

Broken Branches

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

Issue 106 – Aug/Sept 2015

A Special letter

Dear friends I promised one of my “girls” Anne Marie, not her real name, but you have been praying for her and me as we have worked together, not finished yet, over the last few months that if she wrote her story for me and you I would give it front page space, she has, so herewith:

February, 9 2015-a day that will be etched into my heart forever. That's the day I had an abortion, the day I killed my baby. I have never really given much thought to abortion. It was always something that others did. I didn't agree with it, as I knew it was a sin against God. However, today as I reflect, I am astonished that I ended up terminating my pregnancy, yet at the time I felt that there was no way out.

Three weeks prior, I had unexpectedly discovered I was pregnant. I am 44 years old and have 4 teenage children in my care. What should have been a wonderfully joyous occasion for me turned into a situation of despair, desperation and depression?

And so began my cycle of “fixing the problem” My head was spinning and I didn't feel in control of my life. I had to take time off work and I spent my days visiting doctors to discuss my situation. They all informed me that it was no big deal to terminate. It's simple they said. I can even end the pregnancy as easily as taking a tablet, I went to see “counsellors” at fertility clinics who also advised me that termination is a simple procedure and very normal. Women do it all the time. I was repeatedly informed that at my age, I was at high risk of many complications if I continued with the pregnancy. All I was doing was terminating “cells”.

As the days passed, I fell deeper and deeper into depression. I made an appointment to speak with a genetic counsellor at a private hospital opposite the Austin Hospital and the lady there spent an hour listening to me crying as I explained my fear of having a baby at my age. She pulled out a book and showed me all the risks involved with pregnancies with older women. She also told me that many Catholics have many abortions and are sent to the Austin to have the procedure.

I walked in and out of abortion clinics four times. I didn't want to be pregnant yet I didn't want to have an abortion. Even the abortion doctor whom I saw in my distressed state, informed me that I was “blessed” as I already had four children and why would I want to make my life financially difficult if I had another. He also

told me to hurry up and decide because he has a business to run and is very busy. I must say looking back, those places were full to capacity. The rooms were full of young girls who were all calmly sitting and waiting patiently for their turn. I was the only one that was older and I was the only one who was in a very distressed state.

After three exhausting weeks I succumbed to the termination. I wanted and desperately needed my life to return back to normal. I was mixing up my depression with being pregnant and I could not stand one more minute of it.

My life however, didn't return to normal, I felt empty inside and the realization that I had killed my own child was extremely hard for me to accept. I hated myself. I felt shame. I felt deep guilt and most of all I felt regret. I was still depressed and I would cry uncontrollably. I also feared God and I was afraid of retribution would follow. Exactly one week after the procedure, I was crying uncontrollably and I begged God to help me. He did. I stumbled across Anne Lastman's name whilst googling abortion regret. Two days later I went to see her.

Thank you God for giving me Anne. Anne has helped me to heal. She has taught me that God's love, Mercy and forgiveness is far greater than my sin. With Anne's help my baby has a name and I have a plaque made remembering my child. I also know that my baby has forgiven me and we will be re united in heaven one day. Six months have passed since my abortion. It is the single thing that I think about every day and the one thing that I deeply deeply regret. Abortion changes you. If only I had met Anne before the abortion.

Anne-Marie.

Dear friends as you read “Anne Marie's” letter please note all the post abortion symptoms that I written about over the years. Note the stress, even the lies told to the woman, the coldness and distance of the abortion clinic staff, the ambivalence this woman went through. Even the “abortionist” who used biblical language “blessed” that she had other children in order to hurry her into making her decision. And to think that her fear was that she may have had a difficulty with her pregnancy because of her age and the genetics counsellor who told her that “Catholics have many abortions and are sent to Austin Hospital for the procedure” was appalling. Nothing else can be said about this.

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Send to:

Victims of Abortion, National Office

PO Box 6094, Vermont South, Vic, 3133, Australia.

