

**Ramah's Voice – June, 2006**

## **Reaching Abortion-Minded Men**

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This article has been excerpted from the Ramah Booklet, "Reaching Abortion-Minded Men."

[http://ramahinternational.org/catalog/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=60&osCsid=54f120bf118ea66fa05bc70489c9fcd0&osCsid=054380784d87dd5928bc1730a5f53007](http://ramahinternational.org/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=60&osCsid=54f120bf118ea66fa05bc70489c9fcd0&osCsid=054380784d87dd5928bc1730a5f53007)

Pregnancy care centers have always been involved in men's ministry at sometimes an indirect level. Every pregnancy test performed involves at least one man specifically. Men represent half of our target audience. Unfortunately, our movement rarely reaches this audience effectively. Without many men entering the pregnancy center counseling field, it seems clear that more female leaders will need to be educated to help reach male clients. In these notes, our goal is to look at the needs of the male audience, offer effective methods for women to minister effectively to men and to outline expanding this service to include male advocates.

### **Issues to Consider When Ministering to Men**

Clearly we cannot begin a ministry to abortion-minded or post-abortive in the same vein as we minister to women. Their needs are different as well as their communication skills, emotions, fears, hopes and dreams. If women have been sold a lie about abortion, men have been sold a bigger lie. In this issue of Ramah's Voice, we will outline the differences between male and female clients.

#### **Different Languages**

It doesn't take long for women and men to realize that they are very different. Did you know that women speak 30,000 words a day while a man uses only 15,000 words? By 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. men typically respond with one word communications because they've used up their words for the day. Come evening, women are only half way through their words. Women can often misunderstand this lack of response as rejection or abandonment.

Men also require some preparation time to participate in emotional topics of conversation. My husband has often told me, "Don't try to get me talking about deep subjects during a football game, okay? It won't work. If you give me 24 hours notice, I'll be there for you at any level but I need some warning." When men arrive at your center, they are emotionally prepared to address the matter at hand. This makes the time in your center very valuable.

Here are some interesting points in the nature of male/female relationships:

- Men struggle with wanting to be God while women struggling with wanting to be men.
- Most women want to speak to their man about their relationship between 45 minutes or 1 hour of the day. Men want to talk maybe 15-20 minutes every two weeks about the relationship. If there is nothing wrong, the man doesn't see anything to talk about.
- If a man doesn't understand, he may leave.
- Men feel they are "not enough" and women feel they are "too much" for their man.
- The idea of sexually pleasing a woman is intimidating to men because they weren't taught this by their fathers.
- Sexual intimacy is about serving each other and sexual intercourse is about bonding.
- The reason most women don't experience orgasms is (a lack of) communication.
- Women's emotional need is love while a man's emotional need is respect.
- Men are simplistic and play by the rules. Competition drives a lot of what they do. When women change the rules, men get frustrated.

### **Types of Male Clients**

It's not just the boyfriend/husbands that we are dealing with when helping a woman in a potential crisis pregnancy situation. Their fathers are also a strong part of the woman's life as are her brothers and even male friends. *There is nothing as intimidating as an angry male who wants to harm a man because he stole his loved one's virginity!* Add to that the aspects of cultural differences in male leadership and women can become very confused in how to reach men's hearts!

The young woman has a lot to deal with when it comes to potentially subduing these family members as well as the potential father. However, many men accompanying women have a strong desire to provide protection. Once educated on abortion risks at an emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical level, males may be the best team players in a life decision!

### **A Matter of Safety**

Rarely, there are male clients that may exhibit rage and fear upon learning he's involved in a crisis pregnancy. Remember that men are just as frightened, as well as teachable, as women. These clients can try our souls and have us leaning on God's Everlasting Arms

for strength. *Due to the potential of these isolated incidents, it's essential that no volunteer or staff member be left alone in a center during business hours.* Every center needs to have a defense plan in place for these situations. A female volunteer should never be behind a close door with a male client.

### **Staff Abilities to Minister to Men**

Not all pregnancy center advocates are **emotionally prepared** to assist male clients. Some women may be easily intimidated by men or struggling with past abuse issues. Participating with male clients may not be within their capacities. Having separate advocates for male and female clients may be best. If this is not possible, have two women with the male client. Mothers of sons can be great candidates because they've learned the male mindset and can empathize with these hearts in an anointed way. However, if these mothers also have past abuse issues, they may be better concentrating on female ministry.

