

A Three-Pronged Strategy

The majority of Americans remain pro-choice because their concern for the unborn is blocked by their even greater concern for women's welfare. Convincing them that *we do* care about women and that abortion *devastates* women, men, and society — not just the unborn — is the key to opening their hearts to the unborn.

The Next Step

A compassionate pro-woman approach will also melt the defensiveness of millions who have been personally affected by abortion. Those who suffer are more likely to come forward to tell their stories when they no longer fear condemnation, and even more importantly, feel our support.

Abortion is a deeply rooted evil that devastates everyone, not just the unborn. Offering women alternatives and raising awareness of the risks of abortion is not just a side issue — it is the key to ending abortion. To be most effective, we can work simultaneously on three fronts:

1. **Research & Education** — to document the epidemic of serious post-abortion complications and to educate people about abortion's dangers, as well as the need for healing.
2. **Pastoral Reform** — to preach a message of Divine Mercy and healing to post-abortive women and men in our churches and to create a healing environment in our communities. As we have already seen, many of these women and men will become our most effective pro-life leaders.
3. **Legal Reform** — to advance legislation that makes abortionists fully and properly liable for the harm they are causing women, men, and families. Our model legislation is described in the book *Making Abortion Rare: A Healing Strategy for a Divided Nation*. (See www.afterabortion.org for copies of our model bills.)

One Strategy, Many Victories

By calling attention to the evidence and witnesses that indict abortion as harmful to women, men, and families, this three-pronged, pro-woman/pro-life strategy will quickly achieve many victories:

- **Abortion rates will plummet.** As “significant others” learn about the risks, they’ll be less likely to pressure women to abort.
- **Assembly-line abortions will end.** When abortionists are held liable for ensuring that every abortion they perform is safe and beneficial, they will be able to perform few, if any, abortions.
- **More women will seek healing and speak out** about the negative effects of abortion, and help encourage other women to accept the gift of new life — God’s mercy and healing in their lives.
- **People will begin to question**, “Why, if abortion doesn’t help women, do we allow it at all?”
- **We will reshape the political debate** with a new pro-woman emphasis on the dangers of abortion. Those who oppose these pro-woman proposals will be exposed as being more concerned about protecting the abortion industry than they are about protecting women.
- **Courts will allow abortion to be restricted.** Since the Supreme Court has ruled that states have the right to ensure that abortion is safe, our pro-woman legislation will be upheld because it is truly necessary to protect women from abortion profiteers.
- **We will unify a divided nation.** By emphasizing pro-woman solutions, we will restore pro-life values.

Making Abortion Unthinkable

We must never forget that our long-term goal is not simply to make abortion illegal, but to make it *unthinkable*. We can and must show the public that even if abortion is legal, it is *never* safe. Through these efforts, future generations will recognize abortion for what it is: the “medical” butchery of both the mother and her unborn child.

By teaching the public that abortion is always a poor choice, we can create a society where no compassionate person would *ever* encourage a woman to seek an illegal abortion. With your help, everyone in our culture will soon be aware that abortion is a safety hazard, not a safety net.

You Can’t Hurt a Child Without Hurting the Mother

Our victory lies in the creation of a society where the intimate unity of mother and child is universally recognized and revered. Together, we can arouse a cultural awareness that *whenever one hurts a child, one hurts a mother as well*.

Conversely, whenever one helps a mother, one helps her child. Therefore, the solution to problem pregnancies is not abortion; it is compassion.

Let us be a people of compassion. Let us be truly both pro-woman and pro-life.

For More Information

Learn more about this strategy in the book *Making Abortion Rare: A Healing Strategy for a Divided Nation*. For ordering information, visit www.afterabortion.org.

Elliot

INSTITUTE
Post Office Box 7348
Springfield, IL 62791

Phone: (217) 525-8202 / Fax: (217) 525-8212

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ENDING ABORTION WITH COMPASSION

How to Make Abortion Unthinkable

- ABORTION'S AFTERMATH
- EXPOSING THE LIES
- CARING FOR BOTH
- BREAKING THE GRIDLOCK
- PRO-WOMAN / PRO-LIFE

A Half-Won Battle

The pro-life movement is closer to victory than most people realize. The evidence and witnesses needed to convict the abortion industry of its crimes against humanity have already been gathered. And more is accumulated every day. But it is being denied by abortionists and ignored by the media.

This denial will be broken only when we step back to support and serve a new generation of pro-life leaders, the post-abortive women and men who have confronted this evil in their lives, overcome it, and are now prepared to be our “most eloquent defenders of everyone’s right to life.”

