

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

D.A.R.E.

**Domestic
Abuse
Recovery
Essentials**



**Love does not
Abuse**

**NO EXCUSE FOR
ABUSE**



Formal Apology

For many in the community who have suffered domestic abuse, the Church and Christians have been little or no help. This sometimes is evidenced by seeming indifference, genuine discomfort and an inability or unwillingness to address the crisis effectively. This by no means excuses a lack of compassion and/or involvement due to poor training, self-centeredness or turning a blind eye. On behalf of the Christian community, I apologise profusely to anyone who has been impacted adversely, as I too have suffered not only domestic abuse as a Christian and a minister, but also the ignorance, indifference and inaction by Christians.

Dear women, forgive us, is all I can plead; for although Christians fail time and again to represent the one they say they belong to, please know that does not change the nature or mercy of GOD who said whatever we do to the least of these we do to HIM.

Christian women, suffering domestic abuse, also have been ignored and dismissed for years by the very Church/Community they believed would protect them; having scriptures twisted to support the abuser and being blamed, ridiculed and sent back to further violence and abuse under an alleged Christian banner. The wake of such advice and lack of support has led to some women dying either by the hands of the abuser or by their own hands; or having been reduced to constant trauma and mental illness. In other cases children have become the primary victims both physically, sexually and emotionally of such indifference. There never is an excuse for abuse and neither is there any excuse for denying or ignoring this social crisis.

In the following pages of this booklet, domestic abuse is described in detail from its mechanics, to the recovery process. I have worked in a professional and personal capacity with a number of other women who have suffered domestic abuse.; and this along with my own experience of domestic abuse, my education, research and much prayer has urged me to compile a resource to those suffering currently or who have fled such circumstances. In closing, please never believe you deserve domestic abuse and always believe *Love is not Abuse!*

With all my heart,

Jessie Campbell





What is domestic abuse?

At its heart, domestic abuse is power and control of one person over another. This is achieved by a myriad of methods including mind control, intimidation, identity theft, fear, assault, etc.

What it isn't...

- Domestic abuse is not an excuse because of someone else's harsh, unfair or violent childhood.....nor for a bad day at work, for financial struggles, etc.
- Domestic abuse is not your fault.
- Domestic abuse is not just physical violence, although it often includes assault.
- Domestic abuse is not based on an equal balance of power; for one partner is afraid of the other.
- Domestic abuse is an insidious, entangled, sticky product of a society that ignores the needs of its more vulnerable citizens.
- Domestic abuse is never deserved!



Domestic Abuse has no barriers or favorites

It transgresses all social classes, wealth, education, ethnicity, religion and culture. The stereotypical model of poorly educated, working class unemployed, drinker, is far too simplistic.

Education, culture or class cannot protect one from domestic abuse; although it may protect the abuser because of their financial ability to access the legal system, or conceal abuse under a cloak of respectability. Domestic abuse effects all strata of society.



The motivation for abuse is control and power

A desire for control and power is foundational to domestic abuse. This may be disguised as love initially; and later attributed to being your fault.

But love does not abuse. In domestic abuse your heart is used against you. This often is why women remain in domestic abuse. What you may call love, the abuser calls power and control. Once you realize this truth, the truth will set you free.

A key understanding to grasp is "I don't deserve to be abused." Realising you don't have to suffer or accept abuse, is deeply liberating. From this realisation, we step into freedom.



Domestic abuse is never deserved



As a relationship begins, once you observe a **red flag(s)** run in the other direction; or if you are unsure test the waters by addressing the concerning behavior/issue and observe the reaction you receive. If it is defensive, angry, accusatory, dismissive or manipulative be sure there are more red flags and abuse is just under the surface awaiting your capture. No matter how flattering, seemingly loving, loyal or adoring the person appears to be **A RED FLAG IS A RED FLAG IS A RED FLAG** regardless of how you or the abuser justify it.



NEVER DENY RED FLAGS OR YOU WILL BECOME A VICTIM TO THEM.