Or email: anne@victimsofabortion.com.au

2015 Life Dinner

It was with the greatest of pleasure to watch Tanya and Ben O'Brien be awarded the Charles Francis Life Award, 2015, These two very deserving people who through thick and thin through so much work to save the babies outside abortion clinics and to help those who might respond to offers of help to save their babies then accompany the women with help as needed. It was a joy and great pleasure when their names were called out at the Life Dinner at Mannix College. This year there were nearly 300 guests in attendance and as usual there were many worthy nominations for the award, but I felt great joy when Ben and Tanya's names were called out and look forward to next year's event with anticipation and another worthy recipient.

The guest speaker this year was Mary Doogan a Catholic midwife who has experienced much persecution for her pro-life conviction and beliefs. Mary was forced to leave her work or be involved in abortions and as such has not been able to work for some years. It seems that the matter of conscience and being able to exercise ones conscience in UK is same all around the world and not just here in Australia.

When did we lose the right to be free to exercise our right to our own conscience? When were we found dozing and not see that our own basic human rights were being taken from us, because that is what has happened or perhaps did this happen when we surrendered the lives of our babies then we surrendered our own rights?

Because it seems to be that our rights have become eroded. It is appalling that under the law a doctor and a medical professional cannot choose not to participate in an abortion he/she is forced to collude in one. Even if he/she doesn't want to participate must refer to someone who has no qualms about carrying out an abortion. A nurse cannot refuse to attend to the procedure. Then I have to ask, what about me, when I encourage those who come to me not to abort, does that mean that I am acting against the law? I have just worked to help a young mum to keep her baby did I act against the law? I have helped to "save" 20 babies does that mean that I committed a crime? Because I spoke to the mums before they had their abortions and spoke to them about the

pain which is possible following an abortion and the joys possible having the baby. And a promise that I personally would walk with them all the way through if necessary. Does that mean I committed I crime? What kind of world do we live in?

Why have we been sleeping these last thirty years? Why have we permitted laws to be enacted which not only permitted infants to be slaughtered in the womb to full term without even a thought for pain felt, we have also surrendered our rights to all things right and good. Why have the rights of the few screeching radicals mattered more than the silent majority? And herein I think lies the answer. The silent majority. Not enough people made noise. Not enough people refused to allow the screeching radicals to have their way and so the demonic rights were passed into law.

And how to wind this back? With great difficulty.

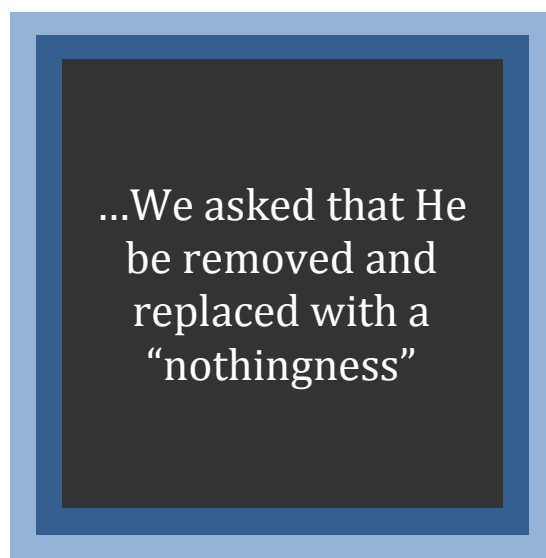


Mary Doogan and yours truly

PAS COUNSELLING

Post abortion grief counselling, whether we like it or not, is a fairly new phenomenon. It is only in the last 20 years or so that its reality has been accepted and counselling of this type of grief is also evolving. Whilst grief counselling itself is not new, abortion grief counselling is, and because this is so, the reality is that we are learning more and more about the human person who has experienced this trauma, and indeed the fragility of this person, and how to deal with this fragility. The delicate balance between the heart, mind and spirit of the individual becomes clearly visible when dealing with an individual suffering this syndrome.

