

Tell Your Story

Edith Ugarte

Florida, United States

It was the night of The Pathway Home's first Celebration of Life when I brought to my Mom a red and a white rose in the name of a grandson who will never be able to bring her roses. This is because many years ago I made a decision that forever I have regretted.

For an entire life, I was just the typical devoted "church girl." I was well-taught, well-involved in our church's activities. Needless to say, both of my parents were also actively involved with Christian retreats themselves, and the Bible was not just another book in our home, but THE BOOK of excellence and for excellence. Dad used to say that it was only there where we would find who we really were, and to Whom we belonged!

Being a senior student at the university, (23 years old), I found myself pregnant and single. I am child number four in my family. But at that particular time, I was the oldest of six younger brothers and sisters. Fear of my Mother, (afraid of what her friends would say), along with the shame I was going to bring upon my family and the poor example I was portraying for my younger siblings, froze me to the point of not being able to see the magnitude of what I was about to decide. I decided the unthinkable: I had an abortion!

It was my boyfriend's bright idea...actually; instead of getting married in a rush...here is "the other option." He told me where to go for the abortion and he provided me with the money the doctor requested. Due to his job responsibilities, he had to go to El Salvador for several days, so...he was not there with me when I had the abortion, and he was not there for me after the abortion.

I believed all the lies! The doctor told me that we needed to do it immediately because at five weeks of pregnancy, there were still not bones... (A blob of tissue?). He did not want to know anything about me. The anesthesia started to have an effect on me and the nurse started to ask EVERYTHING about me: my parent's names, place of our work, father of the child, etc. He also requested that I should come with someone else, not alone. It was a totally humiliating, painful and destructive experience. Moreover, I willingly turned my face away from my First True Love!

I was about five or six years old, when my Mom took me with her every Thursday to her personal and special visit to the Holy of Holiest, and introduced me to my First True Love. At age 9, I found my special place at The Lord's Supper Table. During my teenage years, prayers and youth retreats kept feeding my spiritual hunger. As our four years of clean courtship turned the wrong way, my visits to the Holy of Holiest faded. Slowly but surely, my defenses wore out and the day came to pass when I heard myself crying to God and, acknowledging His unfailing love. I said, "Please, forgive me for what I am going to do but... You know that my mother will never forgive me for the humiliation I will bring upon her!" Well, I will never know anyway...I did not give her a chance! Their friends gossiped anyway! In addition, nobody but me will ever miss the son I gave no chance of being born!

The young woman that went inside the clinic died as well. I came out a very different person. I hated myself, my Mother, my boyfriend, brothers and sisters and even society. I knew what

was right, honorable, noble and good. I realized that I had played to be God! I went immediately to confession. I do not remember how many times I confessed my sin. Regardless, it was always impossible for me to experience God's forgiveness. The real issue was my unwillingness to forgive myself. Now I know my sin was gone from the very first time I confessed it!

That "sweet" girl he had married began to raise her voice aggressively to her husband and with time, became an overprotective mother to her three children. Many of our 32 years of marriage were filled with doubts, half-spoken words and even betrayal.

It was through the Bible Study, "Forgiven and Set Free," that I was able to finally deal with the aftermath of my abortion experience. Going to Calvary, meant for me going back to my "First Love." I realized that His sacrifice was the total payment for my personal sins. I embraced the rugged cross with my bare arms and hands. I threw myself into His Arms of Mercy. He was just waiting for me...His precious bride! He dressed me with royal robe and then, He raised me up to more than I can be. I was assured of God's love. I knew who He was, and I knew His character. I accepted His invitation to "Go and sin no more" because HE DID NOT CONDEMN ME. I literally came out from the darkness into the light! I even got the courage to ask our children for forgiveness, and they did forgive us! My husband and my children blessed my decision to come to Washington and be a Silent No More. I gave my personal testimony publically (in Spanish) for the first time.

Jesus invited me to live the free life. Before, I was denied to live my life freely because of shame. My life was restored and healed as He had promised me. In His extravagant Love, He also gave me a new love, respect and admiration for my husband, and even put a new song to sing in my heart. He gave me a brand new generation of my family, through my grandchildren!

I can now extend my hand to other women living in the same bondage, and I can tell them MY STORY ABOUT HIS GLORY! I can bring hope, because now I know THEY HAVE NOT COMMITTED THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN! God is GREATER than our greatest sin...Of course, it will never be OK what we did...But yes, says the Lord...He is going to give us beauty for ashes, strength for fear, and gladness for mourning and peace for despair...What HE DID FOR ME, HE WANTS TO DO FOR YOU...That is why I AM SILENT NO MORE.

I live my life now challenging others to TELL THEIR STORIES ABOUT HIS GLORY...I ask them to come on out in the open...into the light. Our Redeemer lives! Hear what God says in:

Isaiah 1:18

"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Abortion is Satan's master plan to destroy humanity, and silence is its best ally. I urge everyone to listen to me: Be SILENT NO MORE!

We all need to LISTEN, WRITE IT, and MAKE IT HAPPEN! We all have to be, in one way or another...SILENT NO MORE!

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
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Until We Meet Again

Alexa McGrory

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because, although I used "protection," I became pregnant. Already a single mother of two sons and only 27, I went into panic when I found out I was expecting another child. I was in college and already working nights to support my two children. I barely spent time with them. Since I worked in bar at night, there was no way I could still work there while I was pregnant.

During the abortion procedure, I stared at the clock on the wall directly in front of me and I kept thinking, "Hurry up already, please God let this be over!" I just wanted to go to sleep and wake up from this nightmare already. I kept thinking back to the sonogram that I had a few hours earlier that looked like black ink stamped on a paper and the lady kept saying, "It is just a blob of tissue, nothing has begun to happen," and me saying to myself, "I hope she is telling me the truth, but what if she's not?" Part of me wanted to run, but then how could I feed my babies? I was so scared, anxious and confused. I looked around to meet someone's eyes for comfort, but everyone was running around, too busy preparing. As the doctor came in I remember him saying, "Just a few minutes and it will be all over." As I began counting backwards, I remember asking God to forgive me for what I was about to do.

Immediately after the abortion I felt dead. I felt a large woman shifting me from a wheelchair to a stretcher. I could barely move. She asked me if I needed a blanket and told me I would be resting a while and then she was gone. As I lay there, I was beside myself. I thought I would be relieved that my "problem" was gone, but I felt horrible. Shame, fear, anger flooded my mind. I was numb. I couldn't cry and I didn't want to even think. I had a lot of cramping and bleeding, but I was glad because I wanted to be punished for what I had done.

I actually went to the diner next door to eat breakfast because I was feeling sick from not eating all day. As I walked, I tried to walk upright although I was in great pain because I didn't want anyone to know what I had done. I told my cousin how "relieved" I was that it was over although inside my heart was breaking. When I went to the bathroom, I wondered if the entire baby was out or if I would get an infection from them doing a botched job. I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror...I was so ashamed that I had allowed myself to go through with the abortion. I cried. I wanted my baby back.

As time went on after the abortion I hated myself, I couldn't believe that I bought into the lie that society says about having the choice to bring a child into the world. "Abortion"... Oh God, just saying that word was like a screeching sound to my soul. I could not go into the baby department at any store or even touch a baby. I woke up in the middle of the night as I kept seeing my baby falling or being taken from me. I became somewhat disconnected emotionally from my two children because of the "sacrifice" I had to make for them. I cut my relationship off with the baby's father immediately after. I could not connect with anyone not friends or family. I quickly sank into a dark hole where no one could reach me. I jumped from relationship to relationship, nothing satisfied me. When I went to work, I drank more to numb myself from the constant pain that lingered inside me. I was depressed, angry and wanted to die. All the things I loved to do (painting, writing and dancing) were no longer of interest to me.

The cycle of guilt continued as now I felt like a terrible mother and didn't even know who I was anymore.

Help and forgiveness actually found me after six years of repressing my abortion. It was after visiting a relative who had just had a late-term abortion that I had went into a deep depression. Hearing her story sent me into an emotional rampage. All the negative feelings, nightmares and even suicidal thoughts that I thought I had recovered from were back. I could even smell the plastic smell from the oxygen mask I wore six years earlier. My body was having pains and cramps and every time I had my menstrual period, I had delusions of my baby's tissue coming out. I was at church on the Sanctity of Life Sunday when I heard Rev. Rob Schenck speak about abortion. At his first mention, I began to shrink in my seat. I thought I would be found out. Rev. Schenck spoke of God's forgiveness and how God would never remember what I had done once I had asked him to forgive me. He said, "If you have ever had an abortion, I want to say it was not your fault." He elaborated on how society convinces us that it is our choice. The last and most crucial thing that Rev. Schenck said was how I would see my baby again in heaven. The walls of my prison had crumbled and fallen. The despair that I was feeling inside had begun to subside.

There was hope! The one thing I wanted back was my child and God could give that back to me. I didn't have to be ashamed anymore as I was lied to. My baby wasn't just a blob of tissue.

Rev. Schenck had directed me to my nearest pregnancy center where I attended a "Forgiven and Set Free" group. Initially, I was angry and hurt, but when the group was complete I was able to name my baby girl, honor her and say, "So long." Not forever, but until we meet again.

Thinking back to the night of conception, I realized that when the condom broke that night it was God's will for me to have my baby, but I interrupted that gift. There is no circumstance great enough to validate an abortion. It is not a solution. It is a problem that wrecks your whole being; mind, body, soul and spirit. The amount of pain and destruction that comes from this "procedure" is irreparable.

Although I have found healing and God's love, I still suffer from post-traumatic stress and will always miss my baby! To honor her and to save others from this trauma today, I vow to be Silent No More because abortion is a nightmare.

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I Have Been Restored

Rose Ann Rita

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because Planned Parenthood with Bernard Nathanson has used Roe V Wade to make (kidnap, rape, murder, and extortion) abortion legal at any time for any reason. They forced me.

Before coming to the clinic, I had tried to figure out if abortion was right or wrong for three days. Half of me said it was okay, half of me said it was bad. Pregnancy can make you tired—stress even more so. I thought I was going to crack up, so I decided to go to the clinic and then I would know if it was right or wrong.

I asked to see the doctor and was told I could not see the doctor until I signed the paper. When I got up to see the doctor they gave me to a counselor who did not answer questions but made statement responses, ignoring my questions.

Next I was placed in the stirrups and a nurse began the procedure—still no doctor. At this point, the Lord spoke in my spirit the words, "You have stepped out of My will, you are going to be seriously hurt."

I tried to leave. They would not let me. I felt threatened—primal scream threatened. The nurse said I could not leave. I tried to have my husband come in. They would not allow it. I realized at that point I was not in a true medical facility, because you are free to leave and your husband can be at your side in a medical facility. I laid back in exhaustion. I wanted to leave but could not. Puzzlement became terror.

The doctor came in and said four words. "Do you want this?" I did not want it, but I realized I could not leave without it. So I said yes because I wanted to leave. He ripped the fetus from me. The pain was horrific. I was bleeding heavily, but they tried to shove me out the back door with direction to hurry up and drink the orange juice so I could leave quickly. Others were waiting to take my place.

I passed the place that held my child, a child I prayed to conceive. I wanted to see. The Lord spoke a second time saying, "Do NOT look, you will NOT be able to handle it."

I wanted to crush the glass of orange juice in my hand. The Lord spoke a third time saying, "Do not crush the glass, it will not help."

I asked about follow-up. The doctor's response was an incredibly familiar smack to my right buttock and a "See ya next time, baby." As a child I had a great family doctor. I had no preparation for this horror. I was enraged and amazed at the gall.

I slept for one year and cried non-stop when I wasn't sleeping. Then there was another year of non-stop tears. I could not put an ornament on a Christmas tree for three years—I felt I had no right to do so or to have anything. I felt I had no right to do so or have anything ever again. I was punishing myself.

I started walking again at the prompting of Pro-Life Action League's Joe Scheidler by organizing picketing of Tampa abortion clinics. I picketed and served as a sidewalk counselor there daily for eight years. I divorced. I've been radically pro-life and struggling financially since 1980.

I determined to do every good thing I can to see an end to legal abortion. Had it not been legal it would have never crossed my mind.

I found help and forgiveness through meeting Nancy Jo Mann from WEBA (Women Exploited by Abortion). I finally found someone who knew and respected the depth of my pain.

Project Rachel helped, but again there was no follow-up—I felt stranded emotionally.

Twenty-six years after the Lord knocked me out in the Holy Spirit, He spoke to me and I now know that I never wanted it—I have been restored, my self-respect and dignity.

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A Terrible Crime

Luz

Florida, United States

I am here [in front of the Supreme Court building] today because on March 6, 2003 I had an abortion. I wasn't a young and inexperienced girl. I was a grown up woman, a wife, and a mother of two boys 9 and 3. I was 42 years old, but I was irresponsible and weak. Years before, my insurance company terminated my maternity coverage, and to reinstate it, my monthly premium would have increased by about \$150 dollars. I could not afford to pay that much more. A few months before I got pregnant, I failed to pay my health insurance. With a history of pre-term labor, a previous pregnancy that cost over \$100,000 dollars, and no health insurance coverage, my husband urged me to consider the abortion. I wanted this child but I gave in to my husband's wish because I was a coward, my faith was weak, and I was afraid to take full responsibility if something went wrong, for example, having a baby with Down's syndrome given my advanced age. We were too old according to my husband. Our comfort and the comfort of our two boys were threatened. After all, he claimed he was not asking me to do anything illegal.

Yet, I went to the clinic with the idea of stopping the abortion at the last minute. I thought that my husband would not get so mad if at least I tried to please him. (I did not know how afraid of my husband I was). When we got to the clinic, the woman at the front desk asked me what kind of abortion I wanted. None, lady, I thought to myself. My husband immediately jumped in and said, "She has not made up her mind yet. Is there any counselor she can talk to?" The woman next to her stood up and took us to another room. I told her "DEEP INSIDE MY HEART THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR AN ABORTION". My husband told her that my problem was that I thought I was carrying a baby and not just a blob of cells. She assured me that my baby was "just a pinhead". Between her and my husband, they put the idea in my mind that I did not have to like it, that I did not have to want to go through with the abortion, but it was best to sacrifice my baby for the well-being of my other two children. How naive and stupid I was that I did not stand up for my baby when she compared him to a tumor. "Wouldn't you remove a tumor?" she said. She made me sign telling me that I could stop the abortion at any time.

When it was time to go into the operating room, I crouched down and said, "I can't do this." Two other women from the staff lifted me up and pushed me into the room with smiles on their faces. No matter how much I struggled and battled with them in the room, they did not stop. The doctor never asked me why you are fighting. Do you want to do this or not? He even got upset at me because I was crying. After many times of me saying, "I don't want to, I don't want to," they gave me the anesthesia, and I went to sleep praying aloud, practically yelling OUR FATHER who art in heaven.... I was in such a panic state that I don't know if I was asking God to save my baby or to forgive me for killing him. When I woke up, I thought to myself I am not pregnant any more, and immediately I realized that my baby was gone forever, and that I had committed the most terrible crime of my life. I also felt violated and hurt.

In that moment, my living hell started. I felt my life was ruined, and I was on the verge of committing suicide. The only thing that mattered to me was joining my baby in the afterlife. All the reasons that my husband gave me to convince me to abort our child seemed stupid and ridiculous! I was right from the beginning... There is no justification for an abortion.

I am not trying to excuse myself at all from the responsibility I had in my abortion, but I do want to point out a very important fact: The majority of women that have abortions don't want to have them. They are coerced by their partners or their parents, and even psychologists, social workers, nurses, and other medical personnel. I am urging all the men and women listening to me today, never to pressure a wife, girlfriend, daughter, or patient into having an abortion. Instead, help them fight for the life of their babies.

The day after my abortion I was under the care of a psychologist, and then a psychiatrist but there was no magic therapy or pill to cure my sorrow, my grief, my regrets, my anger, or my anguish. I spent three nights without any sleep. I was urged to abort my baby for the well-being of my other two children, and after the abortion, I found myself incapable of taking care of them for almost a year. My days were filled with anger, depression, anxiety and flashbacks of that moment of horror. I miss my baby every day of my life!

I knew from the beginning that no human science or effort could save me. God was my only hope, but how could I turn to him now? I was fortunate that a week after the abortion, I was referred to Father Gabriel, and he introduced me to the Merciful God I had forgotten, and my healing journey began. Thanks to God's Mercy, many bible studies, a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, and all the wonderful pro-life workers that God has put in my life, I was able to make the choice to accept God's forgiveness, to believe that my baby forgave me for extinguishing his light before he had the chance to shine, and to forgive myself, my husband, the abortionist, and his clinic personnel and leave their judgment to God.

It has not been an easy road. I wake up every day and remind myself that I have to continue to work on my healing. I have been changed forever. Since I can't bring my baby back, all I can do now to honor him is to speak the truth, and tell the world that abortion is not for women, it is against women! No one can hurt a baby without hurting his or her mother. Abortion did not protect me. It hurt me in every aspect of my being. I have suffered greatly physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Even my children and my husband had to pay the consequences. Abortion is not a quick solution. It will not erase a pregnancy, it will kill a child and it will scar your life forever. Nothing that I do will change this part of my history. I will always be the mother of a child destroyed by abortion. I am hoping that with my testimony many lives can be saved, and many mothers, fathers, and siblings can be spared the horror of abortion.

Today, I am asking all the women and men hurt by abortion to seek healing and restoration from the only one who can work that miracle.... from God through His son Jesus Christ. I am also asking them to speak up. We can't be silent any more. I wish my husband and I would have known better, I wish we would have heard the testimonies that we are hearing today so that our third child Gabi would be alive!

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I didn't know that my decision would affect me so badly; this pain is truly unbearable...

Abortion Story: Fort Myers, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 27-year-old woman on June 28, 2016.

I don't even know where to start. Two weeks before my birthday I woke up and suddenly I just knew I was pregnant. I had a pregnancy test in a cabinet and that morning I took the test. The two lines showed up, and I was in complete disbelief. When the dad of my baby came back from his trip I told him, but he didn't take to it. He just closed his eyes and made this expression like "Oh sh*t, what we gonna do?" But he just said, "I will support you in whichever decision you make, but I don't think is the right time." I did a little but of research; we didn't talk much about it, but I didn't want my parents to find out. For three weeks, I wasn't sure what to do. Of course I wanted to be a mommy, his or her mommy, but how was I gonna tell my parents that I was pregnant when they think I've been single for years? So I made the appointment a week after my birthday and decided to do it with the abortion pill. I planned to tell my parents, but we just found out that my dad has cancer. How do ai tell them I'm pregnant? So I met with the baby's daddy, and he helped me with half of the money to pay for the procedure. He didn't try to stop me; he didn't show any emotion toward my baby or say anything. He didn't go with me to the clinic; I was all on my own.

I filled out the paperwork, paid \$580, and read the package that they gave to me. It all seemed very easy, with some cramping. The procedure was supposed to be less invasive than the surgical procedure, but I felt completely lonely. Since the day I found out that I was pregnant I kinda knew I couldn't keep him or her: my little angel from heaven. This wasn't your fault; it was pure selfishness from my part. As soon as they called me they did the ultrasound, and I kept it. It is the only thing I would have from my beloved child. I love my baby, despite my decision, and I ask him/her forgiveness for my decision since that day. At the clinic after the ultrasound I cried because I was in complete disbelief about what I was gonna do.

The lady told me that I would be fine, that I'm not alone, and that many of them have been through the same situation. They gave me two pills at the clinic. All I'd have to do was to wait 24 to 48 hours to continue the procedure at home. I hadn't been able to eat for two weeks and although they'd given me pills for nausea, my body couldn't take any of it. It was too late for me to back out. I took the last two pills, and the pain and cramps and fever started. It was a horrible pain. I knew I had killed my baby, my poor innocent baby. It was my duty to protect you, but I killed you, and I love you.

It sounds very contradictory, but I do love you, and I wish I had not taken those pills. You would still be inside me. The lady told me I was 6 week and 6 days. I wish I wasn't such a coward. Losing my baby has been my worst decision. Physically it was painful. The cramping

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Abortion persists because of ignorance, apathy and confusion. Abort73 is working to change that; you can help! Get started below:



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was unbearable; I felt weak. I had a fever and nausea. My mom was worried because she didn't understand what was going on. I just told her I caught a virus.

But more than a physical pain, as soon as that sack came out out of me, I knew I was pregnant no more. I had officially killed my baby—my sweet little baby, which I won't ever meet. I won't get to kiss him or her, nor hug him or her, nor raise you, and I regret this decision every second.

The dad from whom I expected full support completely disappeared for four days. I felt weak and shallow and undeserving of life and love. I feel like trash every day because of my decision.

I didn't know that my decision would affect me so badly; this pain is truly unbearable. It's a pain that I don't know if can be healed from. I just hope that my baby, and God, can forgive me.

My friend is pregnant and we were only a month a part. Each time I see her is super hard for me to be strong and to not cry. I envy her because she has it all together. Her baby is gonna be born in a very happy marriage and is very desired. Her baby will be a reminder of my baby all my life.

And I'm very happy for her, but the pain is killing me. She knows what I did, and she understands why I break down in front of her. I don't want to fill her with my sadness.

I needed to share this because all my emotions are still very sore and is right there stinging because it hasn't been even a month since this happened.

TO MY BABY: I'M SORRY AND I LOVE YOU AND I TRULY WISH I COULD TURN BACK TIME.
I WISH YOU WERE STILL INSIDE ME.

LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART—YOUR MOMMY

Age: 27

Location: Fort Myers, FL

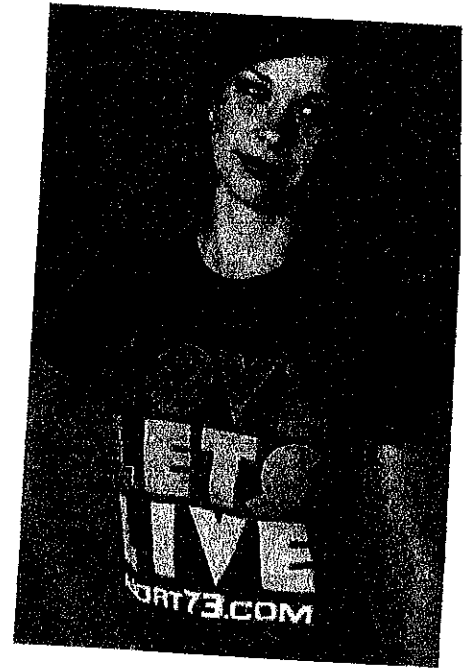
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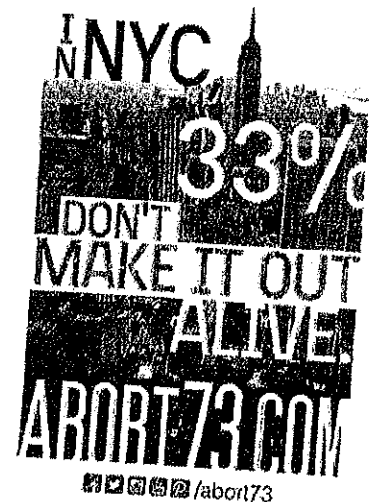
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I regret every part of my decision. Whenever I'm out somewhere and I see a baby boy... I can't stop my tears...

Abortion Story: Fort Lauderdale, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 17-year-old woman on February 9, 2015.

December 1, 2014, is the day I took my first ever pregnancy test. I sat in the bathroom for five minutes hoping and praying to god that the results would be negative. When I found out I was pregnant, I cried with my boyfriend for hours. I wanted a baby so I could give him or her everything I couldn't have, but now that I was finally pregnant, I didn't know what to do anymore. My boyfriend and I have been dating for more than a year. After finding out about the pregnancy, we had to make a decision right then and there because if we waited a little more, my parents would have found out. I couldn't tell my parents or anyone in my family because if I did they would disown me and send me back to my country forever. My mom is also very sensitive, so I also had the fear that she would have another stroke and die. My boyfriend and I are just getting everything sorted out in our lives so we can be settled in together. The only decision that fit was to have an abortion. At the moment, I really didn't think about it that much. I just thought to get rid of it as soon as possible. When I came home, I started researching about the baby—how it looks and how much he grows each day. I became very attached to my baby. I even started eating and drinking healthy. As days went by, I started talking to my baby before going to sleep. I had to get a bypass from the judge to do get the abortion. After two weeks, we made an appointment on December 11, 2014. Even then I didn't realize what I was doing until the ultrasound, the nurse told me what I might see in the ultrasound and that I might even see twins. The moment she said twins, I felt my heart fall to the ground. When I actually saw the ultrasound, I thought to myself, "That's my baby on the screen, inside me, a part of my body and my soul." I wanted to stop right there and then. I had to go back outside to wait for the procedure. I held my tears in front of my boyfriend, and then it was time. I didn't know whether I was ready or not, but after going inside the room, I saw two nurses. It confused me. Why were there two nurses? Then the doctor came in, and they laid me down. I felt everything—two needles going inside me and the sound of a machine with blades. I started crying and screaming. I didn't want them taking my baby away from me. After the procedure, I went home without saying a word—due to the pain. I laid down and cried my heart out. I didn't know whether it was because of my baby or the pain. A week later, while still recovering, I had a dream of my baby in my arms—a perfect little child in my arms, and it was mine, all mine. There was nothing wrong with him. He was just perfect, eyes, lips, ears, teeth, everything was perfect. In my dream, I raised him with a couple of my friends. He was just like

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his father. He liked to take things apart, build things, loved music. Ever since that day, I regret every part of my decision. Whenever I'm out somewhere and I see a baby boy similar to what he looks like, I can't stop my tears—no matter how hard I try. I hope he forgives me for what I have done to him, and pray to god that one day he comes back to me, and I get to give him the world and love he deserves to have.

Age: 17

Location: Fort Lauderdale, FL

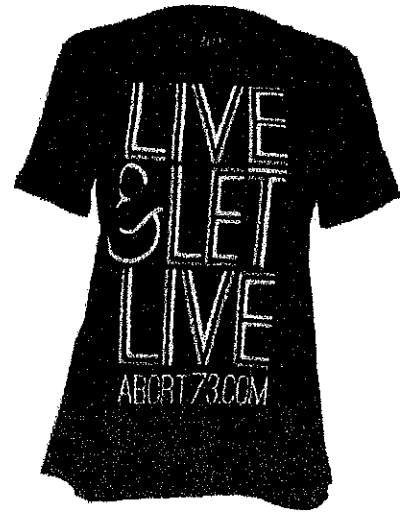
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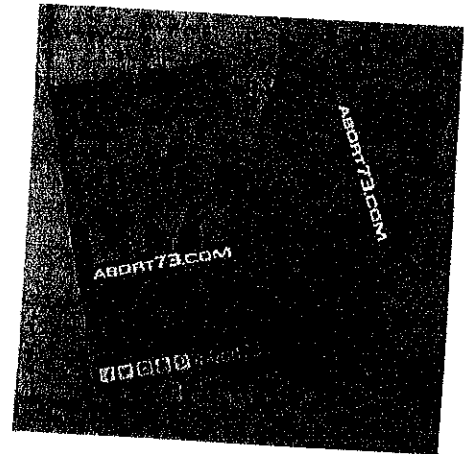
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What had I done? Why was I so irresponsible? I went home and lay in the shower to try and rinse the disgust I had for myself off...

Abortion Story: Hollywood, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 28-year-old woman on September 26, 2016.

[Abortion was] the worst decision I ever made. It all began when I started my career. I was so excited and enthralled in my new career that I worked so hard to obtain. During this time frame, my marriage of six years was shattered. There was no fixing what was destroyed for so long. My ex-husband and I had a 1-year-old baby boy, who is my life. Getting a divorce was what I wanted; it's inevitably what needed to happen. However, I felt it would completely destroy my beautiful son's life. So, years went on and I always knew in my heart I wanted another child. I wanted my son to become an amazing big brother, but I knew bringing a child into an already-broken marriage was probably not a responsible decision. I attempted counseling and nothing worked, I had come to terms my marriage was over.

I began working a lot more when I met a guy I worked with. Unbeknownst to me at the time, I grew to fall in love with him. We became such good friends. I spoke and he listened, but not the type of listening to impress me. He truly cared. Little by little, conversation after conversation I fell deeper and deeper in love with him. But there was a huge problem, I was still married and he had a girlfriend. Several months went by and ironically I came to learn he was going through the the same situation. He was in a six-year relationship, with a 4-year-old child. Eventually we confessed; we loved each other. I honestly can say, I never felt this way about anyone in life, not even the man I chose to marry. The lonely nights of being apart were becoming more and more painful. It was almost a physical pain to be apart from someone I grew to love so much.

Then the day finally came; he called and told me that he ended things with his girlfriend. I was in a state of shock! Now it was my turn. And I didn't quite know how to respectfully end a marriage, but I did. It was not long afterwards that I received the worst news, that to this day I replay. The man I had taken my barriers down for, who I gave my heart to on a silver platter called to let me know his girlfriend was pregnant. Me, being so in love, told myself I can get through that. I made the decision to stay. It almost didn't seem real to me at all. After a couple months, my boyfriend and I ran into a very huge hurdle in our relationship, one that almost tore us apart. But we worked through it, it was a very rough time but we came a long way, so I thought.

After reconciliation between us, there was a short period where things seemed to be going good. Then life hit me with a ton of bricks. While at work one evening, I had this weird feeling. I

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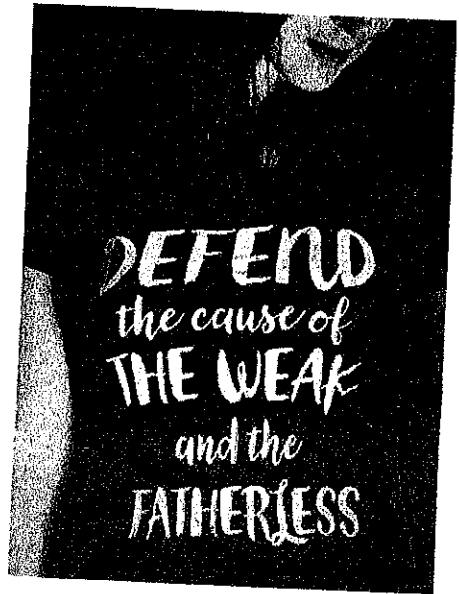
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I knew my period was super behind. It was always irregular so I thought nothing of it, until the cravings began. That night at work my life drastically changed. I took a pregnancy test to find I was pregnant. My heart burned like a fire. I was excited inside because I always wanted my son to have a little brother or sister. And I felt he was at a good age to where I can have them close. I knew the situation with my boyfriend getting his ex-girlfriend pregnant wasn't ideal, but I honestly didn't care about her. I was happy for me. I waited until the next day to tell my boyfriend, whose reaction was not at all what I expected. I was told I couldn't keep the baby because he couldn't raise two infants with two women at once. I was also talked into abortion because of my career. He told me over and over again how I wouldn't move up if I was pregnant.



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My career meant so much, but it still never felt right. A couple months went by and I was coming near to a point where I would be too late for an abortion. Unfortunately for me, I wasn't strong enough to stick up for myself emotionally. I wasn't strong for my unborn baby who at the time, I found out, was 15 weeks. I call her a she because that's what I dreamt of, but she had a heart beat and little precious hands and feet. As the end of September neared, I found myself at the women's center making the decision that I had no idea would affect my life so significantly. And then, it was done. I lay in a daze in the recovery area and all I could do is cry. What had I done? Why was I so irresponsible? I went home and lay in the shower to try and rinse the disgust I had for myself off. It's been a year now and I still hate myself. My boyfriend who had his daughter gets to bask in the glory of having a beautiful healthy baby, and the torn, destroyed me just sits at the sideline and watches as he father's a child that I wish I had.



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It has been an uphill battle trying to allow myself to accept his child but every time I look at her, I see the image of the baby I destroyed. I get extremely jealous of his picture-perfect little family because it is what I wanted. Having had a child prior made it even more difficult. I see my son and it kills me to think of anything bad happening to him or someone that wants to harm him. I feel like a hypocrite because the innocent baby I gave a heartbeat to I harmed. I took her little life. I live my life wondering what could have been. I absolutely hate myself for this decision. It has psychologically destroyed me and my relationship because I hold so much resentment towards not only my boyfriend but his daughter as well. I wish I had a time machine to go back and change things, but I can't. I hope one day in another life to meet the beautiful child I once provided life to, just to embrace him or her and say how sorry I truly am and that I love them. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think about my beautiful little angel.



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Age: 28

Location: Hollywood, FL

Date: September 26, 2016

Search by related keyword: Divorce / Disgust / Hypocrite / Resentment / Sorry

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Abortion Story: Bradenton, FL


Submitted to Abort73 by a 38-year-old woman on July 5, 2013.


I had [an abortion] when I was 17, and let me tell you, IT IS NOT JUST A PIECE OF TISSUE!

It all started when I became sexually active and began thinking about having a baby—so I would have someone to love. I slept with three different guys in a one month period. One month later, I found out I was pregnant. I was scared beyond description. I had been taking pills and drinking, so I was fearful that the baby would be deformed. One of the guys I had been with was of a different race, so I didn't know if the baby would look like me. And my mother was extremely overbearing, thus making the situation even more stressful. I don't remember how, but I told my mother and she began to give me options:

Option 1: Have and keep the baby, but do EVERYTHING EXACTLY the way mom says. 

Option 2: Have and give the baby to my mom, thereby having to face this "mistake" for the rest of my life.

Option 3: Have an abortion. 

Option three was given much support from my stepmother who had, unbeknownst to me, had several of these little "procedures."  My mother was doing the best she knew how. She educated me and took me to a counselor who had previously been counseling me for bulimia. We went over the options together, (but) we didn't discuss the morality of them to any great degree. Eventually, I made the CHOICE to have an Abortion, a simple end to my problem, right? WRONG!

The day came. It was early in the morning. We drove to the abortion clinic, passing billboards of fetuses in the womb. We arrived at the driveway. My mom told me to cover my eyes and lay the seat back. I still could see the picketers outside of the brick building. I could hear their shouts. They just seemed like obstacles to me, fanatics even. I saw their signs—more PICTURES OF fetuses—in the air. I could see the door of the building. A very pregnant, Spanish woman was going in, but, wait, wasn't this just for people like me—barely pregnant people?! The next memory I have is being at the front desk, signing in and looking at pictures on the walls. There was Oprah's smiling sweet face. If Oprah endorsed abortion, it has to be OK, right? There was a letter from her under her photo. Then, it was time for me to go into room number one. In room one, all the women who were there for abortions waited, took a Valium, and basically mingled and got to know each other. I remember a few of the women there with me—another teen girl. She looked to me for comfort. Her boyfriend and mother were pushing her to have an abortion, but she didn't want to. I comforted her, and told her it'd be okay. It wouldn't be that bad. The next girl said she had been there a year ago for the same procedure and she swore up and

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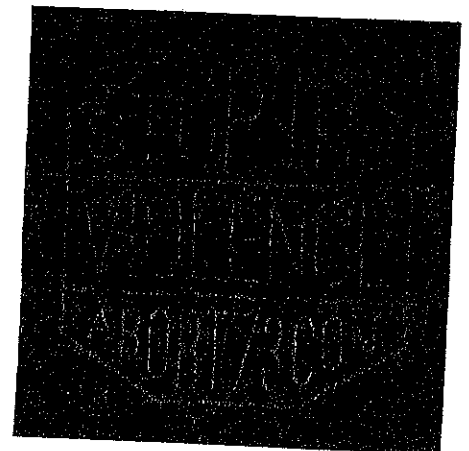
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down she'd never do it again. This supports the fact that most women who have abortions end up pregnant again within a year—trying to replace the loss of their baby. The last woman I remember was in her 40's and had 4 or 5 kids already. She said she just couldn't handle another one.

The nurse came in and called the 40-year-old lady in. A few minutes went by, and the door opened again. My turn. I went to room number two, lay down with my feet in the stirrups, and tried to relax. The nurse held my hand. Madonna's song, "This used to be my playground," came on. I still remember the doctor feeling my pelvis. "She's 10 weeks." I thought I was only 8. Then came the vacuum—the awful vacuum. They dilated my cervix with a clamp or two and then came the vacuum. I heard my baby's life end. I felt cold and nauseated. I teared up—immediately realizing what I had CHOSEN to do—murder. The nurse helped me off of the table and showed me where room number three was—the bathroom, to get my clothes back on and put on a pad. I shook all over, shook so hard I could hardly get dressed. Then I opened the door. There was the teenaged girl I had previously been trying to console. She said, smiling, "it wasn't so bad, was it?" And I fell to freaking pieces! A look of shock now resided on her face. I started crying loudly, and the nurse came, whooshing me away from her into room number four—a room full of recliners and hot tea, soft music, low lighting. The 40-year-old was already there, vomiting in a waste basket, seated on the recliner next to mine, her knees covered in a blanket.

THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED.

I WAS TOLD NOT TO MOURN—IT WAS JUST TISSUE. She wasn't. She was my daughter.