Red Flags

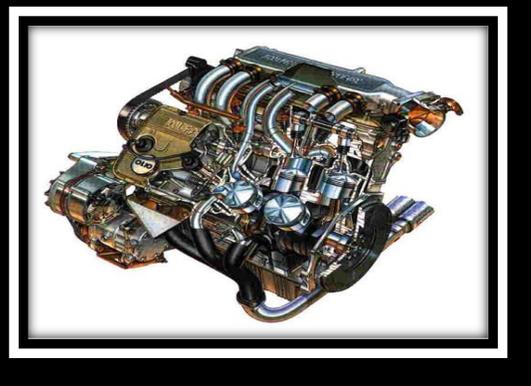
- *Barely know the person. Do not count months/years of being an acquaintance as truly knowing someone, including online 'friend' or knowing of someone through mutual friends or acquaintances.*
- *They declare great/special love for you in brief period of time.*
- *You are the only one who understands them.*
- *The only one worthy of their love*
- *You have convinced yourself they are the only one worthy*
- *Feel as if you have known them all your life after only brief period of time (soul mate scenario)*
- *God's made you for them and them for you (a match made in heaven)*
- *Together you will help change the world*



RED Flags are Stop Signs

- *They start making all the major (and sometimes minor) plans for all areas of your life; e.g. where to live, type of work/career, marriage dates in a overwhelming tsunami of emotion and passion.*
- *You feel you are not allowed to ask certain questions or make comments about particular issues without a negative or aggressive response.*
- *Loneliness draws you to settle for whatever is being offered.*
- *They can't live without you. (but remember they have spent a lifetime without you and somehow survived).*
- *Time will always tell.....give it time.*

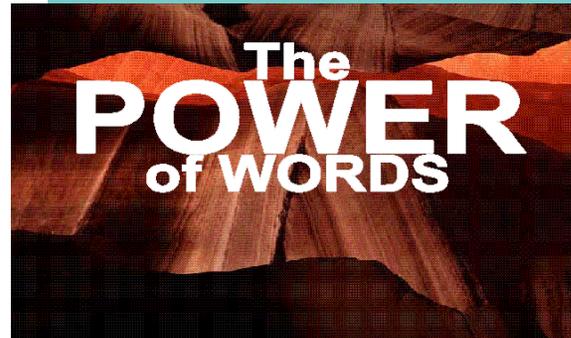
love does not abuse



The Engine and Mechanisms of Abuse

Manipulation is the engine of domestic abuse. This can take the form of threatening, bullying, and mind games. The mental gymnastics associated with domestic abuse are sometimes so subtle and ingrained, that the one being abused has ceased from noticing and lives on in an auto-pilot capacity.

Fear is the fuel for this engine. Fear powers the manipulation. The tactic is to manipulate one into being afraid they are wrong, have misjudged, that their reality is skewed, they are not worthy, or are less valuable without the abuser, and a myriad of other suggestions. These combine to debilitate and cause doubt about one's essential identity. The other brand of fear is the fear of being harmed or of having one's children harmed, if one does not comply with the abuser.



Language is the mechanism of manipulation. There are innuendos and unspoken messages embedded in the words said, that continue to bind the one being abused to the abuser; e.g. "You're wrong about me, but I forgive you.", "If you'd just stop _____, (fill in the blank), I'd wouldn't be upset."; "You want this or it wouldn't be happening." These statements imply it is your fault and the abuser has no responsibility. Domestic abuse is based on power and control. It is not a question of the abuser being unable to exercise self-control, if they are able to do so publically. It is however, a question of keeping the one being abused under their control. Abusers will often dismiss, ignore or deny abuse ever occurred or will toss in a red herring to deflect. But your memory is not failing you, nor is it faulty, even if they claim otherwise.



Foot or Fist becomes the order of the day when manipulation, fear and language are an embedded routine. You then are either under the foot (oppressed); walking on eggshells or are confronted with the fist (physical violence). When you reach this stage, escaping domestic abuse seems impossible. You are so tied to the abuse, you do not know how to have an identity free from it. One becomes driven to repeat the pattern, whether with the current or a 'new' partner.

Abuse attracts abuse - The impact of domestic abuse seems to intrinsically contain a need to repeat the pattern. You can be drawn to abuse, and must admit this or you are likely to fall into other abusive situations.

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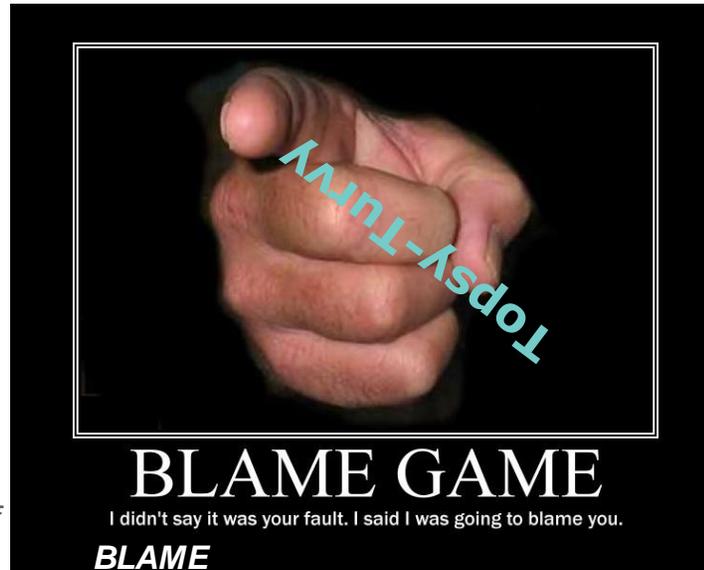
abuse



