Step 9 – Advocate and Patient Spiritual Discussion Script

As the Medical Staff runs the pregnancy test, the Advocate addresses the patient's spiritual needs with a spiritual discussion. This step is part of our mission and fulfills our intention to be a resource of information by addressing all her needs – physical, emotional and spiritual.

Begin this time with the patient by letting her know it takes the Medical Staff about :05 to :07 minutes to run the pregnancy test. The goal is to help her feel less anxiety about what to expect and feel more secure *(see our Operational Assumptions)*.

> **"It will take the Medical Staff approximately :05 to :07 minutes to run your pregnancy test. We like to use this time to talk about your support system and make sure you have what you need."**

It is important to remember that your patient was likely not expecting to talk about this area of her life when she came to her appointment. Explaining WHY we address spiritual things so that your patient understands how this information is relevant to her is key in her feeling comfortable enough to accept a spiritual discussion.

We recommend that you begin by using some opening, explanatory statements such as:

> **"We like to say that when a woman is facing a pregnancy, she faces it on three different levels: physically, emotionally and spiritually.**
> **–Physically – the Medical Staff will come in shortly and go over questions or concerns you may have,**
> **–Emotionally – this is why we asked many of the questions we did in the beginning of the appointment *[perhaps mention someone she told you is supporting her; personalize it to her]***
> **–& Spiritually – as many women consider this to be a strong source of support for them. Would it be okay if we talk about that briefly?"**

AS IN EVERY STEP, THIS DISCUSSION TAKES PLACE ONLY AFTER PERMISSION TO HAVE A SPIRITUAL DISCUSSION HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE PATIENT.

IF THE PATIENT STATES SHE IS NOT INTERESTED IN A SPIRITUAL DISCUSSION, WE NEED TO RESPECT THIS. WE DO NOT OFFER PRAYER OR LITERATURE IF THE PATIENT DECLINES THE SPIRITUAL DISCUSSION. YOU CAN THEN SPEND THE REMAINDER OF THE :05 TO :07 MINUTES (OR LESS) DISCUSSING OTHER AREAS OF SUPPORT IN HER LIFE.

Be prepared to make conversation so that the patient's decline of a spiritual discussion is not awkward for either of you.

If the patient gives permission to have a spiritual discussion, you can continue.

As you begin your spiritual conversation, please understand that this step is uniquely relationship driven instead of simply facts driven. While there are hard and fast, unchanging truths that you will be sharing with your patient, this topic is distinctively personal and likely sensitive to her. The "success" of this conversation is in large part due to how well she understands this step & the relationship that she has already built with her Advocate.

To begin, it is important to affirm that relationship by giving her an opportunity to share. We find that when she feels safe, heard, and respected, she is most likely to willingly receive the information you are offering to her. She will respect you as you respect her. As you seek to draw her out, consider using terms that are comfortable to your patient. We are slow to use wording that is too black-and-white "religious" to begin this conversation, finding greater receptiveness to broader terms such as "spirituality", "personal beliefs", etc. These are concepts that are often far more neutral and familiar to her, as they are broad enough to encompass any unusual beliefs she may hold.

> **"You stated that you are not currently active in a specific church or religion; do you have a background in a certain area? Or would you say that spiritual things are a part of your life at all?"**

Or some other quick introductory questions could be…

- **"Do you believe in a higher power?"**
- **"Do you believe in life after death?"**

Be sure to follow up on her answers by asking more personalized questions in response. Perhaps your patient shared that she has gone to church in the past or is familiar with the Bible. You may find it helpful to ask some more specific questions, such as…

- **"To you, Who is Jesus?"**
- **"Do you believe in heaven and hell?"**
- **"Do you think there's a way for us to know for certain where we will go?"**

Let her respond and use that as a beginning of a spiritual discussion. Throughout this time, remember that affirmation is important. Again, she will usually respect you if you respect her. It is important to note that we can affirm her without affirming her beliefs. Thank her for sharing with you and be intentional to build on any common ground. If she believes in a higher power, you could point out that you do too. If she struggles with fear of the unknown, you could point out that you did too before you found the good news of the gospel.

Depending on your patient's answer to the questions you asked, you can begin to transition the conversation to the gospel. For example, if your patient shares that she believes she will go to heaven, you could ask what makes her confident. If she states that she has believed in Jesus Christ for her eternal life, then encourage her in this relationship with Him. If she isn't sure or is depending on someone/something other than Jesus Christ, you can move on in your discussion.

> **"I would love to share with you a little bit about what I believe," OR "I would love to share with you a little bit about what has encouraged/helped/supported me in my life."**

Because our time is short – please keep in mind:

- The gospel is simple.
- We don't want to overwhelm her. Remember, we are hoping this visit to the center will be the first step in her transformation process.
- We need to stay focused on her reason for being here.
- Our main mission at this point is to empower her choose life.
- We can't "fix" her life (nor has she asked us to).

While the message of Eternal Life is unchanging, your method of sharing this information should be ever-changing to be relevant to the patient that you are meeting with and her life situation.

