

Afraid to Start a Conversation?



KAITLYN DONIHUE'S MONTHLY UPDATE



MARCH 2021



Have you attended a JFA training event in the past but feel inadequate to actually start a conversation? Maybe you are afraid that you will forget everything you learned as soon as you actually get into a conversation or maybe you feel like you understand the concepts that we taught but you wouldn't be able to put them into words.

You are not alone! Many of the people who come through a JFA training event feel that way. In fact, earlier this month, I had the opportunity to mentor

some high school students who were struggling with these kinds of fears.

Many students from Christian Heritage Academy (CHA), a Christian high school, came to outreach with us earlier this month at the University of Oklahoma (OU) to try to have conversations about abortion, worldviews, and the gospel. (See pictures above and below.) We did a seminar at their school last fall where we taught them how to have conversations about unplanned pregnancy and abortion. Now, three months later, they joined us on campus to put what they had learned into practice.

On the second day of the OU outreach, I was working with a group of six students. We wanted them to try to have conversations with real pro-choice people but because fewer students were out and about on campus, we took the opportunity to start with some role-playing practice. I pretended to be pro-choice and the students worked as a team to try to have a conversation with me. When they got stuck, I would pause the role-play and give them ideas. At the end of each role-play, I pointed out what they had done well and made suggestions for improvement.

When we first sat down, I asked my students how they were feeling. They shared that they were nervous and felt like they had forgotten everything they had



"This outreach had a pretty dramatic impact on my life. It forced me to be bold and to reach out of my comfort zone. I really enjoyed continuing to reach people and have intentional conversations about abortion."

—CHA Student



learned in training.

It was exciting to watch their confidence grow as we role-played conversation after conversation. They remembered far more than they thought they did, and as we practiced they remembered more. Later that day, they had conversations with real pro-choice people. At the end of the day, many of them shared how much they had grown and how encouraging the experience was for them.

If you, like those students, feel like you don't remember anything and that you would never actually be able to navigate a conversation effectively, I want to invite you to come to a JFA mentoring session where you can practice having conversations in a safe environment. A JFA team member will role-play the pro-choice position and give you the opportunity to practice the dialogue tools you learned through the JFA training events you attended.

If you are interested in attending a JFA mentoring session, go to www.jfaweb.org/calendar. We would love to see you there. The prerequisite of these mentoring sessions is that you have attended a JFA training event in the past.

In Christ,



“The impact this [outreach] had on me personally was just being able to see other people’s points of view but also getting to have the opportunity to reach out to people and get out of my comfort zone and have the ability to have these hard conversations. My mentors really helped me get through the conversations by being there with us at first and then slowly letting us on our own. The aspect of just being comfortable going out and approaching people helped me personally grow. I also met some fellow Christians, too.”

—CHA Student