Cat and Mouse Game

In the early days there is a process of baiting and testing the proverbial waters. When you 'take the bait' the game level increases in intensity and manipulation. If at this stage you question the motives or character, this will be met with either great defensiveness, denial and possibly verbal abuse or conversely sickly sweet whitewashing of the matter. Consider these 'red flags' and proceed at your own risk.

Once the bait is taken, layers and levels of manipulation will intensify which can include romance. Don't be captivated by the lure of romance. If you are dizzy with it, BE CAREFUL! Romance is very alluring, but if there is no substance, romance will soon fizzle and you will have already been hooked. When romance dies down and control replaces it, regret often is too late. Whirlwind romances are for Hollywood and usually end in destruction and brokenness.



This aspect of the cycle is more entangled and often uses what is known as 'gas lighting', where your reality is purposely misinterpreted, twisted or misused against you. If you are exposed to blame long term, self-blame is foundationally formed and very difficult to dislodge. Blame is the glue of domestic abuse.

FEAR

This ties into the previous aspect of the cycle. When blame takes hold and threatening, verbal abuse or actual physical abuse occurs; fear is the automatic response. Fear then becomes a manipulative tool with which to control.

Deep Programming

This is the final aspect of the ascending cycle of abuse; where layer upon layer of abusive tactics seemingly recreate one's identity to match the abuser's reality.



Non-battering abuse

This is the most common type of domestic abuse and the most ignored; for without broken bones, blood or bruises, abuse is often not acknowledged. Psychological, emotional, sexual and sometimes spiritual in nature, this abuse is just as debilitating internally to the one being abused, as is physical violence. Complicating this type of abuse is the fact that many women feel unjustified in seeking help; because any physical assault is minor in comparison to more serious physical injury. This is the cunning nature of domestic abuse. The typical, "He's only hit me once or twice or he only screams and swears at me a lot." or "He only reacts if I _____", or "I shouldn't have upset him," maintains the woman as a future target.

Blame is the glue of domestic abuse



"I" dentity Theft

Identity theft is insidious and often occurs over long term domestic abuse. This burglary of a soul is the overall tactic of domestic abuse, The abuser superimposes his reality over yours, to negate its existence and ultimately your individual identity. The goal being constant doubt, confusion and loss of who one is. In this manner the abuser can control and wield power over another far more easily. This becomes a far-reaching goal to destroy the very fabric of one's sense of self, generating a robotic push button response, from the one being abused (although just under the surface, lays a highly charged emotional oppression that has been numbed by abuse). This is not simply brainwashing, although it is a component, but systematic erosion of one's understanding of self; creating a learned



helplessness, of "What would I do without you?" type thinking. The basic objective is to make you invisible and the abuser and his perspective the only 'right one' at all cost. Within this trace-able pattern lies the intrinsic motivation for abuse, namely control and power over others. This should not mistakenly be considered a random set of circumstances, but a highly strategic course of action to produce specific results. If, the abuser is unsuccessful initially, repeated tactics are implemented; including re-enforcing their reality and diminishing your value or legitimacy through harassment and degradation; via verbal, physical, or sexual abuse. As well as planting seeds of doubt by applying manipulative language.



Masks

Once your identity has been stolen or even has begun to be dissolved, you can easily become merged with what is underneath the mask of the abuser. You may convince yourself he is just needy, hurt from childhood wounds, requires your help, rescue or therapy. As your own identity erodes, you come to think like him, behave like him and even believe like him. Your own moral conscience may be swayed to for example, blame others as he does, express racism as he does, be easily angered as he is; seeing others and yourself through his eyes and the list continues; if this is a long term situation you will not tend to notice the changes in your own personality, as it has been under construction over a period of years.

love does not abuse



MIND MAZE

There is a process of recognizing and walking through the maze of brainwashing and mind control associated with domestic abuse during recovery. This unraveling allows you to regain your own mind, reclaim your identity and be restored by re-establishing your most treasured beliefs, views and even ordinary, everyday opinions.

