

# INFORMATION

from Focus on the Family

## ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH POST-ABORTION STRESS?

**Q1:** Do you find yourself struggling to turn off feelings or memories related to your abortion(s)? Do you need to keep reminding yourself to just forget it or put it behind you? Do you become uncomfortable around reminders of the abortion, such as being around babies or pregnant women, being in a doctor's office, or when hearing news reports about abortion?

**Q2:** Do you feel anxious at the idea of telling a loved one about your abortion? Is your abortion a secret that is holding you back from greater intimacy with others? When you do choose to share your abortion experience with others, are you overcome with strong feelings such as anger, grief, or guilt? Is there an increased distance between you and your parents, siblings, or partner because of the past abortion(s)?

**Q3:** Do you have trouble talking about the abortion issue as a political issue? When you do talk about it, do you find it hard to respect opposing views, or do you become overly emotional, either in support or in opposition to it?

**Q4:** Do you tend to look at life in terms of "before" and "after" the abortion(s)? Are there traits about your "self" before the abortion that you lost but would wish to regain? Has the abortion changed the way you look at yourself? Have you lost interest in taking care of yourself? Have you tried to become less attractive to avoid the risk of becoming involved in a relationship, love, and sex?

**Q5:** Do you become angry or depressed more easily? Have you experienced "reconnects" to your abortion, such as nightmares, flashbacks, or hallucinations, such as hearing a baby cry?

**Q6:** Was there a period after your abortion when you experienced an increase in the use of alcohol or drugs? Have you experienced other forms of emotional deadening? Have you experienced any suicidal thoughts? Do you take risks that put your life in danger? Have you developed any eating disorders?

**Q7:** Do you have trouble finding, building, or maintaining good relationships with people of the opposite sex? Do you have trouble with issues of trust and control?

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(Continued)**

**Q8:** Have you lost the desire for sexual intercourse? Do you have increased pain during intercourse? Have you become promiscuous because of low self-esteem? Have you lost a previous desire to have children, or are you filled with an anxious desire to have a child as soon as possible?

**Q9:** Do you experience periods of depression, heightened anxiety, or cramping during certain months of the year, particularly during the month of your abortion or the due date of the aborted pregnancy?

**Q10:** Did you have a faith in God that you have now lost? Are you afraid of God? Are you angry at God? Have you rejected Him for emotional rather than thoughtful reasons?

**Post-Abortion Stress Quiz answer key:**

If you have answered yes to three or more of the previous questions, post-abortion counseling may help. Skilled and understanding people, many of whom have been through the same things you are going through now, want to help. Many services are free.

This information was taken from *Hope and Healing*, published by the Elliot Institute. For more information or to obtain a sample copy of this writing, contact Elliot Institute P.O. Box 7348-H, Springfield, IL 62791-7348. (217) 525-8202. Their website address is [www.afterabortion.org](http://www.afterabortion.org).

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