

Two Riveting Stories

By Marilyn Morris, Founder/President

I love it when people send me their personal story. The following are two stories written by two men who lived extremely different lives. The choices they made as teenagers had a profound impact on the outcome of their lives. One comes from a man serving 12 years in a Colorado prison and the other from a successful businessman. Both men are hoping their stories will cause your teenagers to stop and think before they act. Note: You might consider reading this while eating dinner. Then be prepared for some interesting discussion.

A Message from a Colorado Prisoner

I am writing my personal experience to teenagers in hopes you will read this before you jump into a pool of deep regret. As you are about to see, sex before marriage ruined my life. But interestingly, it all started before I was even born.

My parents met when my mother was 16 and my father was a 21-year-old college student. After only one date, they had sex. And ... here I am. Needless to say, they were not in love and the marriage was bound for divorce from the onset.

If my mother had known who my dad was, she surely would have never chosen him as a husband. He was an alcoholic with severe emotional problems which stemmed primarily from growing up without a dad. His mother did her best in raising him, but no mother can ever fill the void a father leaves.

Because of several drunken beatings, my parents' marriage was over within one year. My mother was now 18, with a six-month-old baby and another on the way. Soon, Mom married another man who seemed to truly love her. He raised my sister and me; then they had another son together. Things were okay for a few years, but for whatever reason, they eventually divorced. The cycle was then repeated over and over again. By the time I was 12-years-old, I had five step-dads and we had lived with many other "boyfriends" in between marriages. Since we moved about every six months, I never went to the same school more than one year.

It was hard enough for a young, single woman with three kids to make ends meet, but my mom made matters worse by medicating her problems with drugs and men. Even though I suffered through this horrible life my parents created for me, I later repeated their same mistakes.

Once I became a teenager, I started the cycle all over again by having sex. Then, when I was 18, I got my girlfriend pregnant. Although I didn't love her, I decided to marry her because it seemed the right thing to do. Besides, I was determined my child would grow up with both parents, and I promised myself I would always be there for her.

While I knew my love for my daughter was never-ending, I also knew I didn't love my wife. I felt trapped, and resented her. This is how every young man I have ever talked to feels when they are involved with a girl they don't love and she gets pregnant. It's important to understand *sex without love can cause loathing*. This can even be true without a pregnancy. After all, what is



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usually the result of two people just using each other for their own selfish purposes? I've never seen it result in anything good. And since I didn't love my wife, I was a terrible husband and the marriage was bound to fail.

By age 21, our intense dislike for each other was mutual and we divorced. Everything proceeded to go downhill from there. I was granted joint custody which was all I cared about. I wanted to be there for my daughter and provide for her in every way. But my ex-wife had other plans. She was out for revenge and ran off with my daughter to another state.

I couldn't find them for nearly a year. I went into a deep tailspin and started drinking heavily. The next thing I knew I was in a bar fight and on probation. Once I finally found my daughter, I was in no position to fight for her custody since I was now in trouble with the law. So, instead of being a man and learning from my mistakes, I followed my mother's footsteps and chose to take care of my problems with alcohol. In one of my drunken stupors, I stole some money from a residence where I was staying. I was then sentenced to 12 years behind bars.



I am now close to getting out of prison, but I must say, this hasn't been easy. Unfortunately, it's too late for my daughter's childhood. She is now 16, and I worry about her, as I write this. I can only hope to salvage our adult relationship and be there for her from now on.

So can you see what sex before marriage can lead to? I just wish I could have been born in a family with two parents who were in love and who gave me a loving childhood and home. I'm sure my daughter wishes she could have had the same, as does every other child.

Think about it: Do you really want to give up your childhood and future for a few minutes of pleasure? Do you want to trade hanging out with friends for changing dirty diapers and taking care of a crying baby at all hours of the night? Do you want to end up paying child support, working overtime and no more college? And let's not forget herpes, gonorrhea and other sexually transmitted diseases. Wanna trade going out on a Friday night with bringing home your minimum-wage check and shopping at Super Wal-Mart for discount diapers? Wanna give up all of your freedom for having to answer to the needs of a child and perhaps a spouse whom you may not even love?

If the answer is no, then why trade an incredibly intimate experience you'll enjoy repeatedly in a loving married relationship, for a few minutes in a sweaty act of heat like a couple of animals on the Discovery Channel? Because that's all you're really doing – just acting like a dumb animal that doesn't know any better. But we do know better, and I'm telling you it will be so much better if you just wait until marriage.

The choice is up to you. Please think about it.

Glen's Story

It was late one evening on a school night when I received a phone call from my girlfriend. She wanted me to come over and join a few of our friends. She was very attractive and I liked her a lot.

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When I arrived, we greeted each other with a friendly kiss, and then she took my hand and led me up the stairs. I could tell she had been drinking. When I told her I didn't want to be the one to take her virginity, she cried. I think deep down she really didn't want to have sex either, and deep within me I knew having sex was not the right thing to do.