Control motivates the abuser to build this elaborate mind maze; to dictate your thoughts, feelings, reactions, whereabouts, relationships, etc. During the process of recovery your thoughts are becoming yours again. There is a reclamation of self where layers of false beliefs will begin to unravel and be peeled away.



Pit-Falls

There are a number of pit-falls in the recovery process of domestic abuse of which one needs to be aware.

Addiction to Abuse - Includes a temptation to return to the past, whether to the previous abuser, or a new person that embodies that role. This includes ignoring "**RED FLAGS**" and entering into another abusive situation to normalise abuse and repeat patterns. Usually this new abuser will be more dangerous and more compelling than the one you have escaped from.

Abuse Attracts Abuse

Unresolved feelings, damage, and wounds make us vulnerable to further abuse. Ensure you are receiving support

in resolving these issues. Don't isolate or remove yourself from appropriate help. You can become unknowingly complicit in the maintenance of abuse; co-opted by the abuser to defend, justify and ignore what is unacceptable. Such statements as, "I shouldn't have mad him mad" or "I knew it was building up.", tend to normalise domestic abuse.

Replacements are Futile

During the recovery period, after long term domestic abuse, there are several factors to consider:

- Never enter a new relationship while still easily triggered or unhealed. Because judgment can be highly skewed, recovery takes time and care. You will not find Mr. Wonderful, but rather Mr. Worse if your own issues are unresolved.
- You may want to mask loneliness with activity; or may attempt to handle trauma by relocating repeatedly. Watch for repetitive patterns, they are signposts of emotional overload. Try to remain stable in a safe location, maintaining friendships (if possible), work and other daily routines to solidify your recovery. Constant movement and activity can hinder the healing process.

The motivation for abuse is control and power



PIT-FALLS...Continued

Re-traumatisation

- There is a tendency to unknowingly re-traumatise oneself by the choice of people, residence, job, circumstances, etc. This is very common during the recovery process, so being aware is crucial. If a choice you make causes backward motion, be honest with yourself and change course.

Repetition Hinders healing

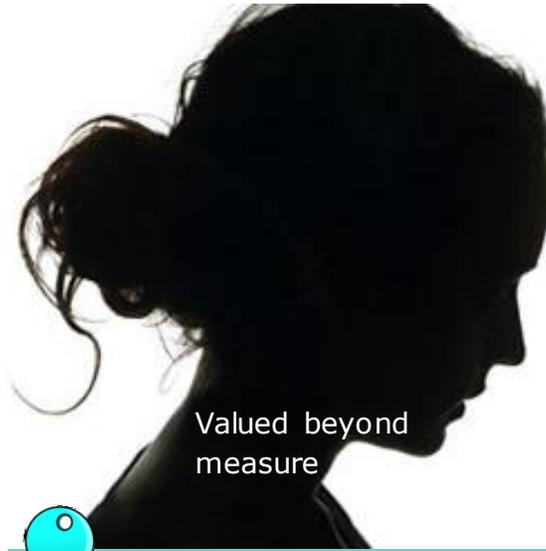
After long term abuse, one is often drawn again to abusive situations. A seemingly magnetic pull exists, which if submitted to will continue the cycle of abuse and obstruct genuine, enduring healing.

Addiction to abuse derives from woundedness. This wound is often due to rejection, abuse or neglect suffered in childhood. There is a compulsion to repeat as your identity is enmeshed with domestic abuse. You may not know, or recognise your identity (self) without abuse, or as apart from abuse. Being attached to the memory, dynamics, and beliefs relating to the abuse can be as much a conflict to battle internally, as the external trauma of domestic abuse. This can be the process you experience once you have removed yourself from the abuse. It is a process to unravel over time with care and support. Even after you have left, there may be a deep seated belief you owe the abuser something; or you are somehow obligated and have let them down by leaving or refusing to continue the unhealthy relationship.

Wounds of the past can cause you to believe your value is inextricably linked to someone else's value for you. In many cases, one may believe that their essential value is derived from a man. If that man happens to be an abuser, your value will be forever chased, never found and always degraded. Many women began this journey of abuse with fathers (or father figures) that damaged them through a myriad of methods, including ; sexually, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually, as well as through neglect and abandonment. Such conditions prime one to pursue a 'false love' of the *one day-some day* sort that will finally heal all the wounds. Tragically the man chosen is usually a carbon copy of the original abuser; because abuse and its impact attracts more of the same. Within this framework of addiction to abuse are these foundational lies:

- I need a man to exist and define me.
- A man owns me or I need to belong to a man to have purpose and meaning.
- I am useless without a man.
- If I am really loved, a man will want to take care of everything (a.k.a. controlling most, if not all matters).
- A belief you owe your life to them and are obligated by a false sense of loyalty, that often disguises your fear of abandonment or fear of retribution.

