

My Story

Category: Abortion

written by Ying Zhang | October 1, 2019

I picked my husband up after work. "Happy birthday!" I said and gave him a quick kiss. "Can we take a short walk? I have something for you."

We walked a few blocks to the arboretum and found a quiet bench to sit on. I handed him a birthday card and watched his face as he read the last words on the page: "I'm pregnant."

I waited for a reaction—any change of expression—but he just stared at me. I couldn't hold it in any longer. I burst into tears.

"I'm not ready," I said. "I need to have an abortion."

This was my first pregnancy—and for me, this was the first time it really hit home that pregnancy is not just black or white: planned or unplanned, wanted or unwanted. People's thoughts and feelings about pregnancy can be many, many shades of grey.

Some time earlier, thinking that we were ready for a baby, my husband and I had decided to stop using birth control. Several months passed, and nothing happened. We entered into a time of transition and grew busy with the changes in our lives and with ambitious career plans—trying to decide on our next steps and contemplating a move across country. It wasn't until I saw the double lines on the pregnancy test that I realized we'd made a mistake.

I thought that when I did get pregnant, it would create this wonderful feeling of anticipation and excitement—the way you feel when something you've been working so hard to achieve has finally happened. But for me, it didn't. Not only did I feel physically ill, with nausea, vomiting and fatigue, I was also grappling psychologically with guilt and uncertainty. After seeing the test results, I knew that I didn't want to be pregnant. I felt uncertain of what my husband's reaction would be, and guilty that I'd made up my mind before even telling him the news.

So the fact is that we did plan; we just didn't know what to expect on the other end. Fortunately, my husband was supportive of my choice. Looking back, having the abortion allowed us to do things in our lives and careers that we would not have accomplished had we continued the pregnancy.

To some readers, my story may sound selfish. I was not a pregnant teen, a low-income single mother or a victim of rape or domestic violence, nor was I carrying a pregnancy with fetal abnormalities. But these are not the only circumstances in which women may choose to have abortions. For me, I just knew I didn't want to be pregnant anymore. And thankfully, in our country, I'm in control of my body, my choices and my health. So I made the decision that was right for me and my family at that time.

Although I do think about my abortion from time to time, I have no feelings

of regret, but rather relief and gratitude to my husband, family and doctor for their support. I am now the mother of a toddler and am filled with joy and love when I see my baby boy. I think of what our futures will bring, and I am glad that I waited until I was truly ready—ready to be excited about parenthood, and ready to be the best mother I could be.

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