

Jennifer Twist 816719  
Lowell Correctional Institute Annex  
11120 Northwest Gainsville Road  
Ocala, FL 34482

**My name is Jennifer Laurie Twist.** I was given my first taste of loss and abandonment when my mother left me with my grandmother for two years. I got my first sexual experience at 7 ½ years old when I was molested. For over a year I was molested and terrorized by someone 8 years older than me. At 8 years old, I learned what marijuana tasted like. By 11 years old I tried cocaine. By 13 I was hooked on both. For me there was no source of supervision. My stepfather was a womanizer. I watched him beat my mother. He was never home because of his gambling addiction. At 7 ½ when I tried to tell about the sexual abuse, my offender cracked my face open. My mothers co-dependency upon my stepfather left me susceptible to all my trauma.

At 15 years old, I was living with three girlfriends and one night we went to a bar. That night I was involved in my first criminal activity when my friends and I stole a bunch of purses from inside the bar. The next seven days we bounced \$43,000.00 in fraudulent checks. At this time I was pregnant and it was 1988. My stepfather kicked me out because I refused to have an abortion. I honestly don't know in my numbness from the emotional trauma and drug abuse what I was thinking. But at 15, seven days later, and pregnant, I was arrested. There was no investigation as to why I was just labeled a rogue teen, and my parents had to pay restitution. Shortly after at 6 months pregnant, I called my mother to my apartment where I was living with a man who intentionally drugged me and as I was sleeping he would rape me. At that point I chose to put my baby up for adoption. After I delivered her, I lost my will to live. I felt like a part of me had died. I ended up with a woman and started smoking crack and committed trafficking offenses of stolen property that were purchased off the credit cards we stole. I was seeking peace in drug abuse and excessive spending, but nothing helped. I ended up with a 9 ½ year sentence where the system just fed me anti-depressants and anti-psychotic drugs to get me high, numb and make me sleep.

The medications hindered and there was no help. Prison was a kiddie camp. We had our clothes and meetings at the park. They did not offer therapy, yet no one questioned why an underage girl was in such a mess or why her mentality was so distorted. I served 6 months of 9 ½ years and went out with the same mentality that I walked in with, but became a better and smarter criminal. I learned about sugar daddy's, how to get one, how to use him to get what I wanted because at this point it was just about me, I was too numb to care. It was 1991 when I went in and came out in 1992 when I was 19. In 1994 I came back on a violation because for a year and a half I ran hard, checks and credit cards, money..... I just wanted to be in. I wanted the jewelry, clothes, the flash, the acceptance and I served 9 months on the violation charge. I felt so ashamed, so unloved, unworthy..... I now had a past I never faced. No where and no one to turn to. I felt I had to buy friends that no one would be around me if I wasn't this person. A person I didn't even know. A person I did not want to be but thought I had to be. The biggest mistake I made was the friends that I chose. I don't care if this doesn't free me. Prison has been my mentality since I was young. Before my life sentence I lived in a prison of my own. Trapped in hostile relationships, lost confused, mentally I was still that little girl lying on the bed being raped. I was just being socially raped and didn't even know it because no one was there to show me. I got in trouble..... money got me out. I got abused and got high to numb the pain. I lost a daughter because she wasn't accepted and killed myself to let her go. There is no logic to these decisions, just emotional, mental wounds that the mind couldn't process because it was immature. I am not the only woman who has suffered. There are millions of us with similar stories yet no one to speak and still yet no one to listen.