Repetition keeps you from healing



Valued beyond measure



If you wouldn't give your child to a relative stranger, or to someone you were unsure of, don't give yourself away either.

Value -

When you know your value, you will not throw or give away your heart to just anyone who cons and manipulates well enough to obtain it. Reclaiming your inherent value is essential and will entail time. Your value is in being loved by God, being precious, so unique no one else will nor has ever had the same thumbprint as you; fearfully and wonderfully made. Your value in not in gaining the approval of a man, no matter how much he claims otherwise.

Activity:

List the things you love to do and begin practicing them again. This allows you to reconnect with your genuine identity, not the false one imposed upon you by domestic abuse.

Why do we tolerate it?

If you believe you are essentially unworthy, domestic abuse will be normalised in your mind and tolerated in your life. It does not matter if the acceptance of abuse stemmed from childhood trauma or originated as an adult; normalising abuse is the master plan of abusers. No matter how strong, how educated, how bright, how beautiful, how resilient, living in domestic abuse, makes one begin to believe the lie.....*I deserve to be abused.*

Until we address the wounds behind this belief, we tend to remain in the cycle of hurt, worthlessness and abuse.



Valued

beyond

measure

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

No Band-Aids

Domestic abuse cannot be cured or fixed by Band-Aids. It is a complex social issue that requires intensive support, time and a willingness for lasting change. Abusive relationships don't become that way, they start that way; so that you are trying to fix something that never was healthy. The dynamics are enmeshed and not easily disentangled. The first step is to remove yourself and children from danger. Because most people equate domestic abuse with severe physical violence, those suffering from the myriad of other expressions of domestic abuse may feel they have no right to seek help and remain silent. Never remain silent about abuse; whether it is physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or sexual. Speak to those who can help you. A number of contacts are listed at the end of this booklet.

Abuse is abuse and there is no excuse.

LEAVING

Why is this so hard? What causes us to stay when we know from years of previous conflicts, the true consequences? Are we weak and hopeless as others claim? Are we stupid as the abuser has told us? Are we destined to this type of life because it is the life we came from or the only life we believe we can have now?

Leaving.....means everything changes, everything. The good and the bad. It means we lose the hopes and dreams we began this relationship with. It signifies a death of sorts, death to the old ways, perhaps friends, family, location. Fleeing from domestic abuse is similar to being a refugee fleeing from a war-torn country, for in order to survive you must leave your home, those you know, familiar routines, work, places. It means we have to leave to live.



Leaving continued...

Leaving can mean to us, we have failed; weren't strong enough, clever enough, beautiful enough, etc. Most women in domestic abuse, genuinely love the one who is abusing them.....so leaving is no less painful than if the person they left died or disappeared. We are leaving those we love. No matter how terribly they treated us, love remains. This is not a soppy, Hollywood version of love, but one earned by bitter steadfastness, where we have done all we could to stay, hoping the change promised would eventuate.

No Excuse for Abuse



GETTING FREE

When we say no to the addiction of abuse (removing ourselves from it and from all contact), we are saying

No to:

- brainwashing
- living in fear
- addiction
- lies
- manipulation
- pretense
- foolishness
- seduction
- fairytale ideas



- unhealthy connections
- trauma
- fantasy
- male ownership
- destruction
- foolish pride (theirs and yours)
- concealing abusive facts
- wearing abuse on your face, body and heart
- Push Button Barbie (a.k.a. Yes Girl)
- violence
- rage
- enmeshment
- placating
- self-destruction
- and so much more...



RECOVERY

Recovery is not an overnight process, but takes time and patience with yourself. You may find your behavior, attitudes and even reactions to others, (including your children) are not your optimum choices. If you are struggling with anger, hurt, loss or any number of other responses, seek help immediately. Do not allow these feelings or behaviors to continue unattended. When one has endured long term domestic abuse, even the brain's neural pathways can be affected. This need not be permanent as support is available from professionals, agencies and those you trust. Enduring long term domestic abuse can erode your personal confidence even in the smallest of tasks, so give yourself time to re-learn to live again. Although it is a trying and difficult path, the rewards of freedom from abuse for you and your children are worth the process, for YOU ARE WORTH IT!



Moving Forward...

