

"Conscious Abortion" and the Idea of Abortion Itself

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Abstract: None available.

Full Text: Headnote ABSTRACT: This article, in the format of a personal narrative, presents abortions statistics and discusses the controversial subject of abortion with clarity. The proposal is made that medical abortions may not be the only option when a pregnancy is untimely. A process, titled by the author "Conscious Abortion" hi introduced and described. KEY WORDS: Abortion, Conscious abortion, Abortion statistics. INTRODUCTION To write this I decided to find some abortion statistics. The stats from Google were startling: * 46 million abortions are conducted each year worldwide, 20 million of them illegally * In 54 countries (61% of the world population) abortions are legal * In 97 countries (39% of the world population) abortions are illegal * Approximately 1 million abortions occur in the US each year * 43% of women will have had at least one abortion by the age of 45 (this statistic includes miscarriages) * About 13,000 abortions each year are attributed to rape and incest-representing about 1% of all abortions (Adapted from the NAF [National Abortion Federation] and the Guttmacher Institute) The question of abortion is one that I would not have expected to write about. I have not paid particular attention to my personal thoughts, views, or experience on that subject for many years. I am 56, male, and married to a woman my same age. I have had liberal/ libertarian views since high school. If I had been asked a few months ago if I had any deep thoughts on the subject, I would have been surprised by the question and probably would have just repeated ideas that I had often expressed in the past. Yet at the December '05 APPPAH conference in San Diego, in response to some comments that I had made, I was very surprised to find myself giving an impromptu talk on the subject of "conscious abortion." I listened to what was coming out of my mouth with as much interest as anyone in the room. As a national speaker, I have topics that I speak on regularly concerning healing, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture, meditation, Qigong, the physiology of consciousness, and so forth, but I had no idea that I had anything to say on abortion. During those 15 minutes, I realized that something had been brewing in me, gradually developing for several decades, and it had passion. More than 40 people came up to me after the talk, and more have contacted me since. Almost everyone expressed feeling the gap between their political and their deeply human and compassionate selves. For me, abortion had become a quiet political issue, something under the surface of my usual daily considerations, or at most a rallying point of the Blue against the Red. I had not thought much about it for a long time. I thought that I knew where I stood on the subject. I assumed my position was correct, and it may be, but now I need an update, I need to scrutinize my stance in a fully conscious and connected way. The political and moral environment is heating up and deserves to be challenged, not on the topic of abortion itself, because that should be considered carefully, but on the self-righteous attitude and moral judgment that it carries. The tenure of that stance will not promote the qualities of humanity and compassion they seek to foster. The pro-choice movement has not been grounded in a positive spiritual or even scientific understanding based on what we know and experience today. I feel a need for careful introspection. Over the years, there have been shadows of thoughts and feelings about abortion that seem to move through and under the periphery of my inner dialogue: fragmented images that did not fit easily with the rest of my assumed opinion. Personally, I have been involved in two abortions. Both were mutually agreed on, conscious choices between the mother and myself, and both left me with an aching sadness that, as I write this, I can still feel in my heart and in my stomach. Yet I can find no remorse for my actions. I believe that faced with the same situations, I would do the same today. The mechanical and clinical process of the abortion, more than the act itself, is what left me with the uneasiness. The life situation at each of those times made it unfeasible to raise a child. Both pregnancies occurred while

using contraception. Most of my life has been spent in some sort of spiritual inquiry: Buddhism, Taoism, early Christianity, and Hinduism. Before my father, there had been thirteen generations of Congregationalist ministers in my family. I have the momentum of deep spirituality in my veins, but I had skipped over the depth of what these teachings could mean in the face of an impending abortion. It is now important to me to fully understand why I feel OK about abortion or why I do not.

