



Creating Dialogue on Abortion: A One-Hour DIY Guide

This guide helps you learn the basic skills of creating dialogue on abortion that can change hearts and saves lives. It will be helpful to anyone wanting to learn JFA's approach, but especially those who are not able to participate in face-to-face learning experiences with JFA mentors. (For a calendar of JFA events, see the link below.)

The guide takes about one hour to complete (not including a conversation we'll encourage you to initiate with a friend). All of the online resources you'll need to complete the four activities, as well as additional resources and a form you can fill out to receive printed materials by mail, are available at www.jfaweb.org/one-hour.

Now, let's get started creating dialogue that can make abortion unthinkable!

1. Immerse yourself in JFA's Three Essential Skills. (15 minutes)

With another person or by yourself, read the short description and sample dialogue in “**Activity 1**” (pages 9-10 of JFA's *Interactive Guide*). This activity will *describe* listening to understand, asking questions with an open heart, and finding common ground when possible, but it will also get you *practicing* those skills immediately.

2. Prepare a simple case for the value of the unborn. (15 minutes)

Steve Wagner pleaded with pro-choice activists one day to give him “just one minute” to make his case against abortion. One of them took out her watch and said, “Okay, go.” They were taking him literally! Steve had both a great opportunity and great responsibility. What would you say if you were in Steve's shoes?

For Steve's one-minute response and an exercise to help you learn it, see his article, “**Just a Minute...**” Fortunately, you'll rarely be put on the spot in this way, so memorizing what Steve said in the next minute will mostly be helpful to you as (1) a good road map or sequence to structure *your* thinking as you discuss abortion, and as (2) specific ideas you can share (in pieces) in various parts of your conversations. These ideas will help to keep you from being at a loss.

3. Learn to respectfully share pictures of the unborn and abortion. (15 minutes)

Pictures of the unborn, both before and after abortion, are essential to helping clarify the facts in a way that words seldom can. To help, we suggest you use the two-minute script in “**Activity 7**” to learn to share JFA's “Invitation to Dialogue” Brochure with a friend. This activity includes a warning before showing pictures of the results of abortion, which is especially helpful in everyday conversation situations. You can fill out the form to receive a printed “Invitation to Dialogue” Brochure using the link below.

4. Develop a plan for starting the conversation naturally. (15 minutes)

Consider three people you know who are either pro-choice or whose views on abortion you don't know. Choose the person on the list who you believe will be the most approachable or easiest for you to talk to about abortion. Your goal is to start the conversation with that person in a natural, non-awkward way. We suggest using a direct approach which is up front about how you are purposefully trying to learn something, and you need the person's help:

“I'm troubled by the fact that good conversations about abortion are rare. It seems to only be hurtful to people. I've been working recently on learning to discuss abortion productively. Would you be willing to sit and chat with me for 15 minutes or more and help me out? My commitment to you would be that I will ask questions with an open heart, listen to understand, and find common ground when possible.”

Please adjust the wording to fit your personality! (Find other ideas at the link below.) Once you've had a conversation with the person who's most approachable for you, challenge yourself by engaging one of the others on your list. Don't forget to send us an email (reflection@jfaweb.org) to let us know how it goes.

Online Resources: www.jfaweb.org/one-hour