



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on June 30, 2022

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Life After Being Aborted

Imagine you discovered that the only reason you are alive today is because the abortionist found your twin in the womb, but failed to realize you were there, too.

“A few months before my birth, my mother had an abortion,” said Jennifer Callendar of Texas, in 2019 testimony before Congress. A short time after the operation, her mother felt Jennifer moving and rushed to the doctor to find out she was still pregnant. Medical records confirmed that one baby had been aborted, and her doctor offered to repeat the procedure. Jennifer’s mother said no.



twitter.com/claireculwell

Born in 1980, two months premature and weighing slightly more than two pounds, Jennifer both survived and thrived. She is now a wife and mother who still wonders about the brother or sister she never met. “I feel like I miss him or her in a most interesting and spiritual way,” she relates in a 2020 Faces of Choice video, saying her heart aches at the thought that abortion robbed her twin of any say in the matter. And while she grieves that her sibling will “never get to experience life,” she thanks God for saving hers, “so that I can share it with others.”

Her message is one of hope for anyone affected by abortion. “I was not rejected. I was not forgotten. I am loved. I have a hope, and I have a future,” she says, in implicit defiance of those who label some babies as unwanted. “The same is true for you.... You can choose to forgive others and have compassion.”

Claire Culwell feels much the same. She is also a twin abortion survivor, but neither she nor her adoptive parents knew it until after finding her birth mother several years ago. “Instantly I just knew I adored this woman,” Claire remembers, in a 2016 Sanctuary of Hope interview. She was thrilled to meet the person who gave her both life and family.

“But when she grabbed my hand, and she took me into another room, she was crying. And her hand was shaking,” Claire relates. “I immediately saw a pain in her eyes, and it was a pain that ... I had never seen before.” Tonya Glasby did not realize she was pregnant with twins at age 13 when her parents pressured her into an abortion. Miraculously, her doctor also missed the second baby.

Claire describes her shock at learning the truth. “All I could comprehend in that moment was the fact that I had survived something that was meant to take my life.” As reality sank in, “I realized that I had a brother or a sister. They just hadn’t lived life with us on this earth, and they had been missing from our family all along.”

“But the one thing that has stuck with me since that day was thinking, ‘Wow! God has a plan. God has a *big* plan.’”

Part of that design has been her story’s impact on the pro-life movement. Though Tonya did not have to



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reveal her painful secret, both women find consolation in knowing that their experience can help others. “If I could touch one girl to know that she has a choice to not have that abortion, and to give that baby up” for adoption, says Tonya, it would ease her remorse. “I have had a lot of guilt,” she admits, saying that every day brings reminders that if she had chosen differently, “I’d have two babies.”

“I’ve never met a mother that has chosen life that’s regretted that decision,” Claire recounts. “I cannot say the same for abortion.”

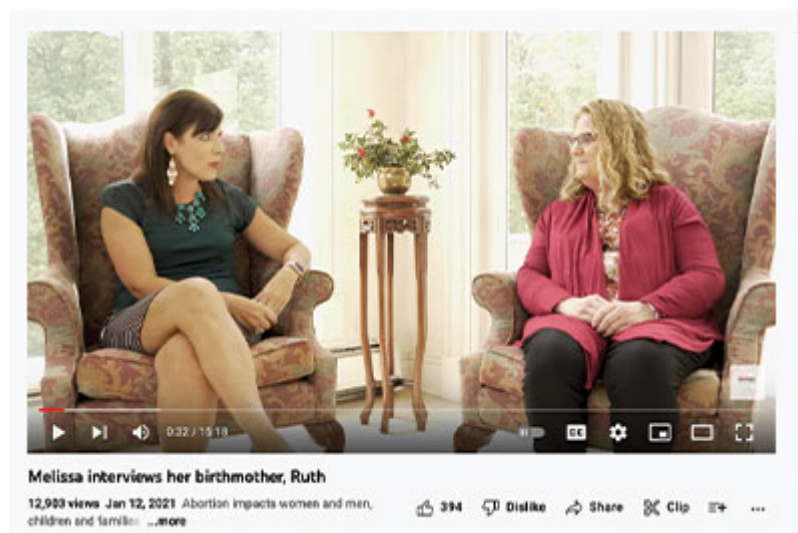
Finding Love and Forgiveness

Not that women who have lost their babies to abortion are without hope. The resounding message among abortion survivors is one of unconditional love and forgiveness.

