

Planning a “Witness Talk” on Post-abortion healing

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First Consideration: What is my Purpose in giving this talk?

- Purpose is NOT to simply “tell my story.”
- Purpose is to share a two-fold message:
 1. Abortion wounds people – the mother and father of the baby, other people who have relationships with them – as well as being the death of an innocent child.
 2. God's Grace and Mercy is more powerful than our sins; His Healing Grace can heal our wounds and restore Peace and Joy.
- Telling our stories is a Means to an End, not an End in itself; we share our story [in its essence, not all the graphic details] to accomplish our purpose.

Second Consideration: What do I want to happen as a result of my talk (what's the goal)?

- Our goal should not be to make people cry, or simply to inform them about post-abortion syndrome and post-abortion healing.
- Goal: to activate people to do something about abortion and post-abortion healing.
 1. To do something about abortion: to live the pro-life message; to reach out to women in danger of having an abortion with concrete help to make the choice for life; to not think of abortion as “just another issue.”
 2. To do something about post-abortion healing: to make a Rachel's Vineyard retreat; to invite or encourage a loved one to make a RV retreat; to help spread the message about RV and post-abortion healing [to be a literature/poster distributor in a local area, etc.]; to support our RV ministry financially.
- It is important to give the audience concrete things that they can do to help the cause of life and the work of healing; don't leave the audience with a feeling of “how sad it is that you went through that pain” – lead them to hope and action!

Third Consideration: Who is my audience?

- We will necessarily have to “tweak” our talks to the particular audience.
 1. To a parish, at the end of Mass: will be very short, compact message, invitation to something of more detail – maybe literature table outside, etc.
 2. To a couples group: may want to spend a little more time on how abortion impacts the marriage relationship, even if only one partner thinks they are post-abortive [if one spouse has had or been involved in an abortion, then both spouses are post-abortive], and how healing impacts the relationship for the better; the importance of a couple making the retreat together if possible.
 3. To a women's group: might be good to bring in how abortion trauma affects different people; use facts to emphasize urgency of need for post-abortion healing [one in four women have been wounded by abortion; majority of abortions are repeat abortions]; how abortion also can negatively affect a man's self-image and lead to other problems which affect marriages.
 4. To a men's group: might include fact that there is always one or more men who were involved in every abortion [the father of the baby; the woman's father or brother who didn't help her make the choice for life, etc.]; that abortion hurts men too [mention a few ways in which it affects men in their marriages and other relationships]; the responsibility that men have, as fathers/husbands/protectors to stop abortion.
- Consideration of the audience should not fundamentally change our “witness talk,” but should “tweak” it, and help us to apply our goal of getting the people involved in pro-life and in post-abortion healing.