

# The Emotional Lifecycle of a Onesie

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Before a baby arrives, we build a picture of them in our imagination, evocative and alluring, captivating us whenever we have a moment for reflection. There's nothing more suggestive of the mysterious newborn to be than their tiny [baby clothes](#). The adorable patterns, simple and luxurious textures, even their glorious smells wrap us up in the deliciousness of our baby and the promise of the future. As new moms, we ride an emotional wave during the child's first year, and the lifecycle of their clothing captures all of it in a nutshell.

Rarely do we consider the feelings that are evoked by newborn baby clothes. Intense expectation, haunting nostalgia, a million shades of wonderful coupled with a tinge of sadness. All of it is part of the first year. Here are the 7 phases in the emotional lifecycle of a onesie.

**1. Anticipation.** Even the most superstitious family is likely to buy a few key pieces of clothing before a baby is born. Onesies, pajamas and gowns, and [blankets](#). All of them purchased when the baby is but a dream, possibly before we know the gender, and before there's even a name. We could stare at those garments for hours, trying to envision the squirming bundle that will inhabit them shortly.

**2. Celebration.** Once the baby is born you will receive lots of clothing, all sizes, all seasons, every style, many of it not your style. I recall a particular crushed velvet jacket that I simply couldn't touch too many times because I was enraptured. I loved everything about it, from its smell to the depth of color. My son wore it twice, as spit up and velvet didn't really go together that well. But it sent me on a reverie I remember to this day. You'll also get plenty of items that won't be quite right and that will eventually lead you to feelings of....

**3. Frustration.** You'll spend a lot of time managing clothing returns, figuring out what she's outgrown and what has a week or two of wear left. If you line up everything by size in the closet as I did, your child will outgrow half of the wardrobe by mid-year. The season won't align with his sizes, some items seem forever too big, and a few will be worn for a week or two. You'll be in and out of stores, trying to remember how much money you have left in credit at this or that place. It will all be a blur.

**4. Mastery.** As you make your way through the [clothing gifts](#), and get to know whether your child is big or small for their age, how certain brands size their clothing, you'll become an expert on what will work. You'll love the things YOU buy.

**5. Nostalgia.** Around this time you'll start to retire lots of clothing, storing items away for future siblings. It's not always easy to give up these old friends. Memories haunt them. She wore this dress to meet Aunt Clara, that gown when he was in the hospital, this onesie the first time he had a fever. As the seasons change, you say goodbye to what are now favorites. You wonder when you'll see them again.

**6. Recycling.** With each pregnancy, mothers revisit the magic of the layette. I've had three sons, spaced roughly 18 months apart, so I've been in and out of the baby boxes many times and I've shared those special pieces with my sister who also has a boy.

**7. Rekindling.** Just recently, we were cleaning the basement and happened upon a forgotten stash of newborn clothes. Our boys are now 16, 14, 13 and 11 and many many onesies were collected along the way. What intense joy and sadness upon reacquaintance with their clothing. How could my son, now 6 ft. 3, have inhabited those baby shoes? Where did all the time go? Our boys will too quickly become men, as our memories scramble to get themselves in order. Hold on to some of those beloved items, the ones that take you back to the early days of motherhood, with all of its powerful associations, the ones you want etched in your mind forever.

Image [source](#).