### **Waiting in the Car**

My son spends more time in his car than in his room. It's his home, complete with a stereo, clothes and food! Often men remain in their automobile "safety zone" while the pregnancy tests are conducted. Post-abortive women often report that the fathers of their aborted children never entered the clinic but waited in the car. Can you imagine the power of having a "waiting in the car" ministry? These gentlemen may need to be assured that you are a safe zone before entering the building. They are often afraid that the waiting room may be filled with "weeping women" and the environment will overwhelm their already stretched emotions.

Be aware of potential male clients in the parking lot. T.J. Lewis, leader of the men's ministry at Life Choices in Conway, Arkansas, says, "I like to take fishing trips when I see men waiting in the car. I'll go out and check the mailbox and then stop by the car and say hello to the men and talk for a minute. Often the offer of refreshment is enough to coax him to come into the center. Then I will sit and talk to him in the waiting room."

Female advocates can always walk outside for a "breath of fresh air" and casually greet the waiting men, offering refreshment inside. If they don't come in, bring the refreshment out to them. **Food and drink is a powerful tool when working with men.** If you ever want to pull a group of teen boys together for a "focus group" interview, offer pizza and they will come! The same holds true with male clients.

### **Avoid Agenda Exposure**

Please don't approach male clients armed with brochures. Many men don't like to read, and they could perceive you as having an "agenda," roll up their windows, and refuse to talk. *It's better to offer a business card, with a Web site and e-mail address listed, available should they determine they don't want to come into the center or talk with you further.* Men love to search the Internet for information, and if they have a specific site,

they will often take the time to visit it. If you don't have a Web site, send them to [www.ramahinternational.org](http://www.ramahinternational.org) for detailed information, or to have our help in designing your center's Web site.

## **Tales of Woe – Global Male Hatred**

In our predominantly female led centers, many of us come from broken homes and our viewpoints about male abandonment haven't been addressed. These abandonment issues can be triggered by similar stories from women who are struggling with a crisis pregnancy. *We must remember that some "tales of woe" are made up to gain sympathy and attention.* Other times the stories are very real.

Should the boyfriend be in the center, it can be difficult for an advocate to conceal their disdain toward him once the test is concluded. He will immediately pick up on these emotions and body language and feel like he has just entered the "bad guy" zone. If that particular man isn't in the office at the time, any other men present could receive the "global male hatred" treatment.

This is the element of pregnancy care work that will determine your success in men's ministry – can you love the male client as much as the female client? Can you treat each client the same regardless of the stories you hear? Can you give the guy a chance to become a "knight in shining armor?"

## **Every Man Deserves the Chance to be a Hero**

It could be that men need your help to assume the horse's reigns and mount the steed in order to be prepared to save the day. Some don't understand that women want their opinion, support and help. If a man understands how deeply abortion could hurt his loved one, he's less likely push this option.

Because a man doesn't experience an abortion physically, he can't really understand what happens in an abortion clinic. A testimony can have significant impact on his heart. Ramah now offers a 13-minute client video called "One Woman's Abortion Story," that can educate both the man and woman about the physical aspects of this procedure. ([http://ramahinternational.org/catalog/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=55&osCsid=54f120bf118ea66fa05bc70489c9fcd0&osCsid=f881c5a50ea3f8e2b4b7c325e03bd4c3](http://ramahinternational.org/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=55&osCsid=54f120bf118ea66fa05bc70489c9fcd0&osCsid=f881c5a50ea3f8e2b4b7c325e03bd4c3)).

This video contains my personal "in the clinic" experience and outlines the emotional and physical pain of abortion. God has used this testimony to turn many male hearts against the abortion option and ignite their protective and nurturing spirits.

We need to provide men with the same information as women who come through our centers. *If he doesn't understand the various aspects of this procedure, why **wouldn't** abortion be a good choice in this situation?* There's a good chance that if he's educated he could change his mind as well.

