

NIGHTMARES, SLEEP DISTURBANCES

During the 1940's in Columbus, Ohio a baby boy was born into a troubled family. His mother abandoned him in the hospital. His care went to his maternal grandmother. She was an unpleasant woman and already caring for an older sister, whom his mother also abandoned. His first home was with a disgruntled, cruel grandmother, an unwanted sibling and a grandfather suspected of sexually abusing the boy's mother, aunt and sister. When the boy was about five, his grandmother caught him and his older sister involved in sex play. Although his sister was four or five years older than he was and more than likely the instigator of the activity due to the age gap and her experience, he was the one taken downtown to Franklin County Children's Services and placed in juvenile hall. He was shuffled through several foster homes and finally ended up at Franklin County Children's Village. His family never came back for him.

Most people don't realize the devastating ripple effects of child sex abuse. Even though he wasn't truly wanted, life was fairly stable with his grandparents, until the day he was discovered in the incident with his older sister and he became the youngest victim of his family's generational sexual trauma. They took him downtown and dumped him. It must have been terrifying for a little guy that age to have his family turn their back on him and throw him to the mercy of strangers. At that age he probably didn't even understand what he had done wrong. Suddenly he was alone and had no idea what was going to happen to him.

Now he is an old man who has never had more than 2 or 3 hours of sleep at a time. If he sleeps longer, deep sleep sets in and he has two recurring nightmares that cause him to wake up abruptly in extreme fear, gasping for air, covered in sweat with his heart pounding out of his chest. One nightmare is him falling off of the largest building in downtown Columbus, always waking just before he hits the ground. The other is him running for his life in downtown Columbus, through the streets and alleys, ducking and hiding between the buildings with gorilla style fighters hunting him down. Although he didn't directly experience sexual abuse by his grandfather, his life was dramatically impacted by the sexual trauma of his mother and sister. The consequences for him were severe, with lifelong repercussions.

We encourage you to google: [brain scans of childhood trauma](#), and click on images. The damage you see is caused by experiencing repeated and/or prolonged fear. Nightmares and sleep disturbances such as insomnia are very, very common for survivors of child sex abuse. It has been clearly documented the mental and physical health problems exacerbated by lack of sleep. Sleep deprivation is used as a means of torture!

Make me a blessing, make me a blessing, out of my life may Jesus shine are some of the words to the meditative song. Participating in this prayer collective, becoming aware of the terrible complexities and ripples of child sex abuse and inviting others to join us in prayer will be a blessing to all who are affected by this crime. And our anticipation in the name of Jesus Christ is an environment of prevention and the blessing of a future without child sex abuse.

Proverbs 3:24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Se1qrIPHbn>

