

Opinion

There is one clear and undisputed law basic to nature: every action has an equal and opposite reaction. This fact, known already for centuries, is the basis for all experimentation, discovery and development. We all learn it in science class, or failing that, acutely sense it, in an elementary way, whenever we knock our head against a door frame.

It is surprising, therefore, that humans, in the main the most intelligent of all creatures roaming the earth, do not appear to take more cognizance of this. Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that the reaction is not always immediate. Hence, we often live under the illusion that a problem either does exist or that it will *simply* go away. All possible, of course, if we merely turn off our cerebral functioning, a more common variation to that of closing our eyes or burying our heads in the sand.

That's why we have become a culture of the "quick fix". If we ache physically, we see a doctor and fill a prescription. If we ache emotionally, we see another doctor and vary the prescription slightly. That, in the majority of the cases, treats the symptom, not the problem. Most of us are aware of that, at least some of the time. Most of the time, however, some of us are after a quick fix.

Sometimes the quick fix works. Taking an aspirin daily may eliminate a daily headache. One is thus spared the more difficult and unsettling prospect of having to change one's lifestyle. Sometimes, however, we fool ourselves into thinking that such is the standard solution to all problems. Abortion is an example.

This epidemic sweeping our society appears, at least in most cases, to be a quick fix to a social problem. It purports to eliminate a personally embarrassing or economically inconvenient situation. In the long run, however, does it really work?

No matter how efficient the technically perfected "vacuum system", the "job" is never complete. It may remove the child from the womb, in pieces, though that is not guaranteed either. But, can it remove the child from one's mind, in peace? And, the vacuum hose is removing a child, let's not be naive about that.

Are we then fully aware of our actions, and their consequences? Do we know both the short term and long term complications that may result, both physically and emotionally? Can eliminating an unborn really eliminate a problem? Germaine Greer, guru of the feminist movement of the 60's and 70's, had unfortunately to learn the hard way. Today, she bears both the physical and emotional scars of her actions, a consequence of an independent exercising of her individual "right". Now she preaches a different message.

The quick fix may, therefore, be neither quick nor the fix one wishes. The quick, easy solution today may become the agonizing lament of tomorrow, both for the individual and society as a whole.

The BC government has sensed just that, and has proposed alternatives. They are long term, and, admittedly, may not be perfect. But, they are a realistic attempt to deal with a social problem. Concern for the family, for the individual, and the unborn child is to be highlighted. Adoption, though perhaps not ideal, is nonetheless to be considered. Counselling, crucial for whatever decision is taken, is to be made available. Information regarding the responsibilities and consequences of engaging in sexual activity is to be given. But most of all, support systems, a caring attitude, and a human touch is to surface, all of which revive our sense of community and responsibility to each other and the future generation growing within us.

Our individualistic and materialistic society tends toward quick fixes. We are now only slowly realizing that, as we reap those "benefits" in our rivers, lakes and air. Quick fixes tend to devalue human life, erode our responsibility, and leave a horrifying aftermath. There are alternatives, ones which bring out the best, rather than the worst, in our attempt to preserve human dignity.

John Valk
Campus Ministry

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