

NFP is a Recognized Birth Control Alternative

At one time or another, every engaged or married couple is faced with the family planning question. The issue of family planning is not so simple as it once was, and the methods, although effective at varying degrees, are not always agreeable to the couple and may even involve a health risk.

Before a couple make their decision about birth control, they must consider several points. At each point they react according to their individual needs, likes and dislikes, and yes, how it will affect their marriage and their sexual relationship.

1 — Effectiveness. Does it work? What is the risk of any unplanned pregnancy, and are we willing to take that risk?

2 — Safety. Is this method going to harm me physically, emotionally? What about long-term risks? Are we, as I willing to take that risk?

3 — Esthetics. Basically, is this method offensive or distasteful to either partner?

4 — Reversibility. Simply, when we are ready to have a child, will we be able to reverse the effects of this method?

5 — Morality. Does this method interfere in any way with our religious beliefs or the teachings of our church? Does it agree with our ideas on moral sexuality?

There are many birth control methods available today. The couple will weigh each method against each of these points and make their decision.

Today, we have another choice, an alternative to artificial contraception — Natural Family Planning. NFP is "fertility awareness," or more specifically the Sympto-Thermal Method. Let us consider NFP against the five criteria mentioned.

1 — Effectiveness. Properly taught and observed, NFP can provide the same effectiveness as the pill and surgical sterilization. The biggest factor in this is motivation, as in any form of

birth control. If a couple is careless, a surprise pregnancy can result. Because the NFP couple has a conscious respect for life, they can accept a new life as an unexpected gift from God and grow to love the child for his or her own sake. Unwanted pregnancies are usually a result of carelessness but unwanted children are a result of lovelessness. If the sex act was an act of loving persons, then the child will be wanted and loved whether he or she was planned or not.

2 — Safety. Because no chemical, mechanical devices or foreign substances are used, there are no health risks.

3 — Esthetics. Natural Family Planning does not require devices or applications, nor does it interfere with the act of intercourse.

4 — Reversibility. NFP is immediately reversible at any time when a couple desire conception because the fertility of neither person has been disturbed.

5 — Morality. Being a completely natural method and not directly interfering with the life process, NFP is approved by every major religious faith, including the Catholic Church, as an appropriate method of

regulating birth. Couples of all religious denominations are seeing NFP as a method more in accord with their concepts of God-centered responsible parenthood.

So, from these considerations we can see that NFP is a viable alternative to artificial contraception. Because of its general appeal, its safety and effectiveness, NFP has gained widespread attention. Training programs and counseling services are springing up throughout the country, and indeed, the world. Most of these efforts are led by married couples who have found NFP the best possible answer for them and

wish to share this knowledge with others.

Couples wishing to attend NFP information sessions or who wish to use NFP should always be referred to trained and certified instructors. Our volunteer instructors all use Natural Family Planning. Ten certified couples teach NFP in a 12-county area and seven additional couples are currently training to teach. More information can be obtained by contacting Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, 89 Genesee St., Rochester 14611 or phone 464-8705. In Elmira, people may call Beryl or Nick Iven at 594-2380.

NFP Adherents Increase Worldwide

There are over 200 NFP programs across the U.S. and many organizations around the world. Most NFP research began after 1968. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the World Health Organization are now involved in their own NFP effectiveness studies. NFP Education of Rochester is an associate member of the Human Life and NFP Foundation based in Washington, D.C. which provides HEW and WHO with the latest research and information on natural methods.

NFP Education of Rochester was formed in January 1978 after teaching on an unorganized basis for five years. There was a proven need on the part of engaged and married couples for accurate information on this new method to plan their families. Most people

are not knowledgeable or associate NFP with the calendar rhythm method, including the medical community. Those involved in NFP decided to do something about it.

Today an office exists in the Kearney Education Building at St. Mary's Hospital. Information sessions are scheduled each month as well as class (limited to six engaged and married couples) and private instruction. Speakers are available for church and community groups, as well as in the schools (grades eight through college). The NFP office has a library of books, articles, newsletters, and tapes, available for use as well as books, tapes for purchase.

Contributions and fees from instruction are depended upon to pay for organization expenses and the director's salary.



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