She had a bright future before her, and I did not want to risk robbing her of those dreams. The worst part was – she was in no condition to remember what should be one of the most exciting and memorable events of her life. Our relationship went to a higher level that night as we had more respect for one another.

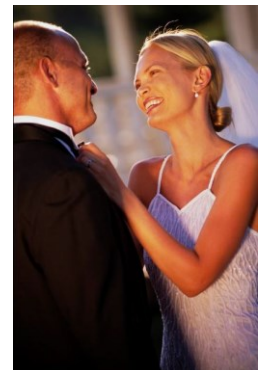
I grew up in a medium sized town with two wonderful parents that gave me the ability dream of a bright future and the tools to succeed. That doesn't mean I chose the right tools all the time. I had my occasional stupid mistakes, but by the grace of God I was able to finish high school with only a few scares and walk into college with a clean slate. Keeping my virginity is the one thing I knew was totally mine, and I had the choice of when, where, and to whom I wanted to give it. I was determined to save myself for one special girl, my wife, and I hoped my wife would have the same goals and intentions.

My college years were some of the best years of my life. Remember that future I was talking about earlier? Let me share some things I believe are a direct result of making some good decisions. The major university I applied to accepted me on the first try! I was selected into a very honorable fraternity my freshman year and was voted President my senior year. During my college years, I also worked with the youth group in my church. My senior year I actually became the director of the junior high program. Working with those kids every week and being a positive role model for them was of utmost importance to me.

It was also during my senior year in college that I married. She is a beautiful lady, and yes she had waited. We honeymooned in Canada. It was amazing!!! Later that year we both graduated from college in the same ceremony. That was fun! I enrolled in a seminary and received two master degrees while my wife taught school to pay the bills. I started my own business and for the past few years I've had a blast helping families and businesses with financial management issues. We are now expecting our first child in the fall. Last week we found out we're having a boy! We are about to move back to my hometown to open our own office. How exciting the journey has been over the past 27 years including almost 5 years of marriage!

I hope you can understand how difficult it was to say no to sex in my relationships before marriage. It took a tremendous amount of determination and discipline. But it helped me to stay focused on two things: (1) I always realized the girl I was dating was someone's daughter, sister, and/or granddaughter. (2) I was also determined I never wanted to be responsible for destroying a girl's future.

I hope you will be a positive influence to your friends and those you date. It's not always the easiest decision, but it's the honorable decision. I challenge you to look at your future with hope and a passion to follow what you know is true in your heart. Be strong. Make a difference! You'll never regret it!





Family Discussion:

- According to the prisoner's own words, when did his problems first start? (See the second paragraph of his story.)
- Describe the consequences the prisoner had to deal with because of his parents' choices.
- Describe what you think the prisoner meant when he said, "Sex without love can cause loathing." Do you agree?
- Can you envision this man behind bars writing this letter? He's had almost 12 years to do nothing but think about his mistakes. What message do you hear him sharing with you?
- Describe the consequences of Glen's decision to save sex for marriage.
- Why do you think Glen's girlfriend cried when he told her he didn't want to have sex?
- What were the two things Glen said he always stayed focused on when dating?
- Obviously, the prisoner's home life and Glen's home life had a strong influence on the outcome of their lives. But was the prisoner destined for failure and Glen destined for success just because of their upbringing? Or can good kids from good homes make disastrous mistakes that can destroy their future while kids from difficult backgrounds make good choices that can lift them out of their destructive lifestyle?
- What have these two stories taught you?

Teen Sex Is No Big Deal

If you're thinking teen sex is no big deal, think again.

- About 2,000 American teenage girls get pregnant every day.
- Only 40% of teen moms finish high school.
- Less than 2% of girls, who have a baby before 18, finish college by age 30.
- Children of teen mothers start school at a significant disadvantage once they enter school when compared to those born to older parents.
- Over a lifetime, a typical college graduate will earn about \$1 million more than a high school dropout.
- Each high school dropout costs America about \$260,000 in lost earnings, taxes and productivity.

Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
<http://thenationalcampaign.org/blog/dont-be-too-cool-school>

Going to the Texas PTA Leadership Seminar in Dallas?

Stop by and visit with Marilyn Morris, founder and president of Aim For Success in booth #421. Then plan to attend Marilyn's workshop, ***Getting Over the Sex Talk Jitters: Why, When and How to Talk to Your Child with Ease!*** (AKA – *ABCs of the Birds and Bees.*) This is the 12th year Marilyn has been invited to share this extremely popular workshop at the Texas State PTA Summer Seminar. Come see why so many schools have invited Marilyn to share this same program at their local PTA Parent Meetings.

Book Your Programs Now!

**If you haven't booked your programs yet, now is the time to do so.
Call or email Stacey Sheehan to reserve your preferred date
for next school year.
The calendar is filling FAST!**

**Stacey Sheehan
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Visit our [website](#) for additional information on any of our programs,
or [click here](#) to submit an online booking request.

If you appreciate the work of AFS, your tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated. Every penny you donate will go directly toward reaching more students and improving our programs.

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