No Contact is the best policy if at all possible. This is a major step to being disentangled from the pattern of domestic abuse. Mind control and manipulation are then extinguished as you are no longer participating in the game. If contact must occur because of children, set firm boundaries and have official supervision arranged so that no unnecessary contact occurs. The longer the time span in which there is no contact, the further and faster your process of recovery.



Be Pro-Active

Activity:

Write down the issues, beliefs and circumstances in abusive situations that draw you. This will assist you in becoming aware of your weaknesses and vulnerability.

For instance, a need to be wanted can be so overpowering, as you are recovering from domestic abuse. With this desire, vulnerability to flattery, seduction, a.k.a. appeals of 'real love' can draw you into an unhealthy liaison.



ABUSE IS NOT YOUR HOME... Remember you do not have to submit to abuse from any man, for there is no excuse for abuse and you are not the cause of it.



Relearning

- Remember you are learning to think, live, and breathe again. Your cognitive processes have been damaged; similar to when someone has had a head injury. Your head (mental processes) have been short-circuited, rewired, broken in some cases. So it is as if you are a small child (toddler) learning to make the most basic decisions again. Be easy on you, this is a delicate time of recovery.
- If you are flooded with the suppressed emotional, mental and physical responses that now can be freely expressed, do not worry; this is an aspect of healing and recovery from domestic abuse. Seek help if you are feeling overwhelmed.



She'll be right, mate

In a nation that espouses She'll be right, mate ship and a fair go, we must at this time admit...

- *she won't be right if she is laying battered on the floor*
- *she won't be right if she lives in fear in her own household*
- *she won't be right if she watches helplessly as her children are abused*
- *she won't be right if she is told countless times she is worthless*
- *she won't be right if she is manipulated, coerced or threatened*



- *she won't be right if she has no right to her own thoughts/feelings/body*
- *she won't be right if she walks on eggshells just to feel safe*
- *she won't be right until the laws and agencies in place, protect her and her children rather than the perpetrators*

She will only be right, when he admits he has no right to beat, demean, degrade, shame and destroy her.....

For Australia is a nation of not just mates, but women and children



Where to From Here???

Sweeping this under the carpet will no longer suffice, for we as a nation keep tripping over the mountain of damage, death and destruction produced from domestic abuse. The only way forward is through honesty, for there is no freedom in pretense. Dialogues between all parties involved, within a genuinely safe environment, (for those who have been injured and impacted) are crucial. The closed doors behind which domestic abuse occurs need to be swung open, and the winds of change ushered in; so that women and children in this first world country are no longer victims of an insidious national secret.

SAFE



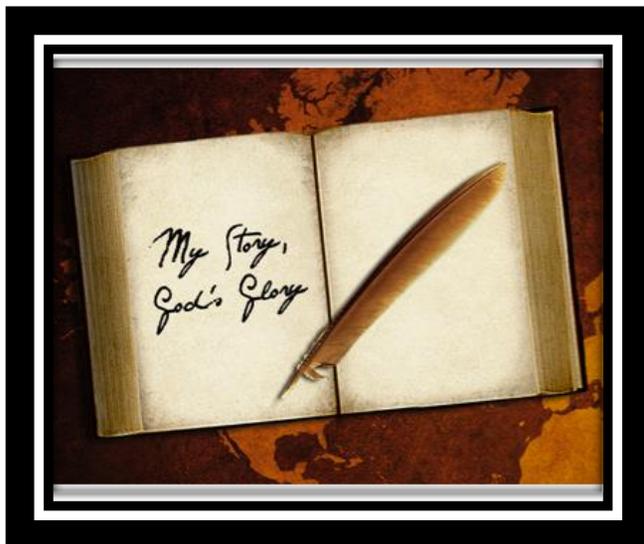
SAFE

S stop the abuse by removing yourself and your children

A ask for help from police, social services, friends, neighbours

F find safe shelter

E educate yourself on what you can do, not on what you can't



My STORY ~

We all have a story....the life we have lived, the circumstances that surrounded our birth, our childhood, our growing into adults, etc. but we are more than just our stories. We are precious souls. So as I share my story, the underlying thread that will appear is value; the value of each one of us.

I began many years ago in Los Angeles in a hospital that no longer stands. But within the walls of that medical facility I was born far too early, requiring immediate blood transfusions, monitoring, and incubation as a high risk infant, with little chance of surviving. Of course I did survive, to tell the tale and was sent home to a severely volatile, abusive and dangerous environment.