Post Abortion grief, in many ways, is a misnomer. Initially the individual rings or goes to a counsellor because of the abortion. It is the abortion response, which is uppermost in the mind and ostensibly causing pain. However fuelling this, are other anti-life events in her life, which ultimately contributed to the decision to abort and the ensuing grief. Post abortion grief can be a misnomer because it assumes that the grief is a single issue (abortion) and that once this is discussed at least several times (even by phone) then all will be well and life will return to normal. Post abortion grief has a genesis and the genesis appears to be the decision to abort and the abortion itself. This is true, but it is my belief that the grief, anguish, sorrows, regret are related to the death of the baby but also to the death or destruction of something else.



There is a new type of personal suffering and communal suffering which I am witnessing on a daily basis yet it is so subtle that it is insinuating itself without effort and we are missing its presence.

I have said it publicly and in private many times that there is more to abortion than meets the eye and until we see clearly what that “something” else is then the abortion rate will continue to increase, the euthanasia issue will escalate until it finds its “home” in our laws. Artificial reproductive technologies will become more and more monstrous and in due course we may even begin to question our very humanity.

Indeed all of these things have come to pass. Abortion has found its place in our laws, euthanasia is seeking its place there too. The deconstruction of family is marching strongly towards this same fate, SSM recognition is now clamouring for recognition so what is happening to push and fuel this anti-life mentality which permeates society?

When did our society fall into such a deep asleep to wake up and find all things changed?

We need to look into our hearts and minds and see what it is that we have refused and whom we have rejected and asked to leave our lives and to really see.

We are seeing a God less generation.

A society who refuses to give God the honour due to Him. A society which has asked him to be removed from all manner of public life, of school life, of family life of personal life, of worship life. We have asked that He be removed and replaced with a “nothingness.” with emptiness. With materials, and with political correctness which all are empty of emotion and feeling and gentleness. Political correctness is a spawn of modernism. Political correctness is an all-encompassing nothingness. It does not distinguish between right and wrong. It blurs all. This is the aim of political

correctness and it is achieving its goal. How far will it go remains to be seen.

Sale of Foetal Body Parts

Much has been reported in in pro-life media in the last month about Planned Parenthood of America being found to be in huge commerce with body parts of aborted infants and by this I mean huge amounts of \$\$\$\$ involved and sales.

An undercover expose was carried out which found that this evil

organisation has been involved in carefully facilitating abortions so that limbs and torso’s of infants not damaged so that premium amounts could be received for them from markets seeking organs.

There has been so much news on this matter on pro-life networks and yet dear friends the secular media has been deathly silent. Why? Why does the secular media express outrage over Cecil the lion who was hunted for sport and dies (though being cruel to animals is not funny) but millions and millions of infant whose body parts are dismembered and then sold for profit don’t even rate a mention in any of the news services. Why has there been no outrage.

One single animal killed and there is an international outcry and melodrama and almost an international incidence with animal activists becoming involved and calling for the hunter Dr Palmer to be “hanged.” Celebrities calling for extermination. And this over a lion and yet not one of the eminent celebrities Messrs Messing, Osbourne, Piers Morgan, Kimmel, et al, can spare a moment of compassion for the infants whose bodies have been broken and prepared

ready for sale cannot bring themselves to mention them or weep for them?

Cecil the Lion's death reveals how our society can be manipulated to get all worked up over animals and beasts lured out of their sanctuaries to be hunted, but look with glazed eyes when the sanctuary of the womb becomes a killing field over thousands of times a day in every nation on earth. Actor and comedian Ricky Gervais has lamented the feline's demise on Twitter with a photo of Cecil with these words "I'm struggling to imagine anything more beautiful than this."

Obviously his imagination is limited and he has no children if he cannot imagine his own child in the womb and out of the womb being more beautiful. How tragic.

Why is it possible that animals have rights but infants in the womb have lost all rights? Because dear friends their mothers have given away their child's rights. The very persons who should have protected them most fiercely did not do so. Indeed they protect the animals and now they walk around with a poodle dressed in mink with a diamond encrusted collar. Indeed we have reached a time of lunacy.