Age: 38

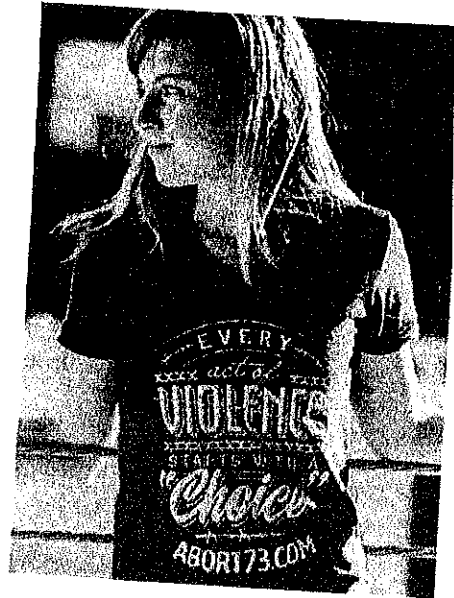
Location: Bradenton, FL

Date: July 5, 2013

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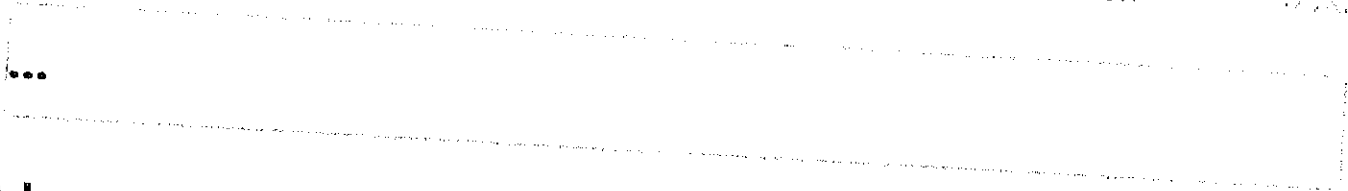


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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 37-year-old woman on February 12, 2013.

I was nineteen years old and had just gotten to North Carolina, where I was serving in the Army when I realized I was pregnant. I had broken up with the guy I was seeing and had only been in the Army for about six months. I had no one to turn to (I was one of two females in an all male unit) and my parents were back in Michigan. I wasn't all that close to them anyway. When I called the clinic in Raleigh, the nurse took my information and told me that I'd have to wait three weeks. When I asked her why, she said that if the tissue wasn't big enough, 'they may not get it all.' I didn't tell anyone about my situation. The only ones I would have been able to tell anyway were my superiors, and they were all men. I could only imagine what they would have thought of me. I also selfishly believed that since I was not ready, willing or able to be a parent, no one else could, would, or should raise my child, so adoption was out of the question for me too. For those three weeks, my baby had a bounty on its head. I took a cab there and back to the clinic by myself. I paid the nurse four hundred dollars, and she did an ultrasound to measure how far along I was (eight weeks). She didn't point out the heartbeat, arms or legs; nothing. The doctor didn't tell me anything either, such as the fact that the machine was loud; it sounded like a Shop-Vac. He told me that it would be uncomfortable, but it hurt. I started crying, and the nurse held my hand out of sympathy. I knew what I was doing was wrong, and it felt unnatural too. I cried on the way home. The cab driver didn't say anything to me. He had picked me up in front of the clinic, so I'm sure he knew what I had done. I managed to stuff that day deep into the furthest corner of my mind, and not even think of it for many years. I even went on to have two more kids after it, but I ended up getting married and divorced twice in about twelve years. I had a lot of anger but couldn't figure out why. I realize now that people would tell me in indirect ways that I was a very negative person to be around. I couldn't seem to find much joy in anything. I was born into a family of lapsed Catholics, and I had found the Baptist faith on my own as a young teenager, but at the time of my abortion, I had not been active for quite a few years. I started dating a 'cradle Catholic' and decided to attend RCIA. I also told him of my abortion, and even though he did not dump me like I thought he would, I could tell that he was horrified. It was during that time that I began to see and understand the magnitude of my decision. I received forgiveness from the Church, but I still could not forgive myself. We married, in 2010, and in 2011, I was pregnant. We moved to Florida from North Carolina that year, and as we drove across the Florida line, a huge billboard greeted me that said '18 days after conception, my heart started beating.' It had a picture of an unborn baby on it as well. I almost drove off the road because I had not known that. That was another nudge at my conscience about my abortion. Shortly after I had my youngest son in January of 2012, I found out I was pregnant again about six weeks later, and I miscarried that one in May. Then, I found out I was pregnant for a third time around the 4th of July. I miscarried again in

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September. Having those two babies taken from me against my will finally broke me, and I began to grieve for them as well as my aborted baby. I attended a Rachel's Vineyard retreat last December, and I was finally able to face the consequences of my abortion, grieve for and acknowledge that baby, and forgive myself. I still have days where I feel shame and anger towards myself, and I probably always will. If I had known then what I know now, there's no way I would have had that abortion. I would have chosen adoption, but I didn't. I have to live with the fact that I took my first child's life. That's not something I'd wish on anyone.

Age: 37

Location: Florida

Date: February 12, 2013

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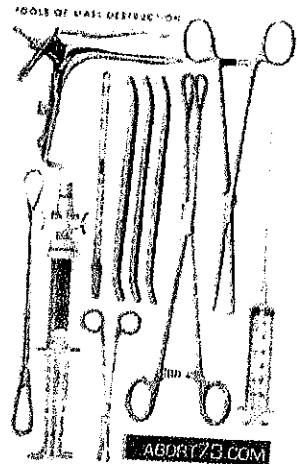
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TRUTH revealed: ABORTION HURTS WOMEN

Darlene Wood-Harvey, Regional Coordinator
Florida, United States

I am speaking to you today because **ABORTION HURTS WOMEN**. It's taken me over 34 years to be healed, strong and brave enough to share my story.

In 1973, as a 22-year-old, naïve and unsuspecting college girl, a long way from home. I hung out with nice, but amoral people who drank alcohol and were involved in pre-marital sex. I went along with the crowd and the consequences were my getting pregnant, although I didn't know it at the time. I was too proud and independent to ask my family for help. I ended up at a "free" Planned Parenthood clinic (PP). They did a test and told me it was "positive." PP told me "it" was "only a blob of tissue" which could easily be removed for \$200 (cash).

When I arrived for the "procedure," the man entered the room and said something about giving me a shot and that I would hear a sound like a vacuum. He did NOT tell me about the horrible cramping and pain I would experience. **I was awake through the procedure and experienced excruciating pain.** I was crying and did not understand what was happening. I'll never forget the pain and the noises coming from the tubes going out of my body. Everything went silent. The "doctor" turned away as he said I could rest a few minutes and leave by the back door. Immediately after the abortion, **I felt nauseous, had sharp pains, experienced a lot of bleeding and weakness**-too sick to sit. **I was traumatized.** This was my first gynecological experience. To this day I have trouble going to see a gynecologist.

During the following months, I STILL experienced severe pain and bleeding. I did not trust Planned Parenthood, so I went to a doctor who told me what the "procedure" was...an abortion! He also told me that PP had put an IUD inside me WITHOUT my knowledge or consent! I felt violated, betrayed and angry! I demanded the IUD to be removed, which was very painful. The doctor said the tissue damage and scarring in my uterine lining from the abortion and IUD **may cause me to be childless.** **Planned Parenthood's abortionist killed my only child and I am childless.**

At this point, I hated myself. I made bad decisions for my life. Nightmares filled my life. I became a workaholic and a near alcoholic. About **three years** after the abortion, I suffered from low self-esteem, physical pain and many other symptoms including panic attacks, short-term memory loss, debilitating fatigue, isolation and suicidal depression. I thought I was going crazy! I saw a psychiatrist. He told me I wasn't crazy, but that I was suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. The hell and reality of remembering the abortion started in the early 1990's and continued until March 2008. **Abortion cost me my womanhood.**

Thank you Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I am now **forgiven and set free** and active in **helping other women to NOT make the same mistake** I made! The most important thing about abortion that I think people need to know is that abortion is not the answer to problems. Abortion creates problems. Women need to SEE and HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT the destruction of ABORTION and how it kills their unborn children. Women need love. Abortion destroyed what made me a woman. Abortion wreaks havoc on women's lives - it is **NOT a safety net**, but a **HEALTH HAZARD!**

I regret my abortion. Women deserve better than lies – they need Truth. With God’s help, I’ll defend TRUTH. I choose both the woman and her baby whose heart is beating at four weeks!
I AM SILENT NO MORE. Thanks be to God - **there is help and hope** for hurting post-abortive men, women, and families through His Grace and Mercy.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

Stop and Think

Jennifer

Florida, United States

On April 21, 2005, I had an abortion. It all happened so fast!

I found out I was pregnant. I told my sister, and she told me to have an abortion. The only reason I can say why I did this is because I always did what my sister said to do. As a matter of fact, most of my life has been a result of choices I made to win not only the love of my sister, but anyone who would give love.

On April 21, 2005 I had an abortion. From the moment I found out I was pregnant to the point of terminating the life inside my body, not one time did I breathe or think on emotional level about what I was doing. I was in people-please mode. I had an abortion because I was told to. To this day, I still find it all surreal. Like most of my life, I am stunned that there was not one person who was willing or able to reach out to me, to help me help myself. I have gone along and done what I "had" to do all of my life. I got a ride to the place from a (at the time) friend. She and her 13-year-old were my only option. It is sad for me to look back at how quickly my sister told me what to do and exactly where to go and have it done. However, on the day when I most needed a sister, she was again not willing or able to be there. So, as a result of an inappropriate comment of the 13-year-old, I was dropped off and went in on my own.

I was numb yet, at the same time, I was so hysterical, and I could not compose myself. With no notice by the front desk woman, I was given a basket and told to follow the girl in front. I believe this was the closest I will ever come to being able to relate to cattle in a slaughter house. One by one we followed in line to undress, sit, and wait. It was there, in the cold locker room, that I sat in a gown, holding my basket of clothes and still hysterical, barely able to speak, let alone breathe. I encountered a very frustrated nurse who became so intolerant of my hysteria that she sent me to the director's office. After all, I was slowing down her factory line. Again, looking back, I am astounded that the director could have taken the opportunity to be human enough to stop give me an option to pause, stop, go home, and think. I suppose she was doing her job when she asked me if I was sure of my choice and, without being able to make eye contact with me, she accepted my flood of tears and emotion and moved me back into my place in line.

Next, I walked into a room where I was told to lay down and put my feet in stirrups. As I did, my knees drew closer and tighter together. I attempted to speak out as I watched a nurse push a thick white fluid into an IV in my arm. In the same way as I lost consciousness the night of conception after unknowingly being drugged in a bar, off to sleep I went. The last thing I remember was attempting to say, "I don't want to be here." It was the same feeling I last thought I as felt as I was driven down a country road. I just wanted to go home, as I begged to go back, out of consciousness I went. Out of control of what was happening to my body and, on April 21, out of control of what was about to be done to the life inside me. The abortion was complete. I woke up sitting in a locker room, cramping and crying alone.

I spent the following 15 years in two different extremely abusive relationships. I allowed men to overpower and take over my life. I slowly allowed these men to kill me, to completely bankrupt me of love, life, and God. I attended Rachel's Vineyard on two different occasions. Each time, I

got a little deeper and closer to how and why and finally to forgiveness. I looked very deeply into myself and relationships. I looked at the empty lonely pit my life had become. I came to believe that perhaps not one of the women involved in my abortion were capable of helping me. I forgive them. I forgive myself. Most important, I realized, I was never really alone. God was there through it all. It was God's love for me that brought me, as a result of such pain, to a place of love and acceptance. I have become active with Rachel's Vineyard and even made a few beautiful friends. On my retreat, I met Sister Mary Christine. She told me to keep on going, to never to stopping talking, to never be silent again.

I am God's daughter, and He forgives me, which has taught me to forgive myself. I am astounded by the number of people who played such active roles in my abortion who at so many times could have said, "Stop and think, you have another choice." Not one of them did and, as a result of this, I will be silent no more. I hope my testimony will help even just one girl or woman to stop and think, just pause and breathe.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
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Hearts Can Change

Jane

Florida, United States

I had three abortions, and there are days when I think it may have been four.

When I was 18, a senior in high school, I met a charming yet pushy, popular, and handsome boy who I quickly learned was aggressive, as well as verbally and physically abusive. I was smart, an honor student, and strong willed. I had overcome a lot of adversity and was going to college. I broke up with him often, knowing I deserved better, and vowed never to go back to him again—only to be charmed and coerced right back into spending time with him and right back into the same cycle, over and over again. He had a car and money, and I didn't. We went out for meals a lot. He took me on vacation and places I'd never been and got me out of the house when I had nothing else to do. But, ultimately, he didn't treat me well and wasn't a person I could trust and talk to. He wanted sex very early on and would get very angry and even abusive if he didn't get it. He experimented with drugs and at one point was pretty heavily addicted. He also sold drugs and tried to hide it from me multiple times. The ironic thing was that no one in our community really knew who he was behind closed doors. He was admired and loved by so many. He was a basketball star and could sweet talk his way through almost anything.

When I became pregnant with his child the first time, I felt disappointed in myself. I knew I could not fail at being successful and end up with someone like him. He didn't necessarily want the abortion. He expressed a negative opinion about it, but I didn't respect his opinion or trust that he would be someone I could count on. He came with me to the clinic and paid for it. I don't remember protesters outside this time, but I do remember the waiting room being full. My boyfriend said, "Look at all these people laughing and smiling like it's a joke." I hadn't noticed the non-chalantness of the others until he said that. I was in my own world.

I remember the procedure being painful, and he took care of me when we got home. We took a warm bath, and I couldn't believe what had just happened. I was regretful, and I promised myself it would never happen again. But yet again, I became pregnant two other times. He had a hold on me, and I did love him. When I'd leave him, he would always come back, pleading with me and promising to go to counseling and end the drug selling. I was so embarrassed to be in such a rollercoaster relationship when I had a bachelor's in psychology and was offering counseling and guidance to adolescents and their families. "My family expected so much more from me," I thought. They believed in me, counted on me. I didn't want to let them or myself down. Child out of wedlock? I'd promised myself that wouldn't be me. I didn't grasp this at the time, but there was no let down bigger than having an abortion?

I don't even remember if I told him about the second pregnancy. I drove to and from the clinic alone and I remember disliking the protestors. As bad as my ex was, ironically enough, he wanted nothing to do with my third abortion. He wanted me to keep the baby. But when I refused, he wouldn't pay for it or come with me. Looking back, I was afraid of the kind of life we, our children and I, would have had with him. I believe that had he assured me that we could do this together, made me feel safe and supported, I may have kept at least our second and third children. Still, I can't justify that I made the decisions all on my own. I felt alone and somehow, selfishly, made those terrible horrific choices despite being a Catholic my whole life

and going to church every Sunday. I put what I'd done away and went on with my life somewhat normally. I confessed my mortal sins and was told by the priest it was unforgivable and that I couldn't receive communion. So, for years, I went to church and did not receive the Eucharist. That was hard for me. I confessed repeatedly. I wanted and needed God's mercy.

When I finally moved to Florida to get away from my ex, I confessed again and felt God's mercy for the first time. I learned God's mercy was bigger than my sins. After a couple of retreats and growing closer in my relationship with Jesus, I began healing. I no longer carried the heavy burden. I was now pro-life and mostly put it behind me, but there was still a piece of me that didn't realize the enormity of the destruction I'd caused.

Then I saw the movie *Unplanned*. The visual on the ultrasound screen, seeing the pieces of baby and blood clots being picked up off the floor, and learning the brutal truth about the abortion industry disgusted me and forever changed my wishy-washy, mediocre pro-life stance. I now believe under NO circumstances should abortion ever be an option.

God called me to speak about injustice when I was 14 and throughout my whole adult life, but I wasn't fully allowing Him to work in my life always. I have literally taken the not-so-pretty, scenic route, to what has always been my calling—standing up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. I can no longer be silent and do nothing. I will continue to discern how, when, to whom, and where I will speak. But one thing I know for sure is that I will speak. Hearts can and will change, as mine has.

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Working up from Ruins

Mary

Florida, United States

It was fall of 1994. I was the super star volleyball player for the Green Castle Blue Devils in Pennsylvania. My boyfriend of four years was a sophomore at the University of Maryland. I was loving life. (I grew up without my father. He abandoned his seven children when I was five, so I was a bit of a rebel.) I was a strong-willed senior, and I thought I ruled the world.

At the beginning of volleyball season in August, I found out I was pregnant. I informed Jason the father, and he immediately said I needed to get rid of it. He said his parents would make him quit school if he became a father. He threatened to throw me down the stairs if I didn't get rid of the child. So, I made an appointment. He gave me the money, and I drove myself to the clinic. He stayed in the downstairs apartment from me and partied with some friends.

I remember sitting outside the clinic saying to myself, "This is wrong. What am I doing? Don't do this!" But I was too scared of Jason. I went to the back after they called me and lay on the table. I remember the sound of the vacuum suction, and the nurse telling me I was doing great. I don't remember much else, except that afterwards I became very sick and threw up. I lay in the back for a bit, and then they released me. I drove home, and Jason was half-drunk, asking me if I was okay. "Yeah," I said. I died that day. I didn't know it at the time, but that was the day my life spiraled out of control. I asked for some Chex cereal, and he went to the store for me. I ate a bowl of Chex and went to bed. I was so mad that he was in the apartment under me, partying and drinking.

After this, I became depressed and drank a lot. I started cheating on Jason and slept with a couple other guys. I just didn't care anymore about anything.

I was playing volleyball for Hagerstown Jr. College in 1994 when I became pregnant again. The second time around seemed a lot easier. Jason, of course, was not there again. I made the appointment. The same thing happened all over again. One of my teammates was pregnant at the same time. She kept her baby; I killed mine. I was twelve weeks along. I knew I was 12-13 weeks, but I told the doctor I was eight weeks. The only thing I remember about this abortion is that during the procedure he said, "Oh, you are farther along." The suction was just as loud as before. I don't remember what happened afterward.

I terminated these children so I could go to college and become something great. This is what actually happened to me. In the spring of 1995, my grades majorly slipped, and all I wanted to do was drink. I quit volleyball, and I quit school. I just wanted to drink. Jason couldn't figure out what was wrong with me, and, at the time, I didn't know either. I just wanted to die.

I broke up with Jason and moved to Florida to live with my aunt and uncle. Although I found God, I was still a mess and drank a lot. I partied every weekend and wanted to just forget the North, the cold weather, and Pennsylvania.

I drank so much I got two DUI's in year and a half. I tried to commit suicide, self-mutilated, had bad boyfriends, suffered anxiety, depression, eating disorders, OCD, ADHD, and my life was in ruins.

I moved to Panama City in 2001 because my life was going nowhere, and I needed a fresh start. I found God and a great church and got married. My husband is wonderful, and I now have three beautiful children. After my third child John Paul I just felt something was off. I ended up talking to a priest friend of mine and opened up about my abortions, which I NEVER forgot. He recommended I attend Rachel's Vineyard, which I did. It was life-changing. I loved that weekend, and it brought me such peace. That was five years ago.

My husband has recently taken a job in Virginia. All my memories are coming back to me. Winter is a trigger for me. Florida doesn't really have a winter. I also recently attended a clinical training course with Dr. Theresa Burke. WOW! I felt she was talking to me, and it brought EVERYTHING back up in my mind. I looked at my priest friend next to me and said, "I don't think I have fully healed yet." I had a panic attack the next day. Severe anxiety and all I thought about was the abortions. Dr. Burke said this might happen, and it did.

I called a Christian therapist and said I think I need to do EMDR therapy. A friend did this and said it was powerful for her. I am set to go to therapy next week. I need to heal before moving to Virginia at the end of August. I hate the North and cold weather, because it reminds me of what I did.

Please pray for me, friends. I know God forgives me. I forgive myself. My children forgive me, but I have a long way to go. God bless you all for what you do.

In Christ,

Mary

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Waiting in Heaven

Debbie

Florida, United States

I was 22 years old, married, and I had a two year old little boy. I started feeling sick and knew I was probably pregnant, even though I had been to the doctor and had an IUD inserted. I went to the local doctor and he told me I had the flu. He gave me meds and told me to go home and I should feel fine. I didn't, became very sick, and vomited until I was dehydrated and had to go to the emergency room. They admitted me and realized I was pregnant. When I got out, I went back to the same doctor, and he discovered that the IUD had moved into my uterus. He told me I had a 50/50 chance of aborting naturally and suggested I get an abortion. My husband was out of work and was not happy I was pregnant, especially since I had been using birth control. He told me to have the abortion or get out. I asked everyone what they thought I should do. My parents were going through a hard time themselves and said it would not be a good time to go home. We were living with my in-laws and they did not care for children anyway. I even asked the only Christian I knew at the time - the mother of my husband's best friend - and she told me she thought it was the only thing I could do to "solve my problem." I felt so desperate. I did not have the money to take care of myself and I had nowhere else to go. Even with all that, I knew it was wrong. My husband wanted a girl and even told me if we could be sure it was a girl, he would be fine with having the baby.

We made an appointment with a local abortion clinic in Atlanta. The day of the appointment arrived and we went to the clinic. Everything was so hush-hush. You had to have your payment in cash - no checks. We signed a form that said the doctor and the clinic had no responsibility whatsoever if something went wrong with the procedure.

I remember walking into the waiting room and the only other people in there were a teenaged girl and her mother. I remember thinking, "How can a mother take her daughter to do something like this?" Then it hit me that I was the mother in my case, and I was doing the same thing.

I remember being petrified when the procedure occurred. The doctor hardly spoke to me at all. It was painful, and I did not look because I did not want to see what was there.

I remember the woman in the bed next to me in recovery laughing and joking with the nurse. I asked the nurse why she thought it was funny to be there. The nurse said she was a prostitute and it was her 27th abortion. I saw her later down stairs, and she was with her pimp.

I was divorced two years later and had remarried two years later. I was driving down the road one day and heard a radio program by Dr. James Dobson called "Tillie," about a little girl who had been aborted and was in Heaven and was telling her mother how much she loved her and had forgiven her. It broke my heart and it opened up my eyes to what I had done. I thought I had "solved" my problem, but what I had done was killed my baby. I pulled off the side of the road and cried for about 20 minutes. I told Jesus how sorry I was (I had become a Christian about 4 years before this). I heard His voice say to me, "This is exactly what I died for. You are forgiven." The sorrow was great but there was peace and a burden to share my story with others.

I have shared many times with others what I did and that Jesus forgave me and He will forgive them, too. For years I missed that baby so much. I went on to have 5 more children and lost 4 more babies. I know I have lots of precious children in Heaven waiting for me.

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All the Sweet Moments

Elisabeth

Florida, United States

Two of my children are in heaven. My daughter is in heaven because God took her home. Little Katie was born with a serious genetic disorder and lived for only two months. My son is in heaven because I aborted him.

I am submitting this essay because I want you to know which choice I regret, and in which choice I delight.

I look back on my daughter's life with deep joy and satisfaction. I was not a perfect mom, even for those two months, but I have the satisfaction of knowing that I loved her deeply and cared for her as well as I could. I think of her often in God's presence and my heart leaps.

My son is in God's presence too, but that thought sends me to my knees. The law says it was my choice to make, but I know the truth: I made a decision no human has the right to make—the decision to end the life of an innocent child.

When I found out as a teenager that I was pregnant, I decided to abort for only one horribly selfish and immature reason. I wanted to avoid the difficult discussion with my parents that would follow if they found out I was sexually active. Although I was given papers to sign, I do not recall anyone at the clinic speaking to me about the risks or potential negative side effects of abortion. I am certain no one asked me why I wanted to abort or challenged me to think through my decision. While being prepped for the procedure, I told the doctor that I believed abortion was wrong. He said nothing to discourage me from going through with it.

Many years later, as a married woman, I was once again faced with the decision to abort. My husband and I were told that our baby had Trisomy 13, an incurable genetic disorder. The doctor urged us to make our decision quickly because I was already far along in my pregnancy and fast approaching our state's abortion deadline.

Once again, years after my teenage abortion, I felt the tug of selfish thinking. I was afraid of the way a tiny, innocent baby might change my life. I knew that some Trisomy 13 children live for many years, and I realized our daughter might need total care. I worried about the strain on our finances and on our marriage.

My husband and I also wrestled with the fear that our daughter might suffer. Maybe, we thought, the compassionate thing would be to abort her before she ever had to struggle. But then we remembered that plenty of people suffer and yet still want to live as long as they can. Who were we to decide that she should die so she might not suffer?

When I told the doctor we had decided not to abort, he urged me to reconsider. Looking me in the eye, he warned that I might not be able to handle carrying a child that I knew was unlikely to live. We stood firm in our decision not to abort, but over the course of my pregnancy, I thought a lot about what he had said. What did that his warning even mean—I might not be able to "handle" it? Did he mean there was a significant risk that I would have a nervous breakdown? Did he mean the stress might kill me?

Ultimately, my husband and I “handled” the challenges the same way anybody does, by walking through them one step at a time.

During the two months our daughter was alive, we received an outpouring of support and love from family and friends. It was a difficult time, but my doctor’s warning turned out to be completely erroneous. I never felt I could not handle things. Yes, we grieved deeply when we lost Katie, but we would have also grieved if we had aborted her, and that kind of grief would have been accompanied by shame and regret. Instead, we are able to hold our heads high, knowing we took care of her as well as we could. The grief we experience is mitigated by the memories of all the sweet moments we enjoyed with her.

In both of my pregnancies, my doctors pointed me in the wrong direction. The doctor who performed my abortion never explained that I might have to deal with serious adverse consequences—grief, shame, and deep regret—for the rest of my life. Katie’s doctor warned me of adverse consequences I might experience if I did not abort, but his warnings were entirely misguided. I regret my abortion, but I do not regret my decision to give birth to Katie. Giving birth to Katie was one of my proudest moments, and one of the most important things I have ever done.

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Scars on her Heart

Paige

Florida, United States

I had an abortion six years ago when I was 19 years old. My mother and my friends influenced my decision, and I went through with it despite my boyfriend's objections (he was Catholic). My mother told me she would pay for it and gave me numerous reasons why I should do it, and my close friends did as well.

I remember that at first I was debating whether I should have the abortion because part of me didn't feel right about it. My mom told a woman this at Planned Parenthood, and she told me that she had once had an abortion and that she now has kids. She said, "I don't regret my abortion at all. I don't even think about it."

With all of this pressure to have an abortion and no one encouraging me to keep my baby, I caved and had the procedure around 8 weeks. I did not feel informed during my visit to the clinic and felt very suspicious when the woman doing the sonogram didn't show me what was inside of me (if it really was just a blob of tissue why wasn't I allowed to see it?) However, the procedure was very professional and quick. I felt no immediate pain when I woke up from the sedation but was loopy and tired.

Within a short period of time I began to wonder if I had done the right thing, especially when the topic of pro-life vs. pro-choice came up. I sort of spiraled out of control emotionally, becoming very outspoken about abortion and how I supported it, justifying my decision. I began to hate Christians and those who stood vigil at abortion clinics, thinking they had no idea what it felt like to make a choice to terminate a pregnancy. I became an alcoholic and an addict to numb the deep pain and regret that I felt, but I would not admit it to myself or anyone else. I went through a dark time of doubting the existence of God, though I had heard the Gospel as a teen. I couldn't comprehend a God who could love but still allow such evil in the world, specifically my evil.

I found healing when I finally accepted a friend's invitation to a nondenominational church over 2 years later. All that I had ever heard about Jesus came alive in my heart and my mind when I heard a pastor share about his past which consisted of drug addiction and suicide attempts. I realized that if Christ could love this pastor, He could love me, and that was the best epiphany I've ever had! It was then that I finally accepted the love of Christ and since then I have been following after Him.

A few months after that experience, I was in a Jiffy Lube reading my Bible when a man sitting across from me asked me if I was reading the Bible. I told him yes, and we began talking about what I was reading. He told me he was a pastor and we spoke until my car was ready. I told him I was interested in using worship to reach the lost, and he gave me contact information for a woman who works at a women's help center in Jacksonville. When I contacted her, I confessed to her about my previous abortion, and she encouraged me to come to a healing workshop at the center.

I went to the workshop and received the forgiveness from Jesus that I was struggling to receive for my abortion. I thought I was over my abortion because I had ultimately been

forgiven at the cross, but I realized that I needed to seek specific healing for the abortion because there was so much unresolved guilt.

Still to this day the abortion is an emotional scar on my heart, and I know that it will always be there because that was my child. But through Christ I can face the topic of abortion with courage and compassion, knowing that my sin has been erased by my Savior.

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Not the Same

Amanda

Florida, United States

I had my first abortion when I was sixteen. I entertained the idea of having the child, but my boyfriend would not hear of it. I also was fearful of my parents. They were strict and I was already the "shame of the family". I was afraid of disappointing them again. We drove to the Women's Health Center in Tampa, Florida, away from our home, to have the abortion. I came out a different person. For this abortion, I was put under, so I do not remember the procedure specifically. I was sick and torn as soon as I was able to communicate. I cried all night. I broke up with my boyfriend of four years and fell into a deep depression. I was angry at him, a lot for not giving me any other option, another for not sharing my remorse. I felt we deserved death after the incident. After months of emotional episodes, causing my parents wondering what was going on with me, I finally told my mom what I had done. At the time, she thought I was acting out because I hated her. I wanted her to know it wasn't her. I hated myself. So, I told her. I remember lying on my bed with my face partially absorbed in the pillow and handing her the business card of the clinic. I don't know why I had held on to it. It was something to remember my baby, I guess. I handed it to her and told her what I had done, how much I hated it, and that was why I had been acting the way I did. She sat in silence for a few moments, then looked down at the card, ripped it up, and said we were never going to talk about it again. She then left the room. To this day we have never spoken of it.

I was 21 when I had my second abortion. I also had a soon to be two year old. I could hardly take care of him. The father and I had a casual relationship; he had two other children he did not take care of and another on the way with his ex. He initially said he was against abortion, but it was my body. I immediately made an appointment with Planned Parenthood in Winter Haven, Florida. Since I thought I would be put under again and unable to drive, I actually had a taxi drop me off at the clinic. While sitting in the waiting room I noticed a few people setting up lawn chairs outside the clinic. I didn't understand what they were doing, and I don't recall reading what their sign said, although they had a sign up. As soon as they started setting up, a clinic worker came over and slammed the blinds down. I was still unaware of the great debate over pro-life and pro-choice. Although I regretted my first abortion, I still knew I was unable to afford another child, and the view my family had of me didn't change much still at that point. I wish to this day I would have understood. I wish I would have seen something from those individuals that would have struck a chord with me, something to bring me out of that clinic.

I was called back, given two pain medications, and soon later taken back for the procedure. When the abortion doctor was about to begin, I tried sitting up. I was starting to feel sick, and I suddenly felt uneasy. The "nurse" standing by my head looked me in the eyes and asked, "Are you okay?" I responded, "I don't know." She put her hand on my shoulders and eased me back on the table. The abortion doctor started, and it was painful. I cried. I screamed. The nurse held my shoulder and hand the whole time, and it was over fairly quickly. I went to the "recovery room" where there was, I believe, about four or five other girls around my age. I was sobbing. The nurse gave me some juice and crackers, but I don't recall eating them. I recall the stares from the other girls. They were emotionless, and no one spoke to one another. Soon after, I was led out of the clinic. I sat down on the curb and phoned for another taxi to take me home. I don't recall any individuals waiting outside. I was in a fog for the thirty minute drive home. It was only until this past year that I opened up to anyone about the second

abortion, considering only a few knew about the first abortion.

I became an angry, depressed, suicidal alcoholic. My life has been everything but right for most of it. I came to know God on a personal level in 2011, and my healing began. I was raised in the church, meaning that I went on Sundays with my grandparents, but I had no relationship with God. As soon as I was old enough to say I didn't want to go, I didn't go. When I came to know God on a personal level, I was able to truly repent and accept His forgiveness, love and mercy. I regret my abortions, while at the same time, I know that anything bad, turned over to God, can be used for good. I hope that the more I share my story, the more it will come to light, even for one person--that abortion kills more than just the growing life inside a woman. It kills some of the woman as well. You will not come out the same person that went in.

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Disconnected

Christina

Florida, United States

I'm not sure how to begin this. I just hope that sharing my story will help someone who is feeling alone and sad and knows that even though I do not know you, I love you and understand your pain.

I have always wanted children. I found out I was pregnant after taking three drugstore tests while alone at work one morning. I had been feeling odd (smelling food from across the house, eating things I normally don't eat, and my breasts were very large and sore). Even after the tests I still did not believe it. My boyfriend and I had been together for four years and living together for three. We were committed to one another, but we are always very careful. I was previously on birth control but had to stop due to an allergic reaction.

After a trip to my GYN, she confirmed that I was pregnant, and I broke down immediately. I had always thought that my knowledge of my own pregnancy would fill me with joy, anticipation, and excitement. This was so much different. Although my boyfriend and I were in a good place, we were just in a good place for US, not a child. Knowing the cost of a baby and the criticism I would receive from my family (Catholic) for being an unwed mother gave me overwhelming anxiety. I almost immediately called my best friend and boyfriend's mother to discuss this with them and finally went home to confront my boyfriend.

We mutually agreed that we were not ready to provide the life that we felt our child would deserve. My boyfriend had recently gotten back on his feet after he lost his job, and we were still building our savings while living paycheck to paycheck. It was not the environment I wanted to bring my child into, as selfish as that sounds. He accompanied me to the abortion clinic for the procedure, solemn but supportive.

I remember the large packet of papers and forms to fill out. Passing the documents lifelessly to him to sign where they needed additional signatures. Once I was called back to the counseling room, they gave us time to really think about if we wanted to go through with the abortion. On paper, I was okay with it. Not okay... but committed to my decision. When I was ready for the ultrasound, I tried not to look at the screen. It was tempting, and I did try to glance at the monitor but I knew it would only be harder if I saw anything resembling a baby.

The women working at the clinic were very kind and gentle. When I was given the sedative before the procedure, my nurse rubbed my back and helped me relax as she helped me get comfortable with on the exam table. I am still shocked at how I was able to lay on the table for almost 45 minutes and not get up to leave and stop it from happening. At that point my mind and body were both numb, and I felt like I was melting into the table.

My spacious exam room suddenly became cramped and manic as the doctor rolled in his large machinery. Hoses, monitors, IV stands, and nurses crowded around me. I couldn't help but notice the look on the nurses' faces. They all looked so sorry for me, cooing that it would be over shortly. I cried silently as the procedure began. I felt no pain or discomfort. And suddenly it was over. What life was once there was now gone by my command. Painfully, I felt a rush of relief followed by an intense grief that took my breath away. I felt selfish and ashamed.

My boyfriend held my arm and walked me to our car. I was silent for the majority of the day following until I went back to work two days later. I was severely depressed and was very anxious about being around people or, God forbid, the possibility of seeing a woman pregnant or small child. I cried and pleaded for my boyfriend to stay home with me since I couldn't bear the thought of having any fun. I felt like I didn't deserve that after what I had done.

A month later my boyfriend proposed to me, and we were married this past November. I think it was his way of helping me through my grief. I wouldn't have time to brood over my pain if I had a wedding to plan. And, honestly, it mostly worked. I was certainly distracted for at least 14 months, but I did still think about the baby that could have been.

Now that the wedding and honeymoon is over, I find myself thinking about it more and more. I promised myself that the abortion was the right thing. A child would have gotten in the way of the great and extraordinary things I was going to do with my life, the places I would travel and the people I would meet. None of that would be possible as a young-ish mother. And now I find myself thinking more and more of how I can't think of anything greater than having a child with my husband. It seems like the want of motherhood is "out of style" right now. Even my husband has said that if we don't have children he won't love me any less. But I can't go without it. I have a deep desire to raise children with him and share our love. We have been through so much together and are still so in love. In a time where people are seem so disconnected, how can I not want to solidify what I see as truly wonderful with a family?

I don't need God's forgiveness or anyone else's. My husband loves and forgives me and now I have to love and forgive myself... That's why I am silent no more.

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Never Covered in Shame

Kim

Florida, United States

Hello and welcome to Silent No More – Tampa.

My journey to this ministry was 30 years in the making. I became pregnant as a 17-year-old girl. I was selfish, immature, and scared that my dad was going to be angry with me. I did not see my pregnancy as a child but rather as a problem to be fixed. My boyfriend, who was 19, did not want me to have an abortion. In fact, he wanted us to get married and start a family, just like his parents had done at that age. But again I was selfish and scared and said no. I did not want to have a baby or be married to him.

The day of my abortion—August 4, 1987 – I went to Ocala with one of my friends (who had already had an abortion) and ended the life of my child. I sought no adult counsel, and I never told my parents or aunts or uncles. I don't remember receiving any counsel at the clinic either, but I don't remember much of that day. Immediately I knew I was doing something wrong, but there was a sense of relief that my "problem" had been solved. My boyfriend and I dated for a couple more years and then at the age of 20 I broke up with him and moved back to Tampa to live with my dad. I pushed down my abortion and thought of it as part of my past. I was in a different city where nobody knew – I would just forget it ever happened.

Over the next several years I was in and out of relationships – always looking for a man to fill me and essentially be my god. At the age of 27, after being invited to church by my roommate several months before and nursing another broken heart by a man who failed to be my god, I surrendered my heart and life to Jesus. Immediately, I knew I was a new person. I had an unexplainable joy and loved reading the Bible and being in church around other Christians.