Early events embedded fear, shame and terror into my small frame; including cowering behind chairs as a 3 year old, yet so desperately wanting to help, while my mother was beaten bloody by my father regularly. We lived in fear. We lived in poverty. We survived. This was the norm and although my mother was kind and loving to me, I never knew when I would be grabbed by the hair and thrown across the room, cursed vulgarly, threatened, bullied or sexually abused. This was life and yet my sister and I still managed to play, laugh and be children daily with one another. I even wrote poetry and remember my first poem at 7 years old entitled, Sorrow, for truly that was my heart. By the time I was 11, my mother lapsed into a nervous breakdown from which she never recovered fully, with numerous relapses many times a year.

She was institutionalised and I remember as a 12 year old visiting her behind locked, steel doors, wanting with all my heart my mother back and just as desperately wanting to leave the cold, solid grounds where we sat together on a small bench.

Once I reached adulthood, I found men became my sedative. I wore my shame as bravado, pretending I was the conqueror, not the conquered. Marrying young, divorcing nearly as young. I knew nothing about loyalty, commitment, real love or death due us part vows. Shuffling through a series of relationships, nothing sedated the pain as I had hoped. In fact all these liaisons augmented my despair, even ending in rape at least once. But underneath all of this I knew there was more to life than just suffering and chasing false hopes. Although I was very attractive as a young woman and therefore could hide my hurt and shame under a cloak of beauty, this only led to more heartache with the wrong men, in the wrong place, at the wrong time. I also was drawn into every type of therapy one could imagine, hoping something would finally work. And although there was insight and understanding and even at times a release from some of the pressure, nothing ever liberated.

It was as fleeting as the men I clung to. I also searched for one I knew was there. Not the man of my dreams but the God of all TRUTH. I investigated every religion and 'ism' I could find; seeking HIM. Somehow though, men still became my compass for many more years. I was fooled by them, temporarily chased by them, and left them or was left by them; whoever got there first. In the midst of all the partner trading, I came to Australia with one of the victim/tormentors, only to realise the gravity of the mistake 10,000 miles from home. There was nowhere to return to, my mother had died 2 years earlier in the hospital, having been institutionalised for many years and my father and I were, let us say on less than speaking terms. He sadly died three months after I arrived in Australia. This story would be a tragedy except, except for this...in Australia, as my patterns continued to repeat, I came to an impasse. I was pregnant. I wanted this baby with all my heart and although not married and the father unwilling to accommodate such an arrangement, I persevered with the pregnancy. I had 3 years before aborted my baby when in this same situation. The agony, the sorrow, the heaviness of that loss would never be mine again, I vowed. I had prayed as I knew there was a God although I had not yet come to faith in Jesus Christ. I begged Him for another chance to have a baby for all those three years.

He gave that to me and I would this time bear a very healthy, well cooked (10 days late) 9.2 lbs. baby son. But things were still quite messy and untenable in a number of ways; which I am not at liberty to discuss. So I cried out, actually stropfully, sassily demanded God do something! I gave the Creator of the Universe, of all the galaxies, of all creation, an ultimatum, either make something loving happen (my idea of course was another man), or I was moving to another state; for that was my M.O. (discomfort caused migration, usually to far distances). Well, the Lord delivered a very different Man than I had expected. And in a little cottage, in a little town on a little island I met the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Giver of Life, the Lord of Glory, Jesus Christ, the Son of GOD. It was not a religious experience, or a religion, or a comfortable little belief system to which I came to believe in, but God Himself, the Lover of my soul; the one who bled and died for me. The one who no matter how foolish, how mistaken, how hurt and shame-filled I was, took me into His arms and made me whole. I only needed to admit I needed HIM. The same One who was willing to take all of humanity's anguish, hate, hurt, pride and sin and become sin who knew no sin. When I came to understand not in my intellect, which I had so highly regarded for years, but in my heart that God the Father had in fact separated Himself from God the Son, not because He had to, but because He wanted

to for my and all of humanity's sake; I knew no other GOD would die in my place, would suffer the anguish of not just a crucifixion, but of separation, God torn asunder from God. My heart soared and I fell in love, so to speak, with the One who made me, died for me and now lives in me.

