



MLCPC 103:

The Abortion Determined Woman:

Pregnancy Decision-making

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Abstract

This session will discuss how coaches may best welcome new clients into their center. Participants will learn the most common feelings associated with crisis pregnancy situations and will understand how to help clients deal with their fears and pressures. Participants will also learn how to effectively speak to the father of the baby and will be advised on how to provide resources to each client.

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will explore the fears of women in crisis pregnancy situations.
2. Participants will discover how to involve the father of the baby in coaching.
3. Participants will gain practical tips to help a client remove pressure from her decision-making process.

I. Welcoming the Client

A. Welcome the client begins **before** they step through your door, when she makes the initial phone call to you.

1. Set up trained workers to answer the phones. They should display:

- Confidence
- A calm demeanor
- Professional phone techniques

2. Let these women know that you are happy they called.

B. Make sure that the message of your office setting is welcoming.

1. Are the door, parking lot, flyers/banners, etc. welcoming?

2. Women need to know that this is a private, confidential setting.

3. Pay attention to the art and pictures on your walls, which could be a subtle form of pressure.

4. Everything about your facility must say, "I have time for you and I want to hear what's going on in your life. There is **no** pressure."

5. You have the opportunity to walk beside these women and be their safe place.

II. Feelings and Emotions of the Abortion Determined Woman

A. **Listen.** Allow these women to express their fears and concerns without throwing solutions at them right away.

1. Fear

- Of judgment
- Of pressure

2. These women are **distressed** because of the big decision ahead of them.

- You may be the one person who says to them, “Have you thought about having this child? What do you need in your life to carry this pregnancy to term? Who would support you?”
- We all process situations and decisions by talking it out. Allow these women to make their own decision.

3. Sorrow

- They sometimes feel like they have to have an abortion.

4. Disappointment

5. Anger

- Get all of the conflict they are experiencing out in the open.
- Ask about the relationship they have with the father and grandparents of the baby.
- The baby has value even if the father is unknown!

B. Going through this process with the abortion determined woman may bring up issues, concerns, or negative feelings for you as the coach. The stories you hear may be an emotional trigger for you.

1. Emotional trigger: When you hear something that causes a reaction in your heart and you start to process this reaction instead of staying present with the client.

2. Go through your own healing **first!**

- Restitution from a place of healing (rather than atonement)

III. Speaking to the Father of the Baby

A. The fathers of these babies may very well be going through a lot, just like the mother. Though our culture does not typically include these men, you should encourage them to speak into the situation.

B. It is important for him to deal with the pressures, feelings, and abortion decision. If the father will not come in to talk, encourage the woman to ask him questions that will draw out what his feelings are.

C. Often, the father's biggest regret is that he did not speak up.

IV. The Pressure of Time

A. Often, abortion clinics will try to speed up this process and neglect to give the woman time to process this huge decision. It is your job to do the opposite.

- B.** The abortion-determined woman often feels trapped and experiences a sense of urgency to make a quick decision. The role of the pregnancy coach includes creating a safe, tension free environment where a client may feel free to examine her options and make a decision apart from external pressures.
- C.** Although our desire is to see a client escape the pain associated with abortion, care must be taken to balance the objective of removing pressures with the reality that the risks, complications, and costs of an abortion procedure will also increase with time.
- D.** The ultimate decision rests with the client and the pregnancy coach must avoid even the appearance of placing pressure on the client to ignore time frames and thus inadvertently become a source of tension or worse still, coercion.
- 1.** Slow things down so that she can think, process, and pray.
 - 2.** Have the woman write down all three choices that she has in dealing with this pregnancy and have her list the pros and cons of each choice.
 - Parenting
 - Adoption
 - Abortion
 - 3.** Give her time and space.
 - 4.** Respect the personhood of the woman, baby, father, grandparents, and generations.
 - Ask about family history to learn about past generation

E. How do you let this woman know that you are concerned about her choice for abortion?

1. **Value** her and the life within her.

2. Offer support services, resources, and solutions to her to give her **hope**. Keep in mind, though, that you should never offer solutions until you have **listened** to her.

- Insurance
- Diapers
- Parenting classes

3. Know when to refer your client because of her psychological state, anxiety, or suicidal tendencies.

- Professional counselors
- Pastors (for spiritual issues)
- Know when, as a coach, you need to seek therapy

V. **See Jesus in the Eyes of Your Clients**

*“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mind, you did for me.’ — **Matthew 25:40***

A. This woman’s baby is a valuable creation of God, regardless of the circumstances of conception. This woman, too, is a valuable creation of God.

B. In order to effectively work with these women you must learn a healthy balance of speaking the truth in love.

*“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” — **Ephesians 4:15***

- C. Do not be offended by what you hear. Let these women share their situation however it comes out.

VI. Learning to be a Coach

A. Be slow to speak.

B. Be quick to listen.

1. The client should be talking more than the coach.
2. This is listening, **not** teaching.
3. Listen to the client with one ear. Listen to the Lord with the other.

C. Be slow to anger.

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” — James 1:19

- D. What should the coach do when she finds out that the client has had an abortion? How should you respond?

1. Process your own thoughts and feelings about that loss of life.
 - You may want to consider having a memorial service for the babies whose lives are lost due to abortion.
 - Work with one another in your crisis pregnancy center and support each other as you deal with the losses.

2. Offer the client a place to go for post-abortion healing.
3. Share with her the mercy, love, and forgiveness of Christ.
4. This is **another opportunity** for her to accept Christ.
5. **Receive** her.
 - Be a welcome vessel.
 - Be a safe and nonjudgmental place for them to return.
6. **Educate** her on post-abortion symptoms.
 - The relationship with the father
 - Anniversary reaction
 - Grief/anxiety
 - Sexual effects (rigidity or promiscuity)
7. Help her **reframe** how God feels about her.

Be encouraged! You are not going into these coaching sessions alone.