

Next discuss Natural Family Planning. Important points include: scientific proof, low cost (money and time), moral acceptability, and high success rate in a wide variety of cycle situations. NFP is natural – it doesn't interfere with the normal functioning of the body, has absolutely no harmful side effects (though there are some nice beneficial side effects), and it's simple to learn and easy to use. Please stress that **THIS IS NOT THE RHYTHM METHOD** (the old rhythm method was only 65% effective – modern NFP is 98-99% effective if used properly). It is also important to give examples of how it works day to day – charting, decision making, and showing mutual respect.

Discuss the advantages of NFP including communication between husband and wife, increased respect and understanding, relationship building, reversible (can be used to **achieve** pregnancy), decreased divorce rate.

Complete the second class session with a review of key ideas, and a plan for follow up.

“When we first started working on this class we expected the clients to sit there and stare blankly at us as so often happens in a classroom setting – but we’ve been pleasantly surprised at how actively the clients participate in this class. They will often share their own experiences, adding credibility to what we have said. They ask questions that are relevant and usually very astute, they answer questions when asked, and we often receive comments of amazement that they’ve never been told these things. We attribute this to the very intimate nature of the subject matter as well as the casual, comfortable, matter-of-fact way in which we try to approach it.”

Ross & Lisa Novack

{ The class plan used by Elizabeth's New Life Center will be made available upon request. }

RESOURCE GUIDE

AUDIOTAPES:

- Pauline Economom speaking on “Benefits of Teaching NFP in the Pregnancy Help Center,” from the 1997 Heartbeat International Conference, available through Heartbeat International (888) 550- 7577.
- * Dr. Janet Smith’s talk “Contraception, Why Not” 1999 produced by One More Soul (800) 307-7685.
 - * Dr. Chris Kahlenborn’s talk “Contraception: What a Woman Needs to Know” 1998 produced by One More Soul

BOOKS:

- Mercedes Arzu Wilson, *Love and Family: Raising a Traditional Family in a Secular World*, Ignatius Press, 1996.
- * Mercedes Arzu Wilson, *Love & Fertility* (booklet), Family of the Americas Foundation, Inc., 1986, (800) 443-3395.
 - * Dr. John and Sheila Kippley, *The Art of Natural Family Planning*, 4th edition, Couple to Couple League, 1996, (800) 745-8252.
 - * Sheila Kippley, *Breastfeeding and Natural Child Spacing: How Natural Mothering Spaces Babies*, Couple to Couple League.
 - Mary Beth Bonacci, *Real Love: Answers to Your Questions on Dating, Marriage, and the Real Meaning of Sex*, Ignatius Press, 1996.
 - * Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae* (Of Human Life), Translation and commentary by Janet E. Smith, New Hope Publications.
 - * Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World), Pauline Books & Media, 1981.
 - * Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), Pauline Books & Media, 1995.

VIDEOTAPES:

- * *Appreciating Your Fertility* (video), Family of the Americas Foundation, Inc., 1993.
- * *Love & Fertility* (video), Family of the Americas Foundation, Inc., 1989.
- Natural vs. Artificial Family Planning* (video), Family of the Americas Foundation, Inc.
- * *Sex Has A Price Tag* (video), Pam Stenzel, Creative Youth Resources / Youth for Christ

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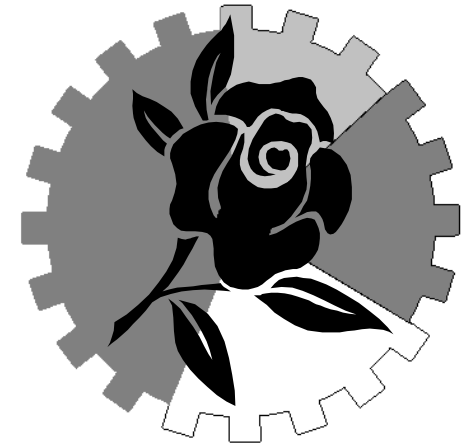
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TEACHING

FERTILITY AWARENESS

IN A PREGNANCY HELP CENTER



By Ross & Lisa Novack

In conjunction with

Elizabeth's New Life Women's

“Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Matt 5:19

“And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.” John 8:32



ONE MORE SOUL

WHY TEACH FERTILITY AWARENESS IN A PREGNANCY HELP CENTER?

