



# Ramah's Voice

## First Contact: Advertising to Reach Post-Abortive Hearts

By Sydna A. Massé

Perhaps the greatest element discouraging post-abortive individuals from contacting a ministry program is the fear that their contact will lead to judgment and rejection. These anxious hearts sit in silent prisons of pain, longing for spiritual, emotional, and even physical release. *The key to their prison door can lie in the advertising your organization uses to reach these hearts!* In this article I hope to explain the post-abortive mindset before contact and outline effective marketing channels to reach these wounded hearts.

### Dispelling PAS Myths & Mindsets

#### *Myth #1 – Pro-lifers will be the first to judge*

Many post-abortive individuals report they are **most** apprehensive of judgment and rejection from pro-life individuals. They expect to be judged because pro-lifers take such a passionate stand against abortion. The first step in reaching these hearts is to dispel the myth that we are condemning and judgmental.

This mindset can be encouraged and reinforced by pro-life slogans that call abortion “murder” and/or use the word “kill” without including messages of love and compassion for those who have made this choice. While these words can be effective in turning hearts against abortion, they can further condemn the post-abortive and that many of us also are post-abortive.

I struggled with the fear of rejection on my first day at Focus on the Family. I knew Focus was a pro-life organization. While I had confessed my sin of abortion to the Lord, I was fearful of being fired if the ministry discovered my truth. This mindset was reinforced when they handed me a “little feet” pin with other introductory papers. I was overwhelmed that a child’s feet at 10 weeks gestation was so well developed. Also, I was amazed that there wasn’t a judgmental message on the card that held the pin. God used that resource to give me hope that compassion existed in this ministry.

During orientation later that day, Dr. Dobson addressed me personally. After describing a brutal late term abortion procedure, he kindly said, “I know I’m talking to many women who have experienced abortion.” I was shocked and stunned by his comment, but he caught my attention. He went on to say, “I want you to know that there is no sin that God cannot forgive. The problem may be that you don’t forgive yourself, and you may need help in doing that.”

While Dr. Dobson had initially used the dreaded terms “kill” and “murder,” he had buffered the truth of abortion by offering compassion and hope. I finally realized that I could be “safe” around pro-lifers. It was the first step in my healing process, because they were the only ones offering me a way to find God’s healing.

In sharing about the general ministry of pregnancy care centers, be sure to address your post-abortive efforts. If you only emphasize life saving work or abstinence education programs, wounded listeners could assume that you could be judgmental. Address the post-abortive listeners directly, offering them hope and compassion through your PAS program.

#### *Myth #2 – I don’t need any help!*

It took more than Dr. Dobson’s message to lead me into a recovery class. I discovered a Focus booklet that listed of the symptoms of post-abortion syndrome. Those pages outlined my life. I had never related my pain to my abortion. But I still resisted the idea that I needed help. I reasoned that I was a strong mother of two, holding down a full time job. I wasn’t mentally ill or overtly struggling with my abortion. “Counseling” was only for those with major issues in their lives.

When I discovered the work of pregnancy care centers, I was excited that Christians were offering other choices to abortion. I called our local center to ask about volunteering. The receptionist offered little information at first. She bluntly asked, ‘Have you ever had an abortion?’ I was stunned. No one had ever asked me that directly before. I stuttered with an affirmative answer. She informed me that every post-

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abortive woman had to go through a Bible study before volunteering at the center. I had never heard of a "Bible study" for post-abortion, and it disturbed me that this was a requirement. My response as I ended the call was, "Thanks anyway."

The conversation with the receptionist was troublesome at many levels. The mandatory requirement seemed oppressive. I reasoned that I was healed. Who were they to judge me! This is a common mindset among the post-abortive. Had she encouraged me to visit the center before specifying that rule, I would have been able to learn of the compassionate and non-judgmental nature of the staff. Given a more loving explanation, the prerequisite would not have seemed offensive.

Offer encouraging statements to potential post-abortive volunteers like, "I understand that many experience a deep level of healing from God outside of a post-abortion recovery class. If that's the case with you, then our group will offer you a way to begin to help other." This message will have a calming and inviting affect on those who may need the class but be unwilling to commit as a "requirement."

