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**Karen Bodle**  
**Pennsylvania State Team Leader**

I learned I was pregnant when I was 18 after my first sexual encounter. Morning sickness was the first tell-tale sign that my body was changing and a new life was growing inside me. As I hung my head over the toilet, I sobbed uncontrollably, realizing that my life would never be the same. I was overwhelmed with fear and shame, and I knew that I needed help.

When I told the baby’s father, he ended our relationship immediately. I felt abandoned and alone. I was a junior in college and was told that dropping out of college to have a child would ruin my life and future career. The only “choice” discussed was abortion. I was ashamed to be pregnant and unmarried, so I thought that abortion would solve my problem.

I felt pressured to have the abortion quickly because I was very close to the twelve-week cutoff. There was no time to think about any other options. If I had an abortion, no one would have to know about my pregnancy; and I would save my family from shame.

“You don’t even have to admit that you were ever pregnant” was the advice I received. I believed the lie that it was just a blob of tissue that could be thrown away. I was told that I could forget about the abortion and go on with my life without any consequences. But I couldn’t forget. In dating relationships, the first thing I would reveal was my abortion because I was terrified of being rejected. For years, I was “pro-abortion” because I thought I had to justify my own abortion.

I suffered a nervous breakdown and spent time in a mental hospital because of the fear that I would not ever have any children. I felt like I was living in slow motion because my once sharp mind was so dull. It took over two years to recover my ability to think and react normally. The abortion experience left me chronically depressed and confused.

I later learned that my 12-week-old unborn baby had a beating heart and fully developed arms and legs. My baby was not some undefined blob of tissue. If only I had seen a picture of fetal development, I would never have chosen abortion. I felt lied to and deceived.

I want America to know that abortion hurts women. Women are created to love and nurture their children – not have them ripped from their wombs and thrown away. There is a disconnect in every woman’s heart and mind when she consents to abortion. Although she tries to forget the abortion and suppress the memories, eventually she will face the reality that her own child was mutilated by abortion.

My denial lasted 21 years. I wept uncontrollably from the depths of my soul for three days when I finally faced the truth. The weeping released the hidden pain and began a journey of healing that led me to forgiveness. I remember crying out: *Where are the women? Where are the women who are willing to speak about the tragedy of abortion?*

I do not want any woman to go through the intense pain and suffering that I experienced. I must speak out and tell my story to encourage other women suffering in silence to seek emotional healing and forgiveness.

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*Karen Bodle is the Prayer Team Leader and Pennsylvania State Team Leader for Operation Outcry. Her heart’s cry is to see abortion become a socially unacceptable choice in the United States and around the world.*

*Karen has a degree in Mathematics and Education from Juniata College. After teaching high school math for a few years, she changed careers and worked as a programmer, systems analyst, and project manager. While living in Buenos Aires, Argentina on assignment with IBM, she had a life-changing experience that led her into her current career – helping women recover from abortion. Karen resides in Harrisburg with her teenage daughter.*



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Changing Lives  
Restoring Justice*