

# Broken Branches

“Take courage! God has healing in store for you; so take courage” (Tb. 5:10)

Issue 105 - June/July 2015

## **RIP**

*Dedicated to the memory of my very dear and precious friend and staunch supporter Rev Fr Raymond Wells. His voice and his shaky writing on the envelope always assured me of love and support. “Keep going Annie you can do it” were his words. Now returned to the lord. RIP dear friend, I will miss you.*

## **I Refuse to Believe**

I refuse to believe that the world is so poor that babies have to die because.....

I refuse to believe that preborn babies and infants and the future are so devalued because...

I refuse to believe that pre born babies are “waste material” because....

I refuse to believe that women have so deeply forgotten what it means to be woman because.....

I refuse to believe that we have forgotten that children always mean that the future is assured and that the past is remembered because.....

*I refuse to believe in such evil because it means that God’s work and masterpiece has failed. This I refuse to believe.*  
Anne

## **Death Penalty**

Dear friends I don’t usually get involved in other “death issues” because there is enough written about them and I would prefer to concentrate on abortion death and its pain and sexual abuse and its wounds and pain but the recent events in our part of the world, that is, the execution of two Australian citizens by shooting, in Indonesia, (Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran) and an accusation that I am one eyed and “don’t care about other life matters” has moved me so much that I have been forced to speak.

First of all I have to say that I am rabidly pro-life and that means all life. I cannot defend the life of a tiny infant and then agree that the death penalty is OK that surely is a hypocrisy. I simply try and stay out of other

issues including euthanasia because I know that there are others dealing with such issues and doing it well also. But in the instance of this latest attack on life, that is the shooting of those two young men in Indonesia I need to say something.

I wept for them, their families and friends. I had many difficulties because of all which had gone on. These executions (together with six others at the same time) were carried out on the two Australian men 10 years after their crime and whilst the court processes were still in progress.

The executions were carried out on two men who had very obviously undergone total rehabilitation during their stay in prison (one became a Pastor of religion and the other a distinguished artist).

During the ten years in prison much work had been done to assist them and to bring about a change in them and indeed we saw the end result of all the work and grace which helped to change the young men from drug couriers to reformed young men who went to their deaths different than the young men who had been arrested ten years earlier. They went to their deaths praying and rehabilitated and showing that it is possible to rehabilitate those who wish to be so.

What a fantastic model this might have been. What fantastic example Indonesia might have been for the rest of the world showing that drug rehabilitation using their model is possible as shown within their own system. Instead what was shown was a President who had made up his mind and nothing was to change it. A President without Mercy. Pity his own people.

What we saw is that rehabilitation is not the end desire of Indonesian Law but legalised murder-how much like abortion, legalised murder. Abortion too is in most countries legalised murder under the title of “right” the death penalty is legalised murder under the title of “law”

What great lunacy are we seeing when the death penalty is used to stop the so called drug trafficking when

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Or email: [anne@victimsofabortion.com.au](mailto:anne@victimsofabortion.com.au)

clearly it has done nothing of the sort. The drug trade flourishes in all nations and death penalty seems to change nothing. The death penalty has not acted as a deterrent because those involved are already trapped in some hell or another. What a better way it would have been if the model used to rehabilitate the two young men could have been replicated in order to stem drug war.

What I found so disturbing in the whole sad saga was the lack of respect and mercy by the President of Indonesia. What I found strange is the fact that he was unable to note the rehabilitation of these two men which occurred during their stay in his prison system and maybe used what worked with them to help other prisoners.

What I found amazing was the fact that this president could not join with other international personages to find a way to stop all drug trafficking.

What happened in his prison system could have been used, expanded to help others. What occurred could be replicated for other places where drug couriers are drawn to.

I was reminded of the recent meeting and uniting of Mr Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest (entrepreneur from Australia) together with the Holy Father Pope Francis and the Grand Imam Al-Azhar of the University of Cairo, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who joined forces to try and eradicate human trafficking. It needs willingness and a united front from all interested to destroy this thing called "drugs" as it needs a united effort to destroy the demon called abortion.