At the age of 30 I married my husband and our first son would be born just a few months later. I loved my new life and learning that God had a plan and purpose for my life, so I set about trying to figure out what it was. I had heard from a pastor that I listened to on the radio that often God will use the thing that has brought you the most pain in your life to be the platform for your ministry. I started thinking of all the hard things that I had been through and started making a list (there were kind of a lot) but the one thing that I would not write down was my abortion. In fact, I would just write the letter "A" and then voice out loud, "You will never use that." Never say never to God.

Skip ahead 13 years. I had three sons. They were 6, 9 and 12 years old. And, for a lot of different reasons, my marriage was falling apart. To the outsider everything probably looked fine. My husband and I both served in church. I was involved in missions and eventually would be on staff as an assistant in the church office. I had a couple of good friends who were very involved in the pro-life ministry at our church. I would plan the Walk for Life with them and participate in functions with them, all the while feeling like the biggest hypocrite – knowing that I had this terrible secret. I could not even begin to think about telling even my closest friends because of the guilt, shame, and regret I now felt about that choice I had made 27 years before.

But God was ever speaking to my heart on this matter. He wanted me to start talking about

my abortion. But why? What good would that do anyway? Because the truth is always better than a lie, and women need to know the truth about abortion. I remember praying one day to God with my Bible open on the floor by my dining room table and telling God, "I just can't do it – I'm too ashamed." He brought a verse to my mind that has since become my life's ministry verse. "Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame." (Psalm 34:5) By not telling people about my abortion I was also essentially saying that there was something that God could not forgive, that there was something that the blood of Jesus did not cover, and that there was a sin that could not be nailed to the Cross of Calvary. And that, my friends, is a lie from the pit of Hell.

The Bible says that we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, that there is none who are righteous – no, not one. And that while we were yet sinners – Christ died for us. Do you know what that means? God even forgives women who have had abortions.

Abortion. One of the most grievous sins of our time. Taking the life of an unborn child. Some would even call this murder. It's really just semantics, isn't it? Nobody wants to be called a murderer, but we had a child within us and, because of our choice, that child died. That's tough. But I submit to you that I and other women who have had abortions have been deceived. They are deceived by a culture that tells us that it's not a baby, that it's just a clump of cells, that it's just tissue, that it does not feel pain. And most recently that it's their right to choose whether or not they reproduce. I have said it before and will say it again. Only Satan himself could be behind a movement that has women championing for the destruction of their own children. God help us!

But back to this murder thing. How can God forgive and even use a woman that has chosen to end the life of her own child? Well, how could God use Moses? He was a murderer. And what about David? Again a murderer (and an adulterer). And the Apostle Paul, arguably the greatest apostle? Again, a murderer, of Christians no less. So why would the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe use these men? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit these men wrote half of the Bible. Moses received the Ten Commandments from God Himself and was used to lead a captive Israel out of Egypt. King David was called a man after God's own heart. Paul wrote 22 books of the New Testament and suffered greatly for the sake of the Gospel. Why would God use these men? Because, my friend, if they qualify – YOU qualify. And I qualify. And EVERY woman who has ever had an abortion qualifies for the love, mercy, forgiveness, healing, restoration, and usefulness in the Kingdom of our loving Father through faith in Jesus Christ. You might not even be a Christian reading this, but you better say Amen anyway! Because that is the good news of the Gospel!

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our sins, the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5.

My name is Kim Gilio and as a 17-year-old girl I had an abortion that ended the life of my first born child. This choice brought me great shame, guilt, and regret. But at the age of 27 I surrendered my life to Jesus and asked Him to forgive me and take control of my life. Seventeen years after that I FINALLY gave Jesus my shame, guilt, and regret and now I am Silent No More.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
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Picking up the Pieces

Teri

Florida, United States

My abortions:

I am 54 years old, and am still suffering emotionally from three abortions I had 35 years ago. I believe that was the start to many choices I made in my life that have led me to where I am today. I wasn't given any other alternatives except abortion, and I didn't know what it was other than what I was told to do as a solution to the pregnancies. (Keep in mind that this was back before internet. We still had card catalogs in the library and microwaves and calculators were being invented). Marriage to my long-term boyfriend was refused with the first two pregnancies, and my mother arranged for my third abortion.

The abortion process:

I arrived in the facilities, where the procedures took place. I was extremely confused, tired, and stressed and very young (20). It seems like I remember that there were some brochures about adoption, but I didn't really look at them because I didn't equate pregnancy with a baby. I was very naïve back then and my mother was the type who threw orders, but didn't talk about anything. (My period started and I asked her about it. Her response was, "Here's a box. Read the directions." The box had a belt in it with some attachable pads and I had to figure it out. It was in the 70s.) As a curious child, when my mother said, "Don't ever let a boy put his hands in your pants," I had to find out what she was talking about. Thus, my pregnancies. I was rebellious in some ways, but in other ways, I naively did what I was told (abortions). I would say that I was a victim, but I also must take responsibility for my choices. My boyfriend made the arrangements for the first two. My mother made the arrangements for the third. I showed up and walked into those horrible places and did what I was told.

I put my feet into stirrups and they spread my legs and sucked my babies out of me with a vacuum. It was extremely painful. They gave me some type of warm compress for my stomach, but it didn't help much. I was still confused, in pain, and then my boyfriend drove me home and dropped me off.

The last time, I was by myself. I had told him that I didn't want to see him again and left for another state. My mother arranged for my abortion via family doctor, who found out who to send me to. Again, I followed directions (like a sheep to slaughter) and afterwards, sat on the beach with a friend. All I really remember after that was that I wouldn't go into the water for a month because I was afraid the blood would attract sharks. My boyfriend tracked me down because he had found out what state I was going to college in and called every college in the state to track me down. I found a memo from the school office from him on my dormitory door that said, "I love you," with his name on the caller line. I waited three days, and then called him. He asked me to come home and marry him. I told him, "I'll think about it." I went home 2-3 weeks later. He dated me for a while, got me pregnant again, and then broke up with me.

Immediately after the abortions:

I was still so confused, but I knew every time that something was desperately wrong. This was

wrong! But I was trapped into a cycle of my own doing, because I was having sex outside of marriage. I loved this boy desperately and he loved me, although he was scared to death of marriage due to his own parents' divorce at a young age.

Long-term effects:

My marriage came about through threat (I told him that he could either marry me this time or never see his child or me again). I wasn't sure how to pull it off, but I was serious and he knew it. When we informed my mother, she said, "You made your bed. You lie in it. Don't call me for babysitting." In spite five years of a very rocky start and many strikes against us, we made a great 30-year marriage by brushing the effects of the abortions under the rug as best we could. I had many short-term depression episodes because I found out early in my marriage exactly what an abortion was through a very graphic pamphlet given to me by my grandmother. I think my mother must have told her I'd had an abortion, and she and my grandfather were very principled Christians who judged others harshly. Whenever the "a" word came up (military lingo, billboards, bumper stickers, church), I retreated into my shell in a sea of misery, and then tried to just forget thinking about it. I have never had any type of counseling (it wasn't a choice due to finances, and also to pride - husband wouldn't let me because counselors are not confidential and he was a small-town businessman). He chose to not talk about it, and mostly ignored my pain. I'm sure he was uncomfortable dealing with an emotional wife, but each depressive episode was short-lived, as I hid everything for years and was determined to give my sons a wonderful life full of happiness.

Although I married their father and raised two sons, I am now divorced after 30 years of marriage, and trying to pick up the pieces of my shattered life. I have a master's degree in education, but am an emotional wreck (outside of school). I departmentalize very well, pouring everything I have into educating children, so it hasn't affected my work. Rather, I've become a perfectionist and workaholic.

Even with this painful past, I remain a "half-full" and forgiving person, and am outgoing in small groups of friends or one-on-one. I was closed-off for many years with adults, pouring everything I had into my husband and children. I am now realizing I have very close friends, which I never had before because I wouldn't confide in anyone. People (both friends and family) can be very judgmental and so I learned to choose "safe" friends to confide in. My friendships are very slow coming, but the friends I have are very close.

I have taken many brain-based classes and part of my master's work is in social skills in the classroom. Talking through and resolving problems have been a key to my behavior management. My students learn many problem-solving skills together. I teach anti-bullying strategies and help them understand that they are safe with me while working through problems. Effective teaching comes through the rapport I build with children and the help I can give them along the way, not just with education. When you spend seven hours a day with young children, you work through a lot. They have troubles with family and friends that they blurt out in their innocence (even publicly), and I've witnessed a lot of "stuff" kids go through. Much of my work with children, I believe, stems from my desire to help others, and to be close to children.

I loved raising my boys and cherished my family, even though it has been a challenge (all families are). I can look back now and know that I have spent my life trying to help children (my own and others). Some I have been successful with, and some I have not. I believe now that the abortions from my youth led to a life-time of hurt that was never dealt with, resulting in choices I made for emotional survival, and to save the life of my oldest son. I became determined to give my children a perfect life and their dad and I gave them the fairy tale (they don't know the real story). I have lost my oldest son now to bitterness on his part (I

learned to hold everything in and keep silent, until the point that I didn't remain faithful to my husband anymore and succumbed to an affair with another man.). My youngest son is now in long-term rehab, having been raised in a "perfect" family and having never learned how to talk through problems. He has learned to make outward appearances look very perfect, while brushing problems under the rug. Neither of my sons knows about these abortions, and I believe my youngest has also aborted his own child, which I could have possibly prevented had I been able to talk. I believe that my silence has now also killed my grandchild. I have two beautiful, glorious other grandchildren who have been taken away from me by my oldest bitter son (who doesn't know how difficult it was to give him life).

I have poured my life into working with children, possibly as a balm to my wounds, and to have my grandchildren taken from me has been devastating. I don't know if I can ever heal the wounds my family has suffered, but would like to possibly help heal other families.

My ex-husband has remarried, travels extensively, and I'm sure tells my children that he still has no idea what happened (he doesn't – all he knows is that I was unfaithful and lied to our family for two years). He did love me very much, and I loved him so much that I forgave him and made a life with him. My oldest son has recently moved abroad (military transfer) and has refused communication for the last three years. My youngest is in rehab for prescription pain pill abuse, suffering on his own on the other side of the state. He doesn't know my story, but I have hinted that I am working on many painful things in my past. He loves me and has been supportive and non-judgmental of me, and while hurt from family issues and his own drug abuse, we are beginning to talk more and I hope to someday be more open with him and help him with his own abortion trauma. It's hard to know how to (or if) I should be open about my past, because anything I say now to my children will look as if I'm trying to discredit their father. My parents have disowned me because I lived with the man I was unfaithful with. My significant other (recently ex) has encouraged me to do whatever I need to do to heal and prayed with and for me often. However wrong it was, I will always be grateful to him for what he brought into my life as we lived together for three years after my divorce. We studied the Bible together and had many philosophical and Biblical discussions. I began reading self-help books addressing all areas of my weaknesses and sin, and have since broken off my relationship with him, as there are too many issues that complicate our relationship (age difference, separate family issues, unresolved guilt on my part for infidelity, financial, social stigma, etc.). The only family who completely loves me and forgives me is my sister, who lives across the country. She's been a great help through my ordeals during the last few years. I have some wonderful girlfriends that have helped me also, and are encouraging me. I never had friends before because I became isolated within the walls of my family circle. I have also learned through sharing with "safe" friends that there are many women who have gone through abortions and who also do not talk about it. The topic is taboo in our society, even though it is very much a reality. They too regret their abortions, and I believe who also do not have a way of dealing with it.

I have recently decided that I must do something to help prevent others from making the same mistakes I made, and suffering the way I have for so many years. I am a Christian woman trying to live with my choices. I know for a fact that I am completely forgiven by God (I have been given amazing signs), but the guilt and suffering and long-term effects continued for decades. I believe that God wants me to stop my silence and share what has happened to me. He has been speaking to me this way for most of my life, but I had nowhere to turn, and was not emotionally ready. I am now becoming strong enough to do so. This is why I am now "Silent No More." Thank you to your organization for helping women (and men) become strong enough to speak out. While excruciatingly difficult, it's essential to know that God can (and does) forgive and that there are now places to turn.

I sincerely hope that with my testimony a child's life could be saved and women and men will

know that they can be forgiven.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

Exchanging Shame for Joy

Tina

Florida, United States

Abortion has impacted my life in a very real way. I don't come at the issue as an outsider. No, I know how evil abortion is in a personal way. It leaves its victims traumatized with PTSD-like symptoms that can remain unexplained and misunderstood for many years, sometimes decades and sometimes forever.

This is not an easy story to share. I didn't share it for decades. Part of me believed that it was irrelevant to the person I am now. Yet, as I grew older, my sense of shame grew with each year, as my living children matured and some of them left home, and I was left wondering what could have been, what I had squandered and what had been taken from me. My shame kept me silent. My heartbreak spilled out and threatened to capsize me anytime I even thought about sharing this horrific secret. And then I encountered God in a new way.

My journey has brought me to a place of profound healing and redemption in Jesus, my Savior. I have learned things that bring me so much joy I do not have adequate words to describe it. The grace of God for you and me is beyond what we can imagine. It is a subversive grace, so out of the ordinary that it is offensive to some. It is expressed in uncertain whispers – could He really take this sin and make it into something good and beautiful? Would He, with foreknowledge of what I would do, still choose me to be the mother of a child who is now in heaven fulfilling a purpose? I have learned that He can and He would and He did.

And so, my story will be shared. It has to be, because I know now that God wants all women who have suffered abortion to know their freedom. And because I know the beauty of freedom and grace, I also want to see all post-abortive women come to know the truth of God's love for them. So I will trust you with my pain. I will always have pain because of what I did and what was done to me. But the shame has been taken from me and replaced with peace. Come and listen to my tale and begin to make the great exchange that the Lord wants for you too.

If you could see my Facebook page you would see pictures of five beautiful children, my pride and joy. But the real truth is that I have ten children: five that I can see and touch and five that are in heaven waiting for me. I have had four abortions (supposedly convenient and easy choices that should have left me happy and carefree according to the pro-abortion camp) – and though I have no proof, I believe one of those aborted pregnancies was twins.

My journey with abortion began in 1979 when I was 16. My parents were finally separated after a marriage of less than 20 years that was filled with turmoil and alcoholism. My father had moved across the state of Florida to be with his new family, and my mother couldn't cope with her new life situation. I was a rebellious and angry teenager who had lost all respect for her parents. I was careening through life with no moral compass, desperately searching for love. I didn't believe my parents loved me, so I ignored their wishes and became very difficult to live with. My mother made me leave, so at 16 I was homeless.

I had a boyfriend who lived about a mile away and that was where my mother dropped me off when she told me that I was no longer welcome at home. The driveway of Michael's house became my home base. I even put my clothing, which was all I had, in the trunk of his car. If

you were to look inside that trunk, you could guess how I felt about myself. Jeans, dresses, skirts, teeshirts, all just thrown there in the back of that old Plymouth Valiant, dirty and crumpled and unorganized.

My life on the streets of Altamonte Springs was as chaotic and crazy as the jumbled pile of clothing in the trunk of Michael's car and before long, I was pregnant. I don't remember how I found out. I doubt I was paying much attention, and I know I didn't have access to a pregnancy test. Originally, I was to be placed in a home for unwed mothers (that's what it was called back then), where I would carry the baby and give it up for adoption.

My boyfriend's parents seemed to be in charge of my fate, but I don't know if my father or my mother were behind the scenes giving instructions. All I know is that instead of the home for unwed mothers, I ended up at the abortion clinic. I don't know how far along in the pregnancy I was. I remember being at the clinic, dressed in a hospital gown along with other girls. They gave me a pill in the shape of a triangle. Nothing else is clear.

Within a few weeks after the abortion I was pregnant again. Just as before, I didn't know how I found out and I didn't know how far along I was when I was taken to the clinic again. This time afterwards my boyfriend's father took me to a trashy hotel on Orange Blossom Trail where the hookers stayed, put me in a room along with garbage bags full of my dirty clothes, and told me that was where I deserved to be.

This second abortion is the one I believe was twins. There were some complications associated with it. I was at a keg party in the woods one night, and I was wearing a white jumpsuit. I felt something hot on my legs, looked down, and saw a scarlet stain spreading. I was hemorrhaging and eventually ended up at the hospital where they were able to stop the bleeding. Then, a few weeks later, I was in Georgia with my boyfriend and his parents and on the way back home to Florida, and I began bleeding again in the backseat, creating a huge pool of blood on the leather upholstery. (I don't remember why I was with them again after having been put up in the hooker hotel. Maybe they felt bad about their choice to do that and decided to invite me on their vacation.)

My boyfriend's parents rushed me to a hospital somewhere, wherever we were in Georgia, and there I received a blood transfusion. I had lost so much blood. When I think about it, 1979 was a dangerous year to have a blood transfusion. While I was there at the hospital I remember that the doctor asked me what had happened to me. I told him that I had recently had an abortion and this was my second time of blood loss. It was clear that the abortion had been done improperly, and I had now twice almost bled to death because of it. I don't know it for sure, but I now believe that I had been pregnant with twins (they run in my family) and the "doctor" who performed the procedure carelessly didn't remove all the tissue.

Someone had decided for me that I would have these abortions. It was a collaboration between my boyfriend's parents, Bev and Joe, and perhaps my mother and father. Someone had to give permission at the clinic. Did they forge a signature? How far along was I? Why were the original plans changed? I was going to carry the baby at first but someone decided differently. What would my life be like if I had given birth?

Fast forward eleven years. Such a short period of time but so eventful. I was 27, and I had left my husband of eight years, bringing with me once again just my clothing. But, this time, I had two beautiful little girls with me. My daughters were 6 and 8, and I was fiercely protective of them. I'd left the marriage because of abuse. I was ready to change my life. I didn't know then that soon I would be repeating very regretful circumstances and this time it would be my decision.

I had survived my chaotic teen years and an eight year long abusive marriage that blessed me with two beautiful little girls. I didn't want them to continue to be exposed to the trauma of violence in the home and I wanted more for myself.

In 1990 I left and shortly after that, met the man who would become my earthly savior and the love of my life, Darin. I became pregnant while we were dating. As soon as I figured it out (this time with the help of early pregnancy home tests), it was like something coldly mechanical took over, like someone else was doing my thinking for me – but it was my own depraved mind. My only mission was to end the pregnancy as quickly as possible, and I knew exactly how to do it. I could not, I rationalized, risk jeopardizing my budding relationship with Darin, who was obviously the most kind and generous and thoughtful man I had ever met. I didn't want to lose him, and I thought that an unwanted pregnancy might push him away.

I couldn't get to the abortion clinic fast enough. I tried to make an appointment as soon as I saw the results of the home pregnancy test, but the clinic told me I was not far enough along yet. Just typing those words and processing the fact that the clinic needed the baby to be larger in order to more successfully kill it makes me feel ill.

The abortion clinic is usually located in the most economically impoverished area of town and this one was no different – strategically set up to cater to young college women. The day of my abortion, the lobby of the clinic was full of potential mothers in their late teens and early twenties. What secrets did they carry? What were they running from? But, here I was, a mother of two in my late twenties. I felt a cold and hard resolve to get my problem taken care of.

Unlike my first abortions, which are black holes in my past, this time I remembered the way it felt. I remember the vacuum cleaner like noise. I remember the bright lights. I remember the pain and yes, I remember the relief. Relief is the one positive emotion researchers have noted that occurs shortly after abortion. But that relief is only temporary.

I lay in the recovery room with no conscious regrets, no feelings, only a cool resolve to carry on with my "normal" life.

Sadly, the pain and emotion injury I had inflicted on myself and the death I had wrought for my precious child through that third abortion was not enough. In a few months, perhaps because it mimicked what had happened to me when I was just a child of 16, once again I found myself at the abortion clinic ending yet another tiny life and etching my despair even deeper into my soul.

If you had asked me how I felt about those abortions, I would have told you that I was glad to have been able to take care of my situation. I felt it solved a problem and, in my intellect, I believed it wasn't such a big deal. Unfortunately, the act only fortified the rocky walls around the mother's heart beating in my chest; the walls were silent and invisible and impervious to everyone, even the love of my life, Darin.

One cannot witness violent death without it marring the psyche. How much worse is it when the mother kills her own child? And the abortion doctor is happy to help.

Three years after I met Darin, I encountered the love of Jesus in a way that changed me forever. I had felt drawn to Him my whole life and He was courting me all along. When I was finally willing to lay it all down one night at home in the dark, before bed, when I violently prayed for Him to be my wisdom, He finally saw fit to invade and conquer my heart, waking me up the following morning as a completely new creature. It wasn't long after that Darin and I were married.

Jesus' love forced me to recognize the extent of the wrong I had done by participating in abortion. I was able to see, for the first time, the utter value of a human life, based on the magnitude of the sacrifice that Jesus made for that life, and the intricate care with which God created it.

Unfortunately, I responded to this greater knowledge by burying the secret of my sins even deeper.

At least I knew that I would never have another abortion again. In 1993 I was married to a loving, strong Christian man, and I was growing in my faith. I never needed to speak again of the horrible things I had done in my past. I knew that God had forgiven me.

It's hard to put into words what it is like to become a Christian at 30 and become part of a world that I never had experienced before. I don't say it to be hyper-critical but just honest: I felt I had to hide my true nature even more as a Christian than I had to before. I don't know how I came to that understanding. I think we all do it. When we come together as believers, we have a tendency to put on our Jesus masks and our smiles and pretend everything is OK.

When I became a believer, I was in awe of church and church people. I thought they were perfect. It wasn't very long before I figured out that wasn't true. But of all the things church people did, to themselves, to each other and even to me, no one had done what I had done. None of these people, I was sure, had ever had even one abortion, let alone four. Over the years I kept pushing that secret deeper inside of me until I almost forgot it was there.

The tentacles of shame were still there, though, wrapping themselves tightly around my heart.

Have you ever discussed with someone the concept of knowing something in your head versus knowing it in your heart? It is something that I have thought about thousands of times in my journey as a follower of Jesus over the past 23 years. I have always desired to know the grace of God in my heart, in a life-transforming way.

Many times over the years, after an encounter with God's spirit I would feel refreshed and uplifted, and I would believe that this time, I had an understanding of his love for me that went beyond my intellectual assent. I finally "got it".

What I didn't know was that my heart was locked deep inside a fortress of hard stone, layer upon layer, lock upon lock. I had begun building it many years ago to protect myself from the raw pain of abandonment. This stony heart kept me from experiencing lasting transformation. I could not see myself the way God sees me because my heart was not open. I thought I knew what it was like to be loved by God, but I was deceived.

What is it that keeps us locked in our patterns of behavior? Why, knowing what we know about how we are loved, do we still engage in self-destructive habits? Why do we say we live in love but act as though we live in fear? I believe it is because we only know God's love intellectually. Our hearts are guarded.

How many people you know are walking around in a state of unrealized grace? Are you one of those people? You may be and because of your past trauma, like abortion, abuse, or abandonment, you may not even realize it.

The first time I realized how guarded my heart had been was only after that rocky fortress was finally dismantled by God's loving hand. I felt like Dorothy must have felt when she saw the shining Emerald City. Everything I could see, everything I knew, was rich and colorful and deeply dimensional, where before it had been only grey, but I didn't know it was only grey and I didn't know what I had been missing.

But this time of radical healing wasn't to come for years. Instead, I walked my Christian journey still feeling inadequate and not knowing why; still suffering over and over again with the same unhealthy patterns; still feeling rejected by others and worse, by myself. And as I would later find out, my suffering had been largely a consequence of the trauma of abortion.

My healing from abortion was a five year long process that began when I first walked into a counselor's office in 2011. Something was wrong with me, and I couldn't live with myself any longer. Instead of becoming a better person, I was retreating more and more into an angry, isolated existence.

Sure, I had grown and matured since becoming a believer in 1993. I was a changed person. God, through my Christian community, was molding me into a better wife, mother, friend, and leader. After my oldest daughter moved out in 2008, I was devastated. I shouldn't have been. She was an adult and ready to move into her own life. But it came so suddenly, without warning, unexpected. It caught me off guard.

I felt crushing sorrow and defeat and most of all, shame. Somehow my daughter's leaving had triggered a shame explosion in me that I couldn't explain. I couldn't have even told you that was the emotion I was feeling. And then, as a result of the toxic shame, anger began boiling over in me. I had no patience or compassion for people in my life outside my immediate family.

Instead of being an example of Jesus to the world, I screamed at my neighbor when her dog came into my yard. Instead of showing hospitality when unexpected guests arrived, I ran into the house and hid until they left.

I quit everything I had been involved in. I sold my guitars and all my musical equipment. I stayed at home and made jewelry. For three years I lived with this soul-stealing grief, anger, and shame that I couldn't explain. I was becoming someone that I did not want to be. I felt like I was being dragged backward into a pit.

Instead of becoming a better wife, mother, and friend, something I wanted so much, I was regressing.

My counselor, Lea Ann, led me on a path of discovering the difference between the lies I had believed about myself all my life, and the truth of what God says about me. From 2011 to 2014, I regained all that I had lost. But during these three years of weekly, intense therapy, I only mentioned my experience with abortion in passing.

I still wasn't talking about abortion.

I still thought abortion was simply a shameful footnote in my history.

When Lea Ann and I decided I was ready to "graduate" from counseling, I felt like a new person. I was lighter, more radiant, more confident in God's love for me. I was believing the truth instead of lies. I was fully reunited with my oldest daughter, and we were building our relationship from a new perspective.

But there was something else going on.

As the rest of my children moved into their teenage years and started making preparations to grow up and leave, my thoughts began to turn to the abortions. This was not something I had ever dwelt on, but now, with my time as mommy to children coming to an end, I was feeling regret over those abortions in a new way.

Something was rising up that threatened to shatter me. I tried to speak of the abortions to my friends, but when I tried, whatever was inside me frightened me and tears streamed down my face, and I could not speak. I didn't know then that it was the unresolved, unexpressed grief over the loss of my children that felt so powerful and dangerous to me.

I needed desperately to somehow express my regret for the abortions I'd had, and I wanted to fight against the injustice of women and girls being lured into what was being sold to them as an easy solution to their problem. But protesting in front of an abortion clinic wasn't right for me. I decided to volunteer at a Christian pregnancy resource center.

There, I could speak with women who were considering an abortion, and I could tell them that abortion is killing a child – something I knew they would not be told at an abortion clinic. I just wanted to help in some way, I didn't really know how.

As part of the training I would be required to go through a Bible study for post-abortion healing, since I had experienced abortion. I couldn't effectively speak with women who were considering abortion without healing from my own trauma.

I was eager to take the eight-week study, called *Surrendering the Secret*. I knew that at the end of the study there would be a memorial service, and I longed to be able to grieve my children and make an expression of that loss.

What I didn't realize was how powerfully God was about to put some flourishes on the healing that had begun in 2011.

Through this study, I was able to fully share my story – all the details – in a safe group of women who had all experienced abortion. We learned the horrible truth, once and for all, about what abortion is and what it does to women.

A woman who has had an abortion is likely to have trouble being a well-adjusted parent to her other children. She may have a compulsion to get pregnant again and "replace" her aborted child. Or she may have repeat abortions out of her trauma and belief that she is unworthy to be a mother.

When my oldest daughter left, it cracked open some very old emotions that had been trapped inside me for decades. I didn't understand what was happening to me then, but as I progressed through the *Surrendering the Secret* study I began to see it.

All these years later I had still been suffering the after effects of abortion.

In the study, I was encouraged to express my anger at all those who had directly or indirectly been part of my abortions. I wrote letters to express my rage, then tore up the letters and let God's peace settle in.

I took responsibility for my part.

I looked at God's forgiveness.

I wrote letters to my unborn children and let out all my grief.

And, perhaps most powerfully, I heard from God that after all, he just wants me to let go of it. The burdens that crush me are nothing to Jesus. He just wants me to be free and to run with him. He said that during this study. In my foolishness I had thought that I could give everything

to Jesus except the abortions. I couldn't place that guilt and shame on him. That just wasn't fair.

But He said it's nothing to me. And it is killing you. And I want you to run with Me.

And during this study, the great exchange finally happened.

I agreed to the deal.

I swapped my soul-crushing burden of shame for the lightness of His joy.

All the layers of locks, the brick walls, the ancient stony crust in which my heart was trapped for so long, all of it came crumbling down by the hand of God.

And that wasn't enough for God. In His unfathomable goodness, He assured me that my children are not in vain. They, and countless millions like them, are part of a vast army of warriors in heaven, warriors for life, working for God to accomplish His purposes.

God doesn't just forgive, He REDEEMS. And that's why I am silent no more.

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Losing Control

Christen

Florida, United States

I was 21 years old and on my own. I was "playing house" with my boyfriend of a year. I had just gotten home from splurging at the grocery store. While there I had picked up a pregnancy test, because I had a gut feeling. I followed the instructions on the packet. When I looked at the results, I felt sick to my stomach. So many emotions! Fear, regret, anger. My life was going great, and now God was going to throw this curve ball?! I didn't want kids, and I certainly didn't want them under the current circumstances. What would my parents think? I was the oldest, the one all my siblings looked up to. I had already been kicked out of the house, so this was going to make me look even worse. My parents would kill me... No, they wouldn't, because I was going to take back control of this situation.

Immediately, I called and scheduled an appointment for an abortion. I put the groceries away, ate some strawberries, and called my boyfriend to tell him the news. Without telling me he came over. He wanted to talk about options! Options! I'm was in control, and I'm was doing this my way. Reluctantly, he didn't argue.

The next day I went to the facility. Oh, the devil made it so easy! No protesters, but I was still scared of the pain the procedure may cause me. They did the ultrasound, and I barely looked at it. But I remember, to this day I remember that little ball of light, almost like the sun shining in a mess of blackness. But that devil, he is good. They tell me I am barely three weeks, if that. No heartbeat, not attached. Just a pill was required to stay in control! No painful suction, no prolonged wait, easy as pie. I accepted, no questions asked. I remember thinking it was weird that the doctor watched while I took the pill, like I wouldn't go through with it! I went home and had to insert some pills to fully flush things out. Painful cramping began, but it was no big deal. I was in control, and life could go back to normal, no regrets—just the knowledge that I did something wrong.

Fast forward almost eight years. My boyfriend, now my husband of two years, and I decided we wanted kids. Well, he did, and I thought I did. Funny how God likes to work. The day my daughter was born was euphoric. Blissful labor, oh and I got to watch the Gator's win while giving birth. The doctor placed Briseis on my stomach and that little baby looked straight into my eyes. I felt my heart break into millions of pieces. I was so wrong, I did want kids, just when it was convenient for me. She was my world, but a new emotion was sinking in—guilt. Something was trying to resurface, but, hey, I was in control. I found out my husband cheated on me, and we sought out God with a new-found passion, determined to salvage the marriage. It worked.

Briseis was a year old, my husband and I were healing, and we decided to have another child. I got pregnant with no problems. I was three weeks along. We were helping my parents move from Houston back to Florida. I went to the bathroom and saw an ever so small blood clot. Fear crept in, fear not of the unknowing but of the knowing. I was going to lose this baby. My family tried to comfort me, told me that God knew what He was doing, that something was wrong with the baby. I agree with them, but a new emotion started sinking in, regret for a sin made long ago. I had no control.

I love my life, I love my God, I love my husband, and I love the three children God has blessed me with, despite what I did. I have asked God to forgive me for taking control of my child's life all those years ago. I have asked the child and family members for the same. I have forgiven myself, but that will never make the regret go away. Regret is the scar tissue that covers the old wounds that we cause. It keeps us growing. It hurts—it will never stop hurting. But what I did wasn't as bad as not trusting God enough to be in control. I wanted control of a situation I put myself into, because I didn't like the outcome I was getting. I know my miscarriage was God's way of showing me, even when I think I'm in control, I'm not. There was nothing I could do to save the baby I miscarried. It has taken me years and years of emotions, adding onto other emotions, to realize the extent of what I did.

When you take another being's life, it is said you lose a part of your soul. Of that I have no doubt. I took something that wasn't mine to take. I doubted the plan God had for me. I doubted He was really in control of what was going on. Because of my blindness to the fact God was trying to spare me, I will forever more have this scar of regret. It is a wound I want no other woman to bear, because the scar will never go away, the guilt will remain, and it will hurt. God's gift to woman of being able to bear children is a way to lose control and let God take control—whether from rape or an abnormality or an accident. God makes no mistakes, He's in control. All He asks is that we lose control.

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Our Testimonies

Daria Monroe and Judy Gonzalez
Florida, United States

Daria Monroe

At age 18 I had a one-year-old son and was in the process of ending an abusive marriage when I became pregnant. I was told everything would be taken care of and was scheduled for an abortion. On that fateful day, I was driven to the abortion clinic and told I would be picked up in a few hours when it was over.

Everything in me wanted to run and hide, but I believed there was nowhere to go except inside the clinic. I was frightened and alone as I sat in a room full of strangers, each of us waiting for our name to be called. Once called, I was taken to a small examining room and given a gown to put on.

There was absolutely no counseling; no mention of the development of the baby or even that it was anything more than fetal tissue. I was also never told any of the possible side effects of abortion. The doctor came in and without even looking at my face, started the procedure. There was no anesthesia or medication. As I cried out, the nurse's grip on my arms tightened. The sound of the machine seemed deafening, but nothing compared to what I felt inside my womb and heart. After the abortion, they moved me to a recovery room with other women waiting to leave. At the designated time, I walked out of the clinic, feeling completely numb, void of any life.

Within the following year, I fell into deep depression and battled nervous tension that even affected my bodily functions. I developed stomach ulcers and was put on sedatives to which I became addicted.

By age nineteen I could take no more of the heartache and torment resulting from my abortion and decided one day to end my life. I know the Lord had other plans for me, as I was found unconscious and rushed to the emergency room where my stomach was pumped. My life continued, but I lived in hidden shame and guilt, with the pain and knowledge that I was responsible for ending my baby's life. I don't know if there is any greater agony on this earth.

I did eventually remarry a loving man and began building a family. Each subsequent pregnancy brought complications. I had difficulty carrying a baby to term; and with two of the babies, I was told by my doctor that I was miscarrying when hemorrhaging began in the third and fourth months of pregnancy. Though plagued with abortion-related reproductive problems, I was thankfully able to have four children.

Finally in 1996 the Lord healed me of a twenty-two-year burden from abortion when another girl was faced with the dilemma of what to do with her unplanned pregnancy and accepted our offer of adoption.

I have gone on to use my healing to help others through Christ, as well as being a voice to bring awareness and prevent others from making the devastating "choice" of abortion. I didn't

... speak up for my baby or myself; I now speak out for babies and their mothers. I am Silent No More!

Judy Gonzalez

As a young 17 year old, naïve to the world, I became pregnant. My parents were devastated, I was confused. Not having a choice, I was whisked away to a New York hospital to have an abortion. It was "safe" there. As I arrived I remember seeing many, many young and old women there. Some with fear in their eyes many didn't seem to care. It was a cold environment, so matter of fact. Next thing I knew I was been prepared and then it was done. As I awoke, I was rushed out of the room to make room for the others. The taxi ride to my aunt's house seemed like an eternity. I had to "rest", take the pain medication and returned by home to Ohio.

Once home, my whole world took a horrible turn. I did not leave my room for a week, didn't speak with anyone, and didn't do anything but sit and think all day long of what I had done. I had to get to school and back to work so off I went. My guilt was overwhelming; I turned to drugs and promiscuity. I felt I had to punish myself for the horrible thing I had done. This continued for most of my young life. The guilt never left my life. I punished myself daily, physically and mentally.

I moved to California, got married had 2 children and got a divorce. There I was, a single mother of two, away from family. Moved to Florida, raised my children. Then, my daughter followed into my footsteps, not once but twice. The guilt continued. Through all this I continued to go to church, searching, waiting, hoping but the guilt never left. Through a church acquaintance I was invited to attend a retreat. What a life saving experience! I realized that God is a forgiving God! I felt I had to do something to help others understand that, yes, what I did was wrong, horrible, hurtful but maybe, just maybe I was meant to help someone else. My encounters may lead me to help my daughter, a stranger or a friend. It was meant for me to experience all the good and not do good to help others. I am here to do God's will. To let others knows, we can over come abortion. We must stand our ground and be heard. Our Children need us!

We are Silent No More!

Daria Monroe Judy Gonzalez

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I have found peace in forgiveness

Vicki Apsey

Florida, United States

I was an 18 year-old senior in high school when I aborted my first child. Knowing my much older boyfriend wasn't too keen on kids, my desire to please him at all costs along with selfishness and shame in my small hometown, led me to request that my doctor provide me the name of the nearest abortion clinic. My boyfriend and I made the 150-mile trip together and although we married anyway shortly after my graduation, the relationship was left in a shambles, void of intimacy or true communication. While the two of us abused alcohol, he began drowning himself in his work and I embarked on multiple affairs, a long-term eating disorder, and eventually, another abortion as a result of an affair which finally signaled to me the end of the marriage six years later.

The following year was a blur as I lived a "party" lifestyle, numbing my pain with promiscuity and alcohol and on more than one occasion, contemplating suicide as I thought about how worthless I was feeling. Within a year after my divorce, I once again found myself pregnant. This time, however, I had no idea who the father was, and as I had already done twice before, I walked into the abortion mill, laid on the abortionist's table and allowed the growing life inside my body to be sucked out along with another little piece of my soul.