Ask female clients to share more about the father of their potential child. If you find that the woman isn't afraid of the man, consider inviting them to come to the center as well for a follow-up appointment. Again, *if the men are waiting in the car, send someone out with a soft drink or food and invite them inside!*

### **Ways to Encourage Heroic Behavior**

Guys need to realize that women **want** their opinion in making choices about crisis pregnancies. Pro-choice forces have worked hard to convince men *that they have no right to express an opinion*. Some men hide behind the fact that "it's a woman's choice." By throwing all the weight of the decision onto the woman's shoulders, the man is effectively telling her to abort. Many women long for their men to say, "I love you. Marry me, and let's live happily ever after."

Introductions – When you see a man in the waiting room, make statements like – "*How are you doing? I'm glad you are here. It takes a lot of courage to come in here with your girlfriend. This must be a tough time for you. How are you feeling today?*" Receptionists can be the most important players in establishing men's ministry. These individuals, as well as advocates that aren't seeing clients, should take the time to address the men in their waiting room, making them feel more secure and welcome.

Creating the atmosphere – Look at your office decorations -- are they feminine? The atmosphere should say to the male client, "You are welcome here!" Be sure to have books, magazines and even photos in the waiting area that are designed for men. Here are some magazines that you may want to offer for these special clients:

Sports Spectrum Magazine  
[www.sportsSpectrum.com](http://www.sportsSpectrum.com)  
1-866-821-2971

New Man Magazine  
[www.newmanmagazine.com](http://www.newmanmagazine.com)  
1-800-829-3371

Let them talk and then really listen – Ask men questions like, "*What are your plans for the future?*" Allow them to share their victories and make them feel respected. It's obvious that they are going through a crisis, too, and most men want to make good decisions and be supportive.

Provide them with role models – When a couple makes a life decision, these new fathers desperately need older men to mentor them. Whenever I share a "volunteer pitch" during pregnancy center banquets, I always speak to the men, saying, "*There are two people involved in a pregnancy. Gentlemen, the fathers of these unborn children desperately need your help and mentoring. Would you consider partnering with one of these young men to encourage him throughout the pregnancy?*" Every director should make the same appeal during speaking events.

Men who are "empty nesters" can make the biggest influence on younger men simply because they have the time to invest. These gentlemen don't need to be present in the center. Centers can set up future appointments and/or include male versions of "Earn

While You Learn.” In the end, the older male volunteers will probably be more blessed than the younger fathers.

Include them as important partners – Encourage women to invite the men to join them in all areas of your ministry services a non-threatening way. Track and keep a record of these men who continue to support their partners. Get life stories and put them on a DVD for future clients. Put a man’s testimony on the roster at your next fund-raising event.

Encourage ultrasound participation - Ultrasound can be more powerful on a man than a woman. It changes his perspective on life and responsibility without being condemning. He sees his offspring and not a “blob of tissue.” Always include him in these procedures.

Make sure you are less program oriented and more relationship oriented – The last thing most men want to do is endure a boring lecture from a woman about parenting. The best way to encourage heroic behavior is personal relationships with other men. Simply shooting baskets with a man, talking about the older man’s experiences with fatherhood, can get a younger father thinking and dreaming about his child.

Help them to dream again – Younger boys respond to the question, “What do you want to do when you grow up?” by saying they want to be a fireman, policemen, doctor, lawyer, professional athlete, etc. When puberty sets in, it becomes obvious that some of these dreams are unattainable. In talking to men about their dreams, many goals can still be attainable with a little encouragement and some help with registering them for college programs or job training courses. *With help, they begin to have hope. With hope comes direction.*

Encourage them to create a new family legacy – Remind men that they can break the chain of pain that was placed upon them by their fathers. They don’t have to turn out like their parents or siblings. Your support can make all the difference. By being his encourager, supporter, friend, you can change one person’s life and give him hope. Remind him that the definition of a real man is to take care of the woman he impregnates. Messages like, “You don’t want to leave your child as your dad left you. Break the cycle of your family line here.” Guys respond to challenges, but “put downs.”

Sharing with other men – When a man embraces his fatherly role, and his life makes a dramatic change for the better, others take notice. He becomes the best public relations vehicle for your center. He’s not limited by his present role because you are there to help him.

## **Conclusion**

You don’t need a lot of time and energy to reach the hearts of male clients. Nor do you need a staff of male volunteers! Begin today to educate your staff on the importance of opening their hearts to the men in your waiting room. Investigate if there is a possibility of “global male hatred” in your center and identify the team members who would be best

at speaking to male clients. The rewards will be incredible with more life decisions and better futures for the newborn children!

In Him!

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