



# Ramah's Voice

a ministry of Ramah International, Inc.

## Ministering to the "Extended Wounded"

By Sydna A. Massé with "Karen"

The finger of abortion reach into many lives and cross all generational lines. It affects everyone whether they know it or not. We often forget the extended wounded in the need to help the grieving post-abortive individual. Wounded family and friends don't even know where to go to get help. Some don't realize that they have a need to grieve these losses in spite of the fact that the baby's parents don't seem to be in pain.

### Who Are the Extended Wounded?

Post-abortive men and women are considered directly injured by abortion. **The extended wounded are impossible to count.** They include, but are not limited to, the following demographic groups:

- \* Grandparents of the aborted child
- \* Siblings of the post-abortive individual
- \* Siblings of the aborted child
- \* Spouses of the post-abortive who are not the parents of the aborted child
- \* Pro-life individuals who work with the abortion-minded individual
- \* Friends
- \* Co-Workers
- \* Youth ministers/Pastors
- \* Medical personnel -- doctors, nurses, staff,
- \* And everyone else!

Virtually anyone who is remotely involved with an individual who aborts can suffer adverse effects from the abortion. Related individuals need an outlet for the stress and grief that abortion can bring to their hearts. When they come to you seeking help for someone else, help them to acknowledge and address their own wounds in this loss. Begin by asking them, "Do you realize you've had a loss too?"

The level of extended pain often relates to their involvement in the abortion decision. Those who participated/encouraged an abortion can feel a deeper level of guilt from the one who had no influence on the choice. It is heartbreaking to discover the abortion years after the fact and come to grips with the fact that their loved one did not turn to them in their time of need or trust them with their secret.

### Listen to Their Pain

You are valuable to others when you **actively** listen to them. Listening gives value back to the person and allows the pain and grief to come out of the hiding places of their hearts. It will also help you identify their feelings of anger, regret, shame and guilt. Listening does not involve knowing what to say next or considering your answer while they are still talking. **You may never know what to say so don't feel pressured to saying anything.** Just do your best to be a friend to them and hear their pain.

### Share Your Faith

The truth of healing is that it isn't possible without the Lord. Be sure to share about God's true character of love and forgiveness that was given to us when Jesus died on the cross. Understand that even believers can misunderstand God's love! **When people are hurting they are more willing to listen to messages of faith and examine their emotions.** They want the relief that Jesus can provide to their hearts. Your faith can help them when they are faithless.

### Permission to Grieve

Individuals don't get over grief -- they get through it. Lam 2:18-19 relays, "*The hearts of the people cry out to the Lord. Oh wall of the daughter of Zion, let your tears flow like a river day and night; give yourself no relief, your eyes no rest. Arise...pour out your hearts like water in the presence of the Lord... for the lives of your children.*"

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Ramah's Voice membership:  
suggested donation  
\$20/year (5-6 issues)

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**For some reason the extended wounded may not feel like they have a “right” to grieve a child that wasn’t their own.** It is possible to be so wrapped up in the pain that you cannot grieve. Unexpressed grief can lead to other issues. God created us with tears. He dedicated a whole book of the Bible -- Lamentations -- to tears. Tears are the body’s natural way to rid itself of toxins. Encourage everyone involved in this pain to cry for this child. It will make a big difference in the beginning of healing to become humble enough to cry. Assure the individual that they aren’t “going crazy” by being overwhelmed with emotion or tears. As relayed in Isaiah 61:2-3, God has sent you **“To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning...”**

### Help Them Identify Their Emotions

Fellings can betray us and help determine how our spiritual life is advancing or retreating. Sorrowful emotions put a cloud over our thinking abilities. If not identified and surrendered, we can easily become bound to these sentiments. Always encourage the extended wounded to express their “gut level” perceptions to discover which is hurting them the most. Often when anger, guilt and unforgiveness issues are resolved, the others will follow in short order. Is there pride? Guilt? Sin? Anger? Betrayal? How are those emotions being acted out in every day life? **We can’t change the abortion but we can change our attitude and how we view the people involved.** Encourage them to ask God to change bad attitudes and feelings and replace them with grace, mercy, empathy, love and compassion. Loving people who hurt us can be very difficult -- especially if the offending person isn’t repentant. Help them understand that with God’s help we can do all things.

### Ask Good Questions

Asking good questions will help piece together the broken story of abortion. **Questions help the person who is sharing by letting them know that you are really listening and that you validate their feelings.** They also clarify what you are hearing and clear up misunderstandings. Here are some examples of good questions:

- \* How did you feel deep inside when you found out about the abortion?
- \* Do you ever get angry with the post-abortive person now even though you’ve talked it through with them? How do you express this anger?
- \* How is your spouse handling this situation? Do their emotions effect you?
- \* When was the last time you heard God’s voice?

By asking questions you can help them pull out emotions they may not perceive. When a couple is going through the grief of an abortion, one can stifle their emotions while the other weeps openly in pain. Couples can also blame each other. **Always rely on the Holy Spirit’s leading in knowing what questions to ask.**

### Help Them Understand their Guilt

Psalms 32:3-4, **“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped.”**

Guilt and shame run together in the emotions of an abortion. For the parent who forced their child to abort, they need to realize that they bear a large part of the guilt of the abortion

decision. This dynamic changes for the person who tried to stop the abortion from taking place. A simple question like, “do you feel guilty?” can help you determine to what extent this is impacting their heart. Confession is a great place to start relieving the burden of guilt.