I was blessed enough to have met my husband shortly afterward and my son was conceived just a few months later. I remember my elation at knowing I would FINALLY become a mother. I came close to suffering a miscarriage, feeling it was the result of my past abortions, but my son was born healthy in 1990 followed by a daughter 18 months later. Ironically, I never really felt like a good mother and just said I wasn't a "kid" person, leaving them with their dad for another man in early 1996 as the self-destructive patterns continued. A few months later, however, the miraculous happened as I received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and my marriage and family were restored. My abortions though, were to remain deeply hidden until another time.

That time was February of 2000, 18 years after my first abortion, as I walked with my husband in an old cemetery in St. Augustine, FL where we had been spending the weekend celebrating our 10th wedding anniversary. There in our Nation's oldest city, among tombstones dating back as far as the 1600's was one which stood out among all the rest. I felt somehow drawn to it and as I walked closer, the words on its new and shiny granite face hit me hard: "BABY UNBORN, Dedicated to the Unborn Victims of Abortion." At that very moment, I was forced into the acceptance of my past and the fact that my choices had been more than just "a blob of tissue" as I'd been told by the abortion clinics' staff, but were in fact individuals created with a purpose in the eyes of God.

I've learned that God never opens a wound without a hospital nearby to care for it. He led me to our local pregnancy center the next week where I began HEART - Healing Effects of Abortion Related Trauma. It wasn't easy as I worked through the memories I had long repressed; memories of cold and impersonal clinic staff, the feeling of my insides being sucked out, the sound of the vacuum as it did its work, the cramping pain as I was led each time to a room filled with other young women and girls sitting in brown recliners sipping on juice and eating crackers. I remembered feeling relief after each abortion but I also knew that every

year around the same time, I would become depressed, never quite understanding why. I learned in recovery that so many of the problems in my life had been a direct result of what abortion had done to me mentally, emotionally, relationally and spiritually. Eating disorders, alcohol abuse, inability to form close personal relationships, extra-marital affairs, bonding issues with my children, perfectionism; all somehow related to what we as a society call a "choice."

However, by learning to grieve my losses and coming to terms with the anger, guilt, shame, and years of denial that the lives I had taken were precious gifts from God, I was finally able to recognize the forgiveness and grace given to me by Christ for my abortions and as a result, those areas of my life have been redeemed. I know now that in addition to the two wonderful children the Lord has blessed me and my husband with, I have three precious children waiting in heaven for me: David, Rebekah, and Grace. I have found peace in forgiveness and it's my prayer that through my testimony, you will find your own peace in forgiveness as well.

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I live with an indelible regret that ends only at the feet of Jesus

Sara
Florida, United States

"> I am the mother of seven children. Their names are Christiana, Pearl, Claire, David, Katherin, John and Charlie. They range in age from 27 to 3 years, respectively. They are all dearly loved, yet only three of them were ever born. Katherin, John and Charlie are my birth children – the ones everyone can see and acknowledge as “real people.” Claire died in miscarriage. Christiana, Pearl and David were all aborted. Their names have never been spoken, read or heard by their grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and siblings. Very few people know of their brief existences and the intimate details of their deaths. I have kept silent company with them since I was seventeen. I am now 45 years old.

My relationship with them has consisted of an undercurrent of longing like a riverbed in my soul that has cut deep canyons in the landscape of my life. I live with an indelible regret that ends only at the feet of Jesus—for He is the One who has the power to redeem their loss. I have wished beyond measure to know these aborted loved ones, to see their faces, touch and smell them, call their names and hear their voices. I miss them every day of my life. They are unknown members of my family, my children’s generation, our community, the nation and the world. If they had been born, they might be parents now and I might be a grandmother. Only God knows what wonders their lives might have held.

After each abortion, I was depressed and used alcohol and drugs to help numb the feelings of intense anxiety and guilt inside of me. Yet, I craved love, which, for intoxicated teenage girls is often found in the arms of intoxicated teenage boys who are looking for sex. I became pregnant again and again.

In the years following my abortions, I felt like a woman sentenced to life in prison. I was imprisoned by choices that promised freedom but brought captivity. Until recently, I kept secret the truth about these aborted ones, but inside of me there has always been a place disturbed only by time where I lived in isolation, toiling under the heavy, ever present burdens of shame, fear, guilt, self-condemnation and grief—these are the silent partners that came home with me after each abortion and who, given time, became the ruling authorities in my spirit and mind. These are the diseased fruits of my choice to abort and they occupied my body and soul like ghosts or demons, stealing my future, and consuming part of everything I had.

Joy and hope eluded me until Jesus revealed himself to me in a dream when I was 24 years old. Becoming a Christian was for me like winning a capital appeal without a lawyer. God had heard my cries, for I was not silent with my Heavenly Father, and He is ever merciful. He sent King Jesus, anointed with perfect love, mercy, forgiveness, and the authority and power to take my sentence upon Himself. Jesus embodies my pardon. His blood assures my freedom from captivity. He is my spotless Passover Lamb and his resurrection promises victory over death for those who believe in him—I believe. He is my hope for all my children - dead and alive.

Even after I received forgiveness from God and found relief from guilt, grief and self-condemnation, shame and fear stayed on, silently barring the door to reconciliation with the community from whom I had stolen three children. Only three or four times in the 20 years after I became a Christian did I gather the courage to tell other people about the three children I had aborted. Those were good and holy confessions, but afterward I put the truth away and went right back to life as usual—a life with shameful secrets.

Last year, I prayed and asked the Lord to help me be more effective in telling people about him and his wonderful, saving, life-giving love – never dreaming that would have anything to do with my abortion history. The answer to my prayer came through a series of events over a couple of months, but it was this, “Tell your story – the whole truth.” I found my instructions daunting, but I was also determined to be obedient to the One whose way I cannot deny.

I called a crisis pregnancy center and found a community of people who are empowered by the Holy Spirit and share in his ministry; they came alongside me and provided comfort and counsel. I went through a 12-week Bible study for those who are “post-abortive” and there I found the grace to surrender the shame and the fear that stood guard over my secrets and thereby imprisoned the truth of Christ within me. I named my children and dedicated them to the Lord in the presence of those caring women. Since then, fear has given way to hope for opportunities to share what I have learned and shame has been replaced with humility and love. I have learned that the sorrow I carry for Christiana, Pearl, David and the millions of their aborted peers is a holy sorrow and I embrace it as a gift from God.

I hope that those persons who have been wounded by abortion - and there are many of us for more than 43 million babies have been aborted in the US since 1976 - and whose hearts are burdened may find healing. I encourage everyone who has aborted a child to find a post-abortion recovery program and experience the healing process. I hope that those who have aborted but experience no sadness may find their hearts broken, open their wounds, begin to grieve, seek God, receive forgiveness and heal.

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On Behalf of My Child

Heather

Florida, United States

My very first pregnancy at the age of nineteen had a very happy ending. I wasn't ready to be a mother; I was single and on the verge of being homeless, but God had blessed me with a family who couldn't conceive. They wanted to adopt that child. Today that little girl is happy with the mother who adopted her. She will be turning eleven years old in May, and she is my pride and joy. I went through several years of disparity and homelessness after giving birth to her.

Finally, in 2012, God sent another blessing my way. It was my present boyfriend and his family who had taken me in as their own. In 2013 I received still another blessing, my now two year old son, the light of my life and my angel, Spencer. Family members of my boyfriend came together and set us up in a nice house with accommodations much nicer than I was used to. We had our great little family, and I was looking forward to marriage, and all was well.

Then, in 2015, I got pregnant again. But this time around, my nice accommodations, my new way of life, and my son's beautiful bedroom were all threatened to be taken away if I didn't abort this new child. I realized that living off of other's charity put my freedom of choice at risk, and I had no other options. My boyfriend and I worked really hard. I even had two jobs, but it still wasn't enough to maintain our living conditions without the financial help of my boyfriend's family. So I folded.

On Valentine's Day 2015, I had my first and only abortion. After already carrying two children to term, it was the hardest thing I ever had to do. It was, by far, much harder than giving up my first for adoption. My boyfriend accompanied me, which took the edge off a little. Although I had made an appointment, the wait to be seen was almost four hours. If it weren't for the hand of my man holding mine tight, I would've walked out more than a few times during that wait. They injected me with some type of drug that sent me in a haze during the procedure, so I don't remember much. They then sent me out the back door where my boyfriend was awaiting me in the car.

After, I started the process of trying to forget, trying to tell myself it wasn't that big of a deal. I had no complications with healing physically, and I went straight back to work the next Monday. I felt like I was on my path to being whole again.

That summer, just five short months after my procedure, my boyfriend left me for another woman. I was to be a single mother now, at 29 years old. It was more heartbreak. Things between them didn't last, because in December, 2015, he came to me, begging me to take him back. I had to consider this carefully. I decided to spend a month out of state with my mother and son to clear my head, pray, and make a decision. I was out in California when I discovered I was yet again pregnant. With this finding, I gathered up strength and forgiveness in my heart and came back to my beautiful home and my boyfriend. Still under much financial assistance, I was again coerced to have yet another abortion once I came back home. This time, however, I wasn't going to budge. One of my three sisters had been married for five years and had not been able to conceive, although they had been trying really hard. I sat down and had many discussions. With no threat of having "yet another mouth to feed" from those who had been

supporting us financially, everybody is on board with this new situation.

Today, as I write this, I am eighteen weeks pregnant with a child who my sister and her husband have been growing in their hearts for years. There is no threat to my or my son's stability, and I will be able to carry this child to term for my sister. Because of the fast pace life seems to happen, I have still not properly been able to grieve for the loss of that eight week old unborn child who passed last Valentine's Day. But I trust that God will send the right healing program my way, and I will testify forever, on behalf of my child whose voice was ripped away. On that child's behalf, I will be silent no more.

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God's Mercy

Nilda Sepulveda-Green and Sally Nunezsa
Florida, United States

Nilda

I was only 19 years old when I found out I was pregnant. I ended up getting married; I had two daughters and one miscarriage. Although my marriage turned into an abusive relationship, I tried to stay in the marriage for awhile. Eventually, I left my husband. When I left, I felt that my world had been shattered. I was angry and I didn't know where to begin. I was a lost soul in the world.

As time went by, I started dating again. Shortly after that, I got pregnant. I remembered my conversation with my mom. She warned me not to come out pregnant again. Also my husband was still pursuing me, although we were separated. When I told my boyfriend that I was pregnant, he told me to have the baby and that he would help me. I was fearful, thinking about my husband and my mom. I didn't know what to do and who to turn to for help. I didn't want any more children and I was afraid of everyone's reaction.

One day I was crying at work when a doctor came in to the office. He asked why I was crying and I told him. He said that wasn't a problem, that he would refer me to his friend to have an abortion. He explained that being 4-6 weeks didn't mean anything it was just a little blood clot. I went along with it.

The day of the abortion, I was confused and afraid, but I thought that was the right thing to do. When I was called into the room, the doctor asked why I was so nervous. I told her I was afraid and she told me not to worry that it would be over soon. After the abortion, I buried the secret. I ended up having another abortion and my life changed drastically. For years I suffered with guilt, shame, and pain for what I had done. I felt like a criminal. I was promiscuous. I tried to find love in the wrong places. I got married three times with no success. I thought God will never forgive me for my sins and I could not forgive myself either. Oh, if only I would have told my mom. I found out the hard way that abortion was not the solution to my problem. I tormented myself for many years. Even suffering seemed good to me because I felt it was a way of purifying my soul. I thought I was being punished for my sins.

I always attended Sunday Mass, but I never had peace. There was a little hope inside of me that some day after many sufferings, perhaps I will find forgiveness. What I failed to realize was that God had forgiven me already. I was too hard on myself; I needed to forgive myself too. I thank God that he kept me away from drugs, alcohol abuse, and suicide. He kept me safe. I married for the fourth time, but this time I sought out God's guidance. The Lord answered my prayer by giving me a wonderful husband. I have been happily married for 11 years.

Although I attended retreats and joined some ministries in my church, I wasn't able to find peace and forgiveness. However, I found myself getting closer to God. I started going to mass every day and visiting the Blessed Sacrament frequently. I try to persevere in my faith.

Early this year my friend from church approach me and told me God told her to speak to me about pro-life and about abortion and she didn't know why. I covered my face and started crying. She invited me to attend a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and I told her I would call her. I attended the retreat in April. It was there where that I finally found healing through God's mercy and love.

I am free at last, my secret is out and as a result I have chosen to be Silent No More. In the retreat, I restored my children's dignity and gave them the respect they deserved. Through my testimony, I pray I can help others find hope, forgiveness, and healing. I also want to make people aware of the consequences and the impact that abortion has on their lives.

Sally

I really thought I was okay for about twenty-two years, even though I felt a sense of depression, loneliness and pain. I'm not sure of the reason.

I was invited by Emily Gonzalez, in 2011, to a Rachel's Vineyard weekend Retreat in Spanish, after my daughter lost her baby, and I told Emily I had worked at a GYN doctor's office where abortions were performed. I also helped set up appointments for abortions.

I worked there for about three weeks. About a week into working I found out that there was a doctor there who performed late-term abortions up to twenty-six weeks.

That didn't sit well with me since at that time I really thought it was "just a blood clot."

We had just moved to Florida from New Jersey and my husband didn't have a job yet. As soon as he found a job I quit. In fact, I remember leaving around the middle of the day. I left crying and told the office manager I couldn't do it anymore because the "late term" abortions tore my heart apart.

At the retreat, then and only then, I realized the depth of the pain I had caused not only for myself, but also for many other women. As I heard and saw the extreme pain these women were in, and how many babies I helped murder, I felt like all the women that I set those appointments for were there next to me and I could hear them crying and suffering and I could see the babies I helped murder.

Through this beautiful Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, I found the beautiful mercy our Lord Jesus Christ has given us and how much he LOVES us and wants us to serve him to help bring others to him, and to fight the war for the unborn, for those little souls that do not have a voice.

And how our LORD works...When my Mom was pregnant with me her Doctor told her that this would be her 12th child and she and the baby would be at risk of dying and she said "well aren't ever going to die?" "Well if it is God's will for me to die, then let it be, for it is the same for me to die today or tomorrow." "Who knows if this one will be the one looking out for me when I am an old lady." (And that is exactly how it was; I was there for her until she died December 24, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. Divine Mercy hour.)

May God pour his mercy upon each person that reads my story and help you also be that warrior God wants us all to be! Amen.

No One Ever Told Me

Shelly

Florida, United States

No one ever told me about the guilt, anxiety, depression, self hate or the medical risks of having an abortion.

I was nineteen or twenty and was in a long term relationship and we talked about marriage for our future. When I became pregnant, I expected it to put a date to our plans. Instead, I received a car ride to the local abortion clinic. I had never thought about abortion, I wanted kids why would I. I was in shock and hurt beyond my wildest dreams. The person I trusted the most had betrayed me. I never asked anyone for advice or told anyone what was going on. I allowed him to make this decision and I wasn't a timid person. Between the emotional shock and the hormonal changes in my body my reaction was not in my character. I didn't know about the changes my body was going through and I had been disappointed by boyfriends before so I had no clue; I was in no condition to make a decisions that would change my life forever.

My family went to church, but we didn't talk about beliefs or religion just that no matter where you are you find a church and go on Sunday. I attended Catholic schools and public school. I was a Catholic and I knew most of the rules, but I had the typical approach of take what I like and leave the rest.

When I went to the clinic, I was asked by someone if this was my decisions and I said yes. No other questions were asked. No explanations of what was going to happen were given. After it was over, I walked out got into the car and that was it. It was treated as if I had a tooth pulled.

A few days later, I started to cry uncontrollably and at odd times. I remember getting into my mother's car to go somewhere and I started to cry; I hid my tears the best I could. The depression descended on me and I hated everything and everyone, but mostly myself. After the crying period, there was the nothingness period. I was numb, I felt nothing. I tried to do things and no matter what I tried it was a vast nothing. I wanted to scream and cry again, but I couldn't cry anymore.

I became preoccupied with wanting children, but with the hate I had in my heart I couldn't stay in a relationship longer than three months. I convinced myself that God was punishing me by not having a relationship that would lead to marriage and my goal of having a child. I had convinced myself that having a child would fill the hole in my heart and the emptiness. Then after years and that didn't happen, I convinced by self that God was going to punish me by never having children.

This went on till I was about 32 and I got pregnant. I wasn't trying at that point; I truly believe I could not get pregnant. This time when the suggestion of abortion came, I had my speech ready. I felt like God gave me a chance to say what I wanted so desperately to have said the first time. I told my boyfriend, "no I don't have to have an abortion and I won't have one". I left feeling better. I had a lot to figure out, but being able to say those words meant a lot.

My family helped in every way they could and I'm sure that would have been the case when I was younger.

After I had my daughter, I started to emerge from my black hole I had been in for thirteen years, but I soon realized that you cannot replace one child with another. I experienced the most incredible joy with my daughter, but there were some very dark nights after I put her to bed and I would remember what I had done.

I went to confession actually more than once. I never felt forgiven. I know in my intellectual mind I have, but it never goes further.

One evening I was overwhelmed with emotion and I called one of those fortune telling hot lines. (God can use anyone he wants) She said something that shocked me. She said you never grieved for the loss of your child. I was stunned. I hung up the phone and started to grieve. I allowed the pain to the surface.

Within a short time, I found my husband and we have two beautiful healthy girls. My life became very busy with dance lessons, music lessons and living a normal life. The past still haunted me, but I was able to push in back until recently when my oldest daughter told me about a friend of hers that was becoming sexually active and in a conversation about that she discovered that her friend would consider abortion as an option if she would become pregnant. I realized I had made the same mistake my mother had made by not explaining my views of abortion to my teenage daughter.

I started checking the internet to educate myself about others that had similar reactions. I found out that the clinics that do abortions do not tell women the potential side effects and lie and hide the truth.

I listen to 911 calls to abortion clinics and video tapes of the workers instructing young thirteen and fourteen year olds how to obtain abortion without parental consent. The thought of someone else going through what I have and due to lies started to eat at me like acid, but the only one who knew what I did was my husband. I had never told anyone else. I had to face my fear of my daughters and my family learning what I did.

Trying to be a role model for my two girls and hoping someone would learn from my experience has been my internal battle for many years. Unfortunately, fear was the tipping factor. I'm in my fifties now and the pain is still as raw as ever. The more I learn about how many others are like me and the lies that surround this issue is too important and I cannot keep the truth bottled up.

I called in one of those Catholic radio stations after listening to a young man in college say that unwanted pregnancy would stop someone from finishing college. I was angry enough that I called to say that having an abortion took away my desire to go to college and ruined my life. Our kids are being told lies by pro-choice people and if we are silent that will be the only information they will hear.

They need to know the truth about abortion. The facts will be the cure for anyone who desires to go through with it. The pro-choice people don't want the truth out because it will destroy their money making industry and the devils plans to hurt God. I listen to a Planned Parenthood worker tell how she was told that the fetus does not feel pain and then watch a monitor in horror that was a lie. We need to spread the truth and teach everyone the ugly truth. If we are afraid to teach this to our children they might find out too late as I did.

I Am Healing

Mary

Florida, United States

I am currently working on writing about my experience of dysfunctional relationships and the hope and healing that the Catholic Church has brought to me post abortion. I had an abortion because I was in an abusive relationship. I had been beaten by my boyfriend and he threatened my life multiple times. He threatened to take our child away from me and send the child to Morocco with his family. I experienced verbal, physical, emotional, social and financial abuse in this relationship. I experienced going through a domestic violence victim's program. I had experienced abuse and abandonment in my family. My brother sexually abused me, as well as, another family member. I was accustomed to being treated terribly and thought this was normal.

During the abortion experience, I felt as if the staff at the Orlando clinic was not concerned about my welfare. No one asked me if my life was in danger even though my boyfriend was cursing at me in the clinic. During the procedure I was extremely cold and uncomfortable. With the nurse and doctor, it was just business as usual. The nurse told me everything would be alright. The doctor didn't even talk to me or look at me. I was crying violently during the procedure as I felt my child being ripped out. I was told to be quiet and given extra pain medication to sleep. I remember asking God for forgiveness and praying the Hail Mary.

After the procedure I was sick to my stomach and felt terrible. I was forced to get up and eat and then leave the clinic. I threw up outside the clinic on the front lawn. I was disgusted with myself and did not allow myself to process or deal with the feelings of my abortion. I did not know about pregnancy resources. I did not know about organizations that would help a woman in a crisis pregnancy. I felt alone. No one shared with me the fetal development of my child. No one offered an ultrasound. My child was referred to as a "clump of cells." I was deceived and betrayed by the staff at the abortion center.

As time went on I felt that I needed counseling and went to spoke to a "Christian" counselor. The counselor would not even address what I was feeling. She told me that I had feelings of guilt and regret because I was a practicing Catholic. Ugh! I eventually confessed to a priest in reconciliation. I started my journey back to God and became involved in the pro-life movement through youth ministry. I attended the Florida Respect Life Conference in Tampa and listened to the various speakers including Dr. Alveda King. I bought the book, "Forbidden Grief" and eventually went on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat. It was the best thing I ever did for my soul. I found forgiveness and help through the many resources available in the Catholic Church.

It will be 11 years in this July since I had my abortion. I have prayed. I have learned. I am healing. I am starting to write and almost ready to speak out and be very vocal about the atrocity of abortion in my life and how abortion only has made things worse. Abortion is not a solution; it is the worst problem a woman could ever introduce to her life.

I am happily married. My husband is an awesome, godly man and a fourth degree of Knight of Columbus. However, my husband and I have not been able to conceive nor find a Catholic fertility doctor. In retrospect, I wish a sidewalk counselor would have pulled me away from my boyfriend. I wish someone would have talked to me about the fetal development of my child. I

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Abortion - Silent No More Awareness Campaign - I Am Healing

I wish someone would have helped me find a program to get away from my boyfriend and be able to have my child in peace. I wish someone would have given me options beside killing my child and masking the pain, grief, anguish, guilt, and resentment associated with having an abortion. I wish I would have been better informed as a Catholic.

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Let Them Live

Lois

Florida, United States

My greatest desire is to see the hearts of mothers turn towards their unborn children and let them live. This is the sole reason I am willing to share my story.

Unmarried in my early 20's, I choose to get an abortion because I wanted the approval of my mother. After looking at the pregnancy test that clearly indicated I was with child, I turned to the mirror holding my belly so excited.

This joy was short-lived - A few moments later my mother came in and said, "Well, you know you can't have it"... I said, "Oh. I know, I know it." At that time it was more important for me to have my mother's approval - even though it meant killing my own flesh and blood.

It horrifies me that I turned my heart away so quickly from my baby. This is a lesson that I hope no other woman will have to endure. Because of much healing, I now seek only the approval of my heavenly Father.

My experience at the abortion clinic seemed professional and cold to me. A group of approximately 10 women gathered in a small room to watch a video about birth control and discussing the different options to eliminate the "fetal tissue." I was brought to a private room and put under during the abortion. After the procedure I recall being offered a small glass of juice with the other women lined up on cots to my left and right.

Immediately after the abortion, I did not feel relief or sadness. I felt nothing! I was emotionally detached from the reality of ending my child's life. I am amazed at the power of the human mind to keep such a thing from the surface.

I began to experience anxiety in the form of panic attacks. These attacks continued for many years and I have discovered that it is separation anxiety. What could be more traumatic than a baby being ripped from the womb? The ultimate separation - and a place my baby should have been safe.

I came across a book on development in the womb. I saw the three-month image. I gasped and was shocked that the "fetal tissue" described at the clinic was in the shape of a baby.

What??? I killed my baby?

Somehow I thought it was not a baby yet? You know, before it became a baby - is what I believed. I can't turn back the hands of time, but I have to think seeing the baby image with my own eyes may have brought me to my senses. This is the reason I support wholeheartedly mothers viewing the ultrasound of their baby days before scheduled abortions.

I was unable to maintain long-term relationships. I would sabotage good, loving relationships until they came to an end... Drug and alcohol abuse was rampant in my life with all the destructive behavior that goes with it. I understand now that this was a form of self-punishment - the consequences to killing my child did not come lightly.

I found help and forgiveness through Project Rachel. A friend invited me to attend a healing weekend and it was the beginning of the recovery process for me. Like an onion, the first layer of numbness was removed. During the retreat I met the truth of my abortion. I was surrounded by loving women who supported me through my beginning steps towards reconciliation with myself and the Lord. I now know that my child is in the care of God and I am forgiven. This is the most freeing knowledge I walked away with from that weekend because, before that, I believed that my child was sentenced to Hell. I found forgiveness through the Lord. Jesus has taken my burden and my son, Michael, now belongs to Him.

So..... for the sake of mothers and the unborn...I am silent no more.

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To Heal and To Be Heard

Ramona
Florida, United States

I assumed abortion was my only option.

Fifteen years ago I made a decision that would change my life forever when I chose to have an abortion. I was a high school senior at a prestigious all girls' school. At least half of my class was sexually active and openly talking about it, so I don't know why I was shocked when I found out I was pregnant. I had been sexually active for several years already and naively I thought that if I didn't get pregnant initially, then chances were, I wasn't going to, but there I stood in the girls' locker room with a positive pregnancy test. I decided to only tell a few people. Unfortunately, I never went to my parents for fear that I would disappoint them or they would reject me.

I assumed abortion was my only option, so I went to Planned Parenthood because they had strict rules of confidentiality. The counselor there reinforced my decision to abort convincing me that I still had my whole life ahead of me. I barely remember the details of that day (which is a blessing). I do remember arriving at the clinic and filling out the paperwork. I remember being called to the back and being set up on a cold table. There was a nurse there who told me everything would be fine. I really do not have any recollection of the procedure, though, and I am grateful for that.

The one thing that stands out in my head so vividly is that, after my abortion, I had to go into another waiting room (I can only assume this was to allow the medications to wear off). As I sat there sipping orange juice, I remember looking around the room at the other "girls". Some were crying quietly, while others sat in silence, with empty expressions on their faces, and not one of us made eye contact or attempted to speak. That moment has weighed heavy on my heart for all these years.

I felt, at that moment, as if we had all committed ourselves to suffer in silence, so when I left the clinic that day, I chose to bury my abortion deep within my heart. It wasn't until several years later, when I met my husband that I spoke about my abortion, and it was only to let him know my past before we committed to marriage. A few years later, when I went for counseling, I realized that many of the problems that led me to therapy were actually side-effects of my abortion.

Deep in my soul, I knew that part of me died along with my baby that day, but I didn't realize how much of my life was affected.

I was never warned of the lack of self-esteem that would drive me into an eating disorder or the discomfort with my sexuality that would create intimacy problems within my relationship. I was never told that guilt would overshadow joy when I heard my baby's heart beat for the first time and realized the consequences of my abortion, or that each subsequent pregnancy would be filled with initial anxiety and fear that something would go wrong because I thought that God was going to punish me.

My abortionist never told me that I would be more likely to have a miscarriage or suffer from reproductive problems. I felt disgusted and dirty and undeserving of God's forgiveness, and even though I had gone to a priest and confessed my sin, I continued to carry the guilt and shame with me, never allowing myself to accept God's mercy. On the outside I continued to wear a big smile on my face, but inside I was emotionally wasted.

Recently I received the grace to witness God's love and forgiveness. It has not been an easy journey, but a very humbling one. Through a lot of prayer and self-reflection, I am on the road to recovery and I realize that this is a lifelong commitment. I submit my story as proof that abortion does hurt women and, like so many, I was not warned of the deep wounds it would leave on my heart and soul.

Sadly, I will never know my unborn baby's face or feel his touch or see him gaze into my eyes, but I know that God has a special place for him in His heavenly house where he is waiting for me.

Today, I feel blessed that God has forgiven me and granted me the courage to stop living in silence. I lived in the dark shadow of a lie for many years, but now the truth has finally set me free. Thank you, Silent No More Awareness Campaign, for finally giving post-abortive women a chance to be heard and to heal.

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Determined

Cheryl Carey, Florida Regional Coordinator
Florida, United States

I was a junior in high school when the landmark decision of Roe v Wade was made in 1973 to legalize abortion. Although abortion was not discussed in my home or in the church I attended, it was certainly up for debate while in school. And, although I was not to know, two very close friends had already experienced this tragedy.

As a teenager, I was convinced that a woman had a right to choose what was best for her body. But what did I really know?

It was the summer of 1982 that I had given thought to the possibility of some day becoming a mother. One early afternoon I sat down and began to compose a poem entitled, "The Greatest Gift." Little did I know that, four years later that gift would become a choice. By this time of my life, I had already become a Christian and pro-choice was no longer an issue.

The Fall of 1985 tested everything I knew and didn't know about abortion. The pressures I placed on myself were so unbearable. I reacted to the news of being pregnant with fear and anxiety, which crippled me. Believing that I really had no real choice, because of the plans "I" had for my life.

It was a beautiful bright day with very few clouds in the sky. The sun was shining and all appeared to be right in the world. But not my world! Everything changed when we pulled into the parking lot. My world became dark and scary. Confusion and doubt coupled with panic and fear filled my every thought. What would I look like when this was all over? Will I be the same person? Am I doing the right thing? Will God forgive me? Can I forgive myself? Oh Papa Help me!

I walked into a room that was filled with faces that appeared distant, terrified and callous. I was looking at young girls and women staring into nothingness. Some of their bodies froze with fear while others with streams of tears running down their faces and others, anxious. What I didn't know was that I would fade into this picture...I would become one of them. Why didn't I just leave...just run out? But it was too late, fear and shame had me rooted in its chair. Where was my "Knight in Shining Armor?" Doesn't he know where I am? Does he not know how much I need him to breakdown these doors and take me from this place! Please Wayne, don't let them do this to me...to our baby! Please! I can't do this alone. I could barely take care of me let alone a child. But I would...IF.

I was escorted back into another room, where I was told to replace what I had on for one of their gowns. I did and moved next into a room that felt like a freezer. I felt nauseous and anxious. But most of all, I wanted out, but it was too late. They came toward me but I couldn't look at them. I couldn't believe that I was about to have LIFE ripped out of me. I couldn't believe that this was to be my lot in life. How did I get here?! How could I do this to me...how could I do this to The Most Precious Gift! Please God, please forgive me! Oh God! Please forgive me.

"Count back from 100," she said. So I did, 100, 99, 98. Before I knew it, I had succumbed to the venom that would eventually turn me into an angry and bitter individual. There was a quietness that filled the room. Then I asked, "What was I doing here? What's going on?" I couldn't understand why they wouldn't answer me? And then it happened. PAIN! Pain like I never felt before. Pain, shooting throughout my body from the depths of my existence! "STOP!" I screamed as I place my hand over my stomach. But then I felt my hand being moved as I shouted even louder, STOP...PLEASE STOP! And once again I placed my hand over the area where life was being sucked out of me!

As I lay there, I still couldn't get them to see that I was not pregnant! I couldn't have done what I said I'd never do! Had my worst fears come upon me? I got up a changed individual. I knew my life would never be the same. I cried all the way home. I remember asking God to give me my baby back as I cried even more and harder until I could cry no more. The next several weeks were very difficult for me, because I knew what I had done. The loss would be so much greater than I could have ever imagined.

I left Miami for almost ten years. I had to get away from everybody and everything that reminded me of my abortion. But where can one go and not find self!

The years would pass, but not the memory of my aborted child. My life began to fall apart and I couldn't understand why.

But then the Holy Spirit brought back to my remembrance the day my life was shattered. The day that I surrendered my child, to the god of narcissism!

After 12 years of suffering in silence, I found help, hope and healing after going through a course entitled, "Women In Ramah," later to be changed to "Forgiven and Set Free."

My life is much different today. I am no longer angry or bitter, but determined. Determined to stand and speak for those who can not speak for themselves! Determined to enlighten those who think that abortion is their only alternative! Determined to share with that young woman, that young man, that God is near to the broken-hearted, and that there is forgiveness in HIM!

And I am MORE than determined to be SILENT-NO-MORE!

You can see video of my testimony at the March for Life on YouTube. [Click Here.](#)

Edith

It was the night of The Pathway Home's first Celebration of Life when I brought to my Mom a red and a white rose in the name of a grandson who will never be able to bring her roses. This is because many years ago I made a decision that forever I have regretted.

For an entire life, I was just the typical devoted "church girl." I was well-taught, well-involved in our church's activities. Needless to say, both of my parents were also actively involved with Christian retreats themselves, and the Bible was not just another book in our home, but THE BOOK of excellence and for excellence. Dad used to say that it was only there where we would find who we really were, and to Whom we belonged!

Being a senior student at the university, (23 years old), I found myself pregnant and single. I am child number four in my family. But at that particular time, I was the oldest of six younger brothers and sisters. Fear of my Mother, (afraid of what her friends would say), along with the shame I was going to bring upon my family and the poor example I was portraying for my younger siblings, froze me to the point of not being able to see the magnitude of what I was about to decide. I decided the unthinkable: I had an abortion!

It was my boyfriend's bright idea...actually; instead of getting married in a rush...here is "the other option." He told me where to go for the abortion and he provided me with the money the doctor requested. Due to his job responsibilities, he had to go to El Salvador for several days, so...he was not there with me when I had the abortion, and he was not there for me after the abortion.

I believed all the lies! The doctor told me that we needed to do it immediately because at five weeks of pregnancy, there were still not bones... (A blob of tissue?). He did not want to know anything about me. The anesthesia started to have an effect on me and the nurse started to ask EVERYTHING about me: my parent's names, place of our work, father of the child, etc. He also requested that I should come with someone else, not alone. It was a totally humiliating, painful and destructive experience. Moreover, I willingly turned my face away from my First True Love!

I was about five or six years old, when my Mom took me with her every Thursday to her personal and special visit to the Holy of Holiest, and introduced me to my First True Love. At age 9, I found my special place at The Lord's Supper Table. During my teenage years, prayers and youth retreats kept feeding my spiritual hunger. As our four years of clean courtship turned the wrong way, my visits to the Holy of Holiest faded. Slowly but surely, my defenses wore out and the day came to pass when I heard myself crying to God and, acknowledging His unfailing love. I said, "Please, forgive me for what I am going to do but... You know that my mother will never forgive me for the humiliation I will bring upon her!" Well, I will never know anyway... I did not give her a chance! Their friends gossiped anyway! In addition, nobody but me will ever miss the son I gave no chance of being born!

The young woman that went inside the clinic died as well. I came out a very different person. I hated myself, my Mother, my boyfriend, brothers and sisters and even society. I knew what was right, honorable, noble and good. I realized that I had played to be God! I went immediately to confession. I do not remember how many times I confessed my sin. Regardless, it was always impossible for me to experience God's forgiveness. The real issue was my unwillingness to forgive myself. Now I know my sin was gone from the very first time I confessed it!

That "sweet" girl he had married began to raise her voice aggressively to her husband and with time, became an overprotective mother to her three children. Many of our 32 years of marriage were filled with doubts, half-spoken words and even betrayal.

It was through the Bible Study, "Forgiven and Set Free," that I was able to finally deal with the aftermath of my abortion experience. Going to Calvary, meant for me going back to my "First Love." I realized that His sacrifice was the total payment for my personal sins. I embraced the rugged cross with my bare arms and hands. I threw myself into His Arms of Mercy. He was just waiting for me...His precious bride! He dressed me with royal robe and then, He raised me up to more than I can be. I was assured of God's love. I knew who He was, and I knew His character. I accepted His invitation to "Go and sin no more" because HE DID NOT CONDEMN ME. I literally came out from the darkness into the light! I even got the courage to ask our children for forgiveness, and they did forgive us! My husband and my children blessed my decision to come to Washington and be a Silent No More. I gave my personal testimony publically (in Spanish) for the first time.

Jesus invited me to live the free life. Before, I was denied to live my life freely because of shame. My life was restored and healed as He had promised me. In His extravagant Love, He also gave me a new love, respect and admiration for my husband, and even put a new song to sing in my heart. He gave me a brand new generation of my family, through my grandchildren!

I can now extend my hand to other women living in the same bondage, and I can tell them MY STORY ABOUT HIS GLORY! I can bring hope, because now I know THEY HAVE NOT COMMITTED THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN! God is GREATER than our greatest sin...Of course, it will never be OK what we did...But yes, says the Lord...He is going to give us beauty for ashes, strength for fear, and gladness for mourning and peace for despair...What HE DID FOR ME, HE WANTS TO DO FOR YOU...That is why I AM SILENT NO MORE.

I live my life now challenging others to TELL THEIR STORIES ABOUT HIS GLORY...I ask them to come on out in the open...into the light. Our Redeemer lives! Hear what God says in:

Isaiah 1:18

"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Abortion is Satan's master plan to destroy humanity, and silence is its best ally. I urge everyone to listen to me: Be SILENT NO MORE!

We all need to LISTEN, WRITE IT, and MAKE IT HAPPEN! We all have to be, in one way or another...SILENT NO MORE!

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Hole in my Heart

Tamra

Florida, United States

I was born and raised in a town in Arkansas and was blessed to have had two great Christian parents and six siblings. My Father was even a Deacon in our protestant church. We owned our own trucking company and were very well respected in our community.

I was an athlete, heavily into softball, track, and volleyball and had been for most of my life starting at age five.

My parents had high hopes that I would attend the University of Arkansas on a track scholarship.

This all sounds like a really good plan; however, it all changed in the matter of minutes, due to one bad decision.

