

## Have More Children, NOW!

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I had my annual physical a couple days ago with a new doctor. She said I was healthy, but that's not all. She asked me about my plans for more children (I already have a one and a half year old). "Are you going to have more kids? Are you trying now? When are you going to try again?" she wanted to know.

And I answered her questions because she is after all a doctor (though she's an internist, not my OB-GYN). But since she already knows certain things about me that no one else does, what would be the big deal about sharing something else so personal? So I basically I told her we would try again, but not just yet.

She did not like my answer. "Why not now? You shouldn't wait. You don't know what could happen. And, if you space your kids too far apart it's so much harder to get back into caring for a newborn." "Well, we have our reasons," I defended.

She came back more adamantly, "There's always a reason, always an excuse. It's never going to be the perfect time."

Seriously? Was this doctor who I'd only met once questioning my husband's and my fertility decisions? What would cause her to be so adamant? On the spot, I turned the conversation on her. "You seem so sure of all this. Do you know from experience?"

"My kids are three and a half years apart," she said, "I'm an older mother and it was so hard to get back into the baby thing for the second one. I shouldn't have waited so long."

And there it was. Her attitude was based on her own insecurities, not what's best for me. And isn't that usually what's going on when someone is 100% certain of what is right?

Just the other night I went to a charity event with my husband and



we sat next to a middle age woman who was adamant about how to discipline a toddler. Her certainty was surprising and misplaced in the calm, casual conversation we had been having. When my husband asked her about her own children, she revealed the reason for her extreme attitude: her college age daughter had a drug problem and this woman blames the drug use on the way that she spoiled her daughter throughout her childhood. I felt bad for this woman, but at least now I could put her advice in context: her extremism was an over-reaction to her own mistakes.

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If someone has the audacity to give you unsolicited strong advice, rather than being offended, exercise your right to ask some questions that might help put their opinions in context. Understanding where a person is coming from can turn your initial feelings of anger into compassion.

***When was the last time you encountered someone with a strong unsolicited opinion? Why do you think they were adamant? How did you handle it?***