## Forgive First

Ephesians 4:22, “*And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you.*”

Everyone needs to understand forgiveness as it relates to God, the post-abortive and themselves. It could be that the process of forgiving must be accomplished daily. Somedays we struggle more than others to surrender this pain. Many are upset at the abortion industry for victimizing their loved ones. **Someone once said, “Having bitterness, anger and unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping that the other person dies.”** It doesn’t hurt anyone but ourselves. Many also have difficulty forgiving themselves. Recognize these emotions as real and help them to understand how important forgiveness is in the plan of God’s salvation. Scripture is a great place to start in teaching this principle:

### Forgiveness from God:

- \* Psalms 86:5
- \* Psalms 103:2-4
- \* Micah 7:18-19
- \* Acts 3:19
- \* Isaiah 1:18
- \* I John 2:9

### Forgiving Others:

- \* Romans 14:10
- \* Mark 11:25
- \* Matt. 5:23
- \* Matt 18:22
- \* Ephesians 4:31-32
- \* Psalms 32:1-17

## Give Them A Hope for Their Future

A memorial service provides dignity and importance to the lost person and gives closure to the grieving. These services allow the focus to shift from the hurting to the missing. Encourage or establish a special service for the extended wounded in your ministry. They should be able to provide a name for the child in their parent’s stead. This name can become a “nickname” in the future if another name is given. Planting a rose bush or tree is a great way to memorialize these children or releasing a balloon or writing a poem/song.

## They Can Help Bring Others to God’s Healing!

Whenever the extended wounded are in their pain they must know that healing is possible and they have a right to grieve despite the fact the child wasn’t their own. When you share about the pain of abortion, be sure to include them so their pain will be validated as real. God’s blessing of healing can start with the extended wounded and migrate to the post-abortive individual and the entire family!

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This article was taken in part from the Ramah booklet: **Extended Wounded: Ministering to Grandparents.** Bible studies to help extended wounded include Linda Cochrane’s “A Time to Heal” (available from CareNet) and the recovery guide program that accompanies Her Choice To Heal (available through Ramah International - [www.ramahinternational.org](http://www.ramahinternational.org)).

## A Memory Should Be..

*a poem in memory of my grandbaby  
by “Karen”*

*Sometimes... in the still of the night.  
There is a place  
Where there should be A memory.  
A newborn hand  
First steps and things to see.  
But always in that memory  
Your precious face is hid from me.*

*Sometimes... in the still of the night  
In that place where a memory should be  
A precious peace comes over me  
For I know that Jesus holds my memory.”*

“As I sought out and received healing from my daughter’s abortion, God began to grow my outreach at the pregnancy care center. I have talked to more extended wounded than I have ever imagined. God has used my grandchild to reach out to others that have suffered from abortion. I am much more empathetic with women I counsel with as well.

God stripped away my preconceived ideas about women who abort. I have worked with women who tell me their mothers would “freak out” to find out they were pregnant. They justify that abortion is the only answer and through my grandchild’s death, God has used me to challenge that thinking. Does God make good come out of bad? Oh yes, He does -- for HIS namesake! Now I can appreciate Romans 8:28 and understand the unique workings of an Almighty God.”

### Extended Wounded: Ministering to Grandparents

This booklet will help you chart a course through a new ministry arena where God can use you to reach those who need your services desperately.

Available at:

[www.ramahinternational.org](http://www.ramahinternational.org)



## Fasting Power



*“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matt. 6:16-18*

Growing up in a Christian home I was never taught the principle of fasting. The concept seemed strange and unhealthy and I thought it sounded “kooky.” I never learned it’s power until an anguished point in my life when the Lord instructed me clearly to fast from food and work. I obeyed and discovered the blessings of this request. By the end of the week God was speaking right to my heart. I had never heard from the Lord so clearly and He opened my mind to many new areas of ministry as well as personal relationships. I was rewarded with questions answered, new direction and peace that can only come from deep fellowship with God.

During a personal fast, Jesus told the Devil that, *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”* (Matt. 6:4). Later, in the passage listed above, Jesus shares how to fast -- in private and in communion with the Lord. We need God more than we need food or work!

Has the Lord ever called you to fast? Maybe it’s not just a break from food but from work as well. Especially during times of trouble and weakness, fasting can be a tool the Lord uses to break the chains around you that you cannot see. The result can change your life and bring you to a place of spiritual health and wholeness. As Jesus relayed, the greatest reward of fasting is time alone with the Creator of the Universe!

*Sydna A. Massie*

### Ramah’s Resource Corner:

#### **“Extended Wounded: Ministering to Grandparents”**

As this issue of *Ramah’s Voice* has relayed, Grandparents are especially vulnerable and often ignore their own needs while helping their children recover. Through the extended testimony of “Karen,” a post-abortive grandparent and ministry leader, this booklet offers a guideline for ministering to this demographic group. It is an excellent companion to any pregnancy care or post-abortion ministry.

To order use enclosed card, visit our website at: [www.ramahinternational.org](http://www.ramahinternational.org) (\$5 Suggested donation.)

### From the Word of God:

*For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Eph. 3:14-19