I was a popular kid in high school but not the girl that all the boys wanted to date. I was the girl that was their best friend, the one they would ask to get some other girls phone number. But one day I met the quarterback of another high school, and he asked my phone number (we actually talked for hours on the phone back then, I suppose you text now). Somehow we ended up meeting at his home. Once I got there, all he wanted to do was have sex. I had not had sex before this and was terrified and felt very uncomfortable, but once you get yourself into a situation like this, things happen, and they did with me that night. I felt so horrible, knowing that I had done something that I knew was wrong. I had been raised properly. I knew you did not do that until you were married but I was weak. After that night, he never called me again, and I was proud, so I did not call him either. He just used me, and it was over. I tried to just forget about it and move on, but then I realized it had been a really long time since my period, and I started to panic. I called my big sister, and she took me to get a pregnancy test. It was positive.

My sister and I sat down with my parents and told them. They were in such shock and were so upset; I think we all cried for at least an hour. My mother hugged me and told me to go to bed and get some rest, and we would talk more tomorrow. I didn't sleep much that night.

The following morning my mom said that it would be best to get an abortion, and she would call our family doctor, who ironically delivered almost all of us and make an appointment. Abortion was legal now so it was very easy to do. I did not go to a Planned Parenthood or clinic for abortion; I went right to the town's hospital and had it done on a Friday morning. It was not discussed again until I was in my later 30's. This doesn't just happen to people who have bad parents, who never went to church, or who are on their own. It can happen to anyone, and it will affect the rest of your life and so many others.

After the abortion, I told my best friend in school. She then told another good friend of ours. She did not do this to be hateful or spread rumors. We all just think that our best friend will keep it a secret, and she thought her other friend would too, but this not human nature. Soon my classmates were whispering in the halls about what kind of person I was. Even my closest

friends found excuses not to be in my life. I was so ashamed I wanted to run away. I fell into a deep depression and soon dropped out of every sport I was in and got a job. I could not wait for high school to be over, so I could just get away.

When I turned 18, that very week, I had already moved out of my family home so I could be on my own. I began drinking, going to nightclubs, and becoming very promiscuous. It got so bad that one morning I woke up in an abandoned house, having no idea how I had gotten there. I knew something bad had happened due to the shape I was in. I just wanted to forget it and move on. I had caused it myself, I was sure.

My parents and older sister had not heard from me in days after that night. They kept calling and got no answer. They finally decided to come to my house and see if I was ok. The door was unlocked and, when they walked into my bedroom, they found me unconscious on the bed with my wrists slit. They had stopped the bleeding, and they decided to take me home to heal on my own, for fear that they would put me in a mental institution if I went to the emergency room.

Over time I healed, and my parents decided I needed to see a psychiatrist. Soon I was on quite a few medications for depression but nothing helped. I got a job and struggled to get up each day and just carry on. I felt the need to get away from everything and start new. I had no money and no way of doing that, so I joined the Air Force. One day, I went to the recruiting center and signed forms to join.

After joining and getting through basic training, I went to technical school. When I went to school my T.I. told the whole group that some of us would leave there married, because some of us "weak and broken ones" will be afraid and cling on to someone, but we won't stay married. They begged me not to do it, but as always, I went down the wrong path and met someone and married him. No, we did not stay married for more than six months. I wanted to be married and start my life in the Air Force as a respectable married person, have a family and a good life. But I was not mentally healthy and could not make good decisions.

Before that divorce was even final, I met husband #2 and got pregnant before we were married. I have an amazing son who lives near Portland, Oregon, and we are very close to this day. His dad and I, of course, did not work out either, because I was damaged, and he was unfaithful.

Still, I had this little picture of being married and living this great life, so I met #3 and again... got married, but he was abusive and an alcoholic.

But wait...there's more!

I started going back to the Church of Christ, where my son and I lived in Oregon, determined that I was going to turn my life around and, low and behold, I met #4 in the singles group. Yes, I married him, and he turned out to be a recovering cocaine addict and was not recovering well.

Still, I go to church and try to be a better person and mom for my son. I then meet my current husband, Ron, on the internet. I no longer wanted to go to bars or join the church single groups, but I still did not want to be alone. I still had hope that I could find someone who was good and whole. I met Ron, a Catholic man, who really wasn't very faithful. He did attend Mass sometimes and, as I got to know him, I found him to be pretty amazing. I joined RCIA and soon became Catholic.

We did end up getting married after dating for three years outside the church, due to my annulment situation, but hoped that someday we could have our marriage blessed and be able to take the Eucharist in our Catholic parish.

I was doing some things right, trying to get my life in order for myself and my son, but I was a broken person, and Ron could not fix me. I was still depressed and would sometimes drink too much, and I felt Ron would not be able to stand it much longer. He was so patient and kind but still.

One night, when he was out of town on business and my son was away at his dad's, I just started crying and could not stop. I wasn't even sure why I was crying, but I knew I needed help. I was tired, so, so tired. I decided to write an email to a priest I had met at a local bar and grill. He actually had a band called Fr. John and The Holy Rollers, and they sang mostly classic rock. I felt like he seemed so approachable...well, at least by email. I then typed him my entire life story.

It took several days before he emailed me back. I had truly begun to think that he probably thought I was crazy and hit the delete button. But he sent a short email and just asked that I call his office and make an apt so we could talk face to face. I was horrified. How could I talk to this Man of God face to face after I had spilled out my whole crazy life story in an email? I got up the courage and made the call, because I knew I needed help. I put on my most conservative clothes and tried to portray what I wanted him to see.

He was the kindest, dearest person I had met to date. He asked me questions about my life and really wanted to know the answers. He asked about my abortion and said that it looked to him like my problems started way back then, and maybe there was something to that. I told him no, that has been the least of my problems. He told me he had heard many women tell him stories very similar to mine, and many of them started with the abortion. He handed me a brochure for a retreat called Rachel's Vineyard and asked me to call a woman by the name of Lorie and get scheduled to go on the next retreat.

I took the brochure home but thought, "I have been to psychiatrists and they can't help, why would a silly retreat help?" But I was desperate, so I called and scheduled to go. The day of the retreat, I called Lorie and told her I wasn't feeling well and had to cancel. She asked me to promise that I would attend the next retreat in about three months. I said I would, but I didn't really mean it.

Like clockwork, Lori called me back and asked me if I was coming, and I said yes, even though I had not even thought about it and did not really plan to do. I talked to my husband about it, and he said I was going, as he was dropping me off so I would not have a car to leave.

I went and the visiting priest that was there for the retreat was Fr. John! I could not believe it. Maybe this was fate, and God wanted me to come to this retreat so I would feel comfortable.

That weekend I cried a lot. I met women and men who told of life stories so much worse than mine and some had gotten many abortions along the way. Some had been raped and had dealt with the rape but could not heal from the abortion. There were men there, men who paid for abortions or tried to stop it but couldn't. We cried a lot, but we also laughed. I was able to name the child that I had discarded so many years ago. For the first time in my life, I truly felt the unbelievable compassion and Mercy of Christ. I was able to go to confession and knew that God had forgiven me. I told Fr. John, "I know he forgives me, but I am not sure I can ever forgive myself." He told me that God had given me this gift of mercy and forgiveness, and he wants me to forgive myself, and he wants me to love myself as he loves me.

I took that message to heart, and I my life dramatically changed after that weekend. I no longer felt depressed and began to feel joy in the little things God had given me. I wanted to help other women and men and became a team member for Rachel's Vineyard retreats and worked with them for many years.

I took an active role in my parish and even helped on the liturgy committee. I finally felt like I was worthy to be a child of God.

I became the Regional Coordinator for Silent No More and shared my story at the Walk for Life in San Francisco.

At every parish since, I have been an active member of the Respect Life Ministry and have prayed countless hours in front of Planned Parenthood and other abortion clinics for the babies, women, men, and the clinic workers.

But, best of all, Ron and I have been married for 17 years now. I received all four of my annulments. We were able to have our Convalidation ceremony in Oregon by Fr. John in 2009.

I began to understand how my abortion effected everyone I touched. It is true that abortion kills one and wounds another, and when someone is walking around so broken, it spills over into every life they touch. It affects all of society.

I realized abortion not only took my child's life; it also created this hole in my heart that will never fully heal. It affected my mother in every way. She had many bouts of depression and told me that she had also thought of ending her life many times. While she lay dying in the hospital not many years ago, she begged me to forgive her. I told her that I knew she did it only out of love, and that there was nothing to forgive.

The father of our aborted child wrote me a letter after many years to apologize. It had also affected his life in many ways and has never been able to truly heal from it.

I now realize that abortion is not the answer; it is the problem, and we must not let another child, woman, or man suffer the way that I and many others have for so many years.

This is why I am "Silent No More".

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I went alone. It was like I was in a dream that I could not get out of... Not a day goes by that I don't wish I chose life...

Abortion Story: Tampa, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 51-year-old woman on March 13, 2015.

It takes a lot to share my story. You see, I had two children already. They were in their teens. I was married, and we found ourselves—both of us Christians—in a sinful lifestyle, and I got pregnant. I was panicked. My husband and I had tried for a 3rd child, but it never happened, so I figured we could not have more for whatever reason. I wondered whose it was and how would we explain it to our families if the child looked very different? Before I knew it, I had scheduled the appointment. I went alone. It was like I was in a dream that I could not get out of. There was much more pain than I ever imagined as they sucked that precious, innocent life out of me. Pain I now feel that I deserved for what I did. I left there knowing what I chose to do was so wrong and have regretted it ever since. Not a day goes by that I don't wish I chose life and feel like someone is missing! I know God has forgiven me. One day I will see my child in heaven, but it is hard to forgive myself! We should keep pushing to abolish abortion so women don't have the option at all and lives are saved.

Age: 51

Location: Tampa, FL

Date: March 13, 2015

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As soon as I took the abortion pill, I felt numb and empty...

Abortion Story: Dade City, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 19-year-old woman on June 12, 2019.

On May 1st, 2019, at the age of 19, I found out I was pregnant when both of my pregnancy tests came back positive. I already had a feeling I was pregnant because I had been having unprotected sex with my boyfriend. But now it was confirmed. I couldn't do anything but cry. I had already told myself if I was pregnant I was going to have an abortion. Looking back, it was very selfish. I didn't even give my own child a chance at life. I told my boyfriend about the test, and he was more excited than me—which I found amazing because I'm African American and in most African-American relationships, the dad does not want to stick around. But I got lucky. I was the one in the wrong. When I told him I wanted an abortion, he was very upset and against it. I made an appointment for an abortion, but once I got there, I couldn't even go in because of my crying. I ended up going next door to a clinic for a sonogram. I decided to keep the baby. Then I decided to get an abortion again, and I went through with it. As soon as I took the abortion pill, I felt numb and empty, and here I am five days later, realizing I made the biggest mistake of my life. That was my child that didn't even get a chance in the world because of me. I was trying to make myself feel better by telling myself I thought my life was over, I'm young, it was going to be hard, etc. But that still does not make it right! I know this sounds crazy, and I know I'll never be able to get that child back, but I feel like I would have a sense of closure if I have another baby by the same man. If you need advice, I say don't do it. Yes, times may get hard, but at the end of the day, that's your little blessing from god.

Age: 19

Location: Dade City, FL

Date: June 12, 2019

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I regret it so much. I was so selfish. I took an innocent life because of my mistakes...

Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 24-year-old woman on November 28, 2017.

I am 24 years old and the mother of a two year old. I've been in a relationship with my baby father for almost three years. When I found out I was pregnant with my 2nd child it was after Christmas, and my daughter was only 10 months. My relationship was really stressing me out. We had a lot of trust issues going on, and we were living with my mom. When I found out I was pregnant I was scared, but he was ok with it. But my family insisted on an abortion because they thought it was going to be hard with two kids, and my relationship was not good at all. I remember feeling so angry with my baby father and decided to do the abortion.

He dropped me off. There was some guy outside preaching about abortion but I ignored him. I paid the \$500 cash and was called in for an ultrasound. I asked to see the baby, and it was the worst thing I ever did. I started to repent, but the grudge I felt inside towards my baby father and everything my family told me made me continue with the abortion.

It has been two years, and I wish I could have someone understand how I regret it so much. I was so selfish. I took an innocent life because of my mistakes, because of my problems and because everyone was against it. Now I can't forgive myself. I will never forget the ultrasound. I was four weeks and baby was there formed. I wish I could go back and have him or her in my arms. Years go by and I can't stop thinking how old she or he could have been by now.

I feel stressed. Now I don't want to have any more kids because I don't think it is fair. :(

I hope someone can understand. This is the worst thing I ever did in my life.

Age: 24

Location: Florida

Date: November 28, 2017

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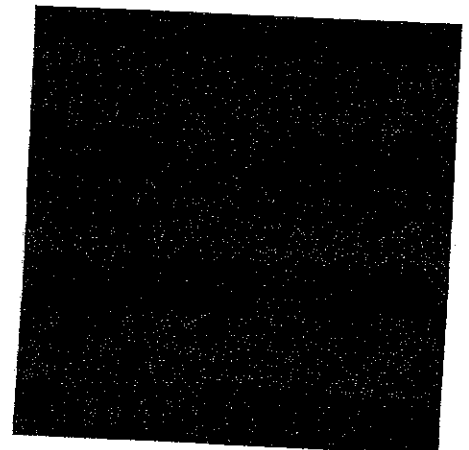
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Abortion Story: Palm Beach, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 33-year-old woman on April 25, 2014.

[Abortion] is one decision that you will live to regret for a lifetime—life is life, and I took one innocent life away. I was 27, under a lot of stress, and already struggling with a 2-year-old. I didn't want to tie myself down further with another kid that to be raised with an abusive husband who I hated enough to kill his child. I was wrong regardless of the circumstances. This life deserved a chance. Planned Parenthood offered no counseling—except for the protesters yelling outside the facility. That's all I had to go by—no "think twice" or one-on-one counseling. It's like a nightmare you never get up from. It is daily mental torture because eventually you realize it was wrong—but too late to take it back. My advice to any female considering abortion is to please think about that life inside of you because it has a voice that only you can hear. I beg you, please don't do this. There are always better options that you will not live to regret. You're not alone; there is help—*more so now than when I made this tragic mistake. Listen to that little voice, please, it is louder than you think, and it gets louder and louder afterwards.* I'm now 33 and remain tortured by the voice of my unborn child. I hope and pray that my story, like others, will help end this terrible mistake we as humans make—only to find that it destroys us in the end.

Age: 33

Location: Palm Beach, FL

Date: April 25, 2014

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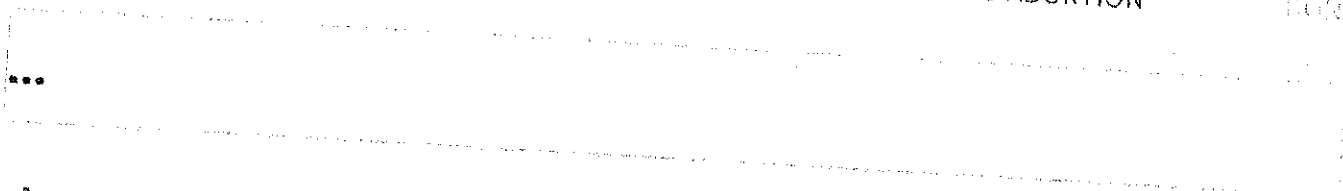


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Abortion Story: Daytona Beach, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 23-year-old woman on March 28, 2012.

I was a full-time college student and mother of a three year old when [I got] pregnant. Immediately, I became stressed because I was in a crazy position, and the stress caused me to feel very alone... After weeks of debating, I made an appointment to get an abortion. I was quickly told I didn't qualify for the pill because I was too far along in my pregnancy. I had two visits to the clinic, one for the ultrasound and February 18 was my scheduled abortion day. After I pulled up to the clinic, I was greeted by a group of four people with signs protesting, trying to get the young women including myself to change their minds. After sitting in the clinic waiting room with a group of women who all seemed not to care they were getting ready to end their child's life, I remember the nurse coming to get me. I laid down, and all I heard was this suctioning noise, and that noise still haunts me. I was 9-10 weeks when my baby was taken away from me. I left out of that place feeling empty and in pain. I'm suppose to be holding and loving a sixth month old baby right now, but all I'm left with is emptiness... Abortions are horrible please don't get one, please give your baby a chance at life or look at adoption as an alternative. It's been a year and month since my abortion. I still deal with post abortion stress which has caused me to be unhappy with my life and most of the time I have no control over my feelings. I passed the clinic one day on the way home, and it was hard driving because I was overtaken with emotions. I vowed to never ride by that place again. I made a horrible mistake, one that will haunt me forever.

Age: 23

Location: Daytona Beach, FL

Date: March 28, 2012

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My heartbreak spilled out and threatened to capsizize me anytime I even thought about sharing this horrific secret...

Abortion Story: Tampa, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 53-year-old woman on November 15, 2016.

Abortion has impacted my life in a very real way. I don't come at the issue as an outsider. No, I know how evil abortion is in a personal way. It leaves its victims traumatized with PTSD-like symptoms that can remain unexplained and misunderstood for many years, sometimes decades, and sometimes forever.

This is not an easy story to share. I didn't share it for decades. Part of me believed that it was irrelevant to the person I am now. Yet as I grew older, my sense of shame grew with each year, as my living children matured and some of them left home and I was left wondering what could have been; what I had squandered; what had been taken from me. My shame kept me silent. My heartbreak spilled out and threatened to capsizize me anytime I even thought about sharing this horrific secret. And then I encountered God in a new way.

My journey has brought me to a place of profound healing and redemption in Jesus, my savior. I have learned things that bring me so much joy I do not have adequate words to describe it. The grace of God for you and me is beyond what we can imagine. It is a subversive grace, so out of the ordinary that it is offensive to some. It is expressed in uncertain whispers—could He really take this sin and make it into something good and beautiful? Would He, with foreknowledge of what I would do, still choose me to be the mother of a child who is now in heaven fulfilling a purpose? I have learned that He can and He would and He did.

And so, my story will be shared. It has to be, because I know now that God wants all women who have suffered abortion to know their freedom. And because I know the beauty of freedom and grace, I also want to see all post-abortive women come to know the truth of God's love for them. So I will trust you with my pain. I will always have pain because of what I did and what was done to me. But the shame has been taken from me and replaced with peace. Come and listen to my tale, and begin to make the great exchange that the Lord wants for you too.

If you could see my Facebook page, you would see pictures of five beautiful children; my pride and joy. But the real truth is that I have ten children; five that I can see and touch, and five that are in heaven waiting for me. I have had four abortions (supposedly convenient and easy choices that should have left me happy and carefree according to the pro-abortion camp)—and though I have no proof, I believe one of those aborted pregnancies was twins.

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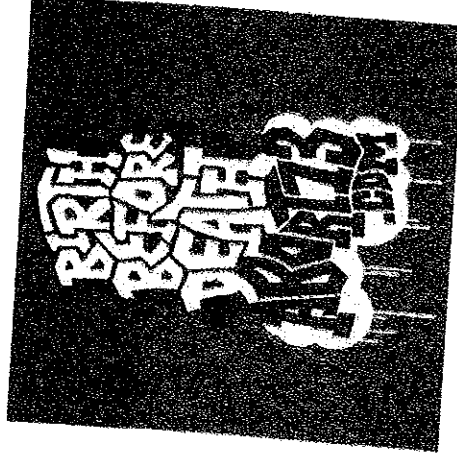
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Abortion Story: November 15, 2016 | Abort73.com

My journey with abortion began in 1979 when I was 16. My parents were finally separated after a marriage of less than 20 years that was filled with turmoil and alcoholism. My father had moved across the state of Florida to be with his new family and my mother couldn't cope with her new life situation. I was a rebellious and angry teenager who had lost all respect for her parents. I was careening through life with no moral compass, desperately searching for love. I didn't believe my parents loved me so I ignored their wishes and became very difficult to live with. My mother made me leave, so at 16 I was homeless.

I had a boyfriend who lived about a mile away and that was where my mother dropped me off when she told me that I was no longer welcome at home. The driveway of Michael's house became my home base. I even put my clothing, which was all I had, in the trunk of his car. If you were to look inside that trunk, you could guess how I felt about myself. Jeans, dresses, skirts, teeshirts, all just thrown there in the back of that old Plymouth Valiant, dirty and crumpled and unorganized.

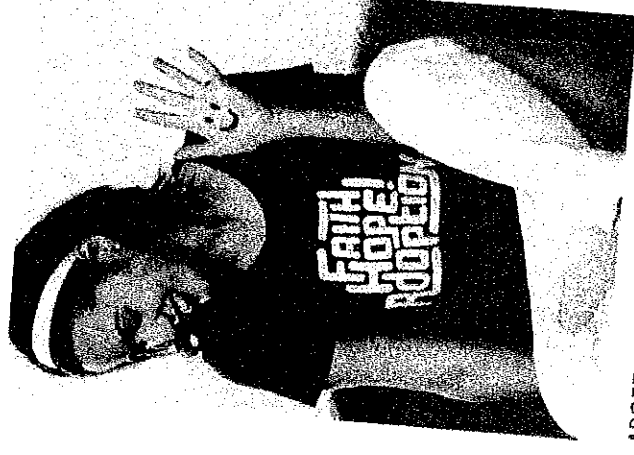
My life on the streets of Altamonte Springs was as chaotic and crazy as the jumbled pile of clothing in the trunk of Michael's car and before long, I was pregnant. I don't remember how I found out. I doubt I was paying much attention and I know I didn't have access to a pregnancy test. Originally I was to be placed in a home for unwed mothers (that's what it was called back then), where I would carry the baby and give it up for adoption.

My boyfriend's parents seemed to be in charge of my fate, but I don't know if my father or my mother were behind the scenes giving instructions. All I know is that instead of the home for unwed mothers, I ended up at the abortion clinic. I don't know how far along in the pregnancy I was. I remember being at the clinic, dressed in a hospital gown along with other girls. They gave me a pill in the shape of a triangle. Nothing else is clear.

Within a few weeks of the abortion I was pregnant again. Just as before, I didn't know how I found out and I didn't know how far along I was when I was taken to the clinic again. Afterwards, my boyfriend's father took me to a trashy hotel on Orange Blossom Trail where the hookers stayed, put me in a room along with garbage bags full of my dirty clothes and told me that was where I deserved to be.

This second abortion is the one I believe was twins. There were some complications associated with it. I was at a keg party in the woods one night and I was wearing a white jumpsuit. I felt something hot on my legs, looked down, and saw a scarlet stain spreading. I was hemorrhaging and eventually ended up at the hospital where they were able to stop the bleeding. Then a few weeks later I was in Georgia with my boyfriend and his parents and on the way back home to Florida I began bleeding again in the backseat, creating a huge pool of blood on the leather upholstery. I don't remember why I was with them again after having been put up in the hooker hotel. Maybe they felt bad about their choice to do that and decided to invite me on their vacation.

My boyfriend's parents rushed me to a hospital somewhere, wherever we were in Georgia, and there I received a blood transfusion. I had lost so much blood. When I think about it, 1979 was a dangerous year to have a blood transfusion. While I was there at the hospital I remember that the doctor asked me what had happened to me. I told him that I had recently had an abortion and this was my second time of blood loss. It was clear that the abortion had been done improperly, and I had now twice almost bled to death because of it. I don't know if for sure, but I now believe that I had been pregnant with twins (they run in my family) and the "doctor" who performed the procedure carelessly didn't remove all the tissue.



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Someone had decided for me that I would have these abortions. It was a collaboration between my boyfriend's parents and perhaps my mother and father. Someone had to give permission at the clinic. Did they forge a signature? How far along was I? Why were the original plans changed? I was going to carry the baby at first but someone decided differently. What would my life be like if I had given birth?

Fast forward eleven years. Such a short period of time but so eventful. I was 27 and I had left my husband of eight years, bringing with me once again just my clothing. But this time, I had two beautiful little girls with me. My daughters were 6 and 8 and I was fiercely protective of them. I'd left the marriage because of abuse. I was ready to change my life. I didn't know then that soon I would be repeating very regretful circumstances and this time it would be my decision.

Continue story on author's personal blog

Age: 53

Location: Tampa, FL

Date: November 15, 2016

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I was able to see that at 12 weeks, I had two children in my womb that already had formed hands, legs, feet (and) eyes...

Abortion Story: Hialeah, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 61-year-old woman on October 9, 2015.

It was April, 1972, and I was a little over two months from graduating high school; I was 17 years old. I was so regular every month and knew the moment I was late that I was pregnant. I could already feel my body had been making changes. Abortion had just become legal in New York in 1972. At this point, I had never even been to a gynecologist yet. I made an appointment with an ob-gyn that a girlfriend had given me. She said he could arrange for an abortion.

I went in for the pregnancy test and in minutes, he came back in and said "the rabbit died." He asked me what I thought I was going to do. I told him I was considering abortion and had heard that he could make arrangements for me in New York. I asked what was involved. He told me that it was just a mass of tissue, not a really big deal, and would be rather quick. With abortion having just become legal in New York and the technology nowhere near what it is today, I believed him and every other thing that was being put out there about how quick and easy abortion was.

I was so young, but I was not a stupid girl. I had a wonderful mom and dad, but I was very independent and felt I got myself into this and I was going to get myself out. I began dating the father of my child when I was in the eighth grade. He was the only boy I ever dated. We started having sexual intercourse when I was 14 years old; there was no birth control then. We started the abortion and the roundtrip flight to New York was \$400.00. I had a part time job and earned \$42 a week. I cannot remember what my boyfriend earned; it was more than me but not by much. It took me until July to get the money together. I had made the flight arrangements, and scheduled the abortion for July 12, 1972. I had never flown before and had to go by myself because that is all I could afford.

By July 12th, I was already pretty big and had to wear my blue jeans unzipped with a shirt long enough and loose enough to cover my belly. The night before I was to fly to New York, I was doing our family dinner dishes and my mom, out of the blue, said, "Are you pregnant? I can't remember you having a period now for several months." I was not smart enough to pull Tampax out and hide them like I was using them during that time. My mother and I were close in our cycles so we always used up a box or so a month. Of course I said, "No way I just haven't been discussing every month with you." She didn't press any further. I lied to my parents and told them I was spending the day with my brother and his girlfriend. I lied to my parents and night with them so I could at least have a day to recuperate.

<https://abort73.com/testimony/2084/>

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If you're pregnant and contemplating abortion, what a mercy that you've found this website! Abortion is not the answer—*no matter what anyone is telling you.*

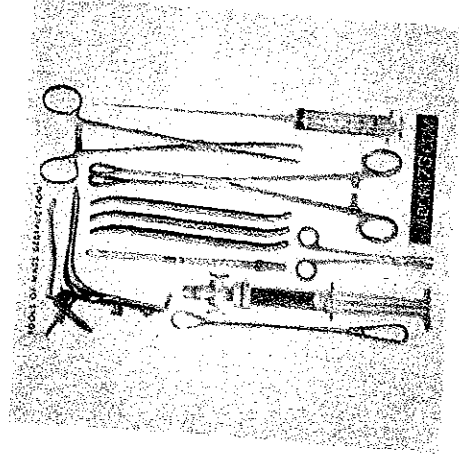
[Click here to find local help.](#)

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GET INVOLVED

Abortion persists because of ignorance, apathy and confusion. Abort73 is working to change that; you can help! Get started below:



SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS:

Post them online to introduce your friends, fans or followers to Abort73.com.

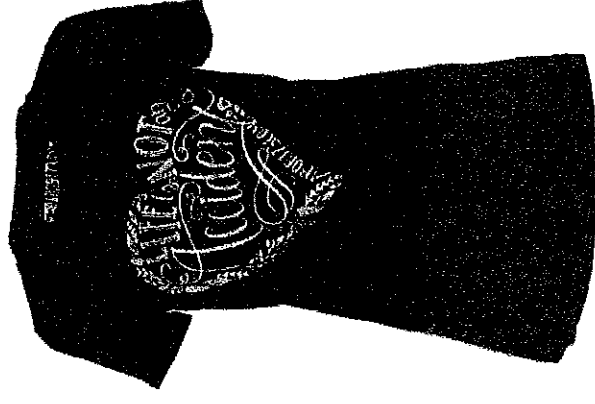
I was approximately 12 weeks pregnant when I went to New York on July 12th. I lied to the doctor's staff in NY and gave them a later date by 30 days. Otherwise, I would not have been able to have the rapid abortion as you had to be less than 3 months pregnant. I also was not turning 18 until the 30th of July, and that was a requirement too. I got on a plane at 7:00 am that morning of the 12th, nervous as hell. I was going to a city I had never been to, by myself, to go through a procedure I knew virtually nothing about—trusting that all the arrangements were above board. I got sick and did not even know for sure that the plane had puke bags in the seat backs like I had heard. I searched and thank goodness it was there, as I filled the darn bag all the way even though all I had done was drink a glass of orange juice on the plane.

I arrived at LaGuardia airport around 9:00 am and was told someone from the clinic would pick me up. This young guy in his 20's was holding a sign with my name on it. When I approached him he said I was the only one he was picking up that morning and that I would have the van to myself. All I remember is it was a white cargo van, he took me over Scarborough Bridge—the bridge in Simon & Garfunkel's song. I don't even remember what borough I was in; I think it was Queens. He took me into a four or five story building; it had big, black and white tiles in the lobby. The clinic was on one of the upper floors.

A nurse came and got me to do some paperwork. When she asked for my i.d. I told her I had forgotten my purse and had nothing with me. She then said if I couldn't prove that I was eighteen, I was not going to be able to have the procedure. I started freaking out telling her I had never flown before, was upset about being pregnant, and had simply forgotten my purse when I got out of the car to board the plane. Of course, I was lying, but I thought, what the heck, I was only 18 days away from being 18—but I sure did not look it. She went and got another nurse and told her I could not prove I was 18 and that they were not going to do the procedure. The second nurse looked at me and said, "She looks 18 to me." She said she would sign off that she had received the i.d. required so I could get the abortion since I had come from Florida.

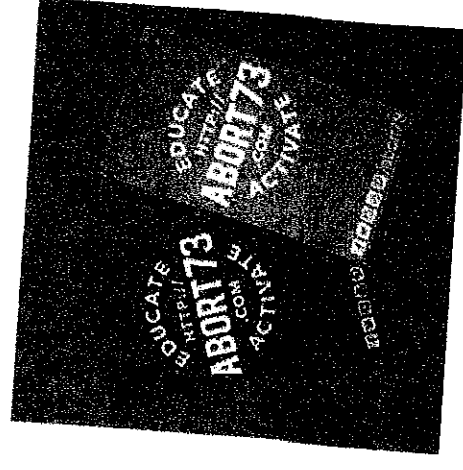
They took me into a room and readied me for the procedure. The doctor came in and got everything ready. He then gave me an exam and said, "You know you are pregnant with twins, don't you?" Well, no I didn't know that, but now it made sense as to why I was so huge at 12 weeks. I remember saying, "Now I'm really glad I came for the abortion." It was about 30 minutes until he was done. They took me into a recovery room where I had to lie down for two hours and eat Oreo cookies and drink Coca-Cola. They said I had to get the sugar into my body, I was bleeding tremendously and cramping very badly. After two hours, they put me back on the van for a flight back to Miami that was leaving New York at 4:00 p.m. I arrived back in South Florida around 6:00 p.m. and went to my brother's house. It was a horrific night; I was cramping and dropping clots the size of cantaloupes. It was scary but at the time, I felt relieved. I had a week of my breasts leaking so much milk I had to put saran wrap in my bra so it would not come through my shirt.

I ended up marrying my boyfriend in November of 1972, and we stayed married until April of 1976. I knew in my heart it was never going to be a marriage that lasted forever, but I was so young and naive. I thought about what I had done but really had mixed feelings and it really bothered me when the doctor said twins. When I reached about 25-years-old, it started weighing heavily on my mind as medicine and technology grew more sophisticated by the minute. I remarried in 1981, after having lived with him for a few years. I had to get off of birth control when I was 27 as it was starting to cause problems with my breasts. I was not sure I was ready to get pregnant yet, so I had an IUD put in. In 1984, I got pregnant with the IUD in and had no idea I was pregnant. It was not like the first time when I knew immediately. I was at work and started to hemorrhage; I went into the bathroom and could not locate the string of



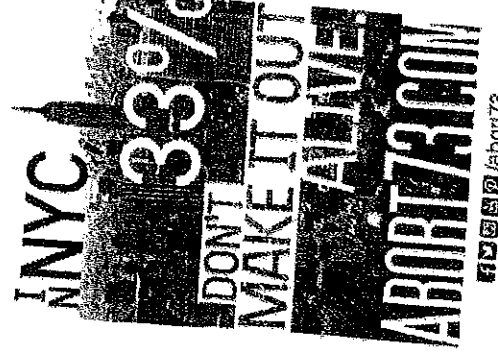
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the IUD and went directly to the doctor. The doctor examined me and asked, "Didn't you know you were pregnant?" I said, "No, I'm supposed to be protected." He told me, "Well, there's a 2% chance you could get pregnant." I lost the baby and had to have a D&C. I told the doctor I did not want any more birth control.

My husband and I then began to try to get pregnant. Later that same year I became pregnant. In about my 11th week, I had a miscarriage. When I had hemorrhaged with the IUD, the doctor told me there was no damage to my uterus or other female organs. I believed him and never sought a second opinion. When I miscarried, the doctor I then had wanted to do a test to see if when I got pregnant my hormones were not producing correctly. I sat for 10 hours in the doctor's office where I had to drink this 16 ounces of fluid have a blood test every hour. After he received the results from this test, he said it was not hormonal. I got pregnant again, and again; I lost the baby. I was never able to have children. I have always felt that I was probably being punished for what I had done. However, I really believe in my heart that the Lord knew I was not a very bright girl at 17 and I did not maliciously consider the abortion. I simply believed the doctors that it was not a baby at 12 weeks.

As the years went by, science was able to show a picture of a fetus inside the womb at the various stages of growth. That was when my heart broke. I was able to see that at 12 weeks, I had two children in my womb that already had formed hands, legs, feet, eyes in their little heads, mouths, noses, backbones, etc. I killed two innocent children and it really bothered me and does to this day. I will never forgive myself. It is probably why I was never able to conceive. Had I just been wise enough to have told my parents, I would have had their guidance to see that it was meant to be. Just because you get pregnant, you don't dispose of what you perceive to be an inconvenience. I was so young. Of course I didn't think so at the time. I did not even tell my parents about my pregnancy or abortion until I was almost 40-years-old.

I now know, and have for the last 30+ years, that the moment you conceive, it is a human being that deserves to live. If you do not feel you are ready, you can always provide a loving couple who cannot conceive with a child of their own. I just pray that our nation will realize that we have murdered millions and millions of children who deserved to live; they were all God's children. These young girls that blog that they have no regrets and are so very glad they made the choice to kill their child, they are so immature and have no idea of the damage that is going to come to their soul at some point in their lives. I pray that they will see the light. With all the birth control that is available today, there is no excuse for an unexpected pregnancy. They will pay the price, sooner or later. It is long overdue to stop this killing of innocents. I don't even believe in allowing abortion for incest or rape. Just give the child up; you will have peace if you do.

Age: 61

Location: Hialeah, FL

Date: October 9, 2015

Search by related keyword: [High School / New York / Birth Control / Miscarriage / IUD](#)

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and Mother always loved me unconditionally. Why oh why was I so afraid to tell them I was pregnant? They would have led me down the right path from there.

My Father didn't know that I had already asked for forgiveness every time I prayed. A theme in every prayer I prayed until just this past year. I climbed a big hill to get to where I am "okay." I still have further to go. I finally realized that in order to receive God's forgiveness I have to have faith in that forgiveness and I have to let it go. Once you ask God for forgiveness I have to forgive and forgets. I have not asked God to forgive me for the abortions in a while, but I still live with a broken heart. I blame the government and pro-abortion activist, I blame the boyfriend, but most importantly I blame myself.

The abortion is not the only hurdle I have had to overcome. I was molested by an adopted uncle when I was a child. I had to stop doing drugs, and binge drinking. I still battle anxiety attacks and depression. I have two daughters I fear of losing, because of my awful "choices." I is because I struggle that I give my testimony today. If one person hears this story, and makes better decisions than I did, then it is worth it. The true meaning and purpose of testimony.

A poem I wrote in a moment of despair:
"The Choice"

In Heaven are you still the tiny seeds,
That you were inside of me?
Two beating hearts with angel wings,
And four eyes destined never to see.

They say when you die you know all,
Then you must know how I fell far from grace.
But they also say when you go to heaven for eternity,
You no longer yearn for this earthly place.

I do hope you know nothing about this lonely life,
And never know the short and hurtful way you did live,
I hope you are wrapped in God's loving embrace,
And know nothing of what my aching heart would give.

Not one day passes by without the greatest of regrets,
Nowhere to hide from the deep despair dragging me down.
I want to go back and change the awful things I have done,
Because YOU deserved the choice to thrive, not to drown.

My innocent ones how I dream of dark things,
And I deserve the wrath of the beast.
There is no death good enough,
And on my heart the crow does feast.

To forget my wretched choices seems impossible,
And to forgive myself seems unfair.
I owed you a chance to be all you could be,
But it was my life's desires I chose to spare.

To have faith in God is to trust in Him,
And He says He will forgive and forget.
He is my only light and my salvation,
And the love of Jesus pays my debt.

