

# NICU Parent Support Audio Cast



Audio Messages of Information, Encouragement & Support for NICU Parents

With Your Host: Dr. Kirsti A. Dyer

## Episode 2 - Dreaming New Dreams after Picking up the Pieces of Broken Dreams

[Brief Music Interlude - 16 seconds. A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes.]

### Welcome

Welcome. You have accessed the NICU Parent Support Audio & Podcast Channel. This is a series of audio messages of encouragement and support for parents and families who have babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or Intensive Care Nursery.

I am your host for this series of audio messages. My name is Dr. Kirsti Dyer.

I am a physician, professional health educator, professor, teacher, grief, loss & bereavement expert and author. I also happened to be a former NICU Parent.

### Introduction

Today's episode looks at the topics of Broken Dreams, Picking up the Pieces of Old Dreams and beginning to Dream New Dreams.

So let's get started.

[Brief Music Interlude - 14.5 seconds. A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes.]

### Broken Dreams

Many NICU Parents experience broken dreams as part of the birth of their baby. NICU parents have to quickly adjust their dreams of taking home a healthy happy newborn shortly after delivery; this dream is not going to happen. Suddenly, and often without warning, NICU parents are faced with a major change in their plans and dreams and hopes.

I found some quotes by several other former NICU parents that may help to explain adjusting to the broken dreams. MOD Family Support Specialist, Melissa offers these words of insight into being a NICU Parent on the March of Dimes, Share Your Story Website:

This was not what you were expecting.  
You had dreams of this precious child being born and going home.  
Storybook fantasies of being a mom...filled your dreams at night.

This is the way you believed things would be...  
Not spending your baby's first days in an intensive care unit.

Suzanne Kamata shares her thoughts in a story, "You're So Lucky." She writes:

You had been planning on starting a program of Mozart and poetry in the seventh month, had already picked out a layette in the Land's End catalogue. You had just started wearing maternity clothes and ordered a gray cotton dress which hadn't even arrived yet. You had an appointment the next week with a doula recommended by your hippee friend who lives in the mountains.

But nothing goes as planned, of course. You must give up all your birth dreams.

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[Brief Music Interlude - 14.5 seconds. A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes.]

## Picking Up the Pieces and Dreaming New Dreams

Former NICU parent, colleague and Professor Michael Hynan reminds us that

Giving up lost dreams and accepting what we do have is simply necessary if we're going to resume living our lives as a family with any joy.

Coping with the NICU experience for parents involves giving up on the old initial birth dreams not spending a lifetime mourning what might have been. With a bit of time, most NICU parents adjust to having a newborn in the Intensive Care Unit. Slowly they start picking up the pieces of their shattered initial dreams and little by little being living a life that has been forever changed by the experience.

## Dreaming New Dreams

For NICU Parents our initial dreams are frequently changed and may even be postponed. Early dreams of going home with a precious baby change into ones of having a healthy, happy, peaceful baby at home—at some point, sometime, in the future.

Many NICU Parents discover an internal core of strength during their time in the NICU. They find a way to make sense of or find personal meaning in the life changing event. One of the things to remember about our dreams as parents is that

Sometimes we have to step back and let go of the old dreams in order to begin dreaming the new ones.

[Brief Music Interlude - 25.5 seconds. A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes.]

## Thank You

Thank you for listening to the information in this episode from the NICU Parent Support Audio & Podcast channel our series of audio messages of encouragement and support for NICU Parents.

## Please Visit the NICU Parent Support Site and Blog

I would like to invite you to visit the NICU Parent Support site at [NICUParentSupport.org](http://NICUParentSupport.org) and the NICU Parent Support Blog at [nicuparentsupport.blogspot.com](http://nicuparentsupport.blogspot.com). Some of the information for these audio episodes has been taken from articles and blog entries on these sites.

I hope that you will find this series of audio messages to be informative, encouraging, comforting and supportive to you during your time in the NICU.

Until the next time, I wish you strength for getting through your NICU experience.

[Brief Music Interlude - 25.5 seconds. A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes.]

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## Resources Use for this Podcast:

Suzanne Kamata's story "You're So Lucky" appears in the new anthology, *Not What I Expected: The Unpredictable Road from Womanhood to Motherhood*. Available on Amazon.com  
MOD Family Support Specialist, Melissa's quote appeared on the March of Dimes, Share Your Story Website in May 2007, Baby in the NICU. <http://www.shareyourstory.org/webx?14@@.ef3b2e2/5>

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**Music Source:** A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes. Mack David, Al Hoffman and Jerry Livingston, 1950. Cinderella. Hummed by Dr. Dyer.



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