Dear friends for those who have computer here several links to the foetal sales if you wish to read. It isn't pleasant reading so I warn you just in case you wish not to read.

Look up the Lifesitenews website there is so much information there is heart wrenching.

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/its-another-boy-4th-video-shows-planned-parenthood-director-negotiating-fet>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/pulse/truth-lies-lifesitenews-john-henry-westen-hosts-tv-special-on-planned-parenthood>

A New Feminism

Dear friends, we need a new feminism, yes a feminism. Not a rabid feminist type of feminism but a feminism of love and life. A feminism based on the dignity of us women and the dignity unique to us and to our vocation as women and life. A dignity which is engraved and etched within our being and forgotten for a time. Dear friends we have a need to reawaken this "new feminism" and dear friends we have a need for our males to help us to reawaken this feminism and help us to find this to welcome this and to love this because unless we do this the civilisation of love and life will not come into being. This civilisation will descend into chaos. We the feminine can rescue civilisation but we need to do is as the feminine but not as feminist and we need our males to help us to reclaim the feminine in order that we may be able to do this.

This needs to be done because it is women who are the first to respond to life, to teach life, and to recognise life in the image of God. It is our recognition and respect of this unique honour that gives women an insight into the task that God has permitted woman to be collaborators with Him. For this reason it is she who must return to the feminine (not feminist) and begin to rebuild a culture of life.

The "feminist" has built a "culture" of death. She has helped to build in a unique way the culture of death through her consent and demand for abortion and has suffered deeply. A return to the feminine and culture of life and love and a rebuilding of woman and her unique design will remodel and return women to design as God had fashioned her. The new woman can speak to her brethren/sisters because she has known what lies behind the culture of death. She has been there. She has known the pain and does not want her beloved sisters to experience the same pain. Like the Woman at the Well (Jn 4:4) she can tell her story because she has been there and knows the pain-of abortion. She knows that behind abortion there is a lie. Behind abortion there is no freedom-behind abortion – there is no peace- behind abortion there is no quick fix-behind abortion there is sorrow and tears.

The feminine and the feminist are two sides of the same coin however the negative one (feminist) is the side which has held sway for some time and has brought much pain on society and the feminine, withdrew. It is now time for the strong feminine to rise and build and lead and allow her unique design to manifest. After all she was the last creation of God's designs and this because she was His masterpiece.

Reconciliation

An opportunity presented itself to speak to some women about reconciliation with an aborted infant. There were several women within the group who had had abortions and so I had to be careful and not wound with my words as this was a social gathering and not a professional gathering.

I must admit that I wish that this wouldn't happen, as I would like to be "normal" and have a latte and vanilla slice or chocolate éclair, and talk about new perfumes and fashions and grandchildren etc. without always coming back to abortion and counselling but somehow it always comes back to it.

When the immediate tears and sadness begin to wane part of the pain that remains with women who abort is a regret that they have not been able to say goodbye to their child.

There is a perceived distance and regret and sorrow and wish that things might have been different. And there is a soft ongoing growing need to find a way to tell the child of their sorrow at what they had done.

As a counsellor I have found this to be true of nearly 100% of all cases who had come to me. That need to tell the child how sorry the mother is for what happened.

And the other thing is that there is a need to know that the child knows that she, the mother, regrets the decision and is pained by that decision. Further, there is a need to know that the baby is in a place where it is blissfully happy and a hope that perhaps one day they will meet again.

I suppose it is one of the better parts of my work when I speak about reconciliation of mother and baby and the day when both will meet “face to face” (1Cor 13:12) and she will see her baby and be reunited in the presence of the Lord whose love and forgiveness transcends time and awaits the moment when the two, mother and child are reunited in eternity and all things will be explained and all things will make sense.

Tears usually flow by this time and the words “I don’t deserve to be forgiven or to see her” come forth.