2/10/2020

Abortion - Silent No More Awareness Campaign - The Choice

When I see you after my time in this world is done,
When my body in the ground will lay,
I hope and pray, even though I am not owed,
You will give me the choice to hold you that day.

I will shed tears for the choices I made.
My heart will break over and over again.
I will teach others it is wrong to take a precious life.
It is God's choice to decide when life ends, or begins.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

I Kept the Secret for Almost Thirty Years

Nilida Sepulveda-Green, Regional Coordinator
Florida, United States

I was only 19 years old when I found out I was pregnant. I ended up getting married; I had two daughters and one miscarriage. Although my marriage turned into an abusive relationship, I tried to stay in the marriage for awhile. Eventually, I left my husband. When I left, I felt that my world had been shattered. I was angry and I didn't know where to begin. I was a lost soul in the world.

As time went by, I started dating again. Shortly after that, I got pregnant. I remembered my conversation with my mom. She warned me not to come out pregnant again. Also my husband was still pursuing me, although we were separated. When I told my boyfriend that I was pregnant, he told me to have the baby and that he would help me. I was fearful, thinking about my husband and my mom. I didn't know what to do and who to turn to for help. I didn't want any more children and I was afraid of everyone's reaction.

One day I was crying at work when a doctor came in to the office. He asked why I was crying and I told him. He said that wasn't a problem, that he would refer me to his friend to have an abortion. He explained that being 4-6 weeks didn't mean anything it was just a little blood clot. I went along with it.

The day of the abortion, I was confused and afraid, but I thought that was the right thing to do. When I was called into the room, the doctor asked why I was so nervous. I told her I was afraid and she told me not to worry that it would be over soon. After the abortion, I buried the secret. I ended up having another abortion and my life changed drastically. For years I suffered with guilt, shame, and pain for what I had done. I felt like a criminal. I was promiscuous. I tried to find love in the wrong places. I got married three times with no success. I thought God will never forgive me for my sins and I could not forgive myself either. Oh, if only I would have told my mom. I found out the hard way that abortion was not the solution to my problem. I tormented myself for many years. Even suffering seemed good to me because I felt it was a way of purifying my soul. I thought I was being punished for my sins.

I always attended Sunday Mass, but I never had peace. There was a little hope inside of me that some day after many sufferings, perhaps I will find forgiveness. What I failed to realized was that God had forgiven me already. I was too hard on myself; I needed to forgive myself too. I thank God that he kept me away from drugs, alcohol abuse, and suicide. He kept me safe. I married for the fourth time, but this time I sought out God's guidance. The Lord answered my prayer by giving me a wonderful husband. I have been happily married for 11 years.

Although I attended retreats and joined some ministries in my church, I wasn't able to find peace and forgiveness. However, I found myself getting closer to God. I started going to mass every day and visiting the Blessed Sacrament frequently. I try to persevere in my faith.

Early this year my friend from church approach me and told me God told her to speak to me about pro-life and about abortion and she didn't know why. I covered my face and started crying. She invited me to attend a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and I told her I would call her. I

attended the retreat in April. It was there where that I finally found healing through God's mercy and love.

I am free at last, my secret is out and as a result I have chosen to be Silent No More. In the retreat, I restored my children's dignity and gave them the respect they deserved. Through my testimony, I pray I can help others find hope, forgiveness, and healing. I also want to make people aware of the consequences and the impact that abortion has on their lives.

For my Spanish-speaking friends:

Yo tenia 19 anos cuando sali embarazada. Me case, tuve 2 hijas y una perdida natural. A pesar de que mi matrimonio se convirtio en una relacion abusiva, trate de mantenerlo. Al separarme, me senti como si mi mundo se rompiera en mil pedazos. El resentimiento y la amargura se apoderaron de mi y no sabia por donde comenzar. Era una alma perdida en el mundo.

El tiempo fue pasando y comenze a enamorarme de nuevo. Al poco tiempo sali embarazada de nuevo. Inmediatamente me recorde de la conversacion con mi mama en la cual me habia dicho que no saliera embarazada sin estar casada. Tambien los problemas entre mi esposo y yo no se habian arreglado. Cuando yo le dije a mi novio que yo estaba embarazada, El me dijo que lo tuviera que El me ayudaba. El miedo se apodero de mi pensando en mi mama y mi mas hijos y pense en la reaccion de mi mama y mi ex-esposo.

Un dia mientras estaba en el trabajo lloraba sin consuelo y el doctor que yo trabajaba llevo y me pregunto que me pasaba, porque lloraba? Le conteste que estaba embarazada y el me pregunto cuantas semanas y le dije 4-6. El me dijo no te preocupes, eso no es nada, ahi lo que hay es una pelotita de sangre solamente. Me dijo que el me resolvia el problema. Que iba a llamar a su amiga y que me hiciera un aborto, yo segui sus intruccionnes.

El dia del aborto estaba confundida y tenia mucho miedo; pero pensaba que era la mejor decision. Cuando llevo mi turno la doctora me pregunto que porque estaba tan nerviosa. Le dije que tenia miedo y ella me contesto que no me preocupara, que eso se hacia en un momento. Des pues del aborto decidi esconder el secreto.

Termine haciendome 2 abortos y mi vida cambio drasticamente. Sufri por muchos anos de ansiedad, el cargo de culpa, la verguenza y el arrepentimiento no me dejaban tranquila. Me sentia como una criminal. Desde ese instante yo cai en el pecado porque habia quitado mis ojos del Senor. Comence a buscar Amor en los sitios equivocados, me case 3 veces y nunca fui feliz. Mi interior estaba muerto pero tenia que sobrevivir. Dios mio, cuantas veces me arrepenti de no decirlo a mi mama. Sabia que esa no fue la decision correcta, pero ya era muy tarde. El sufrimiento para mi era bueno porque pensaba que estaba purificando mi alma.

Sufria todo en silencio, pues pensaba que era mi castigo por los pecados que habia cometido.

No sabia si Dios me iba a perdonar algun dia.

Yo le servia al Senor, pero no lograba tener paz. Lo que yo no pude ver era que Dios estaba siempre conmigo, fui yo la que lo abandone . Nosotros tenemos que aprender a perdonarnos a nosotros mismos. Dios que es todo misericordia, dice que no importa que pecado allas cometido, si te arrepientes, seras perdonada. Le doy gracias a Dios que me protegio de abuso de drogas, alcohol y atento de suicido.

Hoy a pesar de todas mis dificultades, me he vuelto a casar. Esta vez fue diferente porque

Abortion: A True Story of Hope and Healing

Lena
Florida, United States

I was twenty years old. I did not know God. I had not yet met Jesus. I was living a life of sin and danger. At that time, I lived with a boyfriend with whom I did drugs. I became pregnant very early into our relationship. He made it clear that he didn't want any children. I was afraid of losing him, and I felt like I didn't have any other choice but to have an abortion.

I went to a local Planned Parenthood office for help. Only now am I aware that in their "counseling" of me. They side-stepped their legal obligation to inform me of both the dangerous side-effects of having an abortion and my alternatives to having an abortion. In fact, there was no counseling. The only option they spoke of was making an appointment to end the pregnancy, which they strongly urged me to do.

Before setting up a date with Planned Parenthood, I went to see my mother. I was seeking help and I was very afraid. In the midst of my fear, I lied to my mother about my situation, saying something was wrong and that I had to end the pregnancy. My mother, thinking she was helping me, offered to pay for the abortion and drive me to have it done.

The fateful day arrived. With very few words, my mother drove me to the abortion mill. I remember how numb and disconnected I felt as I sat in the waiting room. This all seemed like a bad dream. I had to sign some paperwork first and my mother made the payment. I was so afraid, but I didn't know what else I could do. I was going through with this because I didn't feel I had any other choice.

When my name was called, I was taken into a large room with a single examination table where I was instructed to undress and lie down. After waiting for just a moment, an old man, the "doctor," came in. His physical presence was very scary to me and I've never forgotten it. When I look back now, I realize that I was affected by the spiritual darkness about him.

The abortion was cold and quick. He and his assistant used a machine that made a loud sound. I felt sharp pain. I remember feeling like I was on an assembly line.

The next thing I remember, I was being taken to another room with many reclining chairs. I was given some strong drugs and told to sit and rest for a while. They also gave me something small to eat.

I noticed that I was among other women in the same room. There was a very awkward silence, because we all knew what had just happened to each of us.

I remember feeling horrible immediately. The pain was in my lower body and it was very intense. A short while later, I was escorted to the back door which led to the parking lot. My mother waited for me there. As I rode in the passenger seat of my mother's car out of the driveway, I recall making eye contact with a person who was holding a sign and walking in front of the abortion mill. It was too late for me and for my child.

One week later, I found myself in no better condition. I had been running a serious fever of nearly 105 degrees for almost the entire week. I was living at my boyfriend's parents' home at the time, and his mother took notice of my condition. Thanks to her persistence, I finally allowed her to take me to a walk-in clinic. She was sure there was something really wrong with me.

At the clinic, there was panic and I was immediately taken to the hospital. Eight days after having my abortion, I was admitted to the hospital and put in the intensive care unit. During my first two days there, I worsened, despite broad spectrum I.V. antibiotics.

My family was told that I could die.

My body was shutting down, due to major infection from septic abortion. I had acute pyelonephritis, sepsis, pneumonia and presumed congestive heart failure. I was attached to a heart machine and I had a tube in my throat so I could breathe.

Because my condition was getting worse and worse, I had to have emergency surgery in the middle of the night. My body was so swollen, I was told that I looked like I was nine months pregnant. During my emergency surgery, 300 cc of bloody peritoneal fluid was removed from my body. How I survived this is truly a miracle, and I thank God for His Divine Mercy. Things seemed to get better after several weeks in the intensive care unit and I was relocated to the fourth floor for recovery. I became ill with pancreatitis from an antibiotic I was given during recovery. However, I survived and continued on with life.

Even though I made it through the immediate physical consequences, the worst was yet to come. I dived deeper and deeper into drug and alcohol abuse and I was severely depressed.

The relationship I had with my boyfriend continued, but we were verbally and physically abusive with each other.

I remember a specific night over a year later when, in a drugged state of mind, I climbed onto the roof of the apartment complex we lived in and cried out in anger to God. I said something like "Oh God, if you are real, tell me. Why am I alive? What is the purpose of my life? Why am I here?"

I almost jumped off the roof that night to attempt to end my life.

But, God heard my cry, and instead, the "old" me was coming to an end and my life was truly just beginning...

Now, I bring you into my current life.

I met Jesus and began a relationship with Him when I was 23 years old. Since then, I have become a completely different person. God led me to meet a different man. We have since married and he is a wonderful, holy husband.

I am 32 years old and a stay-home wife and mother. We have a beautiful 3-year-old daughter and I currently am five months pregnant with a baby boy.

My healing from the abortion has been a process and it is by no means completed. However, through the tender support of my husband and by living an active faith, I find daily strength and courage to live the life God has called me to.

2/10/2020

Abortion - Silent No More Awareness Campaign - Abortion: A True Story of Hope and Healing

I thank you for taking the time to read my story. May God bless you with the healing and peace you desire through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of peace and the Divine Healer.

There's Hope ... There's Help ... There's Healing.

There are millions of women and men who are suffering silently from the after-effects of abortion, perhaps without even knowing it.

If you or someone you know has had an abortion, there is hope, help, and healing. The following agencies are available to help, encourage, and inform:

Silent No More Awareness Campaign

Priests for Life: priestsforlife.org

Elliott Institute: unfairchoice.info

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

Healing the Hurt

Rebecca
Florida, United States

I was twenty years old. My period was late. I used two home pregnancy tests that came up negative, but I knew I was pregnant.

I was walking by a doctor's office and saw a sign that read, "Free Pregnancy Tests." So I stopped in. The test was positive and the lady at the desk asked how far along I was. I had no idea.

She said the doctor would return later that afternoon and asked if I would like to schedule an appointment. I did.

The doctor examined me to find I was 16 weeks along. I started to cry. He said that he usually does not perform procedures when the patient is that far along, but he could make an exception since I was so upset. I was in a Planned Parenthood clinic and did not even know it.

I was surprised and told the doctor I was upset because my husband had passed away four weeks earlier and he wasn't here to share this wonderful moment with me.

I gave birth to my precious son. And when he was four months old, I had an affair and became pregnant. I was so ashamed and didn't want anyone to know, so I returned to that same clinic and had my first abortion.

After six years of drinking and doing drugs, I found myself pregnant again. The father begged me not to have an abortion, but I was pro-choice at the time.

The clinic people said that since I have been pregnant so many times, they recommended the Depo-Provera shot and guaranteed that I would not get pregnant again. I had a bad reaction to the shot. While I was waiting for my birth control pills, I found I was five months pregnant.

They recommended an abortion.

But I knew it was a baby. I wanted to place my child for adoption, but my parents would not sign the papers. So I had my third abortion.

During the procedure, I cried hysterically. The nurses held me down until one nurse looked up and said, "Oh, look. Twins." I remember screaming, "STOP! STOP!"

Later, the doctor came in and said he would reprimand the nurse because they are instructed not to tell women about their children.

I wanted to die. And I did try to commit suicide three months later.

Abortion hurts women. Ultrasound laws are needed. That is why I share my story. That is why I am silent no more.

To view Rebecca's testimony on YouTube, [click here](#).

Made Whole in Christ

Lavonia
Florida, United States

I had an abortion due to guilt, shame and a second child would truly have been an inconvenience. The abortion was during the time when abortion was illegal. The procedure itself was not painful however, the result of the abortion was very painful emotionally and spiritually for quite sometime.

After the abortion I hemorrhaged, later to become infected. When I met the man I wanted to marry I found I would never be able to have other children. He wanted children, we did not marry and that was a source of silent pain for years.

Let no doctor, Planned Parenthood personnel or friend, tell you there is no pain. For pain comes in many forms and can last for a lifetime. Do not let them tell you it is not a fetus or it's a blob of blood.....lies lies, lies! I saw my fetus and held it in my hand; today I can still see the lifeless little fetus and I wonder what that child would look like today and what he/she be today.

Because of God's love and forgiveness, I confessed my sin and have been delivered, healed and made whole in Christ.

I will never be silent about the devastating effects of abortion.

Love,

Lavonia

P.S. To view my testimony on YouTube, [click here](#).

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

A Part of Myself

Theresa
Florida, United States

I killed my baby when I was 19 years old. I can wrap that in terms that many in our society would deem acceptable, such as "it was my body, my choice" or "it was only a clump of cells" or many of the false lies that the pro-choice side likes to sell women. But, when I walked out of that clinic that day so many years ago, I knew I had killed my baby and a part of myself died that day as well.

I was a 19 year old girl living with a man who abused drugs, alcohol, and me. We had no money and because my family did not like him, I had no one to turn to. I was also ashamed, as members in my family were positive that this was going to happen and they were just lying in wait to say, "I told you so." The father of the baby wanted the abortion as well but would not have fought me had I decided to keep it. I blame myself completely for making a decision simply out of fear and pride.

The day I walked in the clinic, the first thing they did was to ask for money. They would do nothing until they got their money first. This was the first of many bad signs. They took me to a room to do a pregnancy test to confirm that I was truly pregnant and never once offered me any advice or alternatives to the choice I was making. I was then walked into a waiting room with at least eight other girls and women and sat there waiting to be called. I met the doctor in the room after the nurse had prepared me for the procedure and, when it was done, he walked out with no word to me at all. I was then taken to a "recovery" room where I stayed with a roomful of other women who were recovering until I was able to walk out on my own.

It was a horrible, cold, and heartless place, and I felt like I was an animal being led to slaughter in a factory-like setting. I walked out of that clinic, so sick in my heart and so sick in my soul, because I knew deep down what I had just done. I spent the following years drinking and doing drugs. I dropped out of college and in and out of the abusive relationship with the father. I spent years in depression with so little self-esteem that, even when I finally did leave the father, I still kept ending up in bad relationships with men.

It was only when I started a relationship with God that I began to pull myself out of the horrible state I was in. It wasn't until over 30 years later Forgiven and Set Free was brought to my attention by the pastor of the church I began attending. This Bible study has healed my soul and brought me closer to God! I now know that the mission He has for me is to help women understand that life is always the only choice and that abortion is devastating to a woman and hurts them in ways that they do not realize. That is why I AM SILENT NO MORE!

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org

Rep. Billirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

A Woman's Place Medical Clinics sees women in challenging situations on a daily basis. The mother's circumstances often make her incredibly vulnerable to making an abortion decision. There are a whole host of reasons that could lead her to having an abortion rather than choosing life.

We also see women that in spite of adversity are able to make the courageous decision to choose life for their babies. Sherry is one of those women. She was living with her boyfriend and became pregnant. Her boyfriend wanted her to have an abortion. Rather than give in to the pressure from him, Sherry decided she was going to choose life for her baby. The father changed the locks on their apartment and Sherry became homeless, living in her car. It was then that she came to A Woman's Place Medical Clinic after a friend told her about us.

Since then, Sherry has been seeing our counselor and has become an active part of our class program. Sherry now has her own house, works as a barber, has completed a tax certification class and is taking courses to become a CPA. Her sweet baby girl was born in 2019 and every time Sherry attends Mommy and Baby classes she expresses gratitude for how much we helped her along in her journey.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

**Rep. Billirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's
Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical
Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)**

"I did not want a baby... no less two babies! My boyfriend threatened to leave me and offered to pay for the abortion. Right before my abortion appointment I received a phone call from the sonographer at A Woman's Place. She knew me from my past, so I reluctantly agreed to meet with her. She went over my options and told me my life wouldn't be over. After seeing them moving around during the sonogram, I decided I could do this! I was going to be a mom to twins!"

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

**Rep. Billirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's
Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical
Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)**

“When I found out I was pregnant, I was already the mother of two children. My husband didn't think we should add another child to our family and I was heartbroken. Thankfully, I found A Woman's Place. I told them I had two abortions in my past and even though I didn't want to do it again, I was being pressured to terminate. After my husband saw the sonogram he was happy, and we chose to keep the baby. Without A Woman's Place, I don't think I would have chosen life.”

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

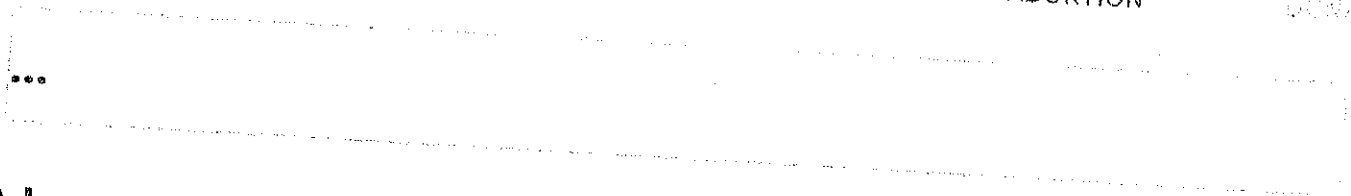


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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 40-year-old woman on August 9, 2011.

I am forty now and at age 16 and 20, I had abortions. I've regretted them both since. All these years later I am still haunted by what I've done. I have two children and they are perfect adults now in their 20's. This is just my silent pain. There is no body to share it with or help. My advice, do not get an abortion.

Age: 40

Location: Florida

Date: August 9, 2011

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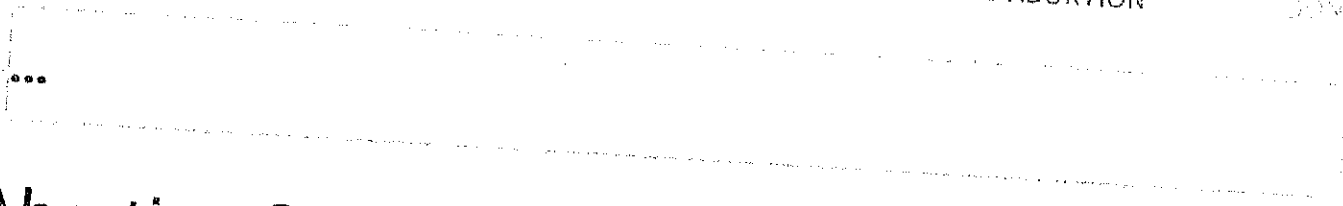
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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 45-year-old woman on October 12, 2011.

Abortion has caused me much grief in my life. Planned Parenthood does not tell you the "aftermath" of abortion. They love the money coming in. They have a marketing strategy and I fell for it.

Age: 45

Location: Florida

Date: October 12, 2011

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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 26-year-old man on June 2, 2014.

I used to hear about abortion all the time, and I said I would never do such a thing. Then I was faced with an unplanned pregnancy at 25—with a minimum-wage job and girlfriend still in her junior year of college. I had to think it over a thousand times before making a decision. I did not know what to do, especially being in the situation I was in. I was worried about the shame we'd receive from my parents and my girlfriend's parents—shame for not being responsible and shame for not having the right support system to take care of the baby.

We made the decision, and in a matter of hours we aborted the baby at a nearby clinic. We came back home to my girlfriend's mother's place. My girlfriend pretended that she was sick. I felt so ashamed walking around her mother's house. We were lying underneath her nose. She doesn't know to this day. This abortion is going to be my biggest regret until the day I die. I will never, ever forgive myself for making a decision to take my unborn child's life away.

Whether you are right or left-wing, we all know in the back of our minds and in our hearts that taking life away is crude—whether the government says you can do it or not. I can't believe I fell for the lies regarding abortion. I pray to my baby every single day, hoping he or she forgives me and hoping that he or she is in a better place. I feel sorry for those who face this decision, because it shouldn't exist. It's better for the baby to be adopted by a young couple who can't have a baby—giving life to other lives. With today's medical technology, babies can be saved if they are suffering health problems.

CONSIDER THIS, YOU HAVE CREATED LIFE. IT'S NOT YOUR BABY'S FAULT. LIFE CAN BE SO BEAUTIFUL. DON'T THROW IT AWAY BECAUSE OF MONEY OR PRIDE. THERE ARE OPTIONS TO SAVE THE BABY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT SHAME AND GUILT FROM OTHERS. AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S YOU AND THE BABY. YOU ARE CARRYING A BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT INSIDE YOU.

Age: 26

Location: Florida

Date: June 2, 2014

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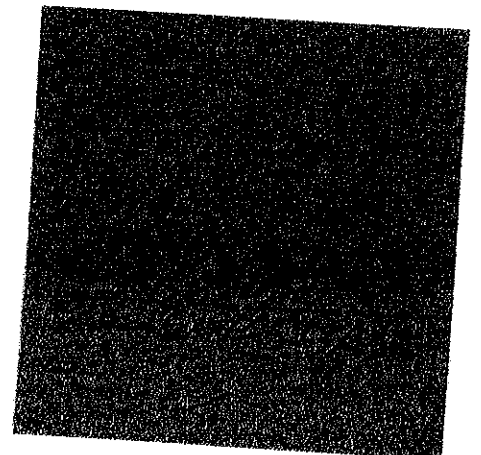
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My mother refused to let me back in the house if I didn't get an abortion...

Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 25-year-old woman on April 17, 2017.

First, if you're reading this, don't have an abortion. It was my biggest mistake and the hardest thing I have ever and will ever do. I found out I was pregnant at about 8 weeks. I didn't have any symptoms, so I never knew. The father was a guy I'd seen casually and have known for 4-5 years. I thought so highly of him until now. My friends were my biggest support system. I desperately wanted to keep it, but I come from a very strict and religious family. My parents were not supportive, and my mother refused to let me back in the house if I didn't get an abortion. I was hurting so much because I had nowhere else to go. That's where I lived; that was my home, my family. She supported my younger sister who had a baby at the age of 20, but she wouldn't support me because she didn't want to deal with any more shame. I've never felt so hurt before. I've always come second. So with the world turned against me, I decided to have the abortion—at 14 weeks, which made it even harder. It's so hard to hide the pain from everyone; it gets exhausting. I'm pretending to be someone else. It's so hard to look at a baby and try to act like nothing happened. I take multiple showers a day because it's easier to cry in there with the water dripping down your face. I can scream in pain so no one else can hear me. I cry every time I'm in the car because no one is around me to watch me and see me...

Age: 25

Location: Florida

Date: April 17, 2017

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I did it so your daddy wouldn't leave. Your daddy left anyway...

Abortion Story: Tampa, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 26-year-old woman on December 3, 2016.

Son, I did it so your daddy wouldn't leave. Your daddy left anyway. Son, I am so sorry I wasn't strong enough to carry you and believe in myself. I prayed to God for you and when given you, my miracle, I was terrified. Your daddy was mean. I should have been your protector, I thought I was. We could have made it, we should have. You should have. I pray one day I will be forgiven and your father will know this pain.

Age: 26

Location: Tampa, FL

Date: December 3, 2016

Search by related keyword: Son / Sorry / God / Protector / Forgiven

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Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

We recently saw a patient who has a long history with us, having first come to us 12 years ago. She had been to the clinic for her four previous pregnancies. However, on this visit she came in planning to abort. She agreed to an ultrasound which showed that the pregnancy was farther along than she had anticipated. After processing this news with the father of the baby, they both decided that God must be in this and chose life for this baby.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

We recently saw a client who has a long history with us, first coming to our clinic 15 years ago, when pregnant for the first time. Since then, she has had multiple children and has experienced an abortion. What a testament to the relationship we have built with her, that even after going through an abortion, she returned to the center where she had come with her first pregnancy!

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

A woman came to our clinic undecided about her pregnancy because she was feeling torn about the relationship with the father of her son, also the father of this baby. She had experienced two abortions. We offered information on Passages of Hope, our post-abortion recovery program, and the importance of taking care of ourselves spiritually, emotionally and physically. On her exit survey she wrote that she had come in undecided but was leaving with the intention to parent her child.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

A young woman came into our clinic facing an unplanned pregnancy. She was undecided about what to do, having recently broken up with her boyfriend, also the father of the baby. The father had told her he did not want to be involved with the pregnancy. She expressed financial concerns with us because she had just moved to Florida. We encouraged her to sign up for our class program. Not only did this young woman choose life for her baby in spite of her challenging circumstances, but she also signed up for our classes, giving our clinic a chance to come alongside and support her throughout her pregnancy.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

We recently saw a previous client who admitted she was struggling with the balance of work and being a single mom and the thought of having another child so soon after the first was incredibly overwhelming. She shared that she had already been struggling and this pregnancy had compounded it. Through her emotions she shared that the first pregnancy had already affected family relationships negatively and she did not know how she could possibly tell them she was pregnant again. After her sonogram, she still left planning on seeking an abortion. When the staff followed up with her, she agreed to come back and after several follow-up visits, she chose life for her baby and signed up for our class program where she receives ongoing support.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)

Rep. Bilirakis Florida Patient Stories for Hearing Record: Protecting Women's Access to Reproductive Health Care (02/12/20) – A Woman's Place Medical Clinic (Pinellas Park, FL)

One of our recent patients came in and said she was not ready to face this pregnancy or emotionally ready to be a mom. She was also feeling convicted about being pregnant and not married but desiring a future with the father of the baby. The patient expressed appreciation and left excited and happy after her ultrasound, with the plan to return to the clinic for classes throughout the pregnancy.

- Jennifer Ellis, Director of Client Services (A Woman's Place Medical Clinic)



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THE CASE AGAINST ABORTION FACTS ABOUT ABORTION BRINGING AN END TO ABORTION

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I wish I knew what abortion was. I wish I found out about the (Abort73) website before I did my termination...

Abortion Story: Miami, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 23-year-old woman on July 15, 2015.

I had an abortion when I was five weeks pregnant. When I found out I was pregnant, I was so happy and excited. When I told my boyfriend—who was a married man—he was shocked and didn't believe me. I showed him the pregnancy test. He told me he was sick, had heart problems, needed surgery, and was going to die. This married man was like a dad to me. He protected me from anything bad. I didn't have anybody with me, not even a family member. I decided to have sex with him because he treated me like a queen. Please, don't judge me. Unlucky for me, I got pregnant for the first time by him. He told me that I couldn't have that baby—that I had to have an abortion because he was going to die and wouldn't be there for his child. In my mind, I was thinking my mom got pregnant at almost the same time, but she didn't abort me. I was raised with only my mom. I never had a father. I met my father when I was 12 years old. I felt sad, and I was so mad at him. My boyfriend drove me to the clinic and said he couldn't go inside. The people know him. I said, "No, take me back home." He was crying and shaking and saying I never loved him, and his family was going to hate him. I felt bad and actually went by myself. Inside, I asked how much the termination was after I signed a bunch of a papers. I told them, "I don't want to do it today. I'm coming back on Wednesday." When I came back, my stomach was hurting so bad. I talked to the nurse. I didn't want to have the termination. She said, "It's your body, no one can tell you what to do." I wish I had listened to the nurse. I wish I knew what abortion was. I wish I found out about the (Abort73) website before I did my termination. I thought it was nothing—with no regrets—like my boyfriend told me. Now I'm living with regrets. I cry almost every day. I want my baby back. Yesterday my boyfriend called to say he's not having the surgery. This hurts me more. My baby could have been nine weeks if it wasn't for him. I miss my baby. I want God to forgive my sins. I threw away his gift. I feel bad. I don't have anybody to talk to. I wish my baby was still inside my stomach:(

Age: 23

Location: Miami, FL

Date: July 15, 2015

Search by related keyword: Boyfriend / Married / Family / Regret / Miami

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She told me my problem would be over in 20 minutes. It has been more than 25 years...

Abortion Story: Lakeland, Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 47-year-old woman on October 9, 2015.

When I was 17, I gave birth and placed my daughter up for adoption. By the age of 21, I was married with a 2-year-old daughter and going through a divorce. During my divorce, I allowed myself to become pregnant. I was raising one child and didn't know how I would afford another child. After talking with a friend and the father of my unborn child, I decided that an abortion would solve the problem. The next day, I went in for an abortion. I can remember feeling so unsure and afraid. I asked the lady behind the desk if it was a baby yet and if it would feel anything. She told me that it wasn't anything yet, and it wouldn't feel anything. She told me my problem would be over in 20 minutes. It has been more than 25 years. I still remember how the abortionist told me it wouldn't be painful. He lied!! It HURT, emotionally and physically. I remember the long needle and being told to be very still. I remember the intense pain when the needle was inserted into my cervix. When the machine started, I remember a nurse asking me not to look. Because there was a clear tube that was sucking the life out of me. I didn't need to see, I felt EVERYTHING. I realized it was my baby the very second I felt my baby's soul leaving my body. I remember crying and wanting to die because I just killed my baby. After it was done, I got up and told myself everything was all right. I turned to drinking and drugs, trying to drown out the memory of killing my unborn child. I got down to a dangerous 88 pounds. I didn't care about anything. I went through years of self destruction. And then a friend told me about a Bible study to help heal after abortion. I went through the Bible study, called "Forgiven and Set Free," where God's Word healed my heart. I can now say I have been forgiven by the Lord, and I forgive myself. I no longer walk in the shame and guilt that I walked in for so many years alone. I have to speak out to let women and men know they are not alone. There is hope and healing. There still is a deep sadness and loss for my baby who never had a chance in life. Through the Lord Jesus Christ, I hold my head up to speak out about how abortion hurts women, men, and children.

Age: 47

Location: Lakeland, Florida

Date: October 9, 2015

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It's been over a year, and I still miss you my Angel, my love child. I'm sorry I didn't give you a chance...

Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 29-year-old woman on August 31, 2015.

I was married but separated. I found someone who I enjoyed being around and started dating him. We were inseparable. We were lovers—soul mates. I found out I was pregnant. I already had two kids. I thought about what my family would think—how I would be the one to let them all down again. I thought about the person I was still married to. I sat at the hospital with my boyfriend for five hours to confirm my pregnancy. They said I was about six or seven weeks pregnant. By the 8th week, it was over with. Oh, let God have mercy on my soul! God, please heal my broken heart. It's been over a year, and I still miss you my Angel—my love child. I'm sorry I didn't give you a chance. My wish is to help someone not do what I did. There is a bond in the womb that no one can explain. Pain, suffering, depression, suicidal thoughts—please let me help you and your baby. It's not just tissue!

Age: 29

Location: Florida

Date: August 31, 2015

Search by related keyword: [Married](#) / [Separated](#) / [Family](#) / [Broken Heart](#) / [Pain](#)

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NEVER get an abortion. It will hurt you far more than anything else. [It] is like having knives stab at you for your whole life...

Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 19-year-old woman on March 25, 2016.

I am a college student; I don't have time; I can't afford it. These are the excuses people use when they get an abortion. DON'T LISTEN TO THEM! I was having sex with a guy at my college who was so amazing. He was the classic hunk. I was so happy that I was with him. I knew he didn't think about me the way I thought of him. I was one of many girls that he was with. I was with him for a month, and then I got pregnant. I waited to tell him because I wanted us to be in a committed relationship before he knew. I finally got him to be in a relationship with me. When I told him, he was conflicted. He loved being with me, but he wasn't interested in kids at all. He said that he would think about it for a while and then "get back to me." I still needed support, so I went to my parents. They hated me for getting pregnant. They said that I wasn't welcome in their home anymore. I needed a place to live, so I turned to my boyfriend and he was nice enough to let me move in with him.

I was living with my boyfriend when we decided to keep our child. I was so happy. I knew it was going to be hard, but I was going to make it through. After a week my pregnancy became a problem. My boyfriend said he was only staying with me for the sex and called me his "side b****." He finally said, "you need to get an abortion, or we're done." I knew that he was the only person between me and being homeless, so I got an abortion. It was HUGE MISTAKE! I can't believe that I made my worst nightmare a reality. I cry every day but don't let my boyfriend know. He insists that I take birth control now and has gotten nicer. However, I think I would be happier having a child and not a home, instead of the hell I live in now. I want my baby. I am thinking of taking myself off birth control and getting pregnant. I know that my new baby will never replace my other child, but I think giving another baby life will help some of the guilt that looms over me every day. Never get an abortion if you are thinking of getting one. It is the worst thing ever. You go through far more pain then can ever come from having a child. If you don't want a child, try not to get pregnant. If you do, NEVER get an abortion. It will hurt you far more than anything else. Getting an abortion is like having knives stab at you for your whole life.

Age: 19
Location: Florida
Date: March 25, 2016

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During the procedure, I felt like my whole life was being vacuumed out. I was left bereft, empty, alone and guilty...

Abortion Story: Brooksville, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 56-year-old woman on October 15, 2015.

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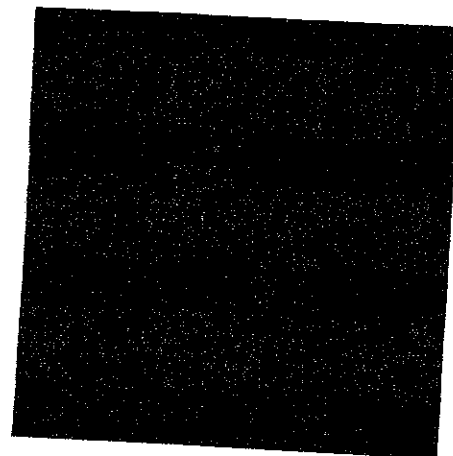
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Abortion persists because of ignorance, apathy and confusion. Abort73 is working to change that; you can help! Get started below:



SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS:

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I had an abortion when I was 20. I had agonized over the decision—not that I had leanings one way or the other. I just really wanted the child. I was unmarried and the sperm donor dropped me like a hot potato on hearing the news. I was trying to work and go to college, while helping my mother and younger brother. I had a birds-eye view of what having children under similar circumstances was like. My parents married at 18, and I came along a year later. It was like we all had to grow up together and it wasn't pretty. So that was my mindset at that time.

I went to a women's clinic, and I wasn't counseled about other alternatives. I was taken into a cold sterile room and told to take my clothes off, put the paper gown, and get on the table. The staff was far from being caring. They were more like life-like robots. I never saw the doctor's face, but I heard his cold, clinical commands. I still feel the invasion into my body. During the procedure, I felt like my whole life was being vacuumed out. I was left bereft, empty, alone and guilty. I had just broken a Commandment; I murdered my child.

I am now 56-years-old. From that day to this, I think about my son (I had to give my baby a gender and name). Every time I saw a child, I would compare them in my mind, wondering how he would be at each stage of life. I look at grown men today and compare them in my mind, wondering what kind of man my son would have grown into. Would he be happy and successful? I was married at 25 to a wonderful man. We were married for 25 years before his sudden death. God never blessed us with a child. To this day I blame myself, and I know this is God's punishment—to go through life looking at strangers and wondering, "What if?"

Age: 56

Location: Brooksville, FL

Date: October 15, 2015

Search by related keyword: Unmarried / Bereft / Empty / Alone / Guilty

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THE CASE AGAINST ABORTION FACTS ABOUT ABORTION BRINGING AN END TO ABORTION

It's an emptiness I can't describe. It was so overwhelming. I felt so alone and still do—37 years later...

Abortion Story: Orlando, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 60-year-old woman on October 9, 2015.

