



Joyce Bautista, Managing Editor

the pursuit of pregnancy: the beginning

If 36-year-old me could sit down for a drink with 21-year-old me, I'd tell the younger me to get thee knocked up ... *now*. I know, I know. Even women over 70 are still having kids.

"I spent my 20s having fun (while trying to not get pregnant) and looking for the one and, lucky me, I found him--albeit 12 years later."

But as I begin my quest for my first pregnancy and am faced with polycystic ovaries here and a mysterious cyst there, the fear of regret begins to creep up on me.Â

I spent my 20s having fun (while trying to not get pregnant) and looking for *the one* and, lucky me, I found him--albeit 12 years later. Should I

have worked less and gone out more? Should I have allowed that first boss to match me with every eligible Jewish man she knew? I wanted finding a partner to be natural and organic, the way love should be, right?Â

Besides, I wasn't going to let not having a man stop me from what I wanted in life. When I started shelling out mucho dinero for my first wave of friends getting married, I decided to stop the woe-is-me act and register for my birthday (presents were optional, of course, but if you were going to get me something, then at least get me something I wanted). When I turned 30, I wanted to be a homeowner, and didn't want to wait to be half of a dual-income household, so with some help from the 'rents, I bought a junior one-bedroom that was all my own.Â

As I got older, I learned that we make our own luck. I got what I wanted (most of the time) because I worked hard to make it happen. Just like love (I met Michael on match.com), this baby isn't going to be a result of wishful thinking. Instead, I'm going to *do* everything I can, go to every doctor, eat every weird Chinese herb, read every how-to-adopt book until we get a little one of our own. Wish me luck!



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the pursuit of pregnancy: more than a woman

I was watching *America's Best Dance Crew* last night on MTV, and there's an amazing group that vogues (the real thing, according to the blogs--not that slick Madonna-ified version). Their frontwoman is transgendered--she was born a man, but opted to become a woman so that her outside appearance would match how she felt inside.

By all accounts, I appear to be your run-of-the-mill female. However, now that I'm trying to conceive, I've begun to feel like less of one. Until recently (with the help of a prometrium boost), I had gone a year without getting my period. Also, some blood work revealed that I had *way* too much testosterone. Should I just be thankful that all I have is a hairy chin and not a set of testes? Was my lady junk, indeed, junkie?

A woman's ability to conceive is obviously not the gold standard that any female (born or created) should hold herself to, and having a child is not the be-all-end-all of womanhood. But being a mother is how I want to express myself and be identified (at least in part).

My first-ever sonogram a month ago revealed to me that my ovaries had released an egg, and I cried from pure joy at the possibility of becoming a mother and becoming the version of "me" that I want to be at this stage in my life. That egg didn't take, and on a recent off day, I cried because I felt broken and freakish when friends all around me were getting knocked up by accident. I told my fiance Michael this, and he just put his arms around me and said, "I love you, and we'll love our baby no matter what." At that moment, I had never felt more accepted for who I am, or more complete as a woman.



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the pursuit of pregnancy: you're the best thing

In an effort to boost our ability for sperm and egg to meet and go from point A to point B, I put Michael and myself on a diet, one not unlike any normal, healthy thirtysomething should be on: fewer carbs and less red meat; more fish, leafy greens, and antioxidant-rich foods. We also figured it's good practice for us to be role models for the child we're trying to have.

"In general, we are terrible people with deplorable habits, questionable tastes, and the vocabularies of pubescent girls. Are we even worthy of having a child?"

Then, I got to thinking: late-night snacking on blocks of cheese and a weakness for [Manwiches](#) weren't all we had to reassess. The F-bomb (in both expletive and gastrointestinal forms) is like a barrage of machine-gun fire at our house, and snarky remarks aren't limited to the ones we make while watching VH1's *Rock of Love* or *America's Next Top Model*. In general, we are terrible people with deplorable habits,

questionable tastes, and the vocabularies of pubescent girls. Are we ready or even worthy of having a child? I like to think that Michael brings out a better version of me: more patient, more kind, and more forgiving. I'm hoping that the child we're working on having, and the anticipation of his or her arrival, will bring out the best version of us--whatever that might be.

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