President Widodo of Indonesia chose such an easy way for him...death by shooting. His kind of solution. Not by drugs but by shooting. Not much different the outcome, still death. Like abortion, death is still death of the child whether by chemical means or dismemberment or potassium injection...it's still death. Legal death like the death penalty.

It has been argued with me that the child in the womb is innocent and doesn't deserve to die...agreed. No argument from me there, and drug couriers are drug couriers who in most cases are also addicts and therefore all manner of suffering imposed on them.

I am reminded of the words of the late Holy Father St John Paul II "not even a murderer loses his personal dignity and God makes Himself its guarantor. As St Ambrose teaches, God did not want to punish Cain for the murder, as He wants the repentance of the sinner" (EV 9)

Our present Holy Father Pope Francis recently spoke some beautiful words on this topic "when the death penalty is applied persons are killed not for present aggressions, but for harm caused in the past. Moreover, it is applied to persons whose capacity to harm is not present but has already been neutralised and who find themselves deprived of their freedom." (Zenit News 22/3/2015).

These words of Pope Francis speak directly to those two Australian citizens who were executed recently and to all the other prisoners who have been, are, or to be so treated in the future. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is not found a way which is humane to rehabilitate those who have failed but the only way via the means of legally imposed death. This goes also for other nations who still impose the death penalty. It hasn't stopped what it was meant to stop and dehumanizes and cheapens life.

It is no wonder that we have such disrespect for life at all levels when laws decree that life can be disposed because it's cheap.

## **POST ABORTION DEPRESSION**

### **A SOUL'S JOURNEY TO FIND ITSELF**

It is important to have a clear outline or understanding of what depression is before we can posit some reasons for its existence. A possible understanding is that it is a marked decline or lowering of energy which is needed for day to day living. Indeed it can become so lowered that

conscious living becomes intolerable and at times it becomes easier to retreat into safe areas of make believe or even psychosis.

Depression can begin with a triggering event, but the event itself is not the cause. The cause or causes maybe many and in the guise of psycho/spiritual and/or physical or a combination of all of them. However, the primary cause is usually a deep wound, unresolved grief, unrecognised grief, important loss, deep crisis, abandonment, rejection and so on. In its mildest form depression is something, which is experienced by all. It is a state of mind and spirit, which are not harmonious.

Depression manifests visibly an internal dissonance. There is something deep within which remains hidden and which is causing pain – yet continues to remain hidden, and until the “whatever” is brought into the light

it will continue to cause tension and a lowering of *joi-de-vivre*.

In its more severe form depression is debilitating to a degree which is extraordinary. It can paralyse and can induce a meaninglessness unimaginable by a non-depression sufferer.

Post abortion depression can begin with the former, that is, mild form and can be understood as something, which is disturbing yet it has no name. At this level it can be manageable. However, post abortion depression does not

remain at the mild level but progressively intensifies as meaning is sought for the feeling of unease. Indeed it could be said that if the abortion experience remains the nameless event which is not permitted to be brought to the conscious memory, acknowledged as something which was life changing and serious and validated as an experience, then severe depression is the response to the tension within.

Post abortion depression, the depression that is not chemically based (or chemical imbalance) can also or more specifically be understood as illness or even malaise of the wounded spirit.

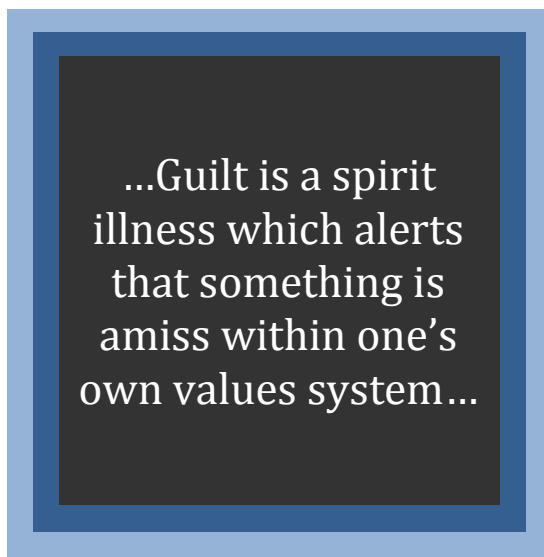
This kind of depression when treated as a biologic illness (drug therapy) can and is damaging. Spirit illness alerts that something is amiss within one’s own values system, within one’s own conscience. As a result, guilt becomes the self-punishment and is a function performed by the “I” because of the loss of self-esteem, and a devaluing of self. Psychic and/or spiritual disorders (which I believe Post abortion Syndrome, grief,

