



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 21, 2018

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Ending Abortion From the Inside Out

From the print edition of The New American

When Abby Johnson quit her job as director of a Texas Planned Parenthood clinic in 2009, she had no intention of becoming a pro-life activist.

Then Planned Parenthood tried to get a judge to slap a permanent gag order on her. The attempted silencing of Johnson not only failed in court but also spurred her to speak out.



“That was when I found myself telling my story, and things took an unexpected turn for me at that moment,” the 37-year-old mother of seven said in an interview with *The New American*.

With a story that few novelists would have the chutzpah to concoct — Johnson said she left Planned Parenthood after being informed of a doubling of the clinic’s abortion quota and witnessing an ultrasound-guided abortion — Johnson quickly became one of the most prominent pro-life activists in the country, which brought her to the attention of others who were having a similar change of heart.

“After I had been out of Planned Parenthood for a couple years, I started having other workers, clinic workers, they were reaching out, and they were asking me for help, and how do they leave and is there someone that can help them,” Johnson recalled. “And I was actually shocked to find out that in 40 years of trying to end legalized abortion, the pro-life movement had never thought about an outreach specifically to the abortion clinic worker.”

To rectify the situation, in 2012 Johnson founded And Then There Were None (ATTWN). The Round Rock, Texas-based organization’s mission is “to end abortion from the inside out” by “help[ing] abortion clinic workers leave the abortion industry,” according to its website, [abortionworker.com](#).

Breaking Up Is Hard to Do

Just what is so difficult about quitting a job at an abortion clinic that it requires assistance from outsiders? Isn’t it as simple as handing in your resignation?

“Leaving the abortion industry is not like leaving a restaurant or leaving an insurance agency,” maintained Johnson. “When you decide that you’re going to leave the abortion industry, you then become an enemy of the abortion industry.... As soon as you leave, they will turn to deception, they’ll turn to lies, they will do anything to discredit you and to give you a bad reputation.”

Johnson knows whereof she speaks. Having been named the 2008 “Employee of the Year” at her Planned Parenthood clinic, upon her resignation the following year, Johnson suddenly found herself being labeled a “disgruntled” employee who “was facing ... disciplinary action,” allegations that she says were “a complete lie.” She was also accused of removing items from the clinic and supplying confidential information about an abortion provider to a pro-life organization; she denies these charges as well.



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Annette Lancaster, who, with the help of ATTWN, left her job as manager of the Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Planned Parenthood clinic in 2016, told The New American she was treated likewise by her former employer. “They came back a few weeks later saying they couldn’t find several weeks’ worth of deposits, that I had stolen them,” she said. She claims to have easily parried that accusation by pointing out that there were video cameras aimed at the safe where the money was kept, so it would have been a trivial matter to prove who, if anyone, actually stole the money. She said she was also falsely accused of making off with other items from the clinic.

Another barrier to quitting an abortion clinic is finding work elsewhere. “When you have worked for the abortion industry,” said Johnson, “you essentially are a pariah in the medical community.”

“Medical professionals know that the abortion industry is corrupt,” she explained. “They know that there’s systemic Medicaid fraud. They know that they cut corners. They know they don’t properly sterilize instruments. They know that medical professionals are working beyond their scope of practice.” Therefore, while they may support abortion in the abstract, they are reluctant to hire people who used to work in abortion clinics, she contended.

Temporal concerns aren’t the only things keeping people from exiting the abortion industry.

“When you have been working for the enemy, our spiritual enemy, and then you decide that you’re going to follow a life that is righteous and good and just and you’re going to follow Christ, Satan is going to do everything he can to come at you and to tear down your family and to bring turmoil into your life, and so there’s a significant amount of spiritual warfare that takes place when someone decides that they no longer want to work inside of the abortion industry,” said Johnson.

Clearly, ATTWN has its work cut out for it. Fortunately, Johnson and her team are up to the task. ATTWN pairs each client with a client manager who helps the client through the transition, including meeting emotional needs and supplying job leads. The group provides temporary financial assistance to help make up for lost wages. It offers free legal services through its network of more than 3,000 attorneys spanning all 50 states. It assists the client in finding a new job, including writing a resumé and preparing for interviews. It holds “healing retreats” to help clients deal with their feelings of guilt and shame for having participated in abortions. And it connects clients with local pro-life advocates who can help them find churches where they will be welcomed and supported.

Photo: AP Images

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“I have had so much help, not only financially but also spiritually and emotionally,” said Lancaster. “Just anything and everything you can think of, they are there for you.”

You Can’t Fire Me — I Quit

Lancaster turned to ATTWN when she “began to feel something within [her]self” telling her that she needed to leave her job at Planned Parenthood.

The decision didn’t happen overnight. At first, she said, she treated her work there like “just another job,” as did most of her co-workers. “But,” she continued, “you could tell by the after-hours activities” — namely, heavy drinking — “that people were very stressed out and kind of bothered by what they were doing.” Lancaster resisted quitting even after she became convinced that she was participating in something wrong, partly because she “didn’t want [her] husband to be the sole breadwinner” in the



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family but also because she “just had this mentality, you know, they’re not going to break me.”

“I kept thinking, ‘I can do this. I can do this,’” she said.

