

Rebel – domestic violence

I am a victim of domestic violence, and I think the thing that was the hardest to realize was that I really was a victim. My ex-husband was very controlling, um, very isolating from friends, family, church. He monitored my coming and going. He did not let me talk on the phone. You know, my family was “stupid,” and I was stupid, and the things that . . . you know, the apartment that I moved in . . . that he moved into with me, it was stupid, you know. Everything wasn’t up to his par, including me. And so you know, I was constantly in a race with myself to see, you know, what I can do to make it better or fix it. And it just kind of snowballed from there. And the crux was when he threatened to have me killed.

You could put on your social face when you were outside, but, um, the thing that was most frightening was I was literally afraid to go home at the end of the day. Work was a comfortable setting. Church was a comfortable setting. Um...nobody was going to do anything, but then you get in your car to go home, and you start having panic attacks. The daily impact . . . once he threatened to have me killed. . . It was like you were outside looking in, ‘cause by the time that happened, you know, I wasn’t really talking to my family because I had pretty much pushed them by the wayside. They didn’t like him or how he treated me because they could see it. And of course, I was too involved in the relationship to see, and, um, so there was nobody to go to.

I kept thinking in the back of my mind that domestic violence happened to somebody else, you know? On TV, it’s some other person or some other background or lifestyle or age of a person. You know, I didn’t think it would be happening to me.

You go through the whole realm of emotions. One minute you’re mad as a hatter that you allowed yourself to do this or that he did it to you. The next minute, you’re so glad and relieved that you’re out of it.

He was sexually abusive. Um . . . and I think of all of it, that was probably the most painful and still probably the hardest to get past.

You know, when you’re in a relationship with somebody that you love and they use sex forcefully, it’s devastating, it’s demoralizing. I’ve gotten to the point where I know I’m better off without him, and I’m moving forward. Me being a victim of domestic violence has really affected my whole entire family and friends structure. For the longest time, it was the elephant in the room. They tiptoed around all the issues. The fear has eased a little, but it’s still there. It’s still fresh enough. Um... Emotionally, I just—I can’t imagine going out on a date again, or getting into a relationship again. I can’t imagine . . . being intimate. I’m afraid that if I put myself out there, it will happen again.