

This question takes many forms:

“Are you saying that NFP and Contraception are different because one is natural and the other artificial? What’s wrong with being artificial? Anyway, NFP lacks spontaneity and isn’t this unnatural in primates?”

“How is the conscience of someone who uses contraception different from one who uses NFP? They both want the good of the family”

“For the same grave reasons to postpone pregnancy that make NFP morally acceptable, wouldn’t the use of a condom instead be just as moral?”

“If every sexual act must remain open to the transmission of life, then NFP is wrong too when used during the infertile time.”

The theme is that similar goals or effects seem to prove that they are both contraceptive and immoral or both family planning and moral.

NFP modifies sexual behaviour to suit fertility while contraception suppresses fertility to suit behaviour



Are they the same? Does it matter?

Both NFP and contraception have to do with birth regulation, but that does not make them the same.

All crows are birds and all eagles are birds but crows are not eagles. And apples and oranges or durians and durians are all fruits yet different, one from the other.

Also, good ends are not enough. How you reach them makes all the difference. You will die if you eat the poisonous mushroom , even if you believe it is the truffle , a delicious and expensive fungus.

How exactly are they different?

Although both are used to regulate birth, *NFP modifies sexual behaviour to suit fertility while contraception suppresses fertility to suit behaviour.*

They are like two roads that diverge in a wood leading to different habits and cultures.

The words themselves describe these paths.

‘**Natural Family Planning**’ is ‘planning a family’, where couples in a licit marriage lose themselves in each other and express the language of their beings for the genesis of new persons.

NFP adds insight and skills to decipher and interpret this language to help spouses accept and space as many children as they can take care of.

So NFP supports the marital act viz licit sexual intercourse in a licit marriage, and binds us to God’s design of procreative love.

Being faithful to this design makes us beautiful, and the husband who recognizes the inner beauty of his wife is in a sense seeing God.

‘Natural’ then implies natural sex and Natural Law, the moral law inscribed in the heart to sustain human integrity, not the absence of pills or devices and not the scientific laws of nature.

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‘**Contra-ception**’ means ‘anti-conception’ not ‘family planning.’ It is to have sex but block conception and is never used to achieve pregnancy. If it plans for the good of some children, it is at the expense of others, even selecting some for abortion.

‘Contraception’ is really a sex-fixating, anti-baby package. Freud called this sexual perversion.

This is true of the contraceptive use of devices like the condom, diaphragm or female condom and of measures like sterilization and withdrawal (Onanism, *Gn. 38,9*) which do not themselves cause abortion.

And true also of the Pill and the IUD which may also cause early abortion before pregnancy is even known. The Pill may also lead to thrombosis or breast cancer.

Yet, using contraceptives is not wrong just because of all these. Like homosexual sex, contracepted acts are unnatural sex de-linked from marriage, and corrupt the very meaning of sex as procreative love.

Contracepted acts ... corrupt the very meaning of sex as procreative love.

So NFP is not a contraceptive.

NFP accepts the cycle of God’s procreative gifts before menopause viz the gift of fertility and the gift of infertility – like using a radio as designed viz to produce music though it is sometimes off.

Contraceptives reject them, blocking a baby that could have resulted from sex on fertile days. They falsify the design of fruitful sex – like using the radio to hammer a nail into the wall.

Using contraceptives also violates the unitive meaning of intercourse, as it disfigures the sexuality of husband and wife and obstructs the self-giving that is characteristic of love.

But NFP does nothing to make the sexual act less fertile or less unitive than it would normally be.