CONSCIOUS ABORTION: THE BACKGROUND STORY

In China and other countries in the East, there is a recorded history extending back several thousand years that connects early local folk remedies to the highly researched and integrated Traditional Chinese Medicine of today. Herbal and other abortion-inducing techniques have always been part of the Asian medical tradition, as have methods for fertility, prenatal care, birthing, infant care, and pediatrics. I am an acupuncturist in primary practice, with over 30 years of clinical experience. From the early '80s to the mid '90s I received regular requests from women seeking an alternative to the standard Western medical procedures. They wanted something more natural and less invasive. I was reluctant to use acupuncture because, although I knew several procedures, I had no firsthand experience with them. When I was studying in Boston, I knew a woman Chinese doctor whose job in a Chinese hospital had been to do 30 abortions a day using acupuncture. She had mentioned that the procedure was very effective and relatively easy. However, my license did not allow me to do it, and, like most acupuncturists, I had little or no hospital backup. But the requests kept coming, and several times a year I would have to treat women who were suffering the ill effects of self-administered herbal or other abortive techniques. I had long talks with many of these women. Finally, out of frustration, I suggested to one of them: "Take a few days and first discover the part of you that wanted to be pregnant." "But I did not want to get pregnant." "Even though consciously that's true, most people have many voices speaking inside them; there might be other feelings and hidden desires that you are not outwardly aware of. You have nothing to lose. Take the time to find out what is true. If you trust in nature and the natural course of things, then the idea that consciousness creates or affects biology might make sense to you. If you discover that there is a part of you that wanted to get pregnant, then accept that part of you, connect to it and listen to it. Understand where those feelings come from. That will then allow you to make peace with all the parts of yourself. If you can do that, and you still do not want to be pregnant, you can then consciously change those feelings by integrating them with the big picture of your life. Once you become coherent and accepting of your feelings about being pregnant, you can communicate to the awareness of the little being inside you. With deep love and concern, ask them to leave. Let your self feel the divine love and connection with them, then tell them that it is not time for them to come in, or that you would like them to come back at a later time. You must tell them the deepest truth from your heart. This is a new and profound experience for most people." She sat back in her chair and closed her eyes for several moments. It was dawning on me what I had suggested to this woman. I was a man-had I made a mistake in suggesting this to her? "This sounds right. I will do it." She hugged me and left. For the next several weeks, I thought about her often and also worried. I hoped that she was OK, but I intuitively felt that I should let her get in touch with me. One sunny morning I got a call from her: "Thank you so much for what you told me; it worked. I went away to a cabin in the woods. It took almost two days to begin to feel the longing that had been with me since I was a little girl. I realized that I had always wanted to have a baby to love and be loved by. I had no idea how deep this feeling was inside me. It felt genetic, like it came from my soul. As I got older, I had pushed these feelings away as my life became more involved with my work. I was so surprised to uncover this part of myself, but I also have to say that there was a part of me that was not surprised. Once I got a clear consensus with all my parts, then I began to talk to the little girl beginning to grow inside me. I know that she was going to be a girl because she told me. I spent a whole day being with her. It was as if we spent a whole lifetime together that day, most of it without words. I do not think that many of my friends would get what happened, but a few will. In the end I said good-bye to the little bright spirit and she agreed to go. Several days later, I passed some clots. It was a bittersweet moment for me, to be sure, but it was also empowering to know that I could be in my deepest spiritual truth and have reality respond. It changed my life; thank you." After she

hung up, I felt a soft gratitude. Without any pretense or forethought, something tangible had come through; it changed something in both of us. From that day until now, I have repeated this story and offered these same instructions to perhaps fifty women. I have not back heard from all of them, but from most of them. All of those who did get back to me reported that the process worked. Some said that as a result of connecting quietly with themselves, they had decided to keep the baby after all. Some brought the father into the process, but, without exception, every woman that I talked with who had asked the baby to leave with a true and clear heart either had a problem-free miscarriage or was suddenly not pregnant anymore. I have no way of knowing about the ones who I did not hear from. I suspect that some of them were not able or willing to make that deep connection with themselves. There can absolutely be no blame or selfdisparagement for them. Few of us have been brought up with the experience of deep inner reflection; in fact, our culture often trains us to mistrust our inner knowing. Maybe a few others connected deeply, but there may have been some structural impairment, scarring, pelvic misalignment, meridian imbalance, and so forth that might have prevented something from changing. Nevertheless, nobody mentioned anything like this to me. Again, without exception, all those who reported back to me had experienced a positive outcome. When I told my wife, Patricia, about this, she commented that they must have been very conscious women. But I as think back, they were all very normal. A few were meditators or spiritually inclined. I think that there were at least as many Catholics as Buddhists. Most were just normal people who had never done anything like it before. Several had never thought about doing anything like it. Personally, I feel that being pregnant is in itself a very spiritual event, one that instinctually connects pure consciousness with primal form and energy. How often do our lives and the things around us seem mundane and underwhelming? Yet all the great spiritual traditions, as well as modern science, remind us of the myriad levels of reality we all inhabit. Even the most hardened pragmatist or skeptic is, atomically, mostly space, and that space, according to both science and metaphysics, is inhabited by light and consciousness. I believe that the main trick in all of this is simply to remember to find the deeper truth of us and to live from there. What could be more beneficial, or more safe? In the 70's, I spent several years training and practicing biofeedback. I have seen hundreds of patients lessen their pain, lower their blood pressure, dissolve headaches, reduce stress, effect hormones in PMS and menopause, relieve depression and enhance their overall enjoyment of life by consciously changing their physiology. Hypnosis has helped millions of people to self regulate there bodies and emotions in similar ways. Using meditative techniques I have taught several thousand people in my workshops to heal deeply, balance their energy, enhance their immune system, heal disease, reach altered states of awareness and to experience and change minute aspects of the physiology, such as the Corpus Colosum that divides the brain or to feel tension patterns in the retina of the eye. Through history, every culture has used similar techniques for healing and spiritual experience. The techniques that work in the process of conscious abortion are well founded in many disciplines. THE CULTURAL CONTEXT The idea of abortion is currently being used to polarize people for political purposes. Most of what I have heard or read is a distortion of what people on both side of the political fence believe and feel. This is an injustice to our country. We should not let ourselves be divided on moral issues, we should continue to speak to each other until we can experience each other's humanity and philosophical point of view. Democracy is based on the strength of a multiplicity of ideas creating balance and nourishment for each opinion. There is a great deal of anti-abortion propoganda coming from the Christian Right. I do not believe it is a bad thing at all; the taking of human life, or any life, for that matter, carries sacred implications and deserves concern, research and introspection. Judaism holds the mandate "choose life." It recognizes, however, that choosing life can at times mean killing in self-defense. Theologian Laurie Zoloth quotes an ancient Jewish text: "Abortion is not forbidden when done in great need." Islam holds a diversity of opinions, but most revered teachers hold that abortion is permissible for serious reasons. Even late-term abortions are permissible when there is danger to the mother's life. Family planning is an accepted moral need by most Muslims. The central tenet of Jainism is "... doing no harm." However, on that basis, abortion can be justified when necessary to prevent greater harm. Native American traditions involved