trauma is) can only be treated or perhaps even resolved by using moral and spiritual dimensions whilst appreciating that the cognitive dimension is also involved and important.

## Book Review: Redeeming Grief

Dear friends,

Several months ago I asked a priest friend Fr Marian Faliszek SVD from PNG to please write a book review for me on Redeeming Grief, Abortion and its Pain. And I have recently sent him a copy of the second book Hidden Pain hoping that he might do the same for this one. I present to you his review of Redeeming Grief. I thank him for the time he took first to read the book and then to compose the review. Thank you Father Marian.



“Since in PNG an abortion is not yet legalised and Melanesian culture is its system of values puts life as the highest one, to which a community, a relationship and an exchange are subordinated (Ennio, Mantovani 1991. Traditional and Present Day Melanesian Values and Ethics. Occasional Papers of the MI, No. 7), there are always some cases of killing other persons motivated by payback, a fight, an unusual birth of twins etc.

It does not exclude an abortion as a determination of pregnancy using the different traditional or

domestic methods. More and more this issue is discussed in the public forum and mass media using very often the gentle or soft terminologies such as birth control, breaking pregnancy, and others. Some medical institutions or centres involved with Family Planning are advertising different so called “safe” means to stop pregnancy which in fact have abortive results.

A presented book was generated by the experience of counselling begun in 1995 and having counselled over 1700 grieving women caused by one or more abortions. This experience led Mrs Anne Lastman to establish an office for Victims of Abortion. (1996).

It is evident that all women after an abortion experience silent suffering, very often unknown by the community, neither shared with confident person who can help and who can help to decrease intense intrinsic grief.

Counselling by a professional person as well as confession by Catholics, which includes reconciliation with herself and her baby and God, can be very helpful

even decisive for the further life. As Mrs Lastman writes in her foreword “the book offers hope to all who read it, that those who suffer from the abortion experience can “redeem” their suffering and grief. Often this is easier in the context of religious faith, whereby the suffering is raised to a spiritual level.”

This book wants to encourage all women and girls and everyone who has been involved in an abortion activity/experience to confront the reality of abortion, or reality of sexual abuse and neglect.

Post abortion grief, trauma, psychosis is a real situation when a person is becoming aware of right to life, when pro abortive influence stops and a mind of girl/woman is changing. Abortion terminates human life in the mother’s womb but the only living victim of such a procedure remains the girl/woman.

Abortion must be distinguished from pregnancy loss, which also causes psychic grief, but the trauma following abortion is incomparably greater.

“Woman” who is designed by God/nature to be life giving mother is with abortion “voluntarily” agreeing to kill her baby who needs only a particular time to be born, to smile to her, to speak to her, and to confirm its happiness and gratitude to be with her and feel secure.

All these forthcoming experiences are not present at the moment of her decision to have the abortion or to be forced into the abortion or to permit the abortion, but they are coming after that deepening at the same time regret towards all these lost experiences. How far is this grief associated by a consciousness that a human person was killed, depends from many different circumstances. In many countries, especially western ones, the abortion process is placed as a medical procedure.

In this context, an individual, personal life of the unborn baby is totally devalued. Strong influence on such understanding of human life, makes many girls/women the victims of abortion. Where abortion is presented as a solution without any moral estimation, proper understanding of this action then moral responsibility of the particular girl/woman depends on age, maturity, spiritual, physical and psychological conditions. Therefore, very crucial is the social and moral environment, which could be pro-life, promoting and supporting proper awareness of the dignity of human life, its safety from the beginning to the natural death, taking care for those who need healing of post abortion trauma or syndrome.