It is difficult for someone whose guilt is so deep to believe that she will be forgiven. That she will be given a second chance with her child. That her child whom she has rejected will want to even see or be with her. This is human thinking and we attribute our thinking onto God and to the divine but I assure her that it isn’t so. It is earthly thinking. It’s why Scripture says of God “My ways are not your ways” (Isaiah: 55:8-9).

The wounds of abortion are the most devastating wounds because they are soul wounds and leave a deep scar, but God whose love saves all, saves even those who ache with abortion pain “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool” – (Isaiah 1:18).

As healing begins to penetrate and a belief that God has loved and her baby has loved her, and the clouds of self-doubt and self-loathing begin disperse there is usually a visible sign, a glow of an inner peace. A beginning of reconciliation and a feeling at peace.

Her life is no longer awful but a gift and the lives of her friends and loved ones is good too. She is not jealous of her pregnant friends but joyful for them. As she begins to see life with joy in her eyes and a yes in her smile then the difficulties no longer seem overwhelming for her she seems to manage them well.

She begins to see the future well and slowly the post abortion grief diminishes. Yes there will be times when something will remind her of it and moments when she will remember, but the Lord will be merciful and ease the pain ever more gently every time, so that as time passes she will not forget but remember with love.

Living with memories of abortion is part of abortion experience and cannot ever be removed. The memory is ongoing and can be daily experience with sometime reminders or occasional reminders: a new baby, a pregnant woman, a TV commercial, a smell of a brand new baby bring forth stream of tears, shopping centre with baby items especially nappies, and formula and baby products, and of

course the anniversary of what would have been the month or even the day of the birth of the infant.

These bring ache to the heart, but these are not to be suppressed or to be despised these are good. These are memories of a child who passed by for a short time and visited but left very early.

And it is important to remember that no abortive mother wants to completely forget because if she forgets who will remember?

Just as no one would ever ask a mother to forget a miscarried child so no mother forgets an aborted child and this is a right order. This is as is it should be. Isaiah 49: 15.

Thanks you’s

Just some short thank you to those who came to the Life Dinner and sat at Victims of Abortion table it helps to raise some funds for me. Thank you Fr Dowling and Mary (hope you like my book and promote in radio) thank you Amanda, thank you Kevin, thank you Charles, and Anna. I have a feeling I have forgotten someone but I can’t remember who it is, sorry!

Thank you Sr. Patricia (SA) for kind donation it helped me so much, thank you also Giacomo, thank you Gertrude, thank you Collins family, I appreciate your care, and thank you to three anonymous donors. And thank you to all kind friends who responded to call for help the kitty was so empty I was tempted to throw it out! And stay in bed! Then I had to get up ☺

Dear friends a dear priest friend from Queensland has asked me to advise of his change of address just in case any of his friends are on my newsletter list so here goes:

Fr Paul Chandler, Oratory in Formation, PO Box 3131 Tarragindi Qld 4121,

There you are Fr Paul done!

Dear Friends as I come to end of this issue of the newsletter I would like say a few words about my book *Hidden Pain*. I am a little saddened that it doesn’t seem to be moving at all. It is a book in which much love has gone into the writing of it. I know that it is a difficult subject, that is, sexual abuse of children in the family, but the reason I wrote it is so that we can become aware of a child in pain, note when a child is hurting and do something about it.

It’s not written to attack, to accuse, or even to “destroy” the family, (as I have been accused of) but to help the child who is being abused. We cannot say we are “pro-life” and try and save the life of in utero child and not care when a child is being brutalised in the home. This child is also being slowly destroyed just as much as one being aborted.

Letters

Dear Anne,

Thank you, Anne, for Broken Branches Issue 105 – June/July 2015.

The opening credo is brilliant and I subscribe to it as well.

The article on the Death Penalty is true because if one is pro-life, then one is against the Death Penalty – May Andrew and Myuran and all others included Rest In Peace.

Post Abortion Depression is a malaise of a wounded soul – so difficult to conquer yet still needing people and councillors like your good self to bring them to the Grace of God. God bless your good work in this regard.

The Informed Consent Form of PP Australia is a fright and I wonder how many are duped by it ...

