

Louise Warren knows firsthand about pain. As the child of alcoholic parents, she was forced to grow up faster than most of us. As she referred to it, "I felt more like I was the parent and had to take care of my parents who were really the children." Louise craved attention from her parents, especially from her father, and she searched for ways to please them. She needed their approval. Louise remembers spending enormous amounts of time alone. She said that during those times, "I would fantasize about what it would be like to have a 'normal' family. I couldn't wait to find 'Mr. Right' and get away from the pain I was drowning in." At twelve, and unable to win her father's love, Louise turned to alcohol, cigarettes, and boys.

Shortly after turning fifteen, Louise met her 'Mr. Right.' Here was her 'knight in shining armor,' her 'rescuer.' He was seventeen, and Louise was thrilled he would even give her the time of day. It was love at first sight, and they soon became physically involved. For the first time in her life, Louise felt needed and loved. She felt special. Deep down inside, though, she knew what she was doing was wrong. "I felt dirty and shameful, and I didn't want any of my friends to know." Things went smoothly for a few months and then the unexpected happened: Louise thought she might be pregnant. "At first I couldn't accept the truth," she said, "but I finally had a test done. It was true."

Louise became very confused. Her boyfriend immediately insisted that she have an abortion; however, Louise wanted to have the baby. She loved the baby's

father, and felt that an abortion would destroy something special between them. Louise also wanted to tell her parents that she was pregnant, but was afraid of fearing their reaction. Pressure from her boyfriend convinced her not to tell them.

***The abortions
were followed
by years of
depression and
self-hatred.***

years] - so Louise didn't have to tell her parents about the pregnancy. So, feeling there was no one else she could talk to, and under tremendous pressure from her boyfriend, Louise had the abortion. No one at the clinic asked her for identification or any proof of who she was. A few months after the abortion, Louise and her boyfriend broke up.

"Personally, I've never seen a relationship improved by abortion," she said. To deal with her pain, Louise became heavily involved in drugs and alcohol. Her mother became increasingly concerned about Louise's behavior and asked her daughter why she was troubled. Louise finally told her mother that she'd had an abortion a few months earlier. Her mother was shocked and angry. She questioned Louise, "How could you do that without my permission?" Louise told her mother that no one at the abortion clinic even asked her about her parents.

Sometime later, Louise went to the same clinic with a friend who was having a

pregnancy test done. Her friend didn't want anyone else to know and she asked the clinic personnel if she could give a false address and phone number. The response was that they didn't care what she put down, as long as she put something in those spaces.

The possibilities for tragedy here are far-reaching. What if an abortion patient had a pre-existing medical condition she was unaware of? Without her parents' knowledge, and with no access to proper medical records, something could go seriously wrong. If a patient gave a false name, what would she do if a serious post-abortion complication arose? Does she give her 'false name' to other medical personnel so they could get her records from the abortion clinic? Where does the deception end?

Less than a year later, Louise found herself pregnant again by her new boyfriend. She didn't think she'd have an abortion this time and her boyfriend agreed. She was still hurting so much inside though, that she felt the need to hurt others around her. "I was an emotional mess," Louise said. "I hated myself; I hated my old boyfriend; I hated my parents." One morning she woke up and after smoking marijuana, decided that day that she wanted an abortion. She called the clinic and because of a cancellation, got an appointment in 3 hours. The only problem was that her mother knew this time that she was pregnant. Her boyfriend had told his parents who had, in turn, told her mother. Louise's mother was disgusted with her daughter. "How could you be so stupid?" was her response, but abortion was never mentioned. Assuming Louise would have the baby, mother and daughter discussed how