Survivor Stories: Valencia

MODULES 1, 2, 5, & 6

MEET VALENCIA

Having suffered from parental abuse for as long as she could remember, when Valencia turned 18 she left her family home in Poland and moved to Germany in search of work. Often, she slept under bridges and dug through trash bins to find some food to eat. One day a man offered Valencia a fake passport and a ticket to the USA if she would pose as his wife. Thinking this would be her big break, Valencia accepted. She didn’t realize that once she arrived at the airport terminal, her new partner would put a gun to her head and insist that she swallow a tray of small balloons and retain them inside her body until they passed through customs in New York. Valencia was scared by the prospect of carrying illegal drugs, but felt trapped.

Module 2

Valencia felt dreadfully afraid that one of the balloons she swallowed would burst on the airplane, or that she would become ill and then the authorities would discover the illegal drugs she was transporting inside her body. Even after safely arriving in New York, her partner kept a tight rein by adding new threats – telling her that, if she wanted to stay out of jail, she now had to do his bidding as a prostitute for some of his drug-enterprise friends. Not able to speak English, Valencia felt completely trapped. Who would ever believe her that what happened was not her fault?

Module 5

At a truck stop in New Jersey, a driver witnessed an interaction that made him suspect illegal activity. He called the National Human Trafficking Hotline – 1-888-373-7888 – and provided them with as detailed a description as he could.

Module 6

What can you do to help Valencia and others like her? Learn how to identify and respond to cases of human trafficking in the USA.