

Terri Nordone, Salem Oregon

My story goes back to 1972 when I was in high school. I was date raped and became pregnant. To my parents abortion seemed like the only way out of horrible situation. I thought my life would be back to normal after the abortion, however, that would not be the case. I walked in that clinic one girl and walked out a completely changed girl. I would never be the same again.

I was tormented with deep shame, guilt, anger, and regret. Debilitating depression set in a couple years later when I was in college. Every day was a struggle. I went to bed with and woke up with the weight of my abortion hanging over my head. It wasn't the rape that plagued me the most it was the abortion! I couldn't watch a television commercial with a baby in it without having tears well up. When I was around friends with babies, I'd fight to keep my emotions under control. I would be in deep depression for weeks after attending my friends baby showers. I would never allow myself to hold a baby because the feeling of "empty arms" was so strong and painful. I began to use alcohol and drugs to numb my feelings. Anger and anxiety would build up in me for no apparent reason and I couldn't put a finger on where that anger was coming from. I would just blow up for no apparent reason. Decades would pass before I made the connection between my abortion and the many years of emotional torment and pain. I continued to feel a sense of loss for the child that "might have been". I reached a point when I realized I had aborted my only child...such deep sorrow and regret filled me that I live with to this day. That fateful day in February of 1972 I unknowingly cut off my limb of the family tree. I carried this burden alone and it had become unbearable.

In the years since that day I spent every ounce of energy hiding my secret and struggled to bury the deep, deep shame and regret. I couldn't forgive myself for what I had done. Depression was a constant battle. Even now, 48 years later, as my friends are having grandchildren it is a constant reminder that not only did my abortion kill my only child but also my hope of grandchildren. These are the consequences I live with daily. The suffering my abortion brought on was far greater than if I had chosen life. The physical, emotional & spiritual repercussions have been devastating and lifelong.

In December of 2004 I purchased a book called *SaveOne - A guide to emotional healing after abortion*. It provided a path of healing and restoration that I needed to be free of the heavy weight I had been carrying for decades. I started the Salem, OR chapter of SaveOne in September 2006. Since then, I have heard many stories that are very similar to mine from dozens, if not hundreds, of women and

men. Now many others are healed and empowered to tell their own story of restoration to help save one more person from living a life of crippling guilt and shame. We, at SaveOne, have witnessed that it is those brave women and men who have been healed from abortion related trauma who are able to step out of the shadows, share their stories and tell others the truth about abortion through their own experience. It is these true stories that will bring about change in this culture of death and help restore a commitment to the sanctity of human life.

No one can debate or dispute the truth of my/our own experience.

Abortion IS damaging women's physical, emotional and spiritual health and abortion is NOT just a women's issue. For every woman there was a man involved. Men are also suffering and we welcome them into our SaveOne classes.

Marriages and families have been shattered because of the emotional damage of abortion. As we see women and men healed from abortion related trauma we are seeing marriages restored and families strengthened. We will see communities impacted positively as its citizens are healed. Consider how drastically the divorce rate and mental illness has increased since the 1973 Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision! There is a remarkable correlation.

Abortion related trauma is pandemic and SaveOne is making a global impact – we are now in 23 countries and translated into 20 languages.

I will conclude the same way we do on the last night of our 11-week SaveOne class. Each participant (mother or father) receives a "Certificate of Life" bestowing honor and dignity upon their children....

I, Terri Nordone, do hereby acknowledge
Deidra Hannah,
as a full member of my family. I recognize
her as an equal creation deserving of
the same inherent and immeasurable value and
capacity to be loved as all other human beings
created in the image of God.

By virtue of being conceived, the spirit of
Deidra Hannah lives eternally with Jesus and in
my heart and mind now and forevermore.