Mentioned above, very liberal and amoral approach to abortion, which is accompanied by contraceptive or “anti-life” mentality can morally confuse many people, participating in such activities: on a passive or an active way. Both sides should be aware about their moral

responsibilities of human life, both of them can be affected by post abortion trauma and grief.

This Book *Redeeming Grief* contains twenty four chapters, life stories and witnesses including a prayer for the healing of abortion wounds which can give an answer for so many questions, the solutions for many doubts, showing at the same time the Path of Hope in order to save every human life, both the unborn ones and the lives of the victims of abortions, because suicide is sometimes is considered as a final solution to escape from such grief.

Mentioned above, life stories taken from the Bible (chapters 7 and 8), families (chapter 13) and individual persons (chapters 3,7,8,9,18,22) made this book very authentic and able to convince everyone who reads it to follow “pro-life” attitude and to avoid any dramatic situation of an unborn baby as well as of a living person affected by such trauma.

*Thank your dear Fr Marian, I appreciate the thoroughness of your review. And please dear readers remember that this book is still available from me or the publisher Freedom Publishing, Koorong Books Melbourne and Sydney, The Central Catholic Bookstore Melbourne and Gattos Christian Bookshop in Perth.*

## **New Study**

On 30<sup>th</sup> April, deeply embedded within our local daily newspaper *The Herald Sun* was a very short story about breastfeeding cutting the risk of breast cancer by more than a quarter. Breastfeeding was found, in this study, to cut the threat of the cancer returning by 30%. The researchers believe that the protective effect is caused by a drop in levels of oestrogen which is believed and known to be a trigger for this cancer. My own cancer has been said to be oestrogen receptive and yet I breastfed all my four children so I guess it’s all in the draw.

## **PP Australia: Informed Consent form:**

Through the mail recently (thank you Cynthia) arrived a copy of Planned Parenthood Informed Consent Form. As I read the form I shuddered at the possibilities and wondered how true “informed consent” can be given by woman when she is presenting for an abortion. Indeed one of the possible “complications” cited is of interest to us, that is, No. 1. “Post abortion syndrome” and then wrongly calling this “blood clots accumulating in the uterus, bleeding or pain requiring another suctioning.” Please read and then see how it is impossible to be able to say that someone in a state of crisis, fear, confusion, because of an unplanned pregnancy or under a threat if pregnancy continues and then reading all these complications can really be able to say that she gives

“informed consent.” Imagine not only the death of a baby but any of these possible risks.

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD of AUSTRALIA Continuing a tradition of caring for women: Confirmation of Informed Consent.....** The procedure of a First Trimester Termination

The surgical termination of pregnancy takes approximately 6-10 minutes. Once the client is anaesthetised the doctor gently inserts a speculum (the instrument used during a Pap smear). Once the speculum is in place the doctor will administer local anaesthetic to the cervix. The cervix will then be gently dilated (opened) to allow for a plastic tube to enter the uterus and suction the contents. The procedure is carried out under a choice of anaesthetics: local, twilight or general anaesthesia.

**Complications from First - Trimester Termination of Pregnancy: Complications include:**

Post abortion syndrome - blood clots accumulating in the uterus, bleeding or pain requiring another suctioning.

Excessive bleeding that may require a blood transfusion

Residual products of conception may be left in the uterus, requiring a repeat procedure

Infections, most of which are easily identified and treated if the woman carefully observes the discharge instructions given and explained to them prior to leaving the facility

A tear in the cervix that may require stitches.

Perforation of the wall of the uterus and/or organs that may heal themselves or may require surgical repair or rarely hysterectomy.

Failure of termination of pregnancy that does not end the pregnancy which requires that the procedure is repeated.

Excessive bleeding due to failure of the uterus to contract that may require a blood transfusion.

Incompetent cervix/stenosed cervix (too tight or too loose cervix which may impair future fertility).

Asherman's syndrome (cessation of periods and adhesions in uterus that may impair future fertility).

Depression or mood disturbance, suicide

False passage/channel in the cervix, not allowing entry into the uterus.

**RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ANAESTHESIA**

**ANAPHYLAXIS** - acute allergic reaction to the drugs used. Incidence: approximately 1 in 1,000,000. None of the drugs used in this clinic are implicated. The emergency drugs and equipment required to treat this are readily at hand.

**ASPIRATION OF STOMACH CONTENTS** - this is where a patient vomits under anaesthetic. There were 11 non-fatal and 3 fatal cases reported in 4 years (1.76 million cases). For this reason we require all patients to be fasted.

**AWARENESS** - this means being able to remember things whilst anaesthetised. This is more common with the light sedation techniques used in Day Surgery.

**CARDIAC DYSRHYTHMIAS** - irregularity in heartbeat. 3 cases reported in 1.76 million in healthy people. A slowing of the heartbeat may be encountered during dilation of the cervix or neck of the womb. A drug called Atropine is routinely given to counteract this; it makes the heart race.

**EPILEPTIC TYPE FITS** - these may occur in people who are either epileptic or have the potential to become epileptic in the future. Some of the anaesthetic drugs or the local anaesthetic may cause such fits. They are not used in people identified as epileptics.

**HYPOXIA** - lack of oxygen to the brain. This is usually as a result of decreased breathing due to excessive sedation or airway obstruction. Airway obstruction may occur in those who routinely snore and those who are obese. Continuous monitoring of blood oxygen is routinely used in this Clinic and supplemental oxygen is always available.

**LARYNGEAL SPASM** - this is forceful closure of the vocal cords causing little flow of air into the lungs. It is usually as a result of a painful stimulus in a patient who is between light and deep sleep. Laryngeal spasm is readily treated. All the facilities are available at this clinic.

**THROMBOPHLEBITIS/BRUISING** - some people may experience pain, redness and swelling in the vein into which the drugs are injected - thrombophlebitis. In most cases this is short lived. Bruising at the site of injection is due usually to a difficult cannulation or passage of the needle into the vein.

**MALIGNANT HYPERTENSION** - Incidence: 4 cases in 1.76 million anaesthetics 2 deaths.

# Letters

Dear Anne,

Have just finished reading your new book Hidden Pain, my dear when you do find time to do all the things you do? It is a difficult read but a must read for both religious and laity and I like your chapter on the perpetrator very much you handled that with delicacy and mercy. Well done dear, I thought your first book was very good. This is better if it could be possible. Hope your health is holding up because we need your voice amongst us.

God Bless you

Margaret K  
Vic.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your ongoing work with abortion counselling and newsletters and everything else you do. Your last newsletter should be copied and placed in every parish piety stall. It was so good and they keep getting better.

God Bless

Sally O.  
Melb.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

I am getting really tired of reading your newsletters about all the "woes" and about women's wrongdoings so please remove me from your newsletter list immediately I never asked to be placed on it in the first place.

Yours sincerely,

Carol K. Vic.

*Dear Carol...done! Removed. And I am sorry if you have been receiving something you haven't wanted. Someone must have requested for you to receive the newsletter. Please dear friends make sure that if you ask me to send a newsletter the recipient knows she is being put on the list like Carol it could be upsetting for her.*

Dear Anne,

This is the first time I have written to you and I just want to say how much I have appreciated your sending me the newsletter even if I haven't been able to help you financially. Now I can send you a little donation. Thank you for the information you keep giving us and I have been able to use what I have learnt from you several times. I hope your health continues to improve and you will be able to keep going.

God Bless you

Mary S  
Adelaide.

*Dear Mary thank you for your kind words and donation I appreciate both. I am glad that you have been able to use some of the information from the newsletter. This is partially why I write the newsletter both as a way of teaching and help with funds and in this way I can keep going.*

*The funds help to pay for the running of the office, newsletter production, and going to talks where I am trying to teach others to be aware of abortion grief. I use every opportunity to help other professionals especially to know about abortion aftermath so that slowly others will emerge who will understand and know how to deal with abortion pain and sexual abuse pain. I hope that when I finish there will be others who will take over because I have helped them see. It's my hope.*

*Again I can only do this because of the help I receive from my readers. Anne*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your work you are an inspiration to me and you and your girls are in my daily prayers. Keep well dear.

