

# **CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND**

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## **How to Talk to a Friend Who Has Had an Abortion**

Recently when a friend discovered that I am involved in the pro-life movement she confided in me that she had an abortion many years ago, and I could tell she still was hurting from the experience. If someone confided in you that she had had an abortion (or a man shared that he had pressured his significant other into having an abortion), would you be able to respond in a way that brings the person closer to healing? Would you know where to direct the person to get more help? How do we as pro-life people respond to such an “opportunity” to provide healing and support?

We all want to say something that will help heal the brokenness and lead to a resolution of the pain. It takes great courage, especially if the person knows you are “pro-life,” to share a previous abortion; perhaps the person is afraid you will be critical or will repeat to others what she tells you. Most important is for her to see you as a true friend who cares about her, that you are not sitting in judgment of her, and that you will hold her information as confidential.

In your response focus on “What is her greatest need right now?” Does she just need someone to listen, a shoulder to cry on? Would a referral to a professional counselor, perhaps a priest or minister, be the best response? Is there a need for immediate crisis intervention? (Along with the number for the “Pregnant? Need help?” 1-800-713-HELP (4357), consider having a number for a suicide prevention or crisis line - 1-800-273-TALK (8255).)

Begin by listening to your friend. Let her tell her story without interrupting her. You don’t have to understand every detail. It is important that she let go of some of the burden she has been carrying and that she no longer feels alone.

Among the things she may mention might be the experience of what happened at the clinic. She may express rage and anger—at the boyfriend, her parents, the clinic personnel, God, herself, and feelings of guilt,

regret, unbearable grief, depression, nightmares, perhaps using alcohol or drugs to try to forget, and even suicidal thoughts. She may share that she became alienated from her boyfriend, family and friends, and that she no longer feels she deserves to be loved or forgiven.

Much as you would like to take all her suffering away, her grief and loss will not disappear after one conversation. Assure her of your friendship. Tell her you will be there for her and help her find healing. Assure her again of your friendship. Promise to be there, not only today, but also in the future. Thank her for having the trust to talk with you; that took courage. Her healing journey has begun.

After hearing her story, consider referring her to one of or more of the resources available for those struggling after an abortion. (Several of these resources are listed at the end of this article.)

On a related note - perhaps your friend has not actually shared her abortion experience; however, you realize your friend is struggling with sadness and emotional turmoil and you suspect that abortion might be the cause. How could you offer help without being obvious about your suspicion?

Perhaps at an appropriate time and place, you might comment, “I found an interesting website that gave me a new outlook on abortion. I never realized the pressures women face in making that decision or how, often afterwards they suffer, grieve and feel alone.” Maybe you leave a pamphlet or other information where she will see it, perhaps on your coffee table if she comes to visit.

If your church has a pamphlet rack, consider offering a post-abortion pamphlet. Contact our office or one of the resources listed on the next page, and we will try to help you obtain materials to assist you in any way we can to help heal the wounds of abortion.

## Post-Abortion Healing Resources

**Rachel's Vineyard** Rachel's Vineyard weekends for healing after abortion are offered throughout the year. Rachel's Vineyard offers an opportunity to examine your abortion experience, identify the ways that the loss has impacted you in the past and present, and help to acknowledge any unresolved feelings that many individuals struggle with after abortion. For further info, visit: <http://rachelsvineyard.org/> or call: 877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463)

**Project Rachel** Project Rachel is a sensitive, private and confidential outreach to any family member touched by an abortion. In a safe and positive environment, those who have been involved in an abortion can explore the grief, guilt and sadness that they may be carrying. Through the process, participants work toward reconciliation with self, child, family, Church, and God. For further info, visit: [www.hopeafterabortion.com](http://www.hopeafterabortion.com) or call 888-456-HOPE (4673)

**National Helpline for Abortion Recovery** 24/7 confidential care helpline for women, men and families struggling after abortion. Calls are answered by trained phone consultants who have themselves experienced abortion and want to help others find healing. They can help you find the support group near you. 866-482-LIFE (866-482-5433)

**OptionLine** – Remember the box we include in every newsletter for the “Pregnant? Need Help?” If someone has made the “poor choice,” the same phone number is still a wonderful resource; there is also a post-abortion ministry on the same website and phone number, providing emotional support after abortion. To contact OptionLine visit their website <http://optionline.org/after-abortion-support/> or text HELPLINE to 313131 and send a message, or call 1-800-712-4357.

*There are also several support groups available for Former Abortion Providers*

Through the **Society of Centurions of America** founded by Dr. Philip Ney, abortion providers are offered ongoing support. Director, Joan Appleton, RN, a former abortion facility nurse, may be reached at 651-771-1500 (Pro-Life Action Ministries) or by mail at P.O. Box 75368, St. Paul, MN 55175.

**And Then There Were None** (ATTWN) founded by Abby Johnson, the mission of And Then There Were None is to help abortion clinic workers leave the abortion industry. For further information visit: <http://abortionworker.com/> or call 888-570-5501

## “The Embryo has a Remarkable Ability to Correct Itself”

A study published in the Nature journal and directed by Professor Magdalena Zernicka-Goetz shows that “the presence of abnormal cells in premature embryos does not necessarily indicate a deficiency in the unborn baby.” This research has been carried out in mice; it remains to be seen whether the same mechanisms exist in humans.

Professor Magdalena Zernicka-Goetz decided to carry out this research when doctors told her that “a quarter of the cells in the embryo she was carrying presented with abnormalities.” Following IVF, abnormal cells are detected “in 80 to 90% of premature human embryos,” but to date, “little is known about the fate of these abnormal cells during embryo development.” Professor Zernicka-Goetz “eventually gave birth to a perfectly healthy baby son.”

