

My Marriage Was on the Rocks

Category: Suicide

written by Abbey Pachter | February 8, 2023

When I was 31, my marriage was on the rocks and I considered suicide.

It was shortly after the birth of our second daughter. My husband's main income-producing customers took their business elsewhere. In oxytocin-induced, breast-feeding bliss at home with our girls, I trusted that he'd recover. But he was in denial regarding the severe downturn in our financial stability, and he recovered neither emotionally nor financially. My bliss shattered.

I went back to work, but the cost of childcare ate into my income. We supplemented with rapidly shrinking savings. Talking with my husband was fruitless; he completely shut down.

To make matters worse, he changed his mind about having a vasectomy. With a three-year-old and a three-month-old and him essentially out of work, I was shocked. We'd long ago decided that two kids would be it. I hadn't had my tubes tied during my second C-section because he'd promised to get a vasectomy. He gave no explanation for changing his mind. It was a turning point in our marriage.

I'd never been so angry, disappointed, and sad. I actually pondered killing him but realized that, with me in prison, the children would be essentially orphaned. Distracted from the breach of trust, lack of communication, ongoing financial strain, and fatigue, my thoughts turned to suicide. If I killed myself, the kids would still have their dad and I'd be out of my misery. My husband couldn't fathom my distress.

Fortunately, a dear friend did and recommended a psychiatrist. I met Dr. W, who brought me back from the brink. After several visits, he asked me to invite my husband to a session. At the end of our first joint appointment, he addressed my husband's skill at appearing present but hiding behind an emotional brick wall. His advice was to get his own therapist to help take down the wall before he worked with us as a couple. With this revelation, I started understanding my distress.

My meetings with Dr. W continued. I learned about "necessary losses" from the author Judith Viorst. I cried—a lot. Two years later, without growth in our marriage, we divorced. The year after that, the court approved my move with the children so I could access educational grants not available locally. This advanced my career and greatly improved our prospects.

I've had no suicidal thoughts since. Our daughters are now nearly 43 and 40. Both have solid marriages full of love and trust. And let me tell you about my grandchildren . . .

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The National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number is 988.
The Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support
to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress
24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States.
Call or text 988 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.