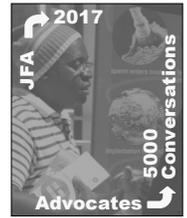




Making Abortion Unthinkable with JFA

May 2017



Recent and Upcoming Events (Partial List): Please pray with us that God will cause hearts and minds to change as a result of conversations created by our staff, volunteers, and audience members:

PRAY FOR CONVERSATIONS

- CO – 4/21-26 – Fort Collins – Seminars and Large Exhibit Outreach (3 Days) at CSU
- CA – 4/22 – Irvine – Presentation at SFLA California Leadership Summit – Steve Wagner
- KS – 5/1 – Wichita – Presentations at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School
- CA – 5/21-23 – Los Angeles – Seminar and Kiosk Outreach at UCLA
- VA – 7/7 – Fredericksburg – Workshop at SFLA Wilberforce Program Kickoff – Steve Wagner
- MD – 7/20 – Baltimore – Workshop for SFLA Regional Coordinators – Steve Wagner
- MN – 9/30 – Chanhassan – Workshop – Steve Wagner

List of All Recent and Upcoming Events: www.jfaweb.org/calendar

Photos from Recent Events: www.jfaweb.org/photos

PREPARE FOR CONVERSATIONS

Featured Resource for Equipping Yourself: “Sam” was so rude at the start of his conversation with JFA trainer Rebecca Haschke that she nearly gave up talking to him altogether. Despite her inner frustration, she repeatedly made a choice to love him and was surprised by the conversation that followed. Rebecca shared the story in her letter, “A Lesson in Love – Part 1” (enclosed, or see www.jfaweb.org/may-2017). As you read, notice how Rebecca sought to understand Sam, find common ground with him, and humbly share aspects of her own experience. As pro-life advocates seeking to create good conversations, we should work to master these skills. (Want to read the rest of the story? We’ll feature Part 2 of the letter as next month’s free resource.)

Read Part 1 or Download a Printable Version: www.jfaweb.org/may-2017

See More Dialogue Examples: www.jfaweb.org/dialogue-examples

START CONVERSATIONS

Featured Conversation Starter: You can start a conversation with a friend in a natural way by sharing Steve Wagner’s recent post, “Identifying with Her Uncertain Future.” The post features a beautiful painting by Mexican artist Saturnino Herrán (from JFA’s *Art of Life* Exhibit). The post and painting can help us start a conversation with important points of common ground: Many women who find themselves pregnant are in very difficult situations, they feel that their future is very uncertain, and we need to take this into account by discussing abortion with sympathy and compassion for the women experiencing these things. To view the painting and share it on social media, use the links below. If you use this conversation starter, please let us know how it goes!

Share the Post: [www.twitter.com/7conversations](https://twitter.com/7conversations) ; www.jfaweb.org/start-the-conversation

About the *Making Abortion Unthinkable with JFA* Resource Bulletin

For friends of JFA who ask, “What can I do to make abortion unthinkable?” this resource bulletin offers some answers. Beyond supporting JFA financially, which enables JFA’s trainers and volunteers to create conversations that make abortion unthinkable at JFA’s events, you can **PRAY** for the conversations the JFA community is creating (including your own), **PREPARE** for conversations, and **START** conversations.

What can I do to make abortion unthinkable?

Pray for conversations. Prepare for conversations. Start conversations.



Rebecca's Reflections



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June 2017

A Lesson in Love — Part 1

A short distance away from me, three students stood, laughing loudly and verbally mocking our display. They had just walked past our large *Stop and Think* Exhibit, which we had put up to create dialogue at Colorado State University in April. Curious, they had approached our Free Speech Board (see example pictured below) and, after reading a few comments, began to vocally agree with others who had written in opposition to JFA.

Even after years of experience engaging students about abortion, I didn't even have an ounce of desire to strike up a conversation with this group. Before the students walked away, though, from somewhere deep inside I was prompted to take courage and walk over to them. So, I went (albeit begrudgingly) and inquired:

Becca: Hey guys, do you mind if I ask, "What are your thoughts?"

Two of the students walked away as if I didn't exist. The third student, "Sam," quickly turned toward me, laughed again, and sarcastically questioned me:

Sam: You want to know what I think? Yea-a-a-h, I'll share my thoughts.

At that moment thoughts started floating through my mind. *"I really don't want to be in this conversation. I wish I hadn't engaged him. Why am I doing this?"* I attempted to learn more about his view by asking him questions, but I was battling those negative thoughts the whole time. As I tried to find common ground with him (even in the smallest of ways), he shared his belief that abortion should be legal for all nine months and for any

reason. When I asked whether or not he agreed with sex-selection abortion, his response indicated that, yes, indeed he did.

After all my attempts to find common ground, I ended up empty-handed. His mocking demeanor continued and eventually a more complete picture of his view emerged. It was something like this:

Sam (paraphrased): Even if a woman wants to kill a child after it is born it really doesn't matter. Although US law doesn't currently reflect this, in reality nothing has value. Even born humans don't matter. The only value that exists is the value that we as individuals assign to a particular object or being. So if a woman doesn't think a two-year-old is valuable, for her it doesn't really matter if she kills her child.

Because of Sam's demeanor, I felt that attempting to challenge his beliefs would have been done in vain. I mentally prepared to exit the conversation when



Pictured above are comments written this past April on one of the Free Speech Boards at Colorado State University.

another thought overwhelmed my mind: “Love him, Rebecca. Love the person he is. Find a way to love **him**.” I’ll “blame” those thoughts on the Holy Spirit.

Once again from somewhere deep inside I found the courage to try to do what I felt I had no capacity to do – love him. At this point I didn’t know where to take the conversation about abortion, so I just asked him about him. I remember asking,

Becca: Have you always felt this way?

Sam: No. And I probably won’t always hold these views. I grew up Catholic. Things in life happen, and these events help form our views. We are all searching, and our views change as we journey through life.

Becca: So, when did this change take place for you?

As he told his story he shared about the intellectual encounters he had had with others who are atheists, how much those encounters had influenced him, and how old he was when he started questioning God’s existence. My next response may have been the most crucial part of the conversation. Sam’s experience wasn’t so foreign to me, and I told him so.

Becca: Sam, you know what? I can relate to that. Of course, every person’s story is different, but sometimes they have similar elements to them. When I was 21, I studied in Mexico and met a guy from Germany named Marc. We had many discussions about religion and the existence of God. Marc was a very intelligent young man, and he had better answers to why he believed God *didn’t* exist than I had for why I believed God *did* exist. When I returned home from Mexico, I had many doubts in my mind about God’s existence and what I believed. At that point, I started a journey of searching for answers to some of those questions, too. I can understand at some level why you have doubts.

As Sam discovered that we had genuine common ground, his demeanor changed. He seemed to be less defensive, mocking, and condescending. He also seemed to be appreciating the conversation as we each shared more about our personal experiences. Little did I know that Sam was about to share something that would remind me why choosing to love *him* was so important in the first place. **(To be continued in Part 2...)**

Rebecca J. Haschke



Here are more snapshots of the comments written on the Free Speech Boards at the Colorado State University *Stop and Think* outreach.