living in balance with what the land could provide. Women usually set the tone for family planning and abortions. A woman of the Ojibwe people said: "It is a disgrace for humans to have children like the insects and the mice of the field." A Lakota woman put it this way: "Anything that has to do with our bodies is our business as women, and as Lakota women, it is part of our culture to make our own decision about keeping a baby. It is a decision that can affect the whole tribe." In the Taoist tradition, good and evil are seen as relative concepts, and right action is considered on a moment-to-moment basis. CONCLUSION The place where modern physics and deepest spiritual traditions meet is in the idea of non-local, quantum, or infinite reality. That is, that all things exist simultaneously, as do the future and the present. It is our unevolved habituation with conceptual reality that binds us to the linearity of our familiar 3-D world. "Consciousness Is!" Recently, in a conversation I had with David Chamberlain, Ph.D., a well-known researcher in pre- and perinatal psychology, he was expressing his view on the consciousness of the developing fetus. I will approximately quote him from memory: "It is clear to me that consciousness never begins or ends. case after case shows that consciousness exists even before the brain is formed. We have many anecdotal reports of parents having conversations with their future babies even before conception. This is way beyond science and our model of biology, but for all accounts it is real, and we must incorporate this knowledge into our understanding of life and the decisions that we make about it." Most of us have good intent toward the world, especially when we get beyond our fears and neurotic patterns of self-protection. We really do not want to hurt or harm. Most of us want to love and be loved and to do the right thing, but in our complex world, what the "right thing" is, is not always certain. Very few rules are broad enough to be useful in all situations. So how do we navigate? Perhaps the answer is to deeply know ourselves and to trust ourselves enough to listen. This can be balanced by not taking ourselves so seriously that we cannot hear or see the things and opinions the universe brings to our sphere of attention. Nature teaches interdependence and that life and death are connected in a sacred, beautiful, and timeless way. Our decisions about life must be centered in our hearts and take in the biggest view possible. That big view may be beyond life and death, but it will not be beyond the connection of all things. The decision on abortion can be selfish or selfless. As a society, we must refrain from the poison of judgment and offer only compassion and understanding to anyone facing that decision. The possibility of "conscious abortion" is real and may be the answer to one of the major cultural questions of our time. If, through a process of deep personal connection and biological request, a mother can end her pregnancy, how could anyone find fault in such a natural or conscious process? Please share this information with everyone; it deserves to be freely circulated, tried, and refined. If any one has any direct experiences, positive or negative, as a result of trying this, please contact me. AuthorAffiliation Peter Heun Fairfield, LAc. AuthorAffiliation Peter Fairfield LAc has practiced acupuncture, Oriental and Energetic Medicine for over 35 years specializing in issues of emotions, consciousness, and personal transformation. He had a clinic in Nepal for many years and has also done extensive field research in China, Tibet, India, Thailand, and Taiwan. He lectures nationally in the fields of Asian Medicine, East-West psychophysiology and the role of physiology in transcendence. Currently he practices hi San Rafaël, California at the Center for Conscious Healing. AuthorAffiliation Peter Fairfield L.Ac faairfield@lvha.net 415-479-6217 15 Mt Whitney Dr, San Rafael, CA 94903

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