



“...Something screamed inside me “NO! STOP! Say NO!” but I couldn’t move”

Samantha, Phone Consultant Ohio

When I had my abortion, I was 19 years old, married and a soldier in the Army. I was stationed in Germany and living in the barracks while my husband was sixty miles away attached to a different company.

I don't really remember where the idea of an abortion came from. It just seemed like the most logical option to take to preserve my own life and career in the military. I just couldn't imagine how I was going to be in the Army and a mother when I was living in the barracks and only able to see my husband on the weekends. My husband said it was my choice, but it was clear to me he did not want any children at this time in his life either. I was afraid of the possible future outcome that was unknown and unplanned.

I had to go through the chain of command to get permission to have an abortion. One cannot do anything to their bodies without authorization from the commander. I had to go from my platoon sergeant, to the company sergeant, to the commander, and each leader commended me for my “responsible behavior.” Of course, the Army was not going to perform the procedure; I had to find a place on the economy (which is out in the German community) to have the abortion. My husband took care of finding a Planned Parenthood facility.

When I went in, they processed me through quickly. The woman took my three hundred dollars and explained to me about the mild discomfort I may have later, “It may feel like monthly cramps.” I had to have an ultrasound to prove that I was pregnant and I remember the clinician stating “Yep! There it is.” And I heard in my mind “Yep there HE is.” I remember thinking for the first time, this is wrong and something screamed inside me “NO! STOP! Say NO!” but I couldn't move. The procedure had already started, the medication given, and I was too afraid to protest.

In the recovery room I was placed in a huge bay like area partitioned off by thin partitions. It put me in mind of a blood donor's clinic. I could hear women crying on the other side of the dividers. At that point, I decided in my heart that I did not deserve to cry about a choice that I made to kill. I made my bed and I would sleep in it and I would not complain. I turned off all emotion and a part of me died for good that day. I did not talk about it or cry about for sixteen years. My husband and I never talked about it.

I realized I had done wrong, but I could not let myself feel sorry about. I did pray for forgiveness and asked God for another chance. I tried to become pregnant again so that I could somehow make up for the loss that I had felt. When I became pregnant again I was obsessed with doing everything right; if anything went wrong with this child, I would not be the cause of it. I read every book on pregnancy and raising children I could find. I had to be the perfect mom. Although I tried to do everything right, I couldn't feel anything, and my emotions were numb and couldn't be hurt. I also wasn't very receptive to other people's feelings. My relationships were strained and I didn't know why.

After my abortion, I was unable to experience life the way I had before. I pushed all of my feelings so far down I couldn't even relate to other people normally. I was critical, angry and impatient with other people, especially their pain. If someone else cried in front of me, I was turned off and had to leave because I would become cold and angry. My marriage was ruined and my life was numb because of the abortion.

Abortion hurts women. We need help to overcome these consequences. We need to let the world know that it is a terrible thing too. **If you are hurting, there is help. Call the National Helpline for Abortion Recovery at 1-866-482-LIFE.**

Samantha is married and works as an occupational therapy assistant. Samantha volunteers as an Operation Outcry contact in Ohio, and shares her testimony in local churches. She also volunteers at the local pregnancy center, is active in her local church and has participated in the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. She is part-time staff for the National Helpline for Abortion Recovery.