While she was struggling internally with the work she was doing, Lancaster discovered ATTWN. One day when she went outside for a smoke, she found the group’s pamphlets around her car. “The regional director was there that day,” she recounted. “When I came back inside, she kind of, you know, in a smirky way, said, ‘You’re going to get rid of those and throw those away, right?’ And the rebellious side of me was like, ‘Sure,’ and I kept one of them. I kept looking at it and looking at it and looking at it. It was saying, ‘We can help you. We can help you get out.’”

Finally, Lancaster decided it was time to quit. According to her, she wrote her resignation letter and was fired — on the grounds that she “didn’t fit in there anymore” — in the same week. Then she went home and contacted ATTWN. “I called *and* e-mailed,” she emphasized, making clear how desperately she needed the group’s help.

Today Lancaster is a stay-at-home mom who occasionally travels with ATTWN to tell her story — and with good reason.

“I truly believe if it wasn’t for [Johnson] and her organization, I probably would not be alive today,” she declared.

From Death to Life

Louisiana registered nurse Shelley Guillory echoed those sentiments. Guillory, 45, worked at the largest abortion clinic in the Pelican State, where, she told *The New American*, clients were “totally dehumanized. They were a dollar.”

“And,” she added, “if anybody had a question or concern, we talked them into believing that this was the best thing for them.”

Guillory said her job at the clinic “was always a conflict from day one,” but she was recruited when she was unemployed and “just convinced [her]self that [they] were providing a much-needed service.”

As time passed, however, “I noticed that more and more I had to talk myself into going to work every day,” she recalled. Still, she kept showing up at the clinic.

Then came what she called her “light-bulb moment”: Her son died at age 20. “And the emotional turmoil and grief that I went through having lost him, how could I continue to convince myself that these women didn’t feel the same way once [an abortion] was completed?” she said.

After a three-month leave of absence, Guillory reluctantly returned to work. When a pro-life advocate handed her an ATTWN card as she entered the building, “I realized that clinic couldn’t start if I didn’t medicate, [and] I knew it was okay to leave that day,” she remembered. “So I left essentially my first day back to work.”

ATTWN has been a “tremendous support to me,” Guillory said. Among other things, the group “helped provide financial services immediately when I left,” she stated. “They helped me with resumé-building, and they got me in touch with people in my area that were in the pro-life movement and doctors that I could get in contact with to find jobs.” Today Guillory still works as a nurse, saving lives rather than taking them.



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Guillory said she has been to five ATTWN healing retreats, which she described as “very, very awesome.” The retreats, she explained, “give us the ability to purge the things from the darkest of our days in an environment where we feel there is no judgment because we’ve all been there, we’ve all done it. And it gives us the ability to help people who have not talked about their story as much be comfortable with coming out because until you can tell your own truth, you cannot begin to heal.”

“I did not realize how much I was in a dark place until I came out,” she said. “The emotional turmoil and the person that I had transformed myself to become was so gut-wrenching for me that without [ATTWN’s] help, I don’t even think I would still be alive today. It was just that bad.”

Stunning Success

Lancaster and Guillory are just two of the 440 abortion-clinic workers and seven full-time abortion doctors whom ATTWN has helped escape the abortion industry over the last six years, according to Johnson. She told CBN News in January that she’d only expected to get about 10 to 12 workers a year to quit because “it is a hard sell.” In addition to the higher-than-expected worker exodus, she told TNA, “We have had clinics close, temporarily and permanently, because of workers coming forward, speaking out, working with state officials on licensing issues and health violations.”

Unlike Planned Parenthood, ATTWN has achieved its success without a dime of government funding. Its operations are bankrolled by private donors who “believe in these redemption and conversion stories and want to tackle changing our culture from a different angle,” said Johnson.

A large network of volunteers helps make those dollars go further. ATTWN has only a handful of staff members, more than a third of whom are volunteers. Johnson donates her time as the organization’s CEO.

Not content to rest on its laurels, ATTWN is expanding its outreach. The group is starting a speakers’ bureau and training former clinic workers to share their stories publicly. It is putting up billboards outside clinics, urging workers to contact ATTWN, a campaign that Johnson said has already had “some success.” And it has started a website, [CheckMyClinic.org](#), that posts states’ clinic-inspection reports to “show the incredible deficiencies inside of these abortion facilities,” such as “not properly sterilizing instruments being used woman-to-woman, not having licensed staff, [and] performing procedures that are outside their scope of practice,” Johnson explained. This is important, she argued, because states, bowing to political pressure, tend to “do nothing” about these unsafe clinics, and both the public and the clinics’ clients “have a right to know.”

ATTWN “is an awesome, awesome organization,” said Guillory. “It puts the abortion worker back in a human perspective in the eyes of people in the pro-life movement.”

“There absolutely need to be pregnancy centers, there need to be people on the sidewalks that are advocating for the victims, but we are advocating for the victimizer,” averred Johnson, likening it to Christ’s salvation of the Apostle Paul, a former persecutor of Christians. “We are saying, ‘Listen, if there’s nobody willing to perform abortions anymore, that’s a good thing.’ If we can stigmatize working in an abortion clinic enough so that abortion clinics are having to close because they have no staff, that essentially will save people from being victims.”

And that, after all, is what the pro-life movement is all about.

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