Our society teaches instant gratification and pleasure above all, that sex is for fun and has no consequences, that children are a burden, that marriage is an archaic invention, and that babies can be disposed of. Some are never taught what is right and good – not by parents or families, not in school, and often, not even in church. If they are, they're told, "Don't do that," without an explanation of why. As a result, counselors often find that a client has no basis on which to consider changing her behavior and choosing chastity. During a Fertility Awareness (FA) class, we lay a foundation of ideas on which a woman can build a new appreciation of sexual morality.

Truly, by offering a FA class to clients, we are trying to give them information to form their consciences and make good moral choices. In a nutshell, the primary goals of our class are to promote chastity or secondary virginity among unmarried women and advocate Natural Family Planning (NFP) for the married. However, its purpose goes further. We teach clients about the beauty and complexity of their fertility and the value of their life and sexuality. We want to inform them of the physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational risks of sex before marriage, and the harms of using artificial birth control (ABC). We also teach them about the abortifacient effects of many types of ABC like the pill, IUD, Norplant, and Depo-Provera. Studies show that women who use these types of contraceptives can have numerous early abortions each year without ever knowing it. We try to instill in clients a sense of the wonder and gift of their fertility and of pro-creating with God to bring new life into the world.

Furthermore, our clients have a right to know how their bodies work, what God's plan is for sex and marriage, to know the harms of ABC, and that NFP exists and is highly effective and beneficial. With this knowledge, they can become free, joyful, and good. Surely, this is an ambitious task, but we're about planting seeds.

IS IT RIGHT TO TEACH FERTILITY AWARENESS TO OUR CLIENTS?

You may be concerned that by teaching an unmarried woman to read her fertility signs we are giving her the tools to sin without immediate consequence. An action sometimes has two effects, one good and the other bad. Is it okay to do something that could have two such results? The Principle of Double Effect allows us to determine whether such an action is right. Five conditions must be met.

- 1. No other action will produce the good effect without the possibility of also causing the bad effect.** We can't force our clients to change their behavior and they are not likely to hear this information anywhere else.
- 2. The action is good (or at least neutral) and directly produces the good.** Informing consciences directly influences people and may cause them to change their beliefs and behavior. Teaching God's plan for sex and marriage and the beauty and design of our fertility is a good action.
- 3. The intention of the person is good.** We intend (and hope and pray) that the result will be good. We do not want to have women using NFP to contracept or fornicate.
- 4. Conditions are good for producing the good effect.** The clients learn in a positive class setting backed up by videos and brochures.
- 5. The reason for the action is proportional to the seriousness of the indirect bad effect.** The effects of withholding the truth from people are apparent in society (i.e., fornication, adultery, contraception, pornography, abortion, etc.).

By meeting these criteria, we see that it is right and good to teach FA to our clients.

"We can never be wrong about giving people information with which to make good moral choices. We are not culpable or responsible for the choices that others make (provided our coercion or lies do not directly cause their choices). We may, in the end, be culpable for withholding the truth by not telling them."

— Fr. Bill Kramer
St. Luke's Church, Beavercreek, OH

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FERTILITY AWARENESS TEACHER

The class can be in 2 parts. Part 1 covers philosophy and biology. Talk about how a woman's natural fertility works, and how wonderfully God has made our bodies. Discuss God's plan for sex, how the female reproductive system works, and the naturally occurring signs of fertility in a woman's cycle (mucus).

Start off by asking them a few questions to find out what they already know – it usually isn't much and a lot of what they've heard is false.

Then talk to them about God's plan for sex and marriage. Discuss the twofold purpose of sex – "Babies" and "Bonding".

- Bonding – We talk about chastity and WHY sex is for marriage, as well as the emotional and psychological effects of pre-marital sex.
- Babies – The 'two become one' so completely that 9 months later, you're picking out a name. Openness to life when you have sex with your spouse is like saying, *"I love you so much that I want to make another person just like you!"*

Stress that **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE** – even though they're not virgins, it's never too late to choose chastity.

We show the video, "Appreciating Your Fertility" and explain the female reproductive system using a poster – talk about all the parts, what each does, and what happens in a normal cycle.

In part 2 of the class, review all the concepts that you covered in part 1 – especially God's plan for sex and marriage, and the naturally occurring signs of fertility.

Then show the video, "Artificial vs. Natural" and discuss the effects of artificial birth control. Try to cover every major kind of ABC including all the chemical kinds, barrier methods, and sterilization.