“The amazing thing is that she forgave me,” says the mother of abortion survivor Carrie Holland-Fischer. “She forgave me!”

Their story went viral on Valentine’s Day in 2019 when the nonprofit Special Books for Special Kids broadcast a video of the mother-daughter duo. Born in 1969, Carrie was the third child of single mom Shirley, who did not believe she could take on the responsibility of another baby whose father had walked out on her.

A short time after her abortion at a Houston clinic, Shirley realized that her child had survived, and she decided to keep her. However, the procedure had taken a harsh toll; Carrie arrived with multiple disabilities including bodily disfigurement and sight and speech impairment.



Family reunion: Abortion survivor Melissa Ohden found and forgave her birth mother, and then started the Abortion Survivors Network so fellow survivors could connect and heal.

She endured bullying and ridicule as a child and young adult because of her physical appearance. She was also plagued with recurring dreams of a baby fighting for its life, dreams that only made sense after a family member revealed the truth of the abortion attempt to her during her teen years. In 2019 testimony before the Texas House of Representatives, she divulged that her life’s hardships led her to attempt suicide at age 30.

After surviving both that and abortion, she realized God had a good reason for wanting her to live and began a personal ministry to forward pro-life causes. Along the way she earned a college degree and



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got married. In 2012, the couple experienced the joy of watching an ultrasound of their six-week-old baby's heartbeat.

Carrie explains that she forgave her mother because she understood the circumstances at the time seemed insurmountable, and because Shirley was so remorseful and honest about it. "I don't want her to feel guilty," Carrie says. "I've accepted the things she did, and she accepts the things I do. And we just love each other." Shirley agrees and calls her daughter her "best friend."

Theirs is one of many happy endings.

"Hope's birth mother came and stayed with us recently, and we all share a special bond and a love for each other," says Terri Kellogg, in a 2020 Faces of Choice video. "She is part of our family."

Terri and her husband adopted abortion survivor Hope Hoffman more than 30 years ago, when she was three months old. The baby had been through a curettage abortion intended to slice her tiny 10-week-old body into pieces inside her mother's womb. Three months after the procedure, Hope's birth mother, Tonya, realized she was still pregnant and this time, opted for adoption. She didn't know of her baby's severe injuries from the abortion instruments.

Hope came eight weeks early. Her brain was exposed where the scalp and skull had been torn away in what doctors described as an old wound. They resuscitated her several times.

Now wheel-chair bound with cerebral palsy, Hope "doesn't see limitations," says Terri. Instead, she has "joy and passion for life" and enjoys it "to the fullest." As a teenager, Hope was thrilled for the chance to meet her birth mother in person, her family having kept in touch with Tonya through their adoption agency.

"The best part about it," said Hope, with a smile, remembering that first meeting in a 2019 video for Port Lucie, Florida, church Calvary PSL, was "letting Tonya know how much I love her and support her in so many ways."

"Looking at her and her telling me she forgave me, that she loved me, but looking at her in that wheelchair..." Tonya said as she choked back tears while describing her initial reaction. Terri had arranged the meeting, suspecting Tonya's feelings of guilt and hoping to assuage them. She summed up her gratitude, saying that "it was because of her that I'm a mother and God led Hope to us."

"'God has a plan' is a quote that Hope says all the time," recalls Tonya, who appeals to all expectant mothers to remember that the same is true for them. "If you find yourself in a situation where you're pregnant, and you don't feel as though you can take care of that child, find somebody who can." She points to the myriad adoption agencies nationwide. "There are a lot of parents out there who are just dying to have a baby to take care of and to love."

Connecting With Survivors

These inspirational stories are only several of hundreds compiled by Melissa Ohden, founder and CEO of Abortion Survivors Network (ASN). She launched the non-profit in 2019 after realizing the large number of abortion survivors in society and their lack of a safe place to connect with each other for healing. ASN also provides a credible platform from which those who choose to do so can broadcast their stories.

