

Hello,

My name is Karen Riley and I am a survivor of sexual abuse and rape. You might have been a victim yourself or know someone else who has been a victim.

My earliest memory of abuse was from when I was only 3 years of age. The perpetrator, who was my babysitter and a teenager at the time, abused me on multiple occasions. Over the course of my childhood, there would be 7 different people who violated me. One of those included rape.

I struggled with anxiety, depression, worry, fear, and panic attacks for a number of years. I had tried various prescription medications but could never completely shake the heaviness and foreboding feelings that constantly hovered over me. I later found out all of these struggles are very common for the type of trauma I had endured.

Through the years, I worked on forgiving the people who had abused me. However, it was not until 2018 that TRUE healing enveloped me. I had commented on social media about a sexual abuse case that was being exposed in the world of gymnastics. At that point, a friend reached out and asked if I would like to go through the Hearts Restored Sexual Trauma Healing group. I said yes. That yes changed my life. I worked through a study guide, talked openly without feeling shamed, and most importantly, felt supported.

Through that healing group I was able to let go of the shame and guilt and cling to joy and hope. For the first time, I was able to label rape as such because I thought I was responsible for what had happened to me. I learned that I was not alone, I wasn't judged, and most importantly, that it was not my fault. Community is so important when facing the truth and lies of sexual trauma. Perhaps you are facing the lies that you are dirty, shameful, not good enough, or worthless. Do those all sound familiar? Those are the lies of the enemy who wants to rob us of the truth. We are valuable, loved and created with purpose by the Creator of the universe.

Know that if you are reading this, you have been prayed for. I hope you reach out and contact me so that you can learn about the hope that can come with healing. It's never too late!

I remember how scary it can be to take that first step. You may confidentially contact me at hopeandhealing@claritycares.org or you may call or text 812.341.5114. All calls and emails are confidential. I care.

Karen Riley

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Hearts Restored: Overcoming Sexual Trauma