The method you use to offer her information on eternal life needs to be relational. Remember that because this step is so relationship based, your authenticity and vulnerability make all the difference to her. It is important that you remain safe and trustworthy to her, and she gauges this by how relatable she believes you are. All too often, Christians are portrayed as unloving, intolerant, and judgmental. Perhaps she has never met a believer that admits to struggling, just like her. To help her trust you, perhaps you want to show some trust in her by sharing something about yourself similar to how she just shared with you. This can help transition into what you believe – the lifesaving work of Jesus Christ.

Be cautious that you do not become so dependent on your "method" or "process" that you appear to be giving her a "sales pitch." Keep it conversational and relevant to her.

-Be cautious that you aren't focused on a "tract mentality":

- **"Accepting Christ into her life"**
- **"Accepting Jesus as her Lord and Savior"**
- **"Praying to receive Christ"**

These are all phrases we have learned from tracts – not from the Bible. The Bible teaches belief in Christ alone for the salvation of eternal life.

We only have a limited amount of time (5-7 minutes) –

SO KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING – BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST.

If we try to include too many things, it can get complicated. Remember that she has a lot on her mind right now, so let's keep it simple. The gospel IS simple.

Please personalize your message of God's love for this patient to her and her life situation. You may or may not give a complete and thorough presentation of the gospel as you remain sensitive to her needs. LISTEN TO HER and respond accordingly. The training videos will help you with this.

We cannot stress enough the importance of **not** making this :05-:07 minutes of talking as fast as you possibly can so you can get through what you need to get through. This is about relationship. Taking situations of need in her life and letting her know that Jesus can meet those needs. If what we say takes far longer than what she shared, this conversation will become a presentation – and feel much less safe and neutral to the patient.

Sometimes it will be appropriate to share the entire message; other times you may just talk about a few verses (or you may add your own). The key is to connect with her to point her to Jesus.

Please do not be "afraid" to offer this truth to her. This is critical information for her. If she is open, please give her what she needs!

The Center has put together a "God's Eternal Promise" card that you can offer to your patient if appropriate. This way, even if you are unable to "get through" the complete message, she will leave with key Scriptures that, should she desire to learn more, will lead her into the truth of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

It is important that you share the gospel in a way that feels natural and authentic to you. If you would like to use the God's Eternal Promise card that we offer our patients as a foundation to this conversation, you can familiarize yourself with it here so that you can offer it in a way that is personable and natural to you.

God's Eternal Promise

God tells us very clearly in the Bible that He created us, He loves us, and He wants to spend eternity with us. This can be explained in just one verse – John 3:16.

JOHN 3:16 "FOR GOD LOVED THE WORLD SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, SO THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE."

What does this mean?

"FOR GOD LOVED THE WORLD SO MUCH..."

God loves everyone in the world, regardless of who they are. It is His desire to spend forever with us, but there is a problem we have as part of our human nature – sin. *"For everyone has sinned, we all fall short of God's glorious standard."* (Romans 3:23) As this verse explains, sin is defined as anything we do that falls short of God's perfectly right and just standard. Until our debt of sin has been paid for, it separates us from God.

"...THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON..."

God sent His Son Jesus to earth to pay our debt of sin. The cost was His own life, which He gave willingly as a sacrifice.

Jesus is the One Who *"takes away the sin of the world."* (John 1:29)

When Jesus died on the cross, His death and resurrection paid in full for all the wrong that we have ever done or will ever do in our lives.

"...SO THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM..."

People often mistakenly believe that we need to earn God's approval by being "good enough", doing the right things, or doing more good than bad.

However, Jesus does not tell us we need to earn the way to heaven based on our own goodness. He only tells us to "believe in Him" for eternal life, because His goodness is sufficient.

***"God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this, it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."* (Ephesians 2:8-9)**

"...WILL NOT PERISH..."

Jesus promises that if we believe in Him, we will "not perish" – which is another way of saying we will not be condemned and go to hell.

"God sent His Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through Him." **(John 3:17)**

"...BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE."

If we believe, we will not perish because we have "eternal life" – the promise that our soul will remain with Him forever. This everlasting life begins the moment we believe in Jesus for it.

"He who believes in Me has everlasting life." **(John 6:47)**

God's Word is clear that if anyone simply believes the words of Jesus found in John 3:16, they will not perish but have eternal life with Him in heaven!

This truth about Jesus does not just affect our eternal destination, but also life today. He desires to have a relationship with each one who believes in Him!

Jesus says, *"...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (John 10:10)

If you would like to know more about believing in Jesus for eternal life or want to know Him better, you can:
- Spend time reading God's Word and talking to Him (in prayer) frequently.
- Find and attend a church that clearly teaches the Word of God.
- Find and attend Bible Study. Spending time with other people who know Jesus will help you learn more about God and the hope He offers you.

-If appropriate, please offer the Gospel of John and God's Eternal Promise card to take home with her.

-Depending on her response and your connection with her, it is entirely appropriate to pray for her to conclude the spiritual discussion. PLEASE DO NOT VERBALLY PRAY FOR "THE BABY" OR "HER PREGNANCY" AT THIS TIME.