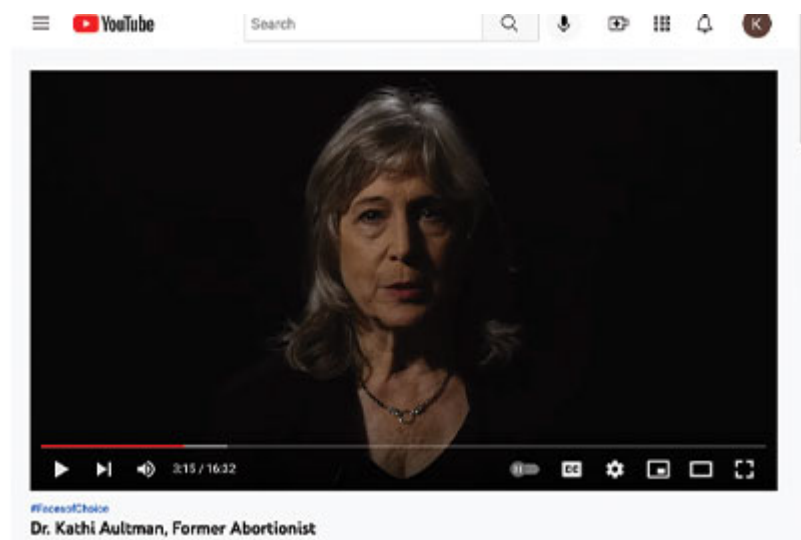
Melissa's began in 1977, when she survived a saline infusion abortion. This is a chemical procedure that



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injects salt into the amniotic fluid that surrounds a developing baby in the womb. It causes slow death by dehydration, brain hemorrhage, burns, and convulsions. Within a few hours or days, the pregnant mother delivers a dead baby. In Melissa's case, she miraculously survived.



Epiphany: Former abortionist Dr. Kathi Aultman became a pro-life advocate when she realized she was not simply removing blobs of tissue but tearing helpless infants “limb from limb.”

She learned this truth at age 14, as recounted in her poignant autobiography *You Carried Me: A Daughter's Memoir*. At first the news left her devastated, feeling isolated and hurt. Years later she sought and reunited with her birth mother, Ruth Lindahl, who had been a 19-year-old, unmarried college student pressured into aborting her baby. For some 30 years, she did not know that Melissa was alive.

Their reunion was one of many discoveries along Melissa's journey. She also connected with the survivor of another 1977 failed saline infusion abortion, the indomitable pro-life activist Gianna Jessen, upon whose life the 2011 movie *October Baby* is loosely based. Melissa says that was the first time she realized that she was not alone.

Her path changed course again after delivering a speech at a Right to Life march in the early 2000s, when a young man approached and whispered, “I'm one of you.” She says her conversation with him opened her eyes to the fact that “people like me are everywhere,” and set her on a mission to find every abortion survivor possible.

ASN has so far connected around 400 members within this exclusive club, spanning 18 countries and ranging in age from infants to the elderly. Many choose to remain anonymous, known only to their fellow survivors, but others air their death-defying stories in videos at the website [FacesofChoice.org](#).

Some narratives span the globe. A curettage abortion in South Korea in March of 1995 left Josiah Presley with a deformed arm, but soon after birth he was adopted by a family in Oklahoma. Josiah attests to “the love of Jesus Christ” showered on him by his adoptive parents, which taught him to forgive his birth mother. He calls life “a gift from God, not meant to be discarded or wasted in hatred.”

“Because God has chosen to love us, we choose to love others. We choose to be a voice for the voiceless,” he says, leaving viewers with the question, “What will you choose?”

“In every situation ... always choose life,” answers Jennifer Milbourn, another Faces of Choice



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representative who in April of 1978 survived vacuum aspiration abortion. During this procedure the abortionist crushes the infant's skull *in utero* and inserts a vacuum hose with a cutting edge that dismembers the rest of the body and pulls the mutilated parts into a collection bottle. The abortionist spared Jennifer's life only after realizing her head was too large to crush, telling her mother that she would nevertheless likely miscarry because of the procedure.

Jennifer believes God miraculously saved her life so her children could live theirs. She, too, has forgiven her birth mother, acknowledging that she was as much a victim as Jennifer and "the millions of other little lives that have been lost that were worth saving."

"She fell for a lie that abortion is actually just healthcare," Jennifer states. "Abortion isn't healthcare; I am not a disease." Speaking for "the millions of people who have been aborted and did not miraculously survive," she hopes to reach women who have had abortions with the promise of God's love and forgiveness, and to teach "this younger generation the truth and realities of what it means to be pro-choice."