I pray that your new book, Hidden pain, is used by many who need it.

With reiterated thanks, Anne

God bless
Br Chris

Dear Anne,

Enclosed a donation for your wonderful work.
I just want to comment on your wonderful article in Broken Branches about the execution of Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran. It was the most meaningful and thoughtful article I had read on this tragedy.

God Bless

Frances.

Dear Annie,

You are a marvel dear, do you ever run out of ideas your bulletins get better and better. I have read every single one of them and I am so impressed. I reckon that you would never run short of words but my goodness what good words they are. God Bless you. Enclosed small donation and blessing.

Fr. John.

Dear Anne,

Your latest issue of newsletter June/July 2015 was certainly excellent, thank you and I really agree with your article about the death penalty. I would have thought that in these times we would have reached a time when we would not have a need for such barbaric means but I guess not. Keep up the good work Anne
God Bless

Elsa R.
Bentleigh Vic.

Dear Anne,

I read with interest your article about the PP informed consent form and read the horrible possible effects which the women indemnify the clinics and still they go ahead with the abortion. The laughable part was “Planned Parenthood continuing a tradition of caring for women” is caring for women the means of killing their babies. Is that the type of caring for women which they know? It’s laughable.

That informed consent is an insult and its sad because the women see it and still they sign it and it shows what emotional condition they must be in not to see what they are signing.

Carol N.
Werribee

Carol if you read Lifesite news’s article about the selling of foetal parts by Planned Parenthood then the informed consent formed is not surprising its all part of the same thing. However, what is surprising is how it got to such a level. Where were we? How did it get past us and were we sleeping. How did the laws get past us?

I had hoped that there would be someone who would fund me to be able to send one or more copies to every school library so that teachers would be aware or even to priests for the pastoral of those who come to them, but I am sorry I cannot afford to send them gratis.

Those who have read the book have made marvellous comment, the most recent being His Eminence Cardinal George Pell. I am so grateful to him, for someone who must be so busy to take time out to first read it and then to make comment leaves me humbled. Thank you Your Eminence. As His Grace Archbishop Barry James Hickey (Emeritus) from Perth said "it is not an easy to read book but a must read book."

Dear Friends as I conclude please don't forget \$\$\$ support it is difficult otherwise.

And please continue to pray for Anna, Frances, Anne, Cam, Lucy, Melissa, Yvonne, Keri, Charlee, Marlene, Diamante, Ann-Maree, Olivia, Lisa, Rhonda (Much please multiple abortions abuse) Chiara (S/A) Jayne (S/A) Lisa Sarah, Sandra.



SECRETARIAT
FOR THE ECONOMY
The Prefect

Vatican City, 24 July 2015

To whom it may concern

With her excellent book, Anne Lastman has delved into the terrible pain that is caused by childhood sexual abuse. One needs a strong faith and deep compassion to sit with so many victims as they share their deep hurt. Anne's objective, explained through her varied experience over many years, was not just to leave victims exposed and wounded, but to bring them, patiently, courageously, sometimes painfully, to a deep and wonderful healing in Christ. Naturally this has been criticised. Yet for those whose stories are contained here, her determination to help others seek healing in Christ has produced miracles of grace and love. And in this way she reminds us as St. Paul once did: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-9).

George Card. PELL
Prefect
Secretariat for the Economy

Anne Lastman

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Broken Branches – By email!

Dear Friends,

Please email me at 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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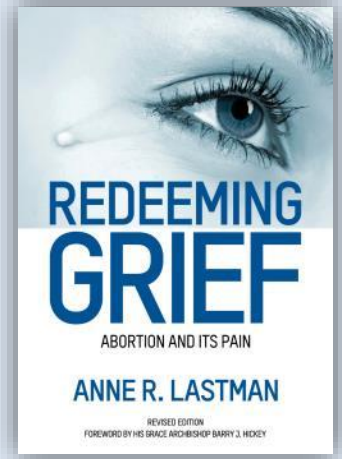
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NEW BOOK – HIDDEN PAIN



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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