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Domestic violence is a choice

Well, my perspective on his behavior is that he chose to batter me. When he would work, or be out with his friends, and they clearly made him upset, he would not choke them, he would not punch, or smack, kick or call them degrading names. But I would receive that punishment. And I believe that he wasn't crazy, he was not using drugs, he wasn't drinking, he didn't drink alcohol. He didn't even eat meat. So, I do not believe that it's something that makes a person batter. I do believe that it's a choice and that maybe alcohol or drugs or maybe even mental illness might contribute to it being more severe. But I believe that domestic violence is a choice.

Black walls

I felt like I was living in hell. He painted my kitchen walls black, my living room walls were really like a burnt, brown color. The hallway was a very dark green, and the whole house was dark. And his explanation for doing that was we have kids and so that they don't mess up the walls. But I had no say so in his doing this, I came home from work one day and my kitchen walls were black. So if you can imagine black walls, that's what I lived with and so did my kids. But I noticed my older son at the time, who was about nine at the time, started wetting the bed, he started having nightmares, and my next son started being more like, short, with his responses. He wouldn't talk a lot. I just felt that they were very aware and tried to be good, so to speak, like they didn't want to be the cause of Mommy getting hit, or of an incident occurring. So I felt like they couldn't be kids.

He was the father of my child

Well, the last night was when my ex-husband came in the house with a shopping cart full of blankets, and my younger son at the time went towards the shopping cart and he lunged at him like, "No! No! Stay away from that!" I knew that all of the threats he had made toward me, and all of the insinuations that he was really going to kill me, and hurt me, were probably going to come true that day. And he had threatened before that he had guns, or that he can get a gun. Put me out of my misery, that was his favorite line. And, I didn't want to believe that, because this was my husband, he was the father of my child, he was the father to my other sons. And I really didn't want to believe that it was possible. That he could even dream of hurting me like that, although he had been hurting me all along. And so he never got to the shopping cart, thank God.

The next day I was able to get out of the house, and go to the precinct and ask for help. And, when I came back to the house with the officers again, he was his charming self, very calm and inviting, for them to come in. "I have nothing to hide". When in fact he had threatened to take the kids, and the officers were able to go into the bathroom and there was some blood on the wall from when he had punched me in my nose, but he had cleaned up so he thought. And they were able to, like within the tile, there was blood. So he was arrested because of that and so began my journey with the legal system.

Re-victimized

What he did was he called, from Riker's Island, he called the State Central Register. The anonymous child abuse hotline, and told them that I had hired him to kill my kids. And so the Administration For Children's Services, known as ACS, came into my life, and they began to investigate my children, and I, which felt like I was being abused all over again. There were instances where the system did work and there were instances where the system didn't work. Again, at a certain point I was told to leave my job, quit my job, leave my apartment, get on public assistance, and just walk away from everything. And I was also threatened that if I went back to my apartment that my children would be taken away from me. And I felt like I was being re-victimized, like, why did I have to leave everything? And he was free to just roam around and just live his life why was I being punished? Again, why wasn't someone holding him accountable for what he did to me?