

## The Fertility Quilt

Several years ago I talked my best friend into taking a beginning quilting class with me. I finished all my squares but have yet to sew them together to make a quilt top but what I learned enabled me to get through the toughest time of my life. You see my husband and I have been trying to get pregnant for five years and for most of that time I have dwelled on our infertility. After our third medicated cycle attempt and still no pregnancy, I felt so alone and that I could not make the leap to IVF for various reasons, mostly fear. Month after month I waited for a miracle to happen and each month the disappointment seemed more than I could bear on my own.

I found a support group of women who were also facing infertility. These women are the most amazing group of talented, creative and loving souls who like me just want to experience the joys of being pregnant and having a baby. These women along with our very gifted leader gently prodded me along and made me realize through sharing their experiences that I had the strength to get through the process of IVF. I began to look at things differently and with my husband decided that IVF was the best option for us. I started to focus on my fertility not my infertility. Then I came up with the idea of making a fertility quilt. I designed the quilt on my computer and bought fabric at the quilt shop where I took classes so long ago.

It took me awhile to get up the courage to cut out the squares and start to piece my small quilt top together but once I started, I felt strong and hopeful. With each stitch, my courage began to grow. I got help from my best friend when I was struggling. After a few ups and down, I finally finished my quilt. Although it wasn't perfect, I couldn't wait to share it with my friends at group. I placed the quilt across my womb during the medicated phase of my first IVF cycle and during my transfer.

I would have liked to tell you that we were successful on our first try, but we were not. After many tears, I came to realized that going through IVF is a lot like making that quilt, it takes courage to start, there are anxious moments when you want to give up, you need the support and help of those close to you to get through it and there is disappointment if it doesn't turn out exactly as you wanted. Right now my fertility quilt is tucked away but I will bring it out when I am ready to try again.



*Update: I wrote this over two years ago and after three more unsuccessful IVF cycles, we are expecting our little miracle mid April 2007. This was our last attempt, it was a successful Frozen Embryo Transfer and yes, my quilt accompanied me every time.*

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