A proper understanding of post-abortion issues reveals the key to ending abortion — legal and illegal, surgical and chemical. The key is based on a recognition that the welfare of a mother and her unborn child are intertwined and inseparable. We can’t hurt one without hurting the other. We can’t help one without helping both.

As a complete evil, abortion helps no one. It is an empty promise promoted by the Father of Lies. Any temporary advantages quickly fade and are replaced by guilt, grief, and illness.

The Two Lies

The legalization of abortion was erected on two lies:

1. Abortion only destroys a “bunch of cells,” not a human life.
2. Abortion is safe and helpful to women.

During the last two decades, the pro-life movement has concentrated on dispelling this first lie. These efforts have achieved great success. Public opinion polls show that:

Americans Know Abortion Kills Babies

- 77% of Americans believe abortion is the taking of a human life, though many in this group also believe it should be legal in circumstances that help women.
- Even among women who abort, at least 70% believe abortion is wrong or, at least, “deviant” behavior.
- Women abort not because they see it as morally just, but because they feel they have no other choice.

Exposing the Second Lie

Clearly, Americans understand that abortion takes a human life. So, poor-choice advocates have largely abandoned their first lie in favor of a second claim: “The woman is more important than the fetus.”

Poor-choicers have successfully pushed many Americans to “choose sides.” As a result, many who believe abortion is wrong, but don’t want to be seen as being “against women,” have hardened their hearts to unborn children.

They Need to Know it’s Killing Women, Too

To reach this group, we must address their real concerns about the well-being of women. We must expose the second lie, which says that “Abortion is safe.” This lie is the backbone of legalized abortion.

Show We Care

If abortion hurts women *and* kills babies, who can be for it? (Heartless population control zealots can, but that’s another story.)

Educating the public about the harm abortion does to women will open their eyes to see that opposition to abortion is the only authentic way to stand up for the welfare of *both* women and their children.

It’s critical that pro-lifers understand this point. We must no longer allow the debate to be defined as pro-abortionists on the side of women and pro-lifers on the side of the unborn.

Pro-lifers are on the side of *both* women and the unborn. We can’t just say this. We must *show that we care* more about women, both before and after abortion, than do the pro-abortionists.

By contrast, this will show that abortion promoters are on the side of death, on the side of deceiving women, and on the side of protecting abortion industry profits. They aren’t promoting “pro-choice” medicine. They’re promoting *poor-choice* medicine, and getting rich at the expense of the women.

The Levels of Moral Development

Psychologists describe three levels of moral development. They are:

1. Concern only for oneself.
2. Concern only for those close to you: family, friends, or even anyone whom you can tangibly see.
3. Concern for all others, even in the abstract, even if they are unknown, unseen — or unborn.

Pro-lifers are operating at this third level of moral development. Arguments on behalf of the unborn are only effective with people operating at this level.

Appeal to Their Concern for Women

For persons operating at the first or second levels of moral development, information about the harm abortion does to women is the *only* evidence that might alter their moral views.

When we appeal to their concern for their daughters, wives, sisters, and girlfriends, they are more likely to listen. In the case of the woman considering abortion, we must appeal to her concern for herself.

Why People Revert to Level One

When faced with a crisis, people who normally operate at the third level of moral development often revert to the second or first level of moral decision making. For many, an unexpected pregnancy provokes such a crisis.

For example, when a father learns his 14-year-old daughter is pregnant, he may suddenly find that all he can see is how this pregnancy will “destroy” his dreams for his daughter’s future. His grandchild is “an abstraction;” his daughter’s future is “real.” Even if she wants to keep the child, he may insist on the abortion “for her own good.”

How to Change Their Minds

Giving facts about fetal development to people who are stuck in crisis-thinking is not enough. Facts about how abortion harms women are far more likely to dissuade them from the rush to abortion. For example, the risks include:

Abortion Hurts Women

- 60% higher risk of dying from natural causes
- Seven times higher risk of suicide
- Nearly half begin or increase drug or alcohol use
- Future reproductive problems, such as infertility or delivery complications
- 10% risk of suffering immediate complications, such as infection, hemorrhaging, anesthesia complications, cervical injury, perforated uterus, and endotoxic shock, to name a few
- Significantly increased risk of breast cancer, cervical cancer, and lung cancer

Share the Truth

Since 52% of women who suffer post-abortion trauma report that they were “forced by others” into unwanted abortions, it is absolutely critical to educate their boyfriends, parents, counselors, and the medical community about abortion’s risks.

By encouraging abortion, they are actually hurting those they are trying to help.

Abortion Hurts Everyone

Abortion doesn’t turn back the clock.

Once a woman is pregnant, the choice is not simply whether or not to have a baby. It is a choice between having a baby or having an abortion — which is fundamentally a traumatic experience. It has no silver lining.