



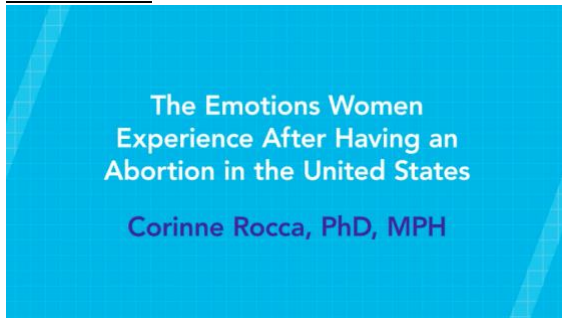
## EXPLAINED: Abortion Research & Policy *Women's Emotions Post-Abortion*

### Learning Objectives:

By the end of the session, learners will be able to:

- Describe the emotions women express after having an abortion, both within days and years afterwards, and the extent to which women feel that their abortion decision was the right one for them.

### Video Lecture:



Women's Emotions Post-Abortion  
Presented by Corinne Rocca, PhD, MPH

Available at: [InnovatingEducation.org/Explained](http://InnovatingEducation.org/Explained)

### Suggested Readings:

- Rocca CH, et al. "[Decision rightness and emotional responses to abortion in the United States: a longitudinal study.](#)" *PLoS One*. 2015;10(7):e0128832.
- Harris LF, et al. "[Perceived stress and emotional social support among women who are denied or receive abortions in the United States: a prospective cohort study.](#)" *BMC Women's Health*. 2014;14:76.
- Rocca CH, et al. "[Women's emotions one week after receiving or being denied an abortion in the United States.](#)" *Perspect Sex Reprod Health*. 2013;45(3):122-131.
- Foster DG, et al. "[Effect of abortion protestors on women's emotional response to abortion.](#)" *Contraception*. 2013;87(1):81-7.

For more resources, please visit the Turnaway study's [annotated bibliography](#).

## Lesson Plan in a Flipped Classroom Setting *EXPLAINED: Women's Emotions Post-Abortion*

Using a flipped classroom model, this lesson plan will use the video lecture and additional resources to provide learners with an engaging learning environment. Here's [how to use this course in a "flipped-classroom"](#) at your own institution.

### Teaching Points

- States have imposed regulations on abortion provision based on unfounded claims that many women come to regret their abortions, or that abortion is "emotionally harmful" to women.



## VIDEO COMPANION GUIDE

- The Turnaway Study, which looked into the short-term and long-term emotions of women after their abortion decision, found that:
  - Shortly after an abortion, the most common emotion was relief, which was reported by 90% of women. Women expressed ranges and mixes of emotions; some women experienced primarily positive emotions (i.e., happiness or relief), others primarily negative emotions (i.e., sadness or guilt), and others a mix of both. Among those reporting any regret, most also reported relief.
  - Intensity of all emotions decreased over time, and relief continued to be the predominant emotion for women during the following years after their abortion.
  - There was no emergence of negative emotions over time.
  - Over 95% of all women reported feeling that the abortion was the right decision for them, regardless of their initial emotions on having the abortion.
  - The small group of women who continued to feel negative emotions about the abortion over time were those who also reported a greater desire to be pregnant, who had more difficulty deciding to seek the abortion, and who experienced high levels of abortion stigma in their communities.
- Experiencing negative emotions, even the emotion of regret after an abortion, is not the same as believing that choosing abortion was the wrong decision.

### Time Required

*Total Time of Video Lecture: 9 minutes*

*Estimated Independent Prep Time Required by Learner: 30 minutes*

*Total Estimated Time Required for In-Classroom Activity: 30 minutes*

### Materials Required and Instructor Preparation

- Learners will need internet access with enough bandwidth to view streaming videos.
- The instructor should print copies of the small group activity quiz (page 4) included in this packet.

### Activity

*Independent Preparation (conducted by learner before in-classroom activity)*

- Learners should independently view the video lecture.
- Learners may be assigned any of the relevant readings (determined by instructor's desired learner work-load) as outlined in the "Suggested Readings" section on page 1.

*In-Classroom Activity (Small Group Activity)*

- Divide the classroom into small groups and distribute the small group activity quiz (page 4-5). Instruct learners spend 15 minutes and work together to answer the questions provided.
- At the end of this activity, convene the class. Present the questions and have learners share their answers and discuss.
- Write the correct answers on the board for the class to see. Collect each handout from learners.
  - The instructor can reference the answer sheet on page 6.



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Names \_\_\_\_\_

***EXPLAINED: Women's Emotions Post-Abortion  
Small Group Activity***

In your group, answer the following questions referencing the video lecture assigned before class. Be prepared to turn in this handout at the end of class.

Questions

1. List at least two findings of the Turnaway Study about women's emotions shortly after an abortion.
  - i.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - ii.
  
2. Which of the following is **NOT** a conclusion about how women's emotions about their abortion decision changed over time?
  - Intensity of all emotions about the abortion decreased over time.
  - Women continued to express more relief than any of the other emotions.
  - For some women, there was an emergence of negative emotions over time; some women reported a change of mostly positive emotions shortly after an abortion to mostly negative emotions five years after an abortion.
  - Actual regret about a woman's abortion decision was uncommon.
  - None of the above
  
3. Over \_\_\_\_\_ of all women reported feeling that the abortion was the right decision for them, regardless of whether they reported mostly positive emotions, mostly negative emotions, or both.
  - 65%
  - 75%



- 85%
- 95%

## VIDEO COMPANION GUIDE

### Open-Ended Question

The Turnaway Study shows that post-abortion emotions vary from woman to woman, largely as a function of life circumstances, difficulty with decision-making about their pregnancy, and experiences of stigma and social support. What are some aspects and conditions of your community that might affect a woman's emotions about her abortion, both immediately and years later?



## **EXPLAINED: Women's Emotions Post-Abortion Quiz Answer Sheet**

### **Questions and Answers**

1. List at least two findings of the Turnaway Study about women's emotions shortly after an abortion.

**Answer:** (Other responses may also be acceptable.)

1. 90% of women reported relief, which was the most common emotion reported.
  2. Women expressed ranges and mixes of positive and negative emotions.
  3. Among those reporting any regret, most (87%) also reported relief.
2. Which of the following is **NOT** a conclusion about how women's emotions about their abortion decision changed over time?
- Intensity of all emotions about the abortion decreased over time.
  - Women continued to express more relief than any of the other emotions.
  - For some women, there was an emergence of negative emotions over time; some women reported a change of mostly positive emotions shortly after an abortion to mostly negative emotions five years after an abortion.**
  - Actual regret about a woman's abortion decision was uncommon.
  - None of the above

**Explanation:** As time passed, there were no new negative emotions presented among the women. The women who expressed negative emotions months or years after an abortion were the same women who had expressed negative emotions one week after having an abortion.

3. Over \_\_\_\_\_ of all women reported feeling that the abortion was the right decision for them, regardless of whether they reported mostly positive emotions, mostly negative emotions, or both.
- 65%
  - 75%
  - 85%
  - 95%**