Louise  
Narre Warren

When exposed to certain triggering agents these people may develop the condition of Malignant Hyperpyrexia. In this condition, all the muscles of the body contract causing the body to overheat; untreated mortality is 86% however specific treatment is available. Drugs to reverse this condition are available at all of our day surgeries.

## Her acknowledgement and signature

*I acknowledge that I have been advised that there are occasions when the expected outcomes of the procedure are not always achieved and would still like to proceed with the operation. I also agree to my blood being taken for serology in the event of a sharps injury I also agree to the administration of medications and other forms of treatment associated with the reasons for this admission as is deemed necessary by the medical officers attending to me.*

*Post-operative care and instructions have been given to me in writing and also explained to me.*

*I have had the opportunity to discuss these with my doctor and the staff of PPA.*

*I have also been given a 24 hour contact number and understand that I should call if I am unwell.*

*I also acknowledge that the Planned Parenthood of Australia disclaims any and all liability for any injury and/or other damages I may cause or sustain in the event that I should ignore, overlook or not accept the advice, cautions or warnings that have been given to me in these matters.*

*I have not varied or withheld any information regarding my medical history and answered all of the questions asked by the doctor honestly and understand that failure to provide all of the information may affect my procedure and subsequent recovery.*

*I acknowledge that for my protection and safety, I have arranged to be taken home from the centre by someone who can be responsible for me, such as an adult member of the family or friend, and that I should not attempt to go home by myself following discharge from the centre.*

*I have also been cautioned against driving a vehicle, operating any equipment or machinery, signing a legal document or making important decisions for up to 24 hours after discharge from the centre.*

*Pregnancy tests may remain positive for days and sometimes weeks after your operation. If you are starting on the Pill you can begin on the sugar pills tonight or the following morning. It is extremely important they you provide us with the correct contact details in case we need to contact you with results of pathology tests. Planned Parenthood of Australia cannot be held responsible for any adverse outcome if we cannot contact you.....*

Dear friends, as I come to the end of another newsletter please don't forget about the **annual Life Coalition dinner this year (27<sup>th</sup> June) to be held at Mannix College** (no stairs) and ask to be placed at my table. Remember a portion of the fee will go to me as a fund raiser. The contact to book for the event is Anne Marie Kiely (03)98160800 or email [amkiely@family.org.au](mailto:amkiely@family.org.au) and cost per ticket is \$75 pp and \$60 for students. Annemarie's mobile is 0447 352 252. Would love to see you and can we make it two tables this year!

Please help \$\$\$\$\$ the kitty has about dried up as I have lost my main funder after many years of support. The person whom I knew was always there is no longer there. He has withdrawn support. So please help. Also see if you can purchase a copy of the new book *Hidden Pain* or even *Redeeming Grief*, all this helps me to keep going. I can only do it with your help.

Please continue to pray for me (more tests coming up) and for Melissa, Frances, Yvonne, Melita, Kerri, Charlee, Amy, Susan, Eve, Cameron, (phone counselling) Anna, Luci, Marilyn, Marlene (new one) Mary, Dolores, Diamante, (new) Sandra, Anne Marie, Ronnie (new) Olivia (new).

*Thank you Maureen W for your ongoing support  
Thank you Tim. Thank you Christopher S, Bernie O,  
Laurie, Frances M. I appreciate your care.*



**Anne Lastman**

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## Broken Branches – By email!

Dear Friends,

Please email me at [anne@victimsofabortion.com.au](mailto:anne@victimsofabortion.com.au) to be added to the email list.



## REDEEMING GRIEF

NEW REVISED EDITION!

**REDEEMING GRIEF** is a reflection of over 17 years of counselling and study of abortion grief, which is experienced by some women who choose to undergo this elective procedure. These reflections are the result of listening to over 1500 personal stories and listening to the expressions used by the women as they speak about their decision to abort the life of their child. These reflections then attempt to reconstruct the meaning that this procedure has

had for the aborting woman and how this one procedure has been the catalyst for life changes.