Inside the Abortion Industry

Jennifer experienced her own epiphany shortly before recording her testimony. She met a former abortionist, Dr. Kathi Aultman, also featured in a Faces of Choice chronicle, who revealed something particularly shocking. Had Jennifer's mother been under the care of Dr. Aultman that day in 1978, Jennifer would not be alive now. Having received specialized training in dismemberment abortions, she knew how to complete the procedure Jennifer described.

Aultman provides unique insights into the abortion industry, not only because of her former occupation, but also due to the abortion she had as an unwed medical student. Thinking that an unplanned pregnancy would destroy her career aspirations, she also sincerely believed that as an abortionist she would likewise be "taking care of women who needed her help."



Fighting for life: Gianna Jessen survived saline abortion in 1977. In her undying crusade to save babies from legalized slaughter, she asks audiences, "What side are you on?" (Photo credit: [Liberty.edu/coleman](#))

Her conversion evolved slowly, beginning after marriage in starting her family. "Suddenly I realized that [my baby] wasn't just a blob of tissue. It wasn't just some sub-human." The "baby-fetus connection"



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convinced her to stop performing abortions, but she continued to refer patients since she still thought it was a woman's right.

Meanwhile other realities began to chip away at her illusions. Among her patients who had abortions she witnessed numerous psychological and physical problems. One woman confessed that she was seeing a psychiatrist because "the realization that she had killed her child was so much worse than the realization that she had been pregnant." Another told her that she had delivered her aborted baby alive into a toilet and watched him drown. "I don't know that that woman will ever get over the psychological consequences of her abortion," grieves Aultman.

On the other hand, she knows mothers who considered abortion but opted for life; she watched their children grow. Seeing their young faces, "I began to realize, again, that these are people," she relates.

Moreover, contrary to popular misconception, "unwanted" pregnancies did not ruin these women's lives. Some kept their babies, others chose adoption. Regardless, young girls saw their families and friends rally around them, and they did not have to quit school. Help materialized even for those without apparent support. Their experiences forced Aultman to acknowledge the illogical basis of her own abortion rationale.

The final blow came when she ran across an article comparing abortion to the World War II Holocaust. "At that point I realized how [the Nazis] could do it. They did not see the Jews as human beings, just as I did not see the fetus as a human being," she explains. It hit her that, although she was always concerned about the safety and comfort of her patients, she never considered the pain and agony of "those helpless human beings ... as I tore those little bodies limb from limb."

Now a pro-life activist, Aultman points out that only around 15 percent of obstetrician-gynecologists perform abortions, and most of those quickly give up the practice. Why? "The abortionist has to count the body parts," she reasons, and "you can only count body parts for so long before it sinks in" that abortion is actually infanticide.

Open Secrets

Shockingly, some remain blind to that fact, choosing instead to prey on women convinced by the lies of feminist propaganda that robbing their offspring of life will solve all their problems. One wonders if abortionists would be as concerned about the plight of women if their profession were not so lucrative. In 2020, the nation's largest abortion provider, Planned Parenthood, reported revenue of more than \$1.6 billion from clinic income, donations, and government subsidies, according to American Life League.

Is profit what motivates abortionists to perpetuate the falsehood that a fetus is subhuman? What other proof is necessary beyond witnessing firsthand babies who actually survive the procedure? Despite media silence on the issue, it is an open secret that live births happen with alarming regularity in the country's abortion mills. The industry's flippant term for them is "failed termination of pregnancy," and ASN says that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies some 400 to 500 annually.

However, reliable statistics are hard to come by. Live Action News published research nearly a decade ago that indicated more than 1,200 babies are born alive after abortions each year. The report recalled Pulitzer Prize finalists Liz Jeffries and Rick Edmonds, who exposed the "epidemic" already present in



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1981, “recording heartbreaking testimonies from nurses who held and comforted dying abortion survivors.” Dr. Willard Cates, then-chief of abortion surveillance for the CDC in Atlanta, stated at the time, “No one is so naïve as to think there is reliable voluntary reporting of live births in the present climate.”

