

This Royal Is Breaking Convention and Getting Real About Miscarriage

It's a very important royal first



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Zara Tindall (Photo: Getty)

If you didn't know who Zara Tindall was before this May's royal wedding, you certainly did after [her gloriously WTF facial expression](#) during the sermon launched a thousand GIFs. (ICYMI: Her jaw *literally* dropping during Bishop Curry's references to fire in a marriage.)

Zara, who is Queen Elizabeth's granddaughter—her mom is Princess Anne—was eight months pregnant at the time. She and her husband, rugby player Mike Tindall, have since welcomed their second child: a daughter named Lena. Of course, babies have been a long-standing pillar of the royal PR machine. The public loves them (because we're not monsters), and the arrival of a new prince or princess is the ultimate good news story. But what happens when the fairytale ends in heartbreak?

The Tindalls experienced this first-hand in 2016 when Zara suffered a miscarriage weeks after the couple had publicly announced that they were expecting.

In a recent interview with Britain's [The Sunday Times](#), Zara revealed that the 2016 loss was not her only miscarriage. In doing so, she broke a long standing royal silence on a subject that is sadly, fairly common. In fact, an estimated [15 to 20%](#) of pregnancies result in a miscarriage, according to the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

Zara told *The Times* that “loads of people” reached out to her and her husband, sharing similar experiences.

“For me, the worst bit was that we had to tell everyone, everyone knew,” the 37-year-old told the *The Times*, referring to the fact that because she's a member of the royal family, her pregnancy announcement had made worldwide news.

Following her highly-publicized loss, the Olympic-level equestrian had another miscarriage “early on” in a subsequent pregnancy.

In her interview with *The Times*, Zara spoke briefly yet pointedly about the emotional toll of her miscarriages.

“You need to go through a period where you don't talk about it because it's too raw but, as with everything, time's a great healer,” Zara said in the joint interview with her brother, Peter. “It was a time when my family came to the fore and I needed them.”

Zara isn't the first famous person to open up about experiencing a miscarriage—[Beyoncé](#), [Gabrielle Union](#) and [Gwyneth Paltrow](#) are among those who have spoken publicly about their losses—but she is the first member of the royal family to address the subject in such a personal way. This disclosure is important because miscarriage, which is [defined](#) as the loss of a fetus before 20 weeks, remains [misunderstood and stigmatized](#). For instance, in a study conducted by New York's [Montefiore Medical Center and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine](#), 47% of the women who participated felt guilty for experiencing a miscarriage and 40% believed they had done something to cause it. (A reminder, most miscarriages are [simply chance events](#).)

Zara's candour is also another marker in a (refreshing!) sea change in the royal family. Famous for basically inventing the Stiff Upper Lip school of dealing with tough stuff—which is to say, not talking about it—the House of Windsor is gradually pivoting to ‘We're Human Too’ Realness. In recent years, [Harry](#) and [William](#) have opened up about their personal struggles after the sudden loss of their mother, Diana. Together, Harry, Will and Kate furthered this conversation by spearheading a campaign call [Heads Together](#), which encourages people to be OK with saying they're *not* OK, in an attempt to reduce the stigma of seeking help for mental health issues. Kate Middleton has also talked about how “[parenting is tough](#),” which, albeit a one-liner, is more commentary on the reality of motherhood than the Queen has ever made.

And that's why this interview with Zara matters so much. Sharing her story of pregnancy loss normalizes talking openly about something that, unfortunately, happens to many expectant mothers—even royal ones.