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## **Grieving Mother Longs for Her 'Oldest' Child**

By Jan Kolb

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Dear Jan:

When I was 16, I thought I was pregnant. I had no money, no car, and low self-esteem. I was scared, yet also happy about being pregnant.

Because of my lack of family support I felt that my boyfriend was the only one who loved me, and he would make things all right. But he broke up with me just before I could tell him. Now I didn't know what to do.

I felt alone and ashamed. I believed I could not talk to my mom, and I was unaware of the Crisis Pregnancy Center (now Community Pregnancy Center). I loved babies, but I didn't want to burden my mom who was already struggling, and I didn't want to be judged by others, so abortion seemed like my only choice.

I knew I probably couldn't go through with a surgical abortion. Instead, I took pills to have an abortion and thought it wouldn't bother me as much, because it was more ambiguous.

I regretted it almost immediately, but I couldn't undo what I had done!

I realized that I could have had a beautiful, perfect child, but now it seemed the effects of the drugs would deform my baby and cause serious defects even if somehow I could have stopped it.

In the clinic with a surgical abortion you don't see what you did to your child, but you experience the act of having an abortion. But with abortion-causing pills, you experience the abortion in a different way.

After it was done, I mostly forgot about it. Here and there I would think about the age of my baby, especially if I was around a child of the same age mine would have been. I wondered what he or she would have looked like.

What I had actually done really didn't hit me until I had given birth 10 years later. How I cried, especially at night, sometimes for three hours, longing for my precious little one. I was reliving that devastating experience every hour of every day. My "oldest" was not really my oldest.

Eventually I told my mother, who was the person I had been most afraid would find out about my pregnancy. I realized that had I told her then, it would have been difficult, but she would have loved me and also her grandchild, too. She would have helped us through our difficult time.

I had thought it would be all over when I had made my "choice." It wasn't over and I'm still healing. I hope my experience keeps others from making the same mistake.

Signed, Longing

Dear Longing:

How wonderful of you to share your story. I, too, hope it helps someone to make a better choice should they be pregnant and unmarried. May I also say that you can find the peace and forgiveness you seek if you will look to God, who will receive you with open arms. You can find solace in a good church that teaches forgiveness and wholeness.

I also want to say something to all mothers and dads of young kids. It is so important that you develop a relationship with your kids so they will not fear coming to you in their greatest time of need. Let them know they can always turn to you with anything, and together, you will work through it. Remember, they are going to turn to someone - let it be you.

God bless you, Longing. Telling your story may help more than you will ever know.



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