

## **Testimony of a Post-Abortive Parent**

As an avid "Pro-Life-er" I never imagined that I would be the one who would have an abortion. But I did. That choice changed my life forever.

I have come to believe that the circumstances may be different for everyone, but the emotions that lead you to the clinic door seem strangely similar; Fear, loneliness, desperation. Sound familiar? I had my abortion in 1998 and thought that it would be over when it was over. I had no idea that once the procedure itself was over, that was just the beginning. For several months I suffered with horrific nightmares and blinding migraines. There was no physical problem that could be found. It got so bad that I couldn't be in large groups. If I was in a restaurant and a baby came in, I would have to leave or face a panic attack. I couldn't work efficiently and my relationships with family members suffered. When I finally couldn't stand it anymore I started asking for help. The symptoms I was having actually have a name - Post Abortion Syndrome.

If not for the counseling I received I would never have been able to put a name to my pain. Through those sessions, I learned how to forgive myself and accept God's forgiveness. Now my life is still chaotic, but a good chaos. I have moved on and have found peace. God's grace abounds everyday in my life and I am ever blessed by His love.

## **"Forgiven and Set Free"**

Someone asked me why I decided to go to a Bible Study about post abortion syndrome. I guess her question was more of 'what was the final straw?' There were contributing factors, one was of being diagnosed with depression and anxiety and an on-going weight problem I have fought for many years. I thought if I could 'finally' get this issue settled, then maybe my depression, anxiety, guilt and weight would disappear.

I had reached the point of 'no return'. I just couldn't see myself going on for another 15 years ignoring conversations, church services honoring babies, Right to Life, and Free Choice speeches. The ache in the pit of my stomach (fear or guilt?) when anyone mentioned the "A" word. Abortion is not an issue where one can be on the fence. Especially in the church. Emotions run high. I have girlfriends who have had multiple miscarriages, lost children due to illness and accidents - how would they ever be able to understand, even with me agreeing that is was the stupidest thing I had ever done? Would our friendships survive?

The secrecy, guilt and anger were all contributing now to health problems. I had to do something, and God helped me get what I needed.

As I drove to my first meeting, I cried the entire way. I entered this small room with these other women and I was pissed. I was scared. I didn't want to be there. I just didn't know what else to do at that point in my life.