

# in my 30s...

“I thought losing my husband meant I had to start over but I’m looking forward to growing the family we began”



**L**UCY TRUSS, 38, lives with her three-year-old son, Harrison, and works as a college librarian. Lucy’s husband, Anthony, died last February, after a seven-year battle with leukaemia. She is due to start IVF next month to add to their family.

When Anthony and I got married ten years ago, we had plans to travel, buy a house and have two children; our dreams were limitless. Even when we received his diagnosis, we thought it was just a blip. We had a baby through IVF, and would talk about having our second when Anthony was better.

He was always so positive, telling me, “I’ll be better soon,” so when on New Year’s Eve, he was given weeks to live, I thought, “This can’t be happening.” He said, “I feel like I’ve let you down – I’ll try my best to give you another five years,” but five weeks later, he passed away in a hospice.

The following few months were a blur. I returned to work a week after the funeral because I thought, “I’ve got a mortgage to pay and a child to provide for.” Although I was surrounded by friends and family, I felt numb and confused. When you’re married, everything becomes “we”. Overnight I’d lost part of my identity.

We’d banked some sperm when Anthony was first diagnosed and when the doctor asked what we wanted to do with it if he died, Anthony had told me, “You keep it and if you want to have more children, you can.” Now on my own, I thought dreams of a family of two were over. But after a few months, I started thinking that Harrison’s got a good life, even without a father – why wouldn’t it be the same if I had another?

When I discussed it with my mother-in-law, she said, “Anthony would love that.” But my own mother asked, “How would you cope with a newborn on your own?” and “What if you met another man?” Of course, I’d asked myself the same questions, but I also thought, “What if I regret not doing it?” And when, after several tests, my doctor said, “Right, when would you like to do it?” I had a real feeling of release because it was the first time I realised

I’m still young and I still have options.

I start the IVF next month and although I have to manage my expectations, it’s given me a positive focus. I’ve joined WAY, a support group for younger widows and widowers, and I’m meeting new people who don’t just know me as Anthony’s wife, but as an independent woman.

I still miss Anthony every day and I’d be lying if I said life was easy, but I look forward to the future now, albeit not the one I expected. Anthony may not be here, but the chance of creating a new life is a legacy he’s left us and I’m determined to make it happen. [widowedandyoung.org.uk](http://widowedandyoung.org.uk)



“I’ve learned to think about what’s possible at my stage, not what’s impossible”

**T**RICIA CUSDEN, 67, is divorced and lives in London. She has two grown-up daughters and four grandchildren, aged three to six. She launched an online beauty business, *Look Fabulous Forever*, in October 2013.

My youngest grandchild, India, now three, was born with a severe chromosomal disorder and had to spend months in hospital. I was self-employed, working as a freelance management consultant, running training courses for large companies, but for the next nine months, everything went on hold and my daughter Suzy and I took it in turns to be at the hospital. When India finally came home, Suzy hired a special needs nanny for her, but I knew I couldn’t go back to my old job.

The whole experience brought home how precious life is. I had been keen to find a new challenge for a while and my