I had an abortion when I was 18-years-old. I was against abortion. I advocated for life as the Supreme Court was ruling on abortion. I had X-rays that put the baby at risk, so my doctors said. I wanted me to keep the baby but was pressured into an abortion by everyone I talked to. It had just become legal for the first trimester. I was 14 weeks, but the doctor lied and did it anyway. I woke up so empty. It's an emptiness I can't describe. It was so overwhelming. I felt so alone and still do—37 years later. I accepted God's forgiveness early on. It was easier to accept His forgiveness, but I couldn't forgive myself. I was tormented by my decision. It took me 13 years after I read a book on inner-healing. I claimed my baby and when I did that, I was able to forgive myself. Months later, I found myself not married and pregnant again. I had two boys of my own and had just gone through a divorce I didn't want. I loved my boys so much because after my abortion I proceeded to have two miscarriages and difficulty getting pregnant. The father who got me pregnant was an abusive drug addict. After I told people around me I was pregnant, dozens told me to get an abortion. I also had people tell me to adopt him out, that my life we be a nightmare with his father. I remembered and still felt the emptiness from my former abortion. I chose life this time. His father threatened me with a knife saying he would give me his own abortion and cut the baby out of my tummy himself. He said he was not ready to have a baby and grow up. He was 35. I fought back, got away from him, and went into hiding. I had a boy and kept him. I never regretted that decision. Yes I had difficulties with his father for 20 years. I made a choice to have sex with this man which resulted in a pregnancy. I protected my child from his father while preserving his relationship with his father. He got to be my 3rd son, a younger brother to two older brothers, an older brother to my 4th son, and a husband to his wife. Some day, he will be a father to his children. He has two designing degrees and is an artist. His little life grew inside me at the most inopportune time. He saved my life, helped me rewrite history, and make the right choice in a similar situation. He works for a college and has his own business. I am so glad I had him and kept him. I'm so proud of him. I thank God for healing me.

Age: 60

Location: Orlando, FL

Date: October 9, 2015

Search by related keyword: Empty / Alone / Forgiveness / Divorce / Miscarriage

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He made the way

Sherry

Florida, United States

When I was sixteen years old, I got pregnant with my boyfriend. At first, I was so excited about the baby and was looking forward to being a mother. I did not see it in any way as being a bad thing. I told my mother and the information was not well received. Several weeks later, she drove me to an abortion clinic in the nearest city and told me it was my only option. The father of the baby had offered to marry me and take me to his family who lived in another state for help and support, but I had never been away from my parents and was not in love with the baby's father. I opted to follow my mother's wishes and agreed to go back for the abortion.

We arrived that morning at the clinic and I remember feeling so sad. I knew what we were about to do was wrong, but at sixteen I did not think I could have the baby without my mother's support.

I entered the room having never had a gynecological exam and was told to lie down on the exam table with my legs in the stirrups. The noise of the suction machine was terrifying. Laying on my back staring up at the ceiling, I could feel them performing the procedure and even though there were no physical feelings of pain, my heart was breaking.

Afterwards, I had lost quite a bit of blood and ended up suffering a drop in blood pressure which forced me to have to stay at the clinic an extra couple of hours while my vitals stabilized. During that time, I watched two more girls around my age come in for abortions and I couldn't believe how busy the office was. I didn't realize then the profound affect all of it would have on me for the rest of my life. I was depressed and devastated, but relieved that I had done what my mother had wanted me to do.

That night, I told the baby's father what had happened and that is when I realized the profound affect my decision would have on his life. We rarely spoke after that and I often wondered if he ever got married and had other children.

Over the years I drowned out my guilt, depression, and emptiness with the same behavior that had gotten me into the situation in the first place until at the age of nineteen I became pregnant again. This time I decided that I would keep the baby and nothing would change my mind.

I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and a year later got married. I convinced myself that by having this baby it would heal the guilt. It didn't. A few years later I had another baby, a boy, and still could not feel better about the abortion.

It wasn't until a couple years after my son was born that I started attending church again and made the decision to ask Jesus to come in to my life. Jesus bore my sin on the cross and paved the way for me to overcome the grief, guilt, depression and emptiness I had allowed to control my life because of that abortion.

There is no pre-abortion counseling that will ever convey the emotional price you will pay when you decide to murder an unborn child.

In their loving arms

Mary

Florida, United States

Because my boyfriend wouldn't talk to me; I was afraid of what my parent would think. When the baby came out I was with ten other woman, we all had IV's. When the baby was born, he was fully formed. I stared to scream. They had told me the movements I had felt was gas. When this perfect little baby was born, I went into shock. They gave me a drug to knock me out, to do a D&C. As soon as it was over, I knew how wrong and horrible, that I had agreed to this. After, I stared dinking or doing anything I could to forget. I had nightmares, and still do, the guilt is over whelming. I went to confession, and I know Jesus has forgiven me. But I can't forgive myself! I wish more than anything to take that day back and have my baby. I named him Francis. I pray a lot to Mary, and Jesus to forgive me, and to rock him in their loving arms. I wish that anyone considering an abortion could see the truth! Not all the lies Planned Parenthood gives.

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In Honor

Faith

Florida, United States

My name is Faith. I had an abortion 31 years ago and I can tell you after going through Post Abortion Bible Studies, "Forgiven and Set Free" and now as a Leader for "Surrendering the Secret", there is healing and peace from a past abortion or abortions.

I was 23 years old and became involved with a man who I later found out was married and had two children. He was in the "process of a divorce" for a period of almost two years he had told me. Needless to say that was a lie. During this time, I became pregnant and was very happy when I found out but, when he found out he started the process of convincing me that I could not have this baby...what would he tell his children and many more reasons. I chose to abort my first child truly because I was told it was just a blob of tissue not yet formed and because I truly wanted to save our relationship. He took me to the clinic, paid for it and left. After I thought he was gone, I ran out of the clinic and there he was to turn me around and tell me again, that I had to do this. I wish someone had shown me a sonogram of my baby because I was over 10 weeks and I really believe had I seen a heartbeat and it's fully formed body, I would not have done it. I remember in a half drugged state, the doctor saying in a very loud voice, "this woman is much more than 10 weeks." This was a statement that went over and over in my head for many, many years. The effects this abortion had on me was huge. I made a fetal attempt at suicide after the abortion and still to this day don't know if it was to keep the relationship or the abortion. I am guessing both. He eventually took his wife and two kids and moved away and I was left alone. I moved to California to run from the pain and there started my life of drugs, alcohol, bad relationships and promiscuity. It wasn't until after I was married to my now wonderful husband and we were expecting our first child, and watched with great anticipation the development of our baby that I really realized what I had done and what I had missed out on. My healing started through a study called Forgiven and Set Free and God revealed to me the sex of my baby, her name (Kathryn), and that she was safe with Him. I started leading studies to help women who had gone through this devastating pain also. I am now a certified Leader of a study called Surrendering the Secret and have led classes with as many as 12 women at one time. We lead these classes on a continuous basis about every 4 months and the reality of just how many men and women are suffering is what keeps me going back to be a Leader.

It is an honor to share this testimony for me and in honor of my daughter Kathryn, who I will be reunited with me in heaven someday.

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Mildred's Story

Mildred

Florida, United States

When I was seventeen years old, I was in a very abusive relationship. So I decided to go to the Navy to get away without getting my family involved, but then I found out I was pregnant. I thought that if I went through with this pregnancy I would be stuck w/this guy forever. So I decided to have an abortion. My boyfriend at the time begged me not to do it, but I wanted desperately to join the Navy so I can get away from him. So in April of 1988 I killed my baby. I have put this in the back of my mind for many years. But in the past 1 ½ years, I have been involved w/the pro-life movement at my church and the feelings of killing my baby has come to the surface. So now I have to deal with them. It has been a very painful process, but I have told my husband and kids and they have been great through the whole process. So now I am ready to share my story with the world.

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Forgiveness and Grief

Nancy

Florida, United States

I was employed at a law firm as a receptionist when I was seventeen years old. The head of the law firm enticed me into an affair although he was twice my age. When I stopped having two monthly cycles and became aware that I was pregnant I wanted to go to a home for unwed mothers in Washington D.C. However, the attorney discouraged me and said he would take care of it.

One night a man who worked for the attorney as an investigator came to my door and told me to go with him. He took me to a place where a black woman gave me something to drink and I didn't remember anything until later at my apartment when I started bleeding heavily. The bleeding continued for a couple of days with intense abdominal pains. I was unable to go to work and I told the lawyer what was happening. He subsequently arranged for me to go to a hospital where I was treated by a procedure called a D and C. I was given antibiotic shots and pills.

I found another job shortly thereafter. It was years before I was able to bring the memory to my conscious mind and then I would drink to forget it. I was in counseling off and on for a number of years, but never really talked about the abortion. It remained in my sub-conscious mind however and influenced my life negatively for years, even after being married and bringing three children to term. I am seventy years old now and only in the last four years have come to grips with the horror of the abortion and how it negatively impacted my life and the life of my family. Even after several confessions and the conscious awareness that I am forgiven by God, I still have immense grief over what happened.

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I Must Say Something

Martha

Florida, United States

I have never sought help after having three abortions which all happened many years ago. Now I feel that I must say something.

The guilt and depression that came with those abortions has been lying under the surface for far too long. The worthlessness had me on a journey of alcohol abuse and sexual promiscuity which went contrary to my beliefs, and yet I longed to fill the void with anything and everything.

It is time for us to warn other young women in hopes to prevent them from being deceived into this choice of death. It not only kills babies, but it also kills us spiritually as individuals. It collectively kills society.

God wants us to have life and to have it more abundantly. Let us stop this death from being a part of our culture. Let us promote life and hope, and stop this death that is killing our families before they have even begun.

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No One Told Me

Pam

Florida, United States

I had an abortion when I was 16 in 1972 when abortions were not legal in the state of Florida. My mother took me to the doctor who treated me as though I was a loose teen. He told us that I had two weeks to decide to have an abortion, as I was 20 weeks along. No one ever spoke to me about education, what was going to happen, adoption, parenting, nothing. My father was a violent alcoholic and all I could think of was, "I can't bring this baby into this home." I decided to have an abortion.

My mother accompanied me to New York City where I had an abortion by saline injection at an abortion hospital. After 36 hours of painful labor (all alone), I delivered my dead son. I remember the nurses laughing at me and the girl who was next to me who delivered dead twins.

Before the abortion, I never wanted to drink or do drugs. I was a quiet person, always reading and laughing. About a year after the abortion, I spiraled out of control. I became violent, angry, depressed, and sad. I was filled with anxiety, panic, and fear, and I cried all the time. I began to have nightmares, started doing drugs, and drinking. It affected me physically, as I had to have a complete hysterectomy at 33, had a benign cyst removed from my breast, and have terrible scar tissue. I was able to have one child, but the pregnancy was difficult. It took months for me to bond with my daughter. My marriage ended after 21 years.

I began to volunteer at a local pregnancy center and, in order to counsel women for the post-abortion class, I had to take a class called Forgiven and Set Free. What an eye opener that was! I had not idea that all of the mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional turmoil I had suffered started after the abortion. Thank God He has set me free and forgiven me. That is why I am silent no more. I want to help others who have made the choice to have abortions or are others who are thinking about it.

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Receiving Forgiveness

Donna

Florida, United States

My name is Donna. I had an abortion because I had just graduated from school and started at a new job. I found out I was pregnant after breaking up with my boyfriend. It was my OB/GYN who suggested I terminate my pregnancy, as it was legal. I actually never thought about it until he mentioned it. It's against my religion and I still didn't think I would have considered it until I spoke to my Mom.

We felt it wasn't the right time to have a child. My abortion was actually performed in the hospital, not an abortion clinic so I was fortunate in that respect. I didn't have any pain during the procedure, but plenty of pain and cramping afterwards. No one talked too much to me at the hospital.

I regretted having the abortion as soon as I had it. That feeling intensified once I had my first child many years later. Many negative feelings about myself and a few bad relationships have come about from this.

I have become more faith-filled over the past 20 years, and I was able to receive God's forgiveness & have forgiven myself finally. I still regret what I did and miss my baby every day and that's why I am silent no more.

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Using My Voice

Rhodora

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because I was new to this country and already had a child out of wedlock. And at that time I was not sure if the father of my baby or our relationship could handle it. My older brother influenced me to have the abortion and went with me.

As far as I can remember, the clinic was like a production line. I was just a number and didn't remember any personal experience from the staff. I felt very nervous and ashamed.

As time went on I had feelings of regret, guilt, shame and so much emptiness in my heart. I was not able to share this with anyone for 30 years. Then a year ago, a priest advised me to look into Rachel's Vineyard. I attended the weekend retreat and went through the healing program. It was then that I finally felt and received God's forgiveness and learned to forgive myself.

And also, four years ago, I was diagnosed with Thyroid cancer that paralyzed my vocal cords. The doctors told me that I may not be able to regain my voice back. I offered everything to God and, after five months of speech therapy, I was able to speak again. Then I realized after attending my healing retreat that this was the reason why God gave me back my voice. To be SILENT NO MORE!

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Buried Deeply

Michelle

Florida, United States

In the summer of 1976, at just 15 years old, I found myself pregnant. My parents had divorced when I was 12, and I was afraid of what my mother's reaction would be to the news that I was pregnant. I was close to my aunt and uncle, who lived 4-5 hours away, and they came and brought me home with them for the summer to care for my younger cousins. I confided in them, and, with their counsel, I was led to believe that an abortion would solve my problem--and my mother never had to know!

I remember looking through the yellow pages with them. My uncle drove me to the clinic. I remember walking inside. I remember hearing only that this procedure would fix everything and allow me to finish school. I remember waiting for my turn and "nurses" who positioned me on a cold metal table. No one ever said that what was burrowed in my womb was a baby. I don't remember faces. I was given general anesthesia and told not to worry--when I awoke my life would be back to normal.

I woke up in a lot of pain and shivering profusely. I think I woke up in a hallway. They gave us cookies and a Dixie cup of orange juice. I remember my hands shaking so much that I spilled most of the juice on my lap. There was no warmth--physically or from clinic workers. I can't remember any more details, but I recovered at my aunt and uncle's house. It was the summer that Elvis Presley died--I remember seeing it on the news on TV.

I had an abortion at 15 because I was scared, terrified and the adults in my life told me it was my best option. I don't remember hearing any other option.

After my abortion my life spun out of control. Promiscuity, heavy binge drinking, partying, drugs, and skipping school plagued my teen and young adult life. I had difficulty relating well to my firstborn child, and even now we struggle. I have major-treatment resistant depression, panic attacks, two divorces, alcohol addiction, and self-loathing that I never knew I had.

The pain and guilt and remorse were buried SO deep that 38 years passed since my abortion before it finally surfaced after the traumatic, sudden death of my newborn grandson. My then husband left me when my grieving took too long for him. I had suffered extreme loss, 8 family members in 12 years--but the culmination was my precious grandson's death. Sometimes it takes a tragedy to unearth a deeply buried trauma. That's how my awareness settled on what I had done through aborting my own baby.

Thankfully I found Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, and there, within the safety of other women who had abortions, I was able to find forgiveness and begin my healing journey. I cried over my lost little one--I recognized his God-given dignity and named him "Stephen David," after the first martyr, and the king who had a heart after God. Through my Catholic faith and the tenderness of God I am beginning to find forgiveness for taking the life of my own child. I know there are so many women who need to find this tender forgiveness, which is why I will be silent no more!

Advice for others

Melissa

Florida, United States

I had an abortion for a few reasons, my mother and I were sharing a one bedroom apartment, she was on disability, and I was taking seizure medication at the time which causes birth defects. We had no family but each other. Really I was scared. When I first told my one-year boyfriend, the first thing he said was "I'm not ready for a baby, I'm moving back to Pittsburgh to work with my dad". I panicked. The only thing I knew about them were it takes the "cell" out so the baby isn't formed. I was SO very naive when I was younger. There were no computers out at the time as they are now. If I had researched about it more and found out the truth, I swear on my life there is no way I would have had one. I still cry and cry. I'm scared God won't forgive me for such a horrible act, so scared. I'm Catholic.

The first day I had the abortion, the most frightening and dreadful moment was when I woke up and they gave me a pad!!!! I said what?? They told me I would be bleeding for a few days!!!! I cried and cried and cried in my closet for hours when I got home. They didn't tell me that would happen. Nothing was explained to me when I went in. They just took me in the room and put the IV in to knock me out. Then I wake up bleeding.

The way I feel about abortion now is, even if you were raped you should still have the baby. There is no reason to not have it. I tell my husband, God forbid I get raped tomorrow, but I would still have the baby.

I find help when I go to church. I tried talking to a counselor a few years ago, no help at all. Reading the bible helps me. But, I still cry and beg for forgiveness everyday. I think having a baby will help me more than anything. So I beg my husband everyday.

This was so hard to write about. I've never done this before. I just want other girls to hear my story so they think twice before making a mistake. I can't explain how hard this is to write. I advise everyone not to do it.

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Still Grieving

Meghan

Florida, United States

I want to share my story in hopes that it will help some young woman not endure the regret I deal with on a daily basis. I have been involved with my boyfriend for over six years. It was an on again/off again thing. We got off track after year three and struggled for a while. We had a hard time being together, but even harder time being apart. I was so ready to get married and start a family, I already had an 11 year old from a previous relationship.

I found out I was pregnant two years ago. I immediately was excited, but yet also nervous as to how things would play out with us. I desperately wanted to get married and have the baby. I also wanted to get married and set the right example for my daughter. It was okay at first, but when we set a wedding date and talked about marriage things began to spiral. Time kept passing and things were getting worse. I was an emotional wreck. I handled things so poorly and was pushing my boyfriend away when he was dealing with his own issues.

I decided to have an abortion, but no one would take me. He refused as well as did my friends. I felt so alone and didn't want to have a child and not be married. I was so fixated on that. My boyfriend finally agreed. The clinic told me it would be a two day procedure. The first day I was at the clinic during counseling filling out paperwork I was an emotional wreck and crying hysterically, but I knew my boyfriend thought we weren't in a good place for marriage so I saw this as my only solution, even though I so did not want to do it.

Immediately after we left and went to the hotel room I began to panic. I didn't care anymore about marriage or any of that. All I knew is I wanted my baby and the rest would work out. I called the clinic and told them I changed my mind, they told me it was too late. I explained, NO, I want to keep my baby please what can I do. They again told me it was too late. I then was in shock, I didn't know what to think or do.

I have grieved for my baby every day since that horrible day. I am sharing my story because it was not too late! I have since researched and found other women who changed their minds at the very last minute during a second trimester abortion as well. It was the clinic that lied to me and I didn't know where else to turn. My baby was still inside me and it was not too late, but I didn't fight hard enough because I went on what they told me. My hope is that if anyone is contemplating an abortion and you change your mind at the last minute YOU CAN!! Don't let anyone tell you differently, especially the clinic. Many clinics just want your money and your nothing but a statistic to them. I would still have my baby if they cared about us. I have not found healing and forgiveness yet, I am still working on that.

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What Abortion IS and IS NOT

Sally

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because I was twenty-two and in college, unmarried, in a carefree lifestyle when I became pregnant. I was scared and too ashamed to tell my parents. I sought the advice of a friend who had an abortion previously and she told me where to go for help. I was in panic mode and trusted the information, or lack thereof, given to me that this was simply a blob of tissue and the procedure was quick and simple and my life could return to normal and no one needed to know.

I don't remember a lot of the details in regards to the procedure other than feeling very alone, the coldness of the room as well as from the Dr (made no introductions and no eye contact). The only other thing I remember is the sound of the machine and extreme cramping, and tears streaming down my face.

Afterwards, I just wanted to get out of there and go home and forget this ever happened to me. After all, they told me I could. That was one of many lies I was told and believed at the time. Well fortunately I didn't suffer any physical complications that I know of, but emotionally is another story. I could not forget no matter how much pot I smoked (and I smoked a lot). My life continued to be lived in a manner of unworthiness. By feeling unworthy of a husband and a family, my relationships were a heap of poor choices.

Then by the grace of God, who I did not yet have a relationship with, God brought my husband to be in my life. I never believed a man like him could ever love me. That was the beginning of my life turning around. We married a year and a half later when I was 39 years old. As time passed, we were not church-goers, God led me to church through a stray dog (another story in itself). From there at a woman's conference I learned about post abortion recovery and quickly signed up. Again through God's amazing grace, mercy and love, I've been forgiven and set free and now volunteer one day a week at a crisis pregnancy center as a lay counselor and facilitate abortion recovery Bible studies. It is truly an honor to serve God in this way as He continues to heal my heart and give my baby's life a purpose in helping others. I'm committed to being silent no more and to testifying to the Truth to what abortion is and what it is not and praising God all the way, as far as He will take me.

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What Keeps me Going

Adriana

Florida, United States

I had an abortion in 2008, I was twenty-one years old. I did it because I had had a baby only three months before and I was scared I couldn't have a baby that soon. I told myself all these false excuses that I believed at the time. My boyfriend who is my husband now left this decision up to me, he didn't say yes or no; he said it was my choice.

While at the clinic I was horrified. I was experiencing all these emotions, I wanted to cry and leave. I wish that day there would have been a sidewalk counselor but there was none. The only friend I called said to stay and hung up on me, so I stayed.

My procedure was quick. It was never confirmed how far along I was. I was even told they couldn't find my baby on the sonogram but they went ahead with the abortion anyway. I didn't ask anything, I just wanted to get it over with.

Four years after the abortion I experienced the true feeling of regret and loss. I had not experienced this pain before. I realized what I had done. I now ask myself how would my baby look and now all I want is to see him/her when we meet with the Lord. I want to see him/her and all the children that were not loved by their mothers. I want to see them rejoice with their creator and enjoy the beautiful place he has prepared for them. That is the only thing that keeps me going.

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My Babies are with God

Janeth

Florida, United States

I had two abortions. I had the first because I was very young, lived with my parents (who were very strict), my boyfriend left me, and I sought help from the wrong people who recommended I get an abortion. The second time I was an adult and divorced with two daughters. I had sex with my boyfriend, who had no intentions to formalize anything with me.

During the first abortion, I prepared myself with medicines twenty-four hours before. I felt very confused and upon entering the clinic wanted to leave. But I had to "solve the problem." Once I was in the hospital bed a nurse held my arms and I experienced the abortion without anesthesia. It was awful.

During the second abortion I remember feeling a desperate cry from the baby I had in my belly, as if my body said, "Let him live!" This is something that causes me great pain to remember, and when I was in the hospital I tried to block that feeling out. I continued to think that "I must solve the problem."

In both occasions, after the abortions I felt really bad. I always feel a pain in my heart, and I felt remorse over the years, unworthy of God's love. I attended a retreat and it was there when I felt that Jesus forgave me. Even so my heart held a lot of pain. Then I had the opportunity to attend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat, and it was there that I realized that my babies are with God and that they forgive me. This led me to forgive myself.

I think that places are needed to guide and educate pregnant women, and I would like to participate in pro-life projects like these.

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It Changed My Life

Amanda

Florida, United States

I had the first abortion because my father wanted me too. Even though it was my choice. He made it seem as though there was nothing wrong with it. For a while I kind of believed him. During the abortion procedure it was very strange; you watch this life go through a tube. Immediately after the abortion I got very sick and was in a lot of pain. It is such a live memory and always will be.

As time went on after the abortion I felt that life would be OK, not realizing the damage that those emotions and trauma would slowly kill me in a sense. I told myself I would never have another, so when I got pregnant with my daughter in 2007, I choose to have her. I thought I was better and then came the summer of 2009.

I found myself pregnant again. This time it was my daughter's father that was insist that I have an abortion, since the child was not his. He was so mean and hurtful towards me, made me feel like I was worth nothing. I was so scared my family would hate me if they knew I was pregnant again and not married. So I made the choice, again, and my daughter's father drove me and paid for it. This time it was different. I decided to take "the pill" method. When I went to my check up and they told me it had not worked, I went to the ER at the nearest hospital. I had an ultrasound and they said everything was fine.

Now when I look back I feel that was God's way of saying "you have another chance". A couple of days later I went back to the clinic and had the old procedure! When the child's father found out about the abortion, he was devastated; he had wanted me to have the baby, no matter what. A year later he would tell me he forgave for having the abortion.

I found help and forgiveness through Rachel's Vineyard. It was amazing. God works in funny ways. I walked in to the meeting room on our first night of our retreat and my cousin was there! She and I got to do this together! She did not know about mine nor did I know about her. Rachel's Vineyard has made me change my life. I made a choice then and there I would be abstinent until I get married.

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Mildred's 2012 March for Life Testimony

Mildred

Florida, United States

In March of 1988 I had an abortion, because I was a unwed seventeen year old girl who was pregnant from a abusive young man that I needed to get away from.

I remember waiting for hours at the Planned Parenthood clinic that I went to which was at a nice community, not at an inner-city, which was surprising to me. As I waited, I looked around at the other women waiting to do the same thing I was about to do, there were young women and older women, which was a shock to me because I thought only young unwed women had abortions.

When it was finally my turn, I was strapped to this bed and was put to sleep immediately. No conversation, no explanation of what was going to happen to me, not a word. When I woke up, I was trying to get the attention of the nurses that were about four feet away from me that were clearly ignoring me. So I got up myself and got dressed, I remember feeling so groggy. I was instructed to go out this one particular door. It led me to the side of the building and outside. My cousin and boyfriend were at the bottom of the stairs. I felt so confused; I didn't know to feel relieved or to feel sad. My cousin gave me a hug and at that moment I started to cry, but only for a moment.

This took place on a Saturday, on Monday I went back to school like nothing ever happened. In September of 1988, I joined the Navy and left the abusive boyfriend behind. But then I became very promiscuous and started drinking a lot and never really dealt with what I did on March of 1988. I continued this path until I was 25 years old and got married.

In 2009, my daughter who was 12 years old at the time decided to join our "Stand True" group at our church, which our pro-life group. So the healing began, I had to deal with what I did all those years ago. And with the help of my great kids and friends from my parish I am slowly but surely forgiving myself for what I did March of 1988.

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Free of the pain and the guilt

Mary

Florida, United States

In May of 1979, I was a very frightened girl. I was having a baby. In fact, I was so afraid of what my parent's reaction would be and what could happen to me and my family, that I had an abortion.

I was in shock when I went to have my abortion and I think I remained in shock for a long time after it. The painful experience of my abortion was buried so deep that I did not even begin to really think about it or remember it until 24 years later.

I remember lying on the table during the abortion and feeling as if the life inside of me was being sucked out. I cried during the entire procedure and as the tears kept streaming down my face, I sang the song "I Don't Know How to Love Him." It's a song from Godspell that Mary Magdalene sings about Jesus. And that's how I felt. I was not loving my God and, as I found out afterwards, my abortion was the most unloving thing I could do to myself and my daughter.

For years after my abortion, the guilt, shame, and pain weighed me down. I had done something that was immoral and unthinkable. And I continued on a path in my life and in relationships that compromised my morals, hurt my body, and made me feel less and less proud of myself.

Many people saw me as a successful loving and spiritual person. What they didn't know was that I lived in fear. Fear in telling the secret of my abortion, fear of getting too close to a man, fear of being too close to God. I was afraid of dealing with the most hurtful, traumatic experience in my life.

Twenty four years after my abortion that changed. My involvement in my church lead to a phone call asking me to help with a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat. I began to cry. Except this time they were tears of relief because I finally could share and deal with my abortion and not be afraid anymore. That year happened to be the same year I opened my heart to a man, and I got married. My husband joined me on the weekend that changed my life for the better. I am free. Free of the pain and the guilt. And it is because of the support of my family, my husband and my daughter Gabrielle that I stand here today. You see, my daughter waited a long time for me to finally acknowledge her and love her. And I think it is because of that and the fact that she's a very spunky girl from Brooklyn that she inspires me and gives me the courage to be Silent No More.

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I Want to Reach Out

Mabel

Florida, United States

Hello. I am sharing this story because I want to reach out to other people that have been through this experience.

I was in college when I had my abortion. I felt like I was not ready for a family. My boyfriend at the time said he would marry me. I had the abortion in the first month. We have been married now for 28 years.

I went to a Rachel's retreat last year. When I left Planned Parenthood, I went straight to the church for confession. I went that afternoon.

That priest in my penance told me to help other women. I have been trying for years to volunteer with Rachel's retreats but keep getting turned down because I am not a professional.

If someone reads this and can help me to volunteer in this area, please let me know.

Rachel's vineyard was a very moving experience.

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God's grace is all I will ever need

Renee

Florida, United States

Prior to this study, I blamed others for the decision to have an abortion and harbored unforgiveness in my heart towards those who urged me to make that decision. The guilt from having an abortion always weighed heavily on my mind and heart, and I felt as though God would allow my children to die because I killed this precious gift that He bestowed upon me.

A counseling program really changed my life by taking my personal situation and comparing it to the Word of God! It walked me through making the decision to have an abortion and the mourning that comes after I had it done. I learned about how God views abortion and the anger, guilt, shame, depression, and consequences to come!

I found how to truly repent, accept the forgiveness of the cross, resist temptation, and be confident in my belief that God's grace is all I will ever need! And that's why I'm Silent No More!

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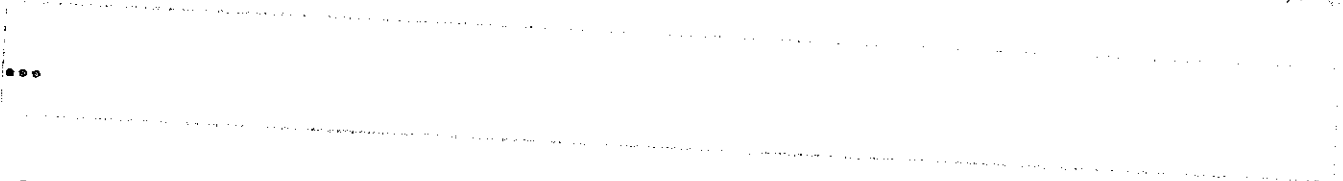


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Abortion Story: Vero Beach, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 16-year-old woman on November 1, 2007.

I am 16 years old and i had an abortion last month. I felt and still feel horrible. I am sorry to my lost child, and I will NEVER be the same again.

Age: 16

Location: Vero Beach, FL

Date: November 1, 2007

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Abortion Story: Miami, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 16-year-old woman on December 19, 2010.

I had recently turned 16 when found out I was pregnant... I didn't know what to do. I was scared. My boyfriend was going to stick by my side he told me. I wanted him with me but I thought of me, and I started being selfish saying how many chances had been ruined for me now that I was pregnant. I started thinking about abortion I was scared. I only told one friend of mine, and she set up the appointment. I didn't know how far along I was. I was just thinking of my self. I didn't tell my boyfriend. I went in to have the procedure done on June 8, 2010. I was 13 weeks and 4 days along when I terminated my baby. At first nothing emotionally hit me. I wasn't feeling sad or happy about it. Two months later I broke down. My life went down hill. I regret it so much... it tore me apart so much.

Age: 16

Location: Miami, FL

Date: December 19, 2010

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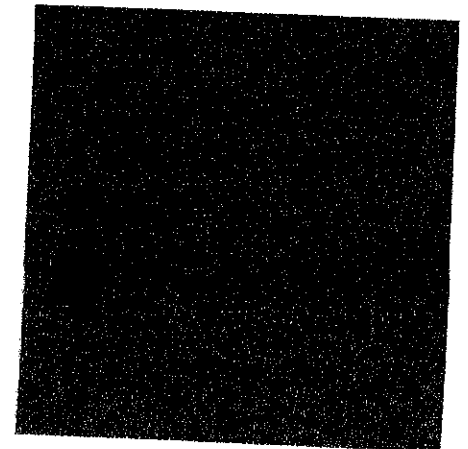
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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 25-year-old woman on April 1, 2011.

I was 17 when I got pregnant. My boyfriend and I were ready to keep the baby, and even broke the news to my family. My mother cried everyday. One day she came in my room and convinced me to have an abortion. She told me it was going to ruin my life and my child's life. My child wasn't going to have a stable mother and father because the the chance of me marrying that guy was very unlikely.

All the drama and negativity convinced me that it was the right choice. The procedure was fast and easy. I didn't feel a thing and life was back to normal. No one in my high school ever knew and I was ready to move on.

Two months later, I was stupid enough to get pregnant AGAIN! My boyfriend and I saw how easy the 1st abortion was and decided to do it again (only 4 months after the first). We didn't tell a soul. Things were pretty OK at the time.

Well, its now 8 years later and you have no idea the regret that I feel. I am a second grade teacher and I love kids, and sometimes I wonder how old my child would be and how much I would love that child if it were here. I only wish that child were here right now. It's hard to deal with the fact that a life was destroyed because of my immature and selfish decisions.

I actually ended up marrying that same guy years later. We are very happy together :-). It's not easy coming to terms with the fact that we pretty much killed our could've been family. Lately, we've actually been trying to get pregnant and haven't been successful. I almost feel that this is "what I get" for the my foolish decisions. I don't know if I will be able to have children in the future, but it definitely hurts.

If I could go back and change things, I would. Not just because I want children now, but because it took me years to realize how wrong it is to take away another's life. It shouldn't be a choice.

Age: 25

Location: Florida

Date: April 1, 2011

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Abortion Story: Florida

Submitted to Abort73 by a 19-year-old woman on July 19, 2011.

When I was 17, I found out I was pregnant a month after my boyfriend of 3 years got kicked out of his parents house. Two weeks later, his job closed down... the week before I found out I was pregnant, he broke up with me so I felt alone and scared... My decision was selfish because my boyfriend's mother was pregnant with him at my age so I felt like I was somehow killing my boyfriend inside. For a long time, I went into a depression and cried over everything... I am so sorry to my unborn baby... I love you and always will. Please forgive me.

Age: 19

Location: Florida

Date: July 19, 2011

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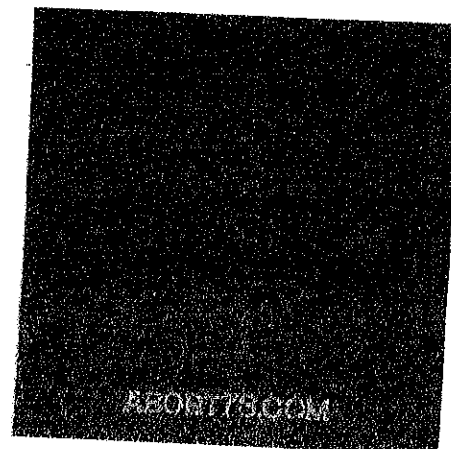
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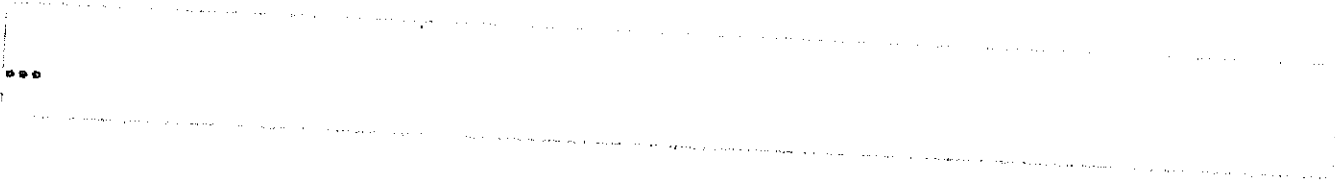


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Abortion Story: Tampa, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 19-year-old woman on July 25, 2011.

I had an abortion recently, and it was the absolute worst choice I've ever made. I regret it every day, I love my baby so much, what kind of monster am I to have killed my own flesh and blood? If I can, I want to take it all back. I just want my little baby boy.....I had a dream before I got pregnant and this beautiful little boy was calling me "mommy." Waking up, I knew it meant something, but I didn't expect it to happen so soon. I'm only 19 years old, my future is not even set, but I'm selfish. I thought having him would ruin my life. But now I'm living it full of regrets. I bet he would have been the cutest thing on earth, the sweetest little boy, the baby I've always dreamed to have. How can I, how can I? I just want him back. I love my little Vincent so much. His dad and I would have tried our best to give him the greatest future and the happiest home. I was so foolish, I was so dumb. Now I'm living in this misery. Missing him and loving him every day for the rest of my life. I love you, god bless you baby, I'm sorry for not giving you life. I LOVE YOU.

Age: 19

Location: Tampa, FL

Date: July 25, 2011

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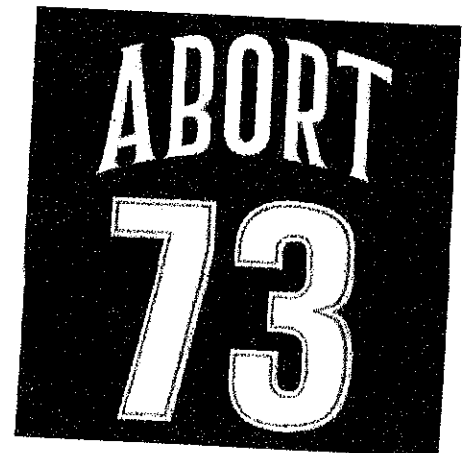
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Abortion Story: Miami, FL

Submitted to Abort73 by a 20-year-old woman on August 3, 2011.

I had an abortion when I was only 15 years old. At first I thought it was the best choice, not only for myself but for my family and boyfriend at the time as well, but of course, it wasn't so. My views about abortion have always been confusing. There are just so many people with a story to tell and they justify this cruel act. A month after my abortion, I began to feel the guilt, the remorse but worst of all, the emptiness crawling in my womb and clinging onto me. I made many suicide attempts but I never had the courage to do so. I promised myself I would never resort to that drastic solution again! No matter the circumstance. I am 20 years old today, it's been 5 years since, and still the guilt remains. Every October I feel it, the guilt and trauma. I was so young and naive, I felt pressured by my parents, my boyfriend, by everybody! I forgot to think about what I wanted and what that baby could have been in my life.

