

## Surviving domestic abuse.



Surviving domestic abuse and living to tell the story is not an easy thing to do. The reason is that many victims suffer from the aftermath of the abuse. Many of those who suffer feel they did something wrong. Victims often blame themselves for being abused. Some go through years of hiding their abuse due to not wanting to feel judged by friends and family. For some, the fear of possible retaliation from their abusers keep them from going to the police. Some believe that because they are in love with who they think their abusers are to be, the domestic abuser will change, or that the abuser will go back to who they used to be. Some victims have children and are afraid, may get hurt in the process. Many domestic abuse cases did not start from the beginning. They can begin to happen years after a relationship has transpired. There is no set time frame for domestic abuse. Domestic abuse usually shows signs such as the abuser becoming angered due to their circumstances of which do not involve the victim. Their relationships also may be in question. Many factors could lead to domestic abuse. Because many survivors speak up about their abuse, do we have the ability to help those who are still in their cruel circumstances. Unfortunately, many people question the victim first, instead of the abuser.

According to sources, domestic abuse is,

*"Domestic violence is an abuse of power. It is the domination, coercion, intimidation, and victimization of one person by another by physical, sexual, or emotional means within intimate relationships."*

For many women living in rural areas of the United States, staying home to raise children is their reality. Many rural places around the United States do not have job opportunities, domestic help centers, and so for this reason- some women choose to stay in their domestic relationships due to not have the ability to make ends meet. For the women who want to leave, work in labor-intensive work environments, or choose to move to different cities to start a new life, they receive negative feedback from their family, friends, and associates about their choices.

Men suffer from domestic abuse, as well. Unfortunately, men who speak about their abuse do not get as much recognition as they should. Some men choose to suffer in silence due to the fear of no one believing them, the fear of being called lesser of a man, and the rejection of their claims in totality to their local law enforcement agencies. Domestic abuse is a non-gender crime. Abuse is abuse and should a crime in all instances.

Many domestic abusers use tactics to keep victims from leaving. Some use children, money, blackmail, and suicide, as vices to keep the victim in their control. For some women, when they speak up to the local law enforcement, men may get a slap on the wrist, because to outsiders, if the women choose to stay, then they are either exaggerating their abuse and or they enjoy this treatment. Some men who report the abuse are not taken seriously due to men being physically stronger than women. To many people, a man can not get abused by women because of the physical differences. To make assumptions about a person's ability to inflict pain onto others based on gender, status, race, age, etc. is a reason people choose not to speak up about their domestic abuse situations.

People must make domestic abuse a priority to prevent. Receiving help should become more accessible and gender-neutral. Domestic abuse should not have personal beliefs and stereotypes associated and concluded to facts. All domestic abuse complaints should be investigated and judged in an unbiased manner for the betterment of the victims involved.

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