

## **ABOUT THE HVCCT**

The HVCCT is one of the leading psychotherapy practices in the Hudson Valley region and adheres to the philosophy that the client's well-being is the top priority. Our therapists treat their clients with respect and warmth while also utilizing state-of-the-art methods. Our therapists accept the responsibility of providing quality care and aim to help their clients to address their problems with an effective, hopeful, and engaging approach.

Therapists at the HVCCT work with children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families. Some of their areas of specialization include the following:

- Depression and Mood Disorders
- Anxiety (Panic, OCD, Social Anxiety, Phobias, Worry)
- PTSD / Trauma / Abuse Issues
- Family Therapy and Marital / Relationship Issues
- Insomnia / Sleep Difficulties
- Academic / Learning Difficulties
- Child & Adult Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)
- Anger Management
- Impulse Control Difficulties (e.g., Hair Pulling)
- Grieving and Loss

## **PARENT TRAINING**

For parents with a child in therapy, parent training is offered to help reinforce the strategies their child is learning.

## **TESTING SERVICES**

Areas of assessment include intelligence, academic / learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, personality and emotional issues, and pre-surgical evaluations for gastric bypass/bariatric surgery candidates.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Hudson Valley Center for Cognitive Therapy**  
**Director: Dr. Christine Ziegler**  
**421 N. Highland Avenue, Upper Nyack, NY 10960**  
**(845) 353-3399, Fax: (845) 353-2272**  
**Email: [info@hvcct.com](mailto:info@hvcct.com), Web: [www.hvcct.com](http://www.hvcct.com)**

Hudson Valley Center for Cognitive Therapy  
421 North Highland Avenue  
Upper Nyack, NY 10960

10/07

# Coping with Infertility

## Counseling for Infertility and Reproductive Related Issues

 HUDSON VALLEY CENTER  
FOR COGNITIVE THERAPY

*Mood & Anxiety Disorders • Substance Abuse • Sexual / Relationship Issues*

If you and your partner have been trying to have a baby for a year or more, you are not alone. Approximately 6 million American couples have difficulty conceiving. Infertility is one of the most distressing life crises that a couple can experience. For most people, conception is thought of as a joyful, exciting time in a couples' life. Instead, life is filled with uncertainty, anxiety, sadness, and emotional turmoil.

### **COMMON REACTIONS TO INFERTILITY**

Some common reactions to infertility include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Grief
- Anger / Frustration
- Self-doubt
- Shame
- Guilt
- Blame
- Confusion
- Jealousy / Envy
- Feelings of isolation
- Feelings of defectiveness

### **COMMON EFFECTS ON RELATIONSHIPS**

Due to the inherently stressful nature of infertility, a couple's relationship can be compromised if concerns and reactions are not addressed. A partner may feel angry or even guilty about the cause of infertility, if it is known. Both may feel frustrated if the cause is unknown. There may also be disagreement about the various treatment options to pursue, which can cause conflict in the relationship. One partner may want to be very aggressive about treatment, and there may be different feelings about stopping treatment all together. Sexual dysfunction may also occur as sex becomes stressful and "goal oriented" toward the end of baby-making rather than pleasure and love making.

### **COMMON EFFECTS (CONTINUED)**

More and more infertility experts are recommending psychological consultation at some point during the process. Counseling can be geared towards an individual or the couple.

### **COUNSELING GOALS**

**Processing of Grief and Loss:** Counseling can help the individual/couple work through their feelings of grief, loss, anxiety, sadness, anger, and defectiveness. It is extremely difficult to make good decisions when the mind is clouded with these intense emotions.

**Facilitating Decision Making / Problem Solving:** Counseling can strengthen problem solving skills and facilitate decision making in regard to medical treatments and alternative family building options (e.g., adoption).

**Enhancing Communication:** Counseling can enhance communication and mutual support within the couple. Frustration in the relationship can occur when there are differences in coping styles (e.g., one partner is expressive and wishes to talk about feelings and reactions while the other tends to contain reactions in effort to shield his or her partner).

### **COMMON EFFECTS (CONTINUED)**

Over time, if these differences in coping styles are not recognized, partners can feel misunderstood and isolated from one another, at a time when each partner really needs the other.

**Managing Stress:** Recent findings indicate that stress can affect the way the brain orchestrates hormones responsible for reproduction. Therefore, stress management strategies are proving to be an effective method of coping with infertility

### **COMMON EFFECTS (CONTINUED)**

and, in addition, may play a positive role in improving conception rates. Techniques often include relaxation training and cognitive restructuring, a technique that helps people modify thinking patterns that contribute to negative moods and maladaptive behaviors.

### **WHEN TO CONSIDER COUNSELING**

Counseling should not be viewed as a last ditch effort, but rather as a way to better understand infertility and its effects. Counseling can help individuals and couples develop coping mechanisms and avoid common problems inherent in the process.

### **OTHER REPRODUCTIVE RELATED ISSUES**

Counseling can also be helpful to individuals and couples who have experienced a miscarriage or are considering alternative family building options such as adoption.

### **FREE PHONE CONSULTATION**

Dr. Christine Ziegler, Director of the HVCCT, is happy to discuss your specific concerns and explain how Cognitive Therapy may benefit you. Please call (845) 353-3399 x 12 to learn more about our services or to schedule an initial appointment with one of our therapists.

For more detailed information about our services and clinical staff, you can also visit the HVCCT website at:

<http://www.hvcct.com>