



Canadian Physicians
for *Life*

Canadian Physicians for Life's members on

Life Lessons & Medical School

6 things I wish I had learned in medical school

By Laura Lewis, MD

I wish I had learned...

1. That science could only describe the magnificence of life, not explain it.

Despite learning about oocytes, spermatozoa, cell division and embryology, I failed to appreciate the complex blueprint of life, established in the early moments of conception.

2. That in the name of "choice" many women have no choice regarding their unplanned pregnancy.

I never appreciated that the scared young woman sitting across from me in my office carried the fear of many others whose lives would be impacted by her unintended pregnancy. This fear often laden with pressure, subtle and overt.

3. That many men and women live with great regret about their children lost to abortion.

As I began to work with our local pregnancy support centre, stories of deep and hidden sorrow began to emerge from men and women who have never forgotten the day they ended the life of their child. I have been privileged to hear from those who are able to voice their regret. I wonder if we have done an adequate job providing real choices. I know the answer without hesitation. No, we have not. True choice is a choice made when options are real, tangible and available. True choice is made from a place of confidence not fear.

4. That despite our ability to treat a diseased heart we have no cure for a broken one.

I wish that all parents, teachers, pastors, men and women facing an unplanned pregnancy could hear the cries of regret from those who have walked

before them. A profound consequence matters, whether it is 1% or 100% of patients. Discussing this is disclosure. Understanding this and choosing still, is consent.

5. That a microscope, while magnifying an image can actually dull our focus.

A chromosome count can't measure value.

6. That we have failed our patients.

That is my word for it, failure. Our patients come to us for guidance, education and help during the chaos of an unplanned pregnancy. The response of the medical profession has been weak and often biased. I use the term 'weak' to refer to the weakness I see in the support and backing given to abortion alternatives. I use the term 'biased' to refer to the overarching attitude that abortion provision; accessibility and availability are given a greater platform than supportive alternatives such as adoption and pregnancy care support.

It is my hope, however, that the medical profession will become part of new system of response to those facing crisis pregnancies, looking beyond the scientific process and returning to the Hippocratic roots of our profession, a place where all life is valued and protected.

Laura Lewis, MD, is a Canadian Physicians for Life board member.

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