Following her study, the Professor confirmed that “embryos have a remarkable ability to correct themselves.” The abnormal cells are “eliminated and replaced by healthy cells.” Thus, “this would mean that even if the first indications suggest that the child could have a genetic deficiency because of the large number (...) of abnormal cells in the embryo, this is not necessarily the case.”

**Do you know someone who might  
be considering abortion?**

**Make sure they get the facts first!  
A LIFE depends on it...**

**1-800-712-HELP (4357)**

**Website: <http://www.optionline.org/>**

# From Pope Francis' "On Love, In The Family"

*On Friday April 8<sup>th</sup> Pope Francis issued his Apostolic Exhortation - Amoris Laetitia "On the Love of the Family" Below are several memorable quotes.*

"Here I feel it urgent to state that, if the family is the sanctuary of life, the place where life is conceived and cared for, it is a horrendous contradiction when it becomes a place where life is rejected and destroyed. So great is the value of a human life, and so inalienable the right to life of an innocent child growing in the mother's womb, that no alleged right to one's own body can justify a decision to terminate that life, which is an end in itself and which can never be considered the "property" of another human being. The family protects human life in all its stages, including its last." - Paragraph 83.

"A sexual education that fosters a healthy sense of modesty has immense value, however much some people nowadays consider modesty a relic of a bygone era. Modesty is a natural means whereby we defend our personal privacy and prevent ourselves from being turned into objects to be used. Without a sense of modesty, affection and sexuality can be reduced to an obsession with genitality and unhealthy behaviors that distort our capacity for love, and with forms of sexual violence that lead to inhuman treatment or cause hurt to others." - Paragraph 282.

The family is the setting in which a new life is not only born but also welcomed as a gift of God. Each new life "allows us to appreciate the utterly gratuitous dimension of love, which never ceases to amaze us. It is the beauty of being loved first: children are loved even before they arrive". Here we see a reflection of the primacy of the love of God, who always takes the initiative, for children "are loved before having done anything to deserve it". And yet, "from the first moments of their lives, many children are rejected, abandoned, and robbed of their childhood and future. There are those who dare to say, as if to justify themselves, that it was a mistake to bring these children into the world. This is shameful! ... How can we issue solemn declarations on human rights and the rights of children, if we then punish children for the errors of adults?" If a child comes into this world in

unwanted circumstances, the parents and other members of the family must do everything possible to accept that child as a gift from God and assume the responsibility of accepting him or her with openness and affection. ~ Paragraph 166.

"Large families are a joy for the Church. They are an expression of the fruitfulness of love." ~ Paragraph 167.

## Around the Office

**A Message from Californians for Parental Rights** – Sadly, insufficient signatures were gathered before the March 15 deadline to qualify the California Parental Notification Constitutional Amendment initiative (Attorney General #15-0040) for the Nov. 8, 2016 ballot. Young girls and their families in 38 other states now have parental involvement laws in effect to protect them from Planned Parenthood secret abortions, but not in California.

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fruitfulness of love. –  
Paragraph 167**

May God bless and reward all those who have struggled and will continue to fight to provide millions of California young people and their families with the proven benefits of parental involvement laws!

**40-Days-for-Life Statistics** - Since our first campaign in the Fall of 2007 there have been:

- 11,796 lives saved (that we know of)
- 133 workers have left the abortion industry due to a change of heart (including Abby Johnson!)
- 70 Abortion facilities where 40-Days-for-Life vigils have been held have closed

The next 40-Days-for-Life will be September 28- November 6, 2016. Are you being called to join the 700,000 people who have already participated in a vigil, prayer and fasting?

**"Pregnant-Need Help" drop cards** - We recently printed several thousand business card size cards with the critical phone number 1-800-712-HELP. If you would like a supply of cards to post on kiosks and bulletin boards, and most importantly to carry one in your wallet in case you ever need ready access to this important number, call 925-944-5351 or email [callife@calright2life.org](mailto:callife@calright2life.org), or put a note in your donation envelope and we will send you as many cards as you request.

## *Calendar of Events*

*For the latest updates of events, see  
[www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org)*

### **Building a Pro-Life Future – National Right to Life Convention 2016 – July 7-9, 2016 Herndon VA.**

(Just outside Washington D.C.) The National Right to Life Convention is the essential pro-life educational and training event of the year. During this three-day event, national experts on life issues gather in one place to equip the pro-life grassroots with the knowledge and skills they need to advance our cause.

### **ELECTION DAY IN CALIFORNIA Is Tuesday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**



For guidance in voting, contact California Right to Life Committee at 925-899-3064 or e-mail [callifeadvocates@gmail.com](mailto:callifeadvocates@gmail.com) Study the ballot, talk with friends, and make sure everyone makes

“life-affirming choices.”

### **WHO IS CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE?**

This is the newsletter of **California Right to Life Education Fund**, a 501-c-3 organization established to educate the public about pro-life issues. Donations to the EDUCATION FUND are **tax-deductible** and can be sent to P.O. Box 4343, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-0343.

California Right to Life **Committee, Inc.** is a 501-c-4 organization providing information on legislative issues affecting the right to life, and pro-life political advocacy. **CRLC, Inc. is not permitted**, under IRS regulations, to offer a tax deduction for donations. \$24.99 annually is requested for a subscription to the CRLC legislative email updates list and can be sent to 1920 Monument Blvd #309, Concord, CA 94520.

Both are affiliates of American Life League, headed by Judie Brown, and share the same “no-exceptions, no excuses” beliefs and the same dedication to promoting the Culture of Life, respecting all innocent human life from the single-cell stage to natural death.

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