally and mentally.

Write down

What will I lose if I choose:

- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Abortion

How important are these losses to you? Do this for each option.

Final steps

Now, again go through and ask yourself the question in the white box:

Write down

What will I gain if I choose

- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Abortion

How important are these gains to you?

Having done this 'check it out' check what you believe about the losses you face, is it really true you will lose some of the things you have considered.

We can feel as if we want to run away from these problems but facing our fears can often help us find the way through them.

It is really important to check whether you will really lose the things you think you will

lose. It is hard to know for sure. These things can be unpredictable. Circumstances change; people around you change their minds about how they feel.

The really important thing is that you feel whichever option you choose is the right one for you.

About the Acorn Centre

The Acorn Centre can give you space where you can think about how you are feeling and a supportive counsellor who can listen to your concerns.

You can feel secure in a confidential environment to talk about your baby loss, your emotions and what this means to you and your family.

Our services include:

- ◆ Pregnancy testing
- ◆ Counselling around the results of tests
- ◆ Infertility counselling
- ◆ Miscarriage counselling
- ◆ Still birth counselling
- ◆ Relationship work for couples affected by either baby loss or infertility
- ◆ Traumatic birth counselling
- ◆ Termination for foetal abnormality
- ◆ Pre and/or post abortion counselling
- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Family support and counselling following all of the above
- ◆ Access to contraception (where)
- ◆ Sexual Infections (where to access help)
- ◆ Post natal depression counselling
- ◆ Parenting skills (young parents)
- ◆ Counselling services for young people

Fees

While we are no longer able to offer our services free of charge, we still continue to try to make our services accessible to all. For people who are unemployed and wish to access our services, we will discuss and agree an affordable donation in advance. For those who are in paid employment, donations are asked for based on your hourly rate.

The Acorn Centre

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Website: www.acorncentrewarks.org.uk

Opening hours:

Monday 10am - 2pm

Wednesday 10am - 2pm

Friday 10am - 6pm (by appointment only)