

Introduction

In the last lesson, you took some time to think about the dreams you have for yourself and your baby, your unique story of how you got to be where you are now, and the things you value. In this lesson you can use those tools and some new tools to consider the specific decision you are facing about your pregnancy.

Dreams and Values

Your story, dreams and values may not seem relevant to a pregnancy decision, but they really are! By thinking through them for yourself you can make sure that you are learning from your past, working toward the future you want, and living in line with your own values.

Decision Basics

When it comes to making any kind of decision, there are four ways to make it.

1. The first way is impulsively.

Someone who tends to make impulsive decisions gets stressed by all the options and just picks one at random.

2. The second way to make decisions is reluctantly.

This is the opposite of impulsive decision-making. The reluctant decision-maker puts off choices because picking is difficult and stressful.

3. The third way of making decisions is by trying to please other people.

Decision-making by pleasing happens when someone decides based on what they guess someone else would want them to do.

4. The last and best way to make decisions is by being thorough.

A thorough decision happens when someone thinks through most or all of the reasons an option may be good or bad and then picks. Sometimes, when there are multiple good options, a thorough decision-maker may just get to choose. Other times, there is a clear best choice. Hopefully, by thinking through the options and knowing if something is mostly good or mostly bad, the decision-maker has less stress about the decision. Thorough decisions are made by thinking, not just by feeling.

We are finally to the big decision facing you: parenting or adoption.

Parenting Option

Parenting can take a lot of forms, but, most likely if you parent, you and maybe your partner will have the main responsibility for your child. One big “pro” to parenting is that you can grow to have a deep relationship with your child. Another great thing about parenting is the happy memories you can make with them.

Finally, many parents say that even though it is hard, having a child is very rewarding.

Decisions almost always have some “cons,” or things that would be hard. For parenting, a big con would be the responsibility. Another thing to think about is that being a parent can be logistically difficult. Finally, having a child will require sacrifice, and sometimes that means waiting or slowing down certain educational or career goals

Adoption Option

Nowadays, adoption looks different than it used to. Many people assume adoption is like foster care, but it couldn't be more different! If a mom chooses to place her baby for adoption, she usually works with an adoption agency. The agency will have a list of families hoping to adopt a baby. Plus, in nearly all infant adoptions, the birth mom gets to work out times with the adoptive family that she can visit the child as they grow up. This is called open adoption.

The first benefit to adoption is that you can know the child is in a loving, stable family. Second, adoption can be a good thing because you can continue to have a relationship with the child. One more pro of choosing adoption for this baby is that you can focus more on your own needs and goals for now.

Of course, adoption isn't all pros. The first is that you will not have daily connection with the child. Another difficulty is that you will likely experience grief over your child becoming someone else's child. One other con of adoption is that you may feel lonely for some time after. These things don't mean adoption can't be the right decision for you, it just means it won't be an easy decision.

Conclusion

Now that you have considered the pros and cons of both of your options in light of your dreams and values, you may have a clearer picture of where you want to go with this decision. If so, that is great! Still, take the time to keep asking yourself, “Does this decision bring me closer to my dreams, and does it line up with my values?”

It is also possible you are still unsure about your our decision right now. That is ok! These lessons are here to help you make a decision thoroughly, and that usually takes real time and thought. We know that you can make the decision that is right for you.