In order to avoid making the post-abortive person feel like they are being "picked on," I propose a new policy that EVERY pregnancy care center worker be urged to attend a post-abortion recovery study—not as observers but as participants. Everyone has experienced loss and grief. Unforgiveness or other sin issues are addressed in the study. The process allows many to understand post-abortion pain at a deeper level and should enhance ministry efforts to the abortion-minded.

### ***Myth #3 – If I approach you, everyone will assume I've had an abortion***

Post-abortive individuals rarely come forward publicly because they fear "guilt by association." Even those that aren't post-abortive can be afraid of approaching you. Many have come to me after I've spoken at a banquet, literally shouting for all to hear, "I've NEVER had an abortion but I want to shake your hand!" It may sound comical, but it happens often! If those who are not post-abortive feel the need to use this approach, why would the wounded ever come forward?

Individuals need a safe and quiet way to contact you without risking public exposure. E-mail and web sites are perfect for this initial communication. You may want to relay the invitation this way, "Many of you may be afraid to speak with me now about your abortion for fear that your secret may be exposed. Feel free to contact me via my e-mail address at . . ." Assure them that any correspondence will be kept confidential and that anyone can contact you in this manner for more information about your program. Then be sure to check your e-mail often! It can take the post-abortive several messages before they learn to trust you with their truth.

## **Advertising Timing and Consistency**

Repetition is the key in advertising messages. It's better to spend your money repeating your message over and over again in a certain period than to spread it out in small messages throughout the year. There are two dates that are extremely painful for the post-abortive individual. We know this to be true based on web site activity around these dates. These are as follows:

**Anniversary week of the Roe v. Wade decision** – January 22<sup>nd</sup> – Abortion is mentioned through most media resources each year. To see or hear the word "abortion" triggers memories.

**Mother's Day** – This can be one of the worst days for the post-abortive because it is a reminder of their lost motherhood. Even if the individual has other children, this day can be a painful reminder of their guilt, grief, and loss.

If you have an advertising budget, consider focusing your promotions over these two dates. Understand that many post-abortive women will avoid church services during these times as well. Therefore, it's best to concentrate church promotions to the week or two prior to or after these dates.

## Radio Promotions

Radio spots are another great way of offering the hope of healing. Center these spots around a specific time period and repeat the message as often as possible. This process is called “saturation.” The theory is that if you play a message often enough, people will learn it. We have seen this work with products like Oscar Meyer – “My bologna has a first name, it’s O-S-C-A-R....” Wouldn’t it be great if everyone could remember the name of your center like that?

Many Christian radio stations are receptive to helping a pregnancy care center’s efforts with complimentary public service announcements around Mother’s Day and in January. Focus on the Family has created a CD with generic advertisements, enabling centers to add their personal information. The “Dear Diary” ad has been aired for several years and has helped many individuals find healing. To obtain a copy, contact Focus on the Family at 1-800-A-FAMILY.

## Check Out the Competition

I am always interested in the advertising channels of our competitors – the abortion providers. These groups have done the research on what works best in reaching our audience. While we may not be able to match their advertising expenditures, we can investigate where they are advertising and seek equal ad time/space as well.

Secular radio stations are the first place to check. While these stations may not offer free space, their rates can be affordable. Listen and you will hear the messages of abortion providers encouraging young people to visit their clinics. We should be on the same wavelength as our competitors! Ask clients what radio stations they listen to and the normal times they tune in to ensure the best time to advertise. You always want to watch your competitors and match their energy and message.

## Web Sites/E-Mail Addresses

A powerful advertising channel today is through the Internet, utilizing a local web site. A site allows the wounded to learn of your compassion through a safe and confidential medium. Post-abortive individuals can reach out for help without being recognized. Many may never have the courage to call or visit you directly. E-mail allows them to test you first and allow trust to be established. This will help them find the courage to trust you with a phone call or a face-to-face interview.

Ramah International offers low-cost Web-site design services that allows centers to establish an Internet presence in less than two weeks. We’ve written all the copy and can add your basic information easily without a lot of work from your staff. For more information, contact Sydna Massé at 866-807-2624 or visit the Ramah website at [www.ramahinternational.org](http://www.ramahinternational.org).

## Television

Visual medium is a great tool in reaching the hearts of both post-abortive and abortion-minded people. Virtue Media has developed some powerful post-abortive ads that can be used in your area. To view them visit: [www.virtuemedia.org](http://www.virtuemedia.org).