Though the agency has yet to correct this lapse, there is ample evidence of live births, though most babies do not live to tell about it. The infamous case of Dr. Kermit Gosnell exposes the horrifying end that awaited survivors in his Pennsylvania clinic. Gosnell is serving life in prison without parole after a 2013 conviction of first-degree murder in the deaths of three babies born alive. Former staff members testified that it was “standard procedure” for Gosnell to use scissors to sever the spinal cords of infants who survived abortions. “These killings became so routine that no one could put an exact number on them,” reads the grand jury report.

Gosnell is hardly an anomaly. Undercover reporting by Live Action News in 2013 revealed Washington, D.C., abortionist Dr. Cesare Santangelo admitting his methods. When the reporter posing as a potential patient asked Santangelo what happens when a baby survives an abortion, he explained that “legally we would be obligated to help it.... It’s all in how vigorously you do things to help a fetus survive at this point.” But, he assured her, “we would not help it.”

The scenario he described would violate the federal 2002 Born Alive Infants Protection Act, which entitles abortion survivors to life-saving medical care. Sadly, evidence indicates both that law and the federal partial-birth abortion ban are rarely enforced. For example, earlier this year, pro-life activists recovered the discarded bodies of five late-term babies outside Santangelo’s clinic, apparent victims of live- or partial-birth abortions.



Defending life: Hundreds of thousands of pro-life activists attend the annual “March for Life” in Washington, D.C., calling for an end to legalized abortion. *(Photo credit: AP Images)*

Other whistleblowers tell of similar atrocities. Jill Stanek was a registered nurse who discovered that her hospital employer regularly practiced live-birth abortion and shelved the tiny victims to die in a soiled utility room. One night, after cradling an aborted baby for the 45 minutes that he survived after birth, she committed her career to helping women who face unexpected pregnancy, encouraging them to choose life. Now an executive with the nonprofit Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, she laments on the group’s website that, despite federal prohibitions, live-birth abortion is all too common.



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That fact tips the abortion industry's hand; despite an alleged dedication to women's health, its genocidal goal remains aligned with that of eugenicist Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, who never masked her intent to supposedly cleanse humanity through selective breeding. She wrote in 1918, "All of our problems are the result of overbreeding among the working class," and in her 1920 book *Woman and the New Race*, she called birth control "the process of weeding out the unfit, of preventing the birth of defectives or of those who will become defectives ... if we are to make racial progress."

David and Goliath

Now, more than a century later, abortionists have been slaughtering around 2,400 tiny victims daily nationwide — nearly 100 every hour — according to Planned Parenthood's research arm, the Guttmacher Institute. And though the U.S. Supreme Court has reversed federal protections for abortion, its ruling hardly sounds a death knell for America's holocaust. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia have enshrined abortion as a fundamental right in state law (city law in the case of D.C.). On the list are California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington. Even a red state, Maine, makes the shameful cut. Guttmacher expects to soon add Colorado and New Mexico to the roll as radical pro-aborts in those states bristle at the (for now) pro-life majority on the high court's bench.

Challenging this entrenched culture of death is the comparatively small, privately funded, and continually growing pro-life movement. Dozens of groups nationwide fulfill various roles in a collective drive toward an abortion-free America. Oldest among these are the National Right to Life Committee and Eagle Forum, which focus on legislation and education. Other organizations such as Rachel's Vineyard and Silent No More provide a haven for women who regret their abortions, while those facing unplanned pregnancies can find enduring assistance through institutes such as the Alpha Center and Care Net.

Bound4Life and 40 Days for Life are two of many associations that emphasize the power of prayer to end abortion. Former Planned Parenthood clinic director Abby Johnson credits the latter with her conversion, depicted in the 2019 movie *Unplanned*.

There are even leftist organizations such as Feminists for Life and PAAU, the Progressive Anti-Abortion Uprising. These represent activists who espouse otherwise politically liberal philosophies, proving the pro-life cause blind to political barriers.

Perhaps most compelling of all, however, are members of the Abortion Survivors Network, whose miraculous existence bears witness to the fact that abortion is the murder of innocent children. In their role as spokesmen for the pre-born, they acknowledge their purpose is to serve God, taking their cue from the biblical dictate in the 31st chapter of Proverbs, verses eight and nine: "Open thy mouth for the dumb, and for the causes of all the children that pass. Open thy mouth, decree that which is just, and do justice to the needy and poor."

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