Being a Christian does not mean you never make a mistake, or fall for old habits and patterns. It is always a choice. Well, 4 years later, I thought I had met the one right for me and although there were a number of red flags, I ignored them because I wanted this man; so I convinced myself otherwise. During the honeymoon, it all became blatantly clear. I lived for several years in a domestically abusive marriage, where as a Christian I tried to remain, not wanting to disappoint God, not wanting to be weak, because I truly loved this man; and year after year praying things would change until one day the Lord Himself, told me I must leave. When I argued with Him, He made it clear that obedience to HIM was love and was I going to obey or argue. So my son and I had to prepare for the hardest of decisions and subsequent departure plans. It took more than two year of recovery to finally

breathe again. But in that time, I have ministered to many in Australia, Africa and America, for nothing is wasted in Him. God has shown me how to love others with His heart and is changing me day by day, transforming me by His power and grace. In my lifelong love affair with God, He continues to hone and carve and transform me in ways I could never have imagined. I travel to far away places now, to help others as a minister in Asia and Africa. God inspires me to write poetry (one book published and another on its way) to encourage and strengthen those who read the poems. When I meet people now, no one would guess my background; not because it is so well hidden, but because I am a new creation in Christ. Oh how I love this God of glory, not just for my sake, but for the sake of all. So this booklet is my gift to you, dear women, to help you know the truth that can set you free.....LOVE DOES NOT ABUSE.

Believe dear women you are fearfully and wonderfully made for a purpose and joy you perhaps could never imagine. God promises to heal the broken hearted and bind up their wounds. Truly He can.

Finally I am sharing some verses from one of the most beautiful Psalms (139), to balm your hearts.

God Bless you,

Jessie

Psalm 139: 1-18

O Lord, You have Searched me and known me.

2 You know my sitting down and my rising up;

You understand my thought afar off.

***3 You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.***

4 For there is not a word on my tongue,

But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.

5 You have hedged me behind and before,

And laid Your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

It is high, I cannot attain it.

***7 Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?***

8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there;

If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

9 If I take the wings of the morning,

And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

10 Even there Your hand shall lead me,

And Your right hand shall hold me.

***11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me,"
Even the night shall be light about me;***

***12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light are both alike to You.***

***13 For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.***

14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

***Marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well.***

15 My frame was not hidden from You,

When I was made in secret,

And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.

And in Your book they all were written,

***The days fashioned for me,
When as yet there were none of them.***

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!

How great is the sum of them!

18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand;

When I awake, I am still with You.

Helpful Reading

Links

- Abusive Relationships explored/described by a professional in the field
<http://www.abuseandrelationships.org/index.html>
- *Stop the Violence/End the Silence.*
<http://www.immigrantwomenhealth.org.au>
- No Place for Abuse: Biblical & Practical Resources to Counteract Domestic Violence
http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=WW838387&p=1006327
- Is It My Fault?: Hope and Healing for Those Suffering Domestic Violence.
<http://www.amazon.com/Is-It-Fault-Suffering-Violence>
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2011/december/but-he-never-hit-me-christian-primer-on-emotional-abuse.html>
- <https://avalancheofthesoul.wordpress.com/2014/02/22/what-abusers-hope-we-never-learn-about-trauma-bonding/>

HELP

Counselling & Support links:

- [Daisy App](http://www.daisyapp.com)
[1800RESPECT](http://www.1800respect.org.au)
- <https://www.1800respect.org.au/daisy/>
- Domestic Abuse and Family Violence (Lifeline)
Call us on 13 11 14 [Chat one-on-one with us](#)
- **White Ribbon**
<http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/finding-help>
- Domestic Violence Prevention Centre
<http://www.domesticviolence.com.au/pages/domestic-and-family-violence-support-services.php>
- 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732): 24 hour, National Sexual Assault, Family & Domestic Violence Counselling Line



Helpful Links for you and your children

Trauma in Children
<http://www.theactgroup.com.au/documents/makingspaceforlearning-traumainschools.pdf>

Trauma Informed Services for Indigenous Children
<http://www.aihw.gov.au/uploadedFiles/ClosingTheGap/Content/Publications/2013/ctg-rs21.pdf>

Trauma Recovery
<http://www.childhood.org.au/get-help>

The Freedom Programme
<http://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/book.php>

- SMART TRAINING - TRAUMA RECOVERY (Rewiring Neural Pathways Caused by Trauma)

<http://www.childhood.org.au/our-work/trauma-recovery>

Highlighted References

- Carnes, Patrick J. (2015) *The Betrayal Wound (Revised)* Health Communications USA
Hidden Hurt
http://www.hiddenhurt.co.uk/male_psychopath.html
- Chenoweth, L. & McAuliffe, D. (2015). *The Road to Social Work and Human Service Practice (4th Ed)*. Southbank, VIC: Cengage.
[What Is Domestic Abuse - whiteribbon.org.au](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au)
[Adwww.whiteribbon.org.au/Stop-Violence](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/Stop-Violence)
<http://www.abuseandrelationships.org/>

On the Journey Home



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