



**“I protected my secret by pushing family and friends away. I was trapped in a world of anxiety, depression and denial.”**

**Barb, Phone Consultant New Mexico**

My story begins on one summer night after a school party. I became a teenage pregnancy statistic. I wasn't pro-life or pro-choice; I was scared and panicked, reacting to a crisis. With no information about any consequences, nine weeks later, I became an abortion statistic.

My heart hardened to the reality of what I was about to do. After paying \$200 cash, I waited my turn. In the procedure room, my head and my heart were in conflict. I cried uncontrollably as the abortionist stopped the only heart that would ever beat in my womb. A woman in the recovery room assured me "It's no big deal, just get over it". I desperately wanted to believe I could go on with my life and never think about it again.

After the abortion, my personality unexpectedly changed. I was cold and hard. I protected my secret by pushing family and friends away. I was trapped in a world of anxiety, depression and denial. I used alcohol to cover my pain. Anger was buried deep in my heart as I gave up my dreams for a life of lies.

Six years later, while teaching kindergarten, my mind was interrupted with a thought, 'I could be teaching my own child, six-years-old go to kindergarten'. That night began a series of dreams about the baby. I could no longer deny the truth. She was real. My heart softened as I finally gave myself permission to cry. Instinctively, I asked God to forgive me. I now give honor and dignity to my daughter. Her name is Johanna Kathryn, the one I hold in my heart.

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*Barb was born and raised in South Dakota. In 1983, she graduated from Augustana College with a B.A. in both Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education. She has served in church youth and music ministries, and is currently an Auxiliary Member of The Gideon's International. Barb resides in New Mexico with her husband of 25 years.*

*Barb is the founder of Freedom Found Ministries, Inc. and the State Leader for OOSNM in New Mexico. She has been involved in the grassroots efforts of the pro-life movement since 1985. She is a certified facilitator for "Forgiven and Set Free" post abortive Bible studies. She publicly shares her inspirational and motivational testimony of her abortion experience and healing. Speaking at youth and adult meetings, schools, colleges, churches, and political venues, thousands have been touched by her life story.*

*Barb is a staff member on the National Helpline for Abortion Recovery for Concepts of Truth, Inc. Professional Counseling & Care Pregnancy Center.*