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*A good start:*

- *Pregnancy, finite time, structured time, timelessness.*
- *The first year, from water to air, between dependence and separation, towards growth and life parents of premature babies.*
- *A difficult start: post-natal depression.*
- *A paradoxical pain: spontaneous abortion.*
- *The emotional implications of sterility.*

**Presentation**

There are many books that deal with pregnancy and maternity, and a large number of magazines and articles on paediatric nursing that deal with these subjects from different points of view. This volume is not a manual and is not intended to explain to future parents what to do and what to avoid. My desire is rather to look at the most significant and problematic aspects of this delicate phase of a woman's life and that of a couple in simple, direct language in which the reader can easily recognise himself.

Reviewing several experiences of clinical work, we offer our reflection on the personal experiences of women and couples and the difficulties which can be met when the desire for a child encounters disappointment. My objective is to offer a key to understand the deep significance and complexity of the path to follow to become parents and face the fears linked to the difficulty of procreation, using the tools of observation and psychoanalytic listening.

How are the problems of sterility or spontaneous abortion experienced? What are the consequences on a psychological and emotional level for parents and inside the relationship with the child who is born after these painful experiences? Children are born prematurely quite frequently and this is an event that can be a moment of intense suffering for parents, as can happen when, after giving birth, a woman experiences a state of depression that conflicts with her joy of having brought into the world a wanted child. Even if the traces of suffering cannot be cancelled, a painful experience can be faced and overcome if the person who has experienced it is helped to understand and work on it, with therapeutic help even of short duration.

The first chapters of the book introduce the subjects of pregnancy and the first year of life of the child; in subsequent chapters the authors deepen some problematic issues, describing ways of intervening with the important preventive aim of avoiding that the suffering of the parents can compromise the emotional development of the child. This study is intended above all for parents, but naturally also for psychologists, doctors, gynaecologists, obstetricians and paediatricians, who can consider the complexity of these experiences from a new point of view.