Age: 20

Location: Miami, FL

Date: August 3, 2011

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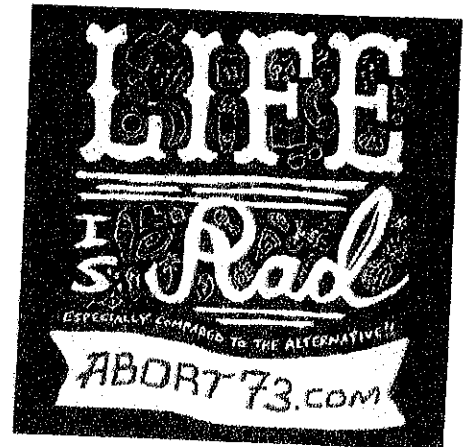
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A Decision Based on Fear

Sara

Florida, United States

I was 19 when I became pregnant. I had been dating the father off and on for 5 years. This was one of the times we had just gotten back together. Shortly after finding out I was pregnant, he broke up with me once again. He threatened me in several ways and told me it was my "choice" what I did with the baby. I didn't want to have an abortion, but after talking to his parents and mine, it was presented as an option. I was scared. I was afraid of raising a child by myself. I made a decision out of fear, not out of the truth.

The day that I went to the abortion clinic is a big blur to me. I remember sitting in a room in the back with couches. I couldn't stop crying. I asked if my mom could come and see me. At that moment, I still didn't want to do it, but I felt like I had to. I don't remember being told much about the abortion, but what I would experience after.

As soon as I left the clinic I regretted my abortion. I was numb. I cried for days. I told my mom that I was going to Hell because I killed my child.

Soon after the abortion I started to go out and party a lot. I had relationships with many men. I started drinking a lot. I was hurting so much, but made it a priority to make it look like I was "happy." I thought that as long as I was making money, dressing nicely, buying new purses, etc. that I would be happy.

After a few years of that lifestyle, I was even more wounded and filled with shame. I had been "saved" as a teenager, but I didn't continue my relationship with Christ. Through a series of events, a friend introduced me to her brother, who was in school at a seminary. He asked about my relationship with God and told me that he felt as though there was something keeping me from having a relationship with the Lord. I knew it was my abortion. I ended up telling him, and he was the first person who spoke truth into my life, that I could be forgiven and made new, even after an abortion.

I began going back to church and spending time in the Word. Eventually, I attended a post-abortion Bible study. In that study God made it very clear that I was to share my testimony with others. So many women around me had also experienced pain from abortions.

After years of believing the lie that God didn't love me anymore and could never use me, I now know what the enemy intended for evil, God will use to save many lives!

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My Mistake

Kristin

Florida, United States

I was 23 when I got pregnant. The relationship with the father of my child was toxic, and I didn't want to be connected to him forever.

I called the abortion clinic to find out what my options were. They simply stated that I could take a series of pills at home, or I could come in and have the procedure done. I told them that I didn't want to be aware of what was happening, so they scheduled me for my procedure less than a week later.

I went in. They took my form of payment, and I began the shuffle from room to room. First, they pricked my finger, and then I was shuffled to the ultrasound room where I met the doctor who would do my procedure. He asked me how far along I thought I was; I told him I thought I was seven weeks. He said, "No, you're nine weeks." He told me he'd see me in a few minutes. Then I was taken to a room to undress and put on a gown. I remember being on the exam table and playing with my feet stirrups. A doctor was administering an IV, and I was wishing I had the guts to run out of the office.

When I woke up, I had little to no pain, which seemed unwarranted. I didn't even take the pain pills they prescribed for me after the procedure. I spent two years of guilt, self-hatred, resentment, and anger before I decided to own up to my mistake. This generation has taught us that it is okay to abort our children. Not only that, but we are told that we shouldn't feel guilty or broken because of it. Rachel's Vineyard brought me healing, and that is why I am silent no more!

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I Lived in Fear

Mary Huston

Florida, United States

In May of 1979, I was a very frightened girl. I was having a baby. In fact, I was so afraid of what my parent's reaction would be and what could happen to me and my family, that I had an abortion.

I was in shock when I went to have my abortion and I think I remained in shock for a long time after it. The painful experience of my abortion was buried so deep that I did not even begin to really think about it or remember it until 24 years later.

I remember lying on the table during the abortion and feeling as if the life inside of me was being sucked out. I cried during the entire procedure and as the tears kept streaming down my face, I sang the song, I Don't Know How to Love Him. It's a song from Godspell that Mary Magdalene sings about Jesus. And that's how I felt. I was not loving my God and as I found out afterwards my abortion was the most unloving thing I could do to myself and my daughter.

For years after my abortion, the guilt, shame and pain weighed me down. I had done something that was immoral and unthinkable. And I continued on a path in my life and in relationships that compromised my morals, hurt my body and made me feel less and less proud of myself.

Many people saw me as a successful loving and spiritual person. What they didn't know was that I lived in fear. Fear in telling the secret of my abortion, fear of getting too close to a man, fear of being too close to God. I was afraid of dealing with the most hurtful, traumatic experience in my life.

24 Years after my abortion that changed. My involvement in my church lead to a phone call asking me to help with a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat. I began to cry. Except this time they were tears of relief because I finally could share and deal with my abortion and not be afraid anymore. That year happened to be the same year I opened my heart to a man and I got married. My husband joined me on the weekend that changed my life for the better. I am free. Free of the pain and the guilt. And it is because of the support of my family, my husband and my daughter Gabrielle that I stand here today. You see, my daughter waited a long time for me to finally acknowledge her and love her. And I think it is because of that and the fact that she's a very spunky girl from Brooklyn that she inspires me and gives me the courage to be Silent No More.

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Why Couldn't I Be Forgiven Also?

Mary

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because I was already a single mother and did not want to put my family through all the upheaval again. I didn't tell anyone. I felt so alone, hopeless, and full of despair. There was no one I could trust. No one I could turn to. I felt as though I did not have a choice.

I took a cab to the abortion clinic. I was so afraid. I wanted to know if it was a boy or girl, but they said there was no way to tell. It was just a blob of tissue. There were so many emotions of pain and shame. I took a cab home. I immediately realized what I had done and could not undo it.

As time went on I never told anyone but the memory was always there. I felt defeated, hopeless, and insecure. I turned to alcohol, drugs, men... I had committed this evil and there was no turning back. I was dead inside.

I finally went back to church but felt my sin was too great for forgiveness. I went on a retreat weekend and someone told their story. I thought how brave that person was, how amazing. Then I thought if I could admire this woman for telling her story then why couldn't I be forgiven also? It was then my healing began.

I joined the Pro-life committee at my church. I wanted to save someone else from going through what I went through. Some there suggested I go to a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and so I did. From there I was put in touch with the Silent No More Campaign. I want to speak out! I want you to know God's Mercy is infinite! There is forgiveness! That is why I will be Silent No More.

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Suppressing the Reality

Florida, United States

Let me start with that I feel a bit intimidated putting this in words. I guess it is shame. I had an abortion because I was 18 and wasn't dating the guy very long. Funny how that didn't stop me from having sex.

I didn't even consider having the baby, simply because I was embarrassed. Not only would everyone know I had sex, but that I didn't use protection. At the time, my friend and I were both late for our periods. We both went for a pregnancy test at a clinic. Our results came. Hers was negative and mine was positive.

The actual experience was seamless, as sad as that may sound. I had an appointment, they told me I had to wait until I was a certain amount of weeks, they made the appointment, and then it was over. It was almost 30 years ago, so my memories of my feelings are vague, not to mention, suppressed.

I would say right after, I was relieved. I didn't even think much about it, so much so, that I found myself in the exact same position two years later. As I recount the events, I think it was easy to suppress the reality of what I was about to do. When you are so early in the pregnancy, you really don't "feel" any different, so you don't really accept that you are pregnant.

As time went on, I still didn't really think about it until I was married and pregnant with my first born. As I followed the pregnancy week by week, the realization of what I had done was hard to ignore. I had a miscarriage between my two children, which I felt I may have deserved.

Over the years, I have become closer to God. To this day, I am still embarrassed about this decision when I speak to God about it. I feel like when I pass, I will have some explaining to do to my two unborn children, who were robbed of life due to my self-absorption.

I still feel uncomfortable forbidding someone else from making their own decision, but I would love to have a word with them, if they were interested, before they made their decision. At the very least, I suggest having teens follow the book *Your Pregnancy Week by Week* to see exactly what stage of development the baby is when an abortion is performed. This may not prevent them from having sex, but it certainly may prevent them from having unprotected sex.

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Jesus our Redeemer

Janet

Florida, United States

Several years ago I made a selfish decision to terminate my pregnancy. I was divorced and had 2 children and was living a dangerous life style. The last thing I wanted was for anyone to find out about the life style I was living, so I went to a clinic and asked them to destroy the life inside of me. When I left that place I pushed everything way down and didn't allow myself to think about it or feel anything toward the baby. I remarried 4 years later and gained 2 more children through marriage and then had 2 more children with my husband. I tried to be a good wife and mother and forget the past but I couldn't. There was a long list of every bad thing I had ever done always in front of me with the abortion at the top of the list. I lived in fear of losing my husband and children because I was sure God was going to punish me for all the terrible things I had done and I couldn't talk to anyone about this. For eight years I lived in constant guilt, fear and depression. Nobody could help. I had no joy or hope and it was getting harder and harder for me to function. I felt that I was in a dark hole and there was no way out of it.

On Friday night, November 4, 2000, I got down on the floor and began to cry and tell Jesus that I was sorry for every bad thing I had ever done. When I looked up Jesus was there and He gently pulled me up and privately cleaned all the filth off me. He told me He loved me just as I was. Then God saved my husband and changed him into a godly man. He gave me the courage to tell my husband about my past. God showed me His unconditional love through my husband, because, just like Jesus, he didn't condemn me or leave me when I told him about having an abortion. Instead he stayed with me and helped me through the healing process. God transformed me from a dirty, fearful, black-hearted woman in the bottom of a dark hole, into a spotlessly clean, courageous, woman who is covered with the righteousness of God – **and** He calls me His beloved daughter.

For 12 years I never allowed myself to think about the baby I had lost. I never named or grieved over the baby. I never told anyone there was a baby. Today I want to tell you about my son who is in heaven. His name is David – named after King David because he also knew about being redeemed by God's love. I can't hold David in my arms, but I hold him in my heart and one day I will see him in heaven. I'm sure he is handsome and many times I cry when I think about him.

I want to leave you with God words from the 103rd Psalm. King David wrote it many years ago but God's Word is alive – that means it was true then, it was true for me in 2000, and it is true for you today. This Word is true for **anyone** who chooses to believe it.

He forgives all our sins and heals us completely – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He redeems us from death and instead crowns us with love and tender mercies. He fills our life with good things ... Psalm 103:3-5

He Restored Me

Lynn

Florida, United States

To recall a scenario that occurred so long ago, 37 years ago to be exact, is a memory that I find difficult to put into words.

It is hard to bring clarity to a blur of shame that I have left, buried beyond my revived heart.

In my effort, I can, at best, bring only bits and pieces to share. It was a dark, gloomy day that I remember which could have actually been one bathed in sunshine, but for me, all I see now is the dark clouds to hide the shame of an act that would scar my self-worth for endless years afterwards. I remember the sound of the suction machine and later walking away from that dreary place, feeling the cramps inside my body that seemed to engulf my whole being.

In my departure, I recall noticing a large green waste receptacle full of large, black plastic garbage bags that I believed contained the remains of many tiny lifeless bodies, including my own horrible sin.

From that day forward, my life became the end product of my intent to self-destruct. I sought relief from any drug I could crush, cook or mix to shoot into my veins. I cherished the sight of my own blood in a syringe to boost back and conceal my pain in the thrill of a momentary rush. I would straighten my life out only for short periods of time, to hide my shame behind a disguise of smug assurance, only to eventually find my greatest relief in finding that white lady friend in secret places where I snorted and later smoked my way into welcomed, ecstatic highs.

Chasing the thrill of relief from my inner shame would consume my life for another 17 years, until, having lost everything dear to me, I finally surrendered to a 12-step program and a year later to the loving, forgiving arms of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Yet, I refused to believe how much He loved me and could restore me until I found a small and intimate Bible study called, "Forgiven and Set Free," sponsored by The Pathway Home and First Choice Women's Centers.

I thank God for His great mercy and grace and the way He has brought me from glory to glory through the worst storm ever imagined to the fulfillment of my wildest dreams. My Redeemer has been faithful! Glory to His name!!

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Voice of Truth

Theresa

Florida, United States

I had an abortion when I was 19 years old, I can wrap that in terms that many in our society would deem acceptable, such as, "It was my body my choice, "It was only a clump of cells, "You can have procedure and move on with your life," or the multitude of lies that are told to women at their most vulnerable time. I wanted to believe the lies I was told the day I entered the clinic, so I closed my mind and heart and did the unthinkable, because I did not know there was help available.

I should have known better when the first thing the clinic wanted was their money, cash only as they explained to me. They did not want anyone to be able to identify me, and it was for my own protection. I was given a pregnancy test to confirm that I was pregnant, but no one offered me any alternatives or choices to the one I was making that day. I was a frightened 19-year-old girl with no support and no idea that there were agencies and people who would and could help me if I chose to keep my baby. I went through with the procedure, and the day I walked out of that clinic I knew a part of me had died as well. I was forever changed.

I was told I would be ok, I was told I was making the right decision, I was told that my baby was only a clump of cells and not a baby yet, and most of all, I was told I could go on and live my life because I had gotten rid of the problem. All the big lies the workers at that Planned Parenthood Clinic told me, all the big lies I wanted to believe was the truth but was not, all the big lies came crashing down immediately after that day. I soon dropped out of college where I was majoring in Early Childhood Education. I began drinking, doing drugs, losing jobs, and getting in and out of bad and abusive relationships. I convinced myself that I would never be good mother, that I did not like babies, so I chose to have my tubes tied. I did not know for many years all the terrible choices I was making in my life were due to what I had done so many years ago in that abortion clinic.

Then I found God, healing, and a Bible study called Forgiven and Set Free, which truly did set me free. For the first time in over thirty years my heart has been opened, and I am no longer suffering the shame, guilt, and pain I have endured for so long. God has a mission for me now, to help other women find healing and forgiveness, to let them know there is a path out of the darkness, to be a voice for the voiceless, and to be the voice of truth in a world full of lies about the harm the abortion industry does to women.

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Healing the Broken-Hearted

Jamie

Florida, United States

I was 19 years old and a virgin. Prior to my abortion experience, I had already been exposed to bullying and hard-core pornography at age six. I had been kidnapped by my mother's ex-husband at age six and was constantly fighting the battle to overcome low self-esteem. By the time I was 19, I had managed to stay pure, but I gave in to my first real boyfriend and became pregnant the first time I engaged in sexual intimacy with him. I was happy about it, but my mother was not.

She made arrangements for my abortion without even asking me. On that dreadful day she picked me up and drove me to a clinic. She and I were the only two in the waiting room. I don't even remember seeing anyone else at all. It was very quiet. A man in a white coat came out of a room. He escorted my mom and I to a room where he instructed me to get on to the table. It wasn't until then that I even knew what was happening. It was at that moment that I think I went into shock or something. All I wanted was to be a virgin when I married and to have a family. On that day, I lost all of it. Laying on the table, I turned my face towards the wall, and I prayed silently. I said to God, "God, this is not what I want. I'm sorry." It was finished.

On the way home, I began to sob. My mother turned to me. Her expression was as though it just hit her. She hadn't even bothered to ask me what I wanted, she just assumed. She pulled the car to the side of road for a moment to gather her own thoughts while I sobbed my heart out in the passenger seat. When we arrived at her house, my boyfriend, the father of my baby, greeted me at the front door. Obviously, he and my mother planned this together without consulting me. I spent a few days on her sofa bed while she and my boyfriend waited on me hand and foot, all the while I was slipping away into a different state of being. From that day, I was never the same again.

I began to drink alcohol, smoke pot, and do cocaine. I lost my job and apartment, and the downhill spiral of my soul continued until in 2005. I attended a post abortion healing group and then again in 2017 when I completed the Surrender the Secret healing program, as well as the Leadership Training.

It's been a long hard life due to the guilt and the shame and the regret. I missed out on so much. But God is good, He does heal the broken-hearted and turn sadness to joy in our most difficult times. He has been with me my whole life, was there with me in that room, and is with me every day when regret surfaces. He understands and dries my tears.

I would like to help other women heal as well as speak out about the abortion agenda somehow, someday.

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Now I Share the Truth

Ann

Florida, United States

I had an abortion because the birth of a baby would have postponed graduating from nursing school by two years. I have a congenital condition that I had struggled with and did not want a child to have to struggle with it. All the recognition I received from my father was by doing well in school, so I did not want to screw that up. My mother had said it would "kill" her if I got pregnant before being married, and since she had tried to kill herself two times before, I took this seriously.

During the abortion experience I remember feeling like I deserved to feel the physical pain. Though in denial that I was killing my child, I was beginning to realize it was terribly wrong. I felt insignificant in the abortion clinic. How I walked out of the clinic or even got down off the table is totally blocked from my memory.

Once home I felt sad and shut down my feelings to try to stop feeling sad.

My next reaction was to be in denial about it all and never talk about it. Next, I abused alcohol to the point of blacking out. That did not last long. But as time went on after the abortion, I placed a wall up around me and deadened my feelings. I felt remorse, shame, and unworthiness. It was difficult to form friendships. I was promiscuous after the marriage to the father of my baby ended. I had low self-esteem. I had anger issues and did not know where the anger came from.

When I finally went back to church, I never lasted longer than a few months to one year in a church, for fear someone would get close to me and realize I had an abortion. I found miraculous healing through Surrendering the Secret. The sin left my soul, and I was allowed to grieve the loss of my child and admit I was a mother. I no longer felt a heaviness being around babies. I started to be able to form friendships.

After 37 years of pain, suffering, and shame I was silent no more because of this healing.

I became a trained leader for Surrendering the Secret and have led that. I am now active at a nearby abortion clinic, trying to reach women who are about to have an abortion, trying to change their minds and hearts by sharing my story of deep regret. After buying the lie that my baby was just "tissue", I now share the truth with others, to help them not fall into this trap from the enemy!

This year is my first year of being involved in Praying for 40 Days for Life! Praise God for another benefit from being silent no more!

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Delivered

Cecilia

Florida, United States

I was 17 years old when I became pregnant. I was afraid to tell my parents and waited until I was five months pregnant. My mother, who at the time worked for New York University, arranged for me to have a saline abortion at Bellevue Hospital. The day of the abortion I was dropped off at the hospital. Saline was injected into my womb with a needle approximately six inches long. I could feel the hot fluid that would burn and kill my baby enter my body. I then waited about 24 hours before labor began. I went through labor and delivery by myself with no medication and gave birth to my dead baby. I later found out it was a baby boy.

My life spiraled into a life of self-hatred, drugs, alcohol, and wrong relationships. I ended up having three more abortions. Each time I felt like my life was being sucked out of me. I felt dead inside, empty. I tried to fill the emptiness with more drugs, alcohol, and relationships. I hated myself and what I had become. I wanted to die.

I lived a life of self-destruction for ten years until I gave my life to Jesus Christ. He forgave my sins and delivered me.

It wasn't until twenty-six years later that I heard about post abortion healing. I went through the Bible study and found a deeper healing and restoration in my life that only God can give. I finally feel free from the shame, and that's why I am silent no more!

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My Plans

Yany

Florida, United States

I was a straight A student with dreams of getting into an Ivy League university. I, the daughter of two poor immigrant parents, was to be the first person in my family to go to college. I had been dreaming of this opportunity for so many years. It was my chance to seize the American dream.

Then, the unexpected happened. I missed my period. I was so focused on being successful that I did not hesitate to tell my long-term boyfriend at the time that I needed to get an abortion. I remember telling him that it was not yet a baby, as I had just gotten pregnant. He did not like the idea. He tried to convince me that it was wrong to get an abortion. But I was clinging to what science had taught me—that the fetus's life had not yet commenced. It was not too late to reverse the situation and go about our lives as if nothing ever happened. I dismissed everything he was trying to tell me. I dismissed his pain and his concerns. I told him, "It's my body, and I'm going to get an abortion." All these slogans and quick sound bites rolled off my tongue, as if I had previously researched abortions and given this decision significant thought. But, in reality, my reaction was a reiteration of every simplified and convenient slogan I had heard until that point. I didn't want to hear anything that would potentially change my mind, because it would have resulted in me having to alter my plans for the future. So, I convinced him to support me in *my* decision and to not inform any of our family members of what we were going to do. I immediately made an appointment at a center that did abortions.

He drove me to the procedure. They brought me to the back, did an ultrasound, and told me that I would have to return in about a week to have the procedure done, as it was too early, and they could not yet see anything. A week later we went back. The people at the front desk seemed nice but indifferent. I do not recall anyone ever questioning me or giving me any information with any alternatives. I took their passivity and unalarming nature as a further confirmation that I was not doing anything that was out of the norm or worthy of concern. It was business as usual for the people who worked there. During the ultrasound I even recall someone confirming that it was just a little blood clot at the time. This idea, that I simply removed a little blood clot rather than a baby, stuck with me for many years of my life.

I did not feel remorse or guilt for many years. But I became born again as a Christian during college, and my perspective and appreciation for life started to change little by little. I am now married with four children and understand the horror of my actions. Having gotten that abortion was the single most selfish act that I have ever committed. I thank God that He has forgiven me. I hope that I can help women understand that a child's life is worth having to change one's plans. When I got to college, I saw a girl I recognized from one of my classes walking around campus with a baby stroller. This was the first time that it had occurred to me that I could have potentially had my baby and still have gone to college.

I Regret Every Day

Martina

Florida, United States

In 1986 I became pregnant after being in a relationship with an older man, my first sexual relationship. I was working my first job as a physical therapist; he was the orthopedic surgeon in the ward. It was a month before the first anniversary of my 19-year-old brother's death.

I went to a crisis pregnancy center, which was really at the back of a school. A very cold, judgmental nun met me in her office. She failed to connect with me. I left, feeling totally abandoned and hopeless. When I returned to the apartment I was sharing with other physical therapists, colleagues, and friends, they insisted I have an abortion. They set it up for me. I just went alone.

I immediately suffered severe depression with suicidal intentions. It was a long, slow recovery for me from having a nervous breakdown, with a long history of depression issues. I attended Project Rachel here in the States in 1992. I am a devout Catholic now and a daily communicant. I regret every day the fateful decision to terminate the life of my child. I had multiple miscarriages during my marriage of seventeen years to Henry. I have no children.

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I Wish I Had Gone Back

Lucie

Florida, United States

I was so in love with the father of my unborn child. We were young and have been through a lot together, but from the very beginning we always knew we wanted a family, a family together. After deciding to take our relationship to the next step, I sold my apartment and moved in with him. He threw me out four days later. I had to go and stay with my mother for a couple of weeks. In spite of that, I still tried to work it out with him. Three weeks later, in the midst of the fighting and figuring out how to come back from the fight we had, I found out I was pregnant.

Initially, we were scared and said things we didn't mean. He told me that we shouldn't have it and that it was a mistake. We then spent the rest of the night making appointments and wondering what to do. I stayed one night with him and took the next day off work. It was the best night we had spent together in a long time. He went to work and I was sick and stayed home. He came home and was upset and acted out. This was normal, but I felt like I needed it to be different this time. I was pregnant and I wanted someone to be strong for me and for us, because I just wasn't capable. He was mean and I asked if I should leave. He said he didn't care if I stayed or went. I did leave.

He called me that night telling me that he was afraid and that we needed more time. He said that it was too big a decision to be made so quickly; he wanted me to come back. Now I wish I had. I wish I hadn't been too proud because I didn't go back. We never spoke again.

Two days later, on Saturday, I went to an appointment that I mistakenly thought I had to go to, and I terminated our child. I had been so open and forgiving for so long. The one time I decided to be too proud, I made my unborn child suffer. I made myself suffer. I don't know how I couldn't see that no one was going to win, that this wasn't a game. It's been four days, and I don't know how I can go four weeks or months or years. That's why I am silent no more.

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Life-Saving Help in a Life-Changing Way

Jeanne

Florida, United States

Back in 1978, my mother and I started an abortion business in Miami Dade County. One year after that, I got pregnant. The baby's father, also a partner in that business, said I should have an abortion because I was a college student and we could have children in the future.

I wanted that baby, but instead I believed what he said and right there--in our abortion business--I ended the life of my first baby.

I remember the pain I felt in my heart when I woke up from the abortion. I could not turn back. I knew the abortion doctor well, yet he never tried to change my mind or give me a word of advice. This was something they did on a daily basis without thinking of anything else but their monetary gain. I had no one tell me there was another option. I cried with much pain! My heart was crushed to know that on that abortion table a part of my life died. My baby was killed that day. I cried out to God to forgive me. I begged Him for another opportunity to have a child.

A few months later, I conceived again with that same man, but this time I stood strong and instead of ending my baby's life, I ended that relationship. I turned my heart over to Jesus Christ and His Redeeming Love rescued me.

After 27 years of keeping my abortion a secret, God brought me back to the very same place where it all began. I received healing through the Forgiven and Set Free Bible Study and now I am silent no more. Today, I am the Clinic Director for Heartbeat of Miami Pregnancy Help Medical Clinic, which is located right next door to where that abortion business once operated. Today, I provide "Life Saving Help in a Life Changing Way" to any woman faced with an unwanted pregnancy.

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The Long Road

Denise

Florida, United States

January 22, 2009 Silent No More Testimony

March For Life: Supreme Court steps, Washington, DC

It was 36 years ago that I made a road trip (which actually turned out to be 20 years long) with two of my college friends. We were sophomores, I was 19 years old, and I was pregnant. They brought me to have an abortion. It was 1973. The reception room was full of girls around my age. None of us spoke to each other, we didn't make eye contact. The girl behind the window asked me for the cash and I filled out the paperwork. The table they put me on was cold, as were the nurse and the doctor. He never looked at me or told me his name. There was no anesthesia. The nurse told me to stop crying, that it would be over soon. All I remember is the sound of the vacuum, like my Mom's vacuum cleaner. As we drove back to school, I passed the exit to my parent's house. I wanted my mother, but I couldn't disappoint her. So, I cried for myself, and for the baby that I would never hold. I regretted what I did, but it was too late. I found there was no solace for a mother of an aborted baby. I couldn't mourn my baby, because I couldn't tell my shameful secret. Even my friends who knew became distant. I secluded myself into a prison of pain, shame, and regret and spent the next 20 years marrying, having 4 children, working, teaching Sunday School, all the while battling depression, suicidal thoughts and fear. One day, my daughter asked me if I knew anyone who had had an abortion. She was about 14 years old. I told her my story, and it began a series of events that opened the doors of my self-inflicted prison. My secret was out! I became a counselor at a crisis pregnancy center and after attending a Forgiven and Set Free Bible study, I became a facilitator. I share the Good News that God forgives our sins and there is LIFE after death!

That is why... I AM SILENT NO MORE!

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The Right

Bernadette

Florida, United States

I am writing today because I want to let other women know that they have the right to have their child and should not let anyone take that right from them.

My former boyfriend, who was older than I was, told me since we weren't married that it "wasn't the right time" to have a child and we could have children later. It came to a point that he said having our child would "ruin HIS life."

He drove me to a Planned Parenthood Clinic near Arlington, Va and I got a very sinking feeling when I realized they had removed their name from the sign that says what floor each business was on. (And, after growing wiser I realize that it is a baby-killing business that they're in.) The girl that "interviewed" me provided no information or supportive alternatives to having an abortion. It was a horrible, extremely painful experience. Besides the horrible pain of the procedure, the realization that a new, innocent life was being killed was overwhelming.

Afterwards, I quit my job, spent all of my savings (thousands of dollars) on psychiatric counseling and psychotherapy and didn't want to live. Ten years later, I still profoundly regret the loss.

I have come to forgive the ex-boyfriend because I don't think he really understood the consequences of what we did. I have come to forgive myself for not being stronger and realizing that I had the right to have my child, and no one had the right to take that life away. Now that I have a young family, I am so thankful for the gift of being a mother and for a husband who loves children.

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Abortion for Health Reasons Still Hurts

Ashli

Florida, United States

My name is Ashli, and exactly six years ago my husband and I lost our first child in a second-trimester abortion at Orlando Women's Center due to a severe, debilitating pregnancy-related maternal illness.

At 4 months pregnant, my HMO and physicians deserted me leaving me to deal with a slew of medical problems, among them: liver dysfunction and serious metabolic disturbance. Attempting to elicit better health care, I threatened them all with abortion, but this never phases anyone who doesn't consider a four-month-old gestating child an actual living human being. Treatment options existed, but they were neither divulged nor available to me, so I finally gave up and traveled to a second trimester abortion facility where everyone calls you "sweetie" before lying to you about fetal development and killing your child. To their credit, I signed papers that told me I might suffer emotionally, that abortion has been linked to breast cancer, and that I might die. Heck, these papers even called me a mother, accuracy that was not reflected on the record that omitted the hemorrhage (not to mention the incompetent cervix) I experienced afterwards. My record also doesn't list the name of the hospital I was sent to because we were instructed to go to a hotel until it was clear that I was out of danger. Having no shred of faith left in hospitals and doctors, we complied and went to the hotel to see if I would live through the night or bleed to death in the tub.

There are no words to describe the agony of destroying a child you want and certainly no way to verbalize the emotional desolation of living with it. Suicide becomes a daydream, a fantasy of escape, but so it was with abortion, and that lesson was too expensive to have learned nothing.

I am among the roughly 1% of women who terminate due to severe, physical maternal illness, so I have heard the excuses well-intentioned people have made for me. Excuses help the least. However, time has hung its faithful cobweb on crisis desperation, my faith enables me to live in the present with the knowledge that my child is with Christ and no longer suffering the sanguine assault of the legal mutilating mortality that is the D&E procedure, I am writing a book on the illness, and I have helped others miss appointments they made to abort the most darling children you have ever seen. I have been honored with the first breaths of these children as well as the happy tears of mothers seeing their faces for the very first time. These are the only tears women should cry.

Time, God, and helping women are but a comforting salve, for there is no cure for the fierce suffering of child loss that is simultaneously unwelcome yet self-inflicted. I have not gotten over it, but I realize I must get on with it.

One in four women experiences child loss through abortion! . It has not made us equal but it has abandoned us to physical and emotional suffering somewhat exclusively. I am here to offer my dissent and to proclaim the truth that women deserve better than abortion.

On The Road to Healing

Kathleen

Florida, United States

It was my seventeenth birthday. I missed school that day, and my friend drove me to the hospital. I was admitted and put into a ward with other young ladies who were waiting for their abortions. Later, I was wheeled into the operating room and put under general anesthetic. I woke up bleeding, in pain, nauseated, and had a very large tell-tale bruise where the IV had been. Late that afternoon I was released. My friend picked me up to drive me home. We arrived at my home to my seventeenth birthday party. My whole family was there. I hid my hand to avoid any questions about the bruise. No one knew that night, as they celebrated, that the day I was born I, had taken the life of my first child.

It didn't end there. I had two more abortions after this. Abortion appeared to be the easy way out. I could get on with my life. I viewed it as a solution to a problem. However, what seemed like easy way out became like a double-edged sword of negative physical and emotional consequences.

Abortion isn't a safe procedure. It is a surgery with risks. I experienced hemorrhaging, intense cramping, infection, and fever. There are many other risks and complications to abortions. Emotionally, I suffered from deep depressions, break-ups with boyfriends, guilt, shame, anger, fear, and a sense of enduring worthlessness. When I did have a child, I found that it was difficult to fully bond with her for quite some time. And I also experienced sexual problems in my marriage. What looked like the easy way out on the outside led to my destruction on the inside. What I thought was the best choice at the time, in reality, it was the worst. "There's a way that seems right to men, but in the end, it leads only to death." That's in the Bible. Abortion for me was a secret sin that kept me in bondage to a cycle of sexual sin.

I have started on the road to healing by taking the first step of repentance. By God's grace, and through God's strength by breaking the cycle of promiscuity and abortion and by receiving God's complete forgiveness, mercy, and grace, by recognizing abortion as a loss of life, and by being able to grieve these profound losses caused by my own selfish choices, I was restored emotionally. By going through a post-abortion Bible study, and set free from guilt and shame by God's abundant grace, through restitution, God has given me opportunities to help take other women who have been hurt by abortion to a post-abortion Bible study, because it is only in God that hope is given and healing is found. And I also want to be silent no more.

I was driving one day and listening to a pastor on the radio, and he said something that really touched my heart. He said, "There is more grace in God's heart, than there is sin in your past."

[Click here](#) to watch Kathleen's video.

["Forgiven and Set Free" is one post abortion Bible study for women. [Click here](#) for the details.]

The Value of Life

Magaly

Florida, United States

God protected me from having an abortion. He gave me an awareness of the value of life.

However, I did suffer because of abortion. When I was a teenager, my mother asked me to go with her to an abortion clinic. This was in Cuba where abortion was very, very common. And the same doctor that we saw at the clinic had a private office where they did abortions, even though abortion-on-demand was not legal in Cuba at that time. I begged my mother not to abort that child. I did everything that I could. I said to her, "I will raise it, mom!" And I was only a teenager. "I will raise it; I will take care of it for you." And she smiled and she said, "What would people think? Look how old you are already."

And I remember sitting in that clinic, inside, and waiting for her to finish and just wondering what I could've done more. I was not a Christian. I didn't have any pictures to show her. I didn't really know how bad abortion was. In my heart I felt that it was something bad, but I never really knew until I saw the pictures. And I never really knew for many years how much anger I had inside of me against my mother. It took years. We were never close after that.

I attempted suicide shortly after that. And most of my life, I felt that I really had to be the best at everything, because I really had to make it worthwhile that she allowed me to be born. I later found out that she had aborted other children. And every time we sat at the dinner table, I would look and think about those that were not there. There's tremendous pain when you're a sibling and your mother aborts. And I'm sure that there are many people out there that are feeling this pain. I gave my testimony to a group of people last night, and several people came up to me and said something similar.

I got involved in the pro-life movement and I have been in it for over thirty years. And when I first saw the abortion pictures, the one about the D&C—that the D&C baby comes out in pieces—that's the type of abortion that's done in Cuba. And a voice, an internal voice, said to me, "That's what your brother looked like when he was aborted." And I wrote a letter to my brother that I have not met, that I will meet in heaven.

Brothers and sisters, abortion hurts. For years I went through post-abortion syndrome. I didn't know that you could go through post-abortion syndrome if you haven't had an abortion yourself, but I did.

I have a type of cancer that is very deadly. And my sister lives in Fort Myers, my brother lives somewhere else. I would've had a brother or sister to help me through this difficult time that I'm going through. And I lost most of my family to abortion. My mother had eight abortions. And my mother realized what she had done when she saw one of my presentations. It was a great pain for me to have her present. I never told her how bad it was, but she came to one of my presentations and she saw what abortion is, and she used to say to me, "If only I had known! I love all my children. If only someone had told me. If only I had known." Till the day she died, she regretted her abortions.

Healing Our Hearts

Connie

Florida, United States

I was to fly to Germany for my vaccines and didn't know I was pregnant. My mom was told by a doctor that my baby had a 50% chance of being deformed because of the shots. Because of this, we decided to have an abortion.

I went ahead with the abortion because I was influence by my parents and trusted them to direct me in the right way. During the abortion, it was like an assembly line. I had to fly from Michigan to New York because it wasn't legal in Michigan. We were given a pill to help calm us (a group of about 10 girls) and then we were called out one at a time. I don't remember getting any more anesthetic, but I do remember the suction noise and then the doctor was having trouble because I was almost too far along. They were going to stop the procedure and send me to a hospital; then they were able to accomplish the killing!

I remember being depressed and staying in my room for a month and not wanting to socialize with anyone. I would feel movement in my stomach and worry that there was another baby that they had missed. Prior to the abortion I felt movement (I thought) and my stomach was a little poochie. I was happy I was going to have a baby and wanted to keep it.

After about a month in my room, I then started being very promiscuous. Prior to getting pregnant, I was a virgin and really didn't even think I had intercourse to my uneducated amazement. As time went on I slept around and then got married to someone two years later.

After being married for two years, we started trying to have kids. I went through seven years of what I thought was punishment from God for my abortion. Many tests and procedures later I conceived my son—what a glorious time in my life. When my son was nine months old, I conceived again with my wonderful daughter. I still went through life another 30 years regretting and sorrowful.

It wasn't until just a few months ago I started the healing process by going to pray in front of an abortion clinic in Ocala, Florida. I have watched young couples, mothers with their daughters, and girlfriends come out and I can't help but be so sorrowful for them because it has only just begun for them. They will regret someday.

I am healing and my mom's healing will begin this Saturday in Ocala. We are both born-again Christians and know that God has forgiven us, but there is so much more for us. Only this process will heal our hearts. Thank you so much for stepping up and sounding out and allowing me to speak out about my experience.

Silent No More Awareness Campaign: Reach Out - Educate - Share
www.silentnomoreawareness.org