While waiting for new clients, pray for them. God will send them to your doors when they are ready to receive your help and you are ready to receive them. As you wait, learn more about post-abortion trauma and advance your education in as many areas of abortion-minded counseling as possible. Continue to focus on the Lord and He will bring the harvest in His time as is relayed in II Corinthians 4:15-16, *... so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.*”

## Easy Ads

### Hurting from a past abortion?

Recovery groups now forming  
Contact Mary at 555-2121 or e-mail:  
[mary@prc.org](mailto:mary@prc.org). We are here to help.  
PRC – 1212 First Street, Every, MI 21001  
555-1212 [www.prc.org](http://www.prc.org)

This small ad can be placed in “thrifty” shopping newspapers, school newspapers, directories, church bulletins, message boards, etc., and can be extremely effective.

**This ad communicates the message about your program and also educates that abortion hurts!** Keep in mind that you should repeat this advertisement over a period of time. It may take multiple messages to reach their eyes and hearts.

Small tracts or ministry brochures can be highly effective in private settings like church bathrooms or doctor’s offices. They should be clearly available in all pregnancy center waiting rooms. These resources can also be passed out at county fairs or social events where large amounts of people gather.

Waiting rooms in professional offices offer great exposure as well. Be sure to feature a personal e-mail address on all advertisements as well as address and phone contact information.

Ramah International has written such a tract that is published by the American Tract Society. It’s called “*Steps to Healing: Finding Peace After Abortion.*” There is room on the back of this tract for contact information about your ministry. These are available from American Tract Society ([www.atstracts.org](http://www.atstracts.org)) or on Ramah’s web site.

While the reader may not be post-abortive, they can be educated to the fact that abortion hurts women. The message can lead to making abortion unthinkable in future crisis pregnancies. This information can also be enough to discourage sexual activity outside of marriage!

## Please be Patient! God Isn't Finished with Me Yet!

*If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. Matthew 18:15*

*Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15*



Recently, I lied. It wasn't a "big" lie that hurt anyone. It wasn't even a necessary lie. I could have handled the situation without offering any falsehoods. The "white lie" came quickly and landed me in the flood of the Holy Spirit's conviction that said "you compromised the truth!" After all these years of walking with the Lord, I thought I was beyond this behavior. Sadly, I still struggle with basic sin issues.

There was one person who knew I lied. As I felt the conviction, I waited for this person to approach me. I realized that if they didn't confront me, they could easily use this sin against me. In hind sight, I should not have waited on their actions. Had I confessed this lie when the conviction came, I would have avoided the resulting damage. Peace did eventually come in my confession, forced by the revelation of this other person. I was grateful even then to be free from the tiny lie that held power over my walk with the Lord. I pray that this lesson will be my last when it comes to being truthful in everything!

Why are we hesitant to confront each other when sin is evident? Why do we wait so long to confess even small sins? I long for people to hold me accountable and treasure those who will love me enough to tell me when I'm wrong. While it may hurt initially to hear our faults, Matthew 18:15 states that we have an obligation to point out the truth in love.

Are you being convicted by a sin that needs confessing? Perhaps you know another who needs your gentle and loving confrontation today. While it sometimes involves risking your relationship, it's important in the Body of Christ to point out the truth. The resulting love that comes with honest and gentle confrontation can endear you and help them hold you accountable too. In the end, Christ's power is strengthened — even in our sin.

*Sydna A. Massé*

### Ramah's Resource Corner:

#### **A Ministry in Ramah - Post-Abortion Outreach DVD Training Program**

This 2 DVD resource outlines steps to help others discover God's healing after an abortion. New post-abortion ministry leaders, as well as pregnancy care center staff, can benefit from this resource. **"A Ministry in Ramah"** features Sydna's personal testimony of abortion and the healing God provided through a post-abortion program. Other topics discussed:

- \* The Emotions of Healing
- \* Group Dynamics
- \* Frequently Asked Questions of Leaders
- \* And much more!

This DVD package also includes copies of Ramah resources that are used as reading assignments over three outlined sessions. **"A Ministry in Ramah" was developed to be used with any available post-abortion Bible study program!**

Suggested donation:\$149/\$129(Affiliates)

### From the Word of God:

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Matthew 18:2-6*