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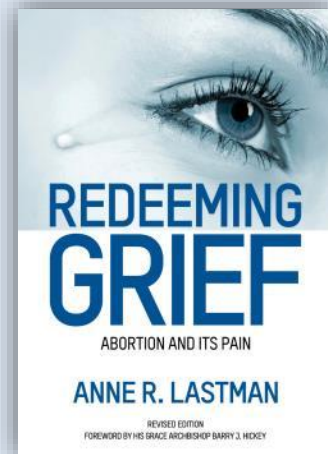
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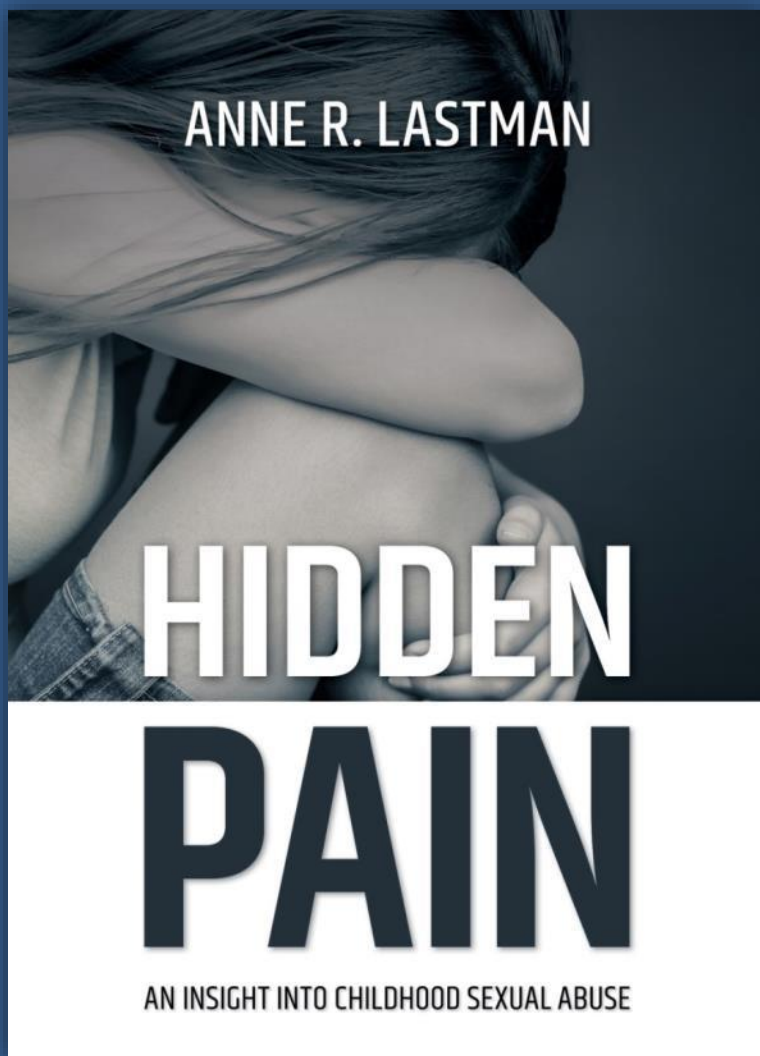
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## NEW BOOK – HIDDEN PAIN



*HIDDEN PAIN* is written about memories which are hidden and cannot be spoken out loud. It is a book about shame, pain, sorrow and lives which have gone wrong both for victims, families, and perpetrators. Sexual abuse of children is common in all communities, in all societies, and yet it's still one of the last remaining taboos. It is something which cannot be spoken about because it's so awful, so inappropriate that it cannot be discussed. Yet discussed it must be, because the children are crying and pleading to be helped.

This is not a step by step guide to dealing with abuse. It is the result of my engagement with those who have come to me originally for post abortion counselling and on further investigation it was found that abuse (especially in cases of multiple abortions) existed in their history. It is my hope that *HIDDEN PAIN* can be of help to those who read it and more so be vigilant and not to turn away when a child is suffering.

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