

# **Rocks, Pebbles, Sand...**

By [Kaeleigh MacDonald, www.unpregnantchicken.com](http://KaeleighMacDonald.com) 30 March, 2017

So there's this story that has been circulating the internet like, forever... But the analogy is awesome and relates to what I want to say today, so bear with me as I retell it:

A teacher walks into a classroom and sets a glass jar on the table.

He silently places 2-inch rocks in the jar until no more can fit. Then he asks the class if the jar is full and they agree it is. He says, "Really?" and pulls out a pile of small pebbles, adding them to the jar, shaking it slightly until they fill all the spaces between the rocks. He asks again, "Is the jar full?" They agree that now it surely is. So next, he adds a scoop of sand to the jar, filling the spaces between the pebbles and then asks the question again. This time, the class is divided, some feeling that the jar is obviously full, but others are wary of another trick. He grabs a pitcher of water and fills the jar to the brim.

Then he looks out at the class making eye contact with everyone,

"The rocks represent the BIG things in your life – what you will value at the end of your life – your family, your partner, your health, fulfilling your hopes and dreams. The pebbles are the other things in your life that give it meaning, like your job, your house, your hobbies, your friendships. The sand and water represent the 'small stuff' that fills our time, like watching TV or running errands."

Looking out at the class again, he says, "If you put sand into the jar first, there is no room for the rocks or the pebbles. The same idea can be applied to your lives. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are truly important. Your life will be busy but it will not be full. Spend your time on the rocks and you will be happy."

You've heard it before right?

I want you to think about how much time you have in your life to do all of the little things that can bog you down. Running errands, fighting with your spouse, stressing the small minutiae. Especially when dealing with infertility. Things like negative feelings towards fertility, arguing with drug companies, Googling symptoms, negative self-talk...I know I've wasted DAYS of my life doing these things.

But they are the sand. They do not add to your life.

Things like friendships, and fun trips with your spouse (even just to the grocery store!), kindnesses done to others, kicking ass at your job... Use those things, the pebbles, to replace some of the negative sand you've been spending time on. It will help to balance you. But overall, the most important parts, your rocks, are what will give you meaning even through this trying time while you battle infertility.

Rocks are what you need to try to refocus on.

Things like your relationship with your family- I know, you're trying to build one, that's the problem! But there is a whole world out there of people in your extended family that add depth to your life. Don't forget them. Allow your connection with these people to deepen and bring meaning to your life in ways you hadn't before. Don't have any family? Estranged? Create your own. Find your tribe and let them enrich your life.

Your mental and physical health- this journey is beyond taxing, take some time to respect your body for what it does for you. For waking up able to breathe each day. Find your jam- be it meditation, lifting weights, running, colouring, crochet, whatever! Allow some time for some self-love and self-care. MAKE it a priority, even on bad days. It is a ROCK, do not let the sand fill its space.

Develop a passion- Find something that makes your soul sing! Maybe it's art, long walks, collecting bottle caps. Yours will be unique unto you. But find something that fills you with the gratitude of being alive. So that on the days where you want to curl up and die and be done with this infertile fight (Yes, I've been there) you can refocus instead on this rock. Look up from the quagmire of self-doubt and pain, this sand, and remind yourself that you have drive and are fulfilled in many ways.

See, I told you the story was important! We all have 24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week, 52 weeks in a year... Fill your moments with the things that matter, the rocks, first. You'll find there's always more than enough time for sand later. And if not, all the better.