


*I got flowers today.
Today was a very special day.*



*It was the day of my funeral.
Last night, he finally killed me.
He beat me to death.
If only I had gathered
Enough courage and strength to leave him,
I would not have gotten flowers today.*

Paulette Kelly



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YOU ARE NOT ALONE

It is a crime if someone assaults or threatens you. This book will show you that there are people to help you while you consider and decide how to give yourself and your children safety and hope. No one has the right to hurt another person, even if that person is a wife, child, parent or partner. Yet, too many women are abused by someone they love.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

"There were times when he was very sorry and said it would never happen again, and it always did. I had black eyes, disconnected shoulders, bruises all over my body...I also had bald spots on my head from all the hair yanking."

– a battered woman

Domestic violence happens when one person, in an intimate relationship, claims the right to control and criticize the other person's feelings, behavior and actions. The violence, or way of controlling, happens in many forms – physically, sexually and emotionally. Physical violence includes kicking, punching, shoving, slapping, strangling or pushing in any way that hurts your body. Sexual violence includes any unwanted touching, or fondling and forced or pressured sex at any time.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

"The bruises from his slaps would eventually heal and go away, but I'll never forget the awful things he said about the way I look, the way I cook and how I take care of the kids."

– a battered woman

Even the threat of violence results in women feeling afraid and controlled. Raising a fist, punching of walls, kicking in doors, keeping you awake all night, threatening to take your children away, hurting your pets, destroying your personal things or withholding money can cause any woman to feel fearful and threatened. If you are experiencing any of these things and feel isolated, alone, trapped or scared, you may be living with an abusive partner.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

"I was amazed at the stories of these women in my support group. The women were all different, but their stories were very much like mine. And I had thought it was all something that I was doing."

– a battered woman

Women who are suffering in battering relationships come from every walk of life. There is no "typical" victim. Our level of education, financial security, race or ethnic group, sexual orientation, physical or mental stability, religion, or marital status do not protect us from experiencing domestic violence.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

"The physical abuse escalated during my marriage. It got more frequent and serious over time and so did my feelings of guilt, of shame about it, of dependence on the relationship. I remember a desperate desire to just be a better person so he wouldn't beat me."

– a battered woman

Sadly, your partner's violence will never end without help from other people or services in the community. No matter how hard you try to understand the abuser, you cannot control the violence. You may already know that over time the abuser's behavior is more and more threatening or violent. We have learned through the experiences of many battered women that assaults always increase in frequency and severity during the relationship. Abuse may result in serious physical injury and even death. After each violent event, many women describe feeling alone, frustrated, disappointed, lonely, afraid and shamed.

Remember, you are not alone...

Nobody should be beaten or abused. You can ask for help. Every person's situation is different. This book contains information about ways you can protect yourself and your children, and a list of resources that can help you take the first step toward safety.

THE POWER/CONTROL WHEEL
 shows how different tactics help
 the abuser exert power over you.



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 Domestic Abuse Intervention
 206 West Fourth Street
 Duluth, Minnesota 55806*

STOPPING THE VIOLENCE

Violence comes in many forms – hitting or punching, constant put-downs and even sexual abuse by your partner. No matter how many times you have been told, “It’s all your fault,” the truth is that *no one deserves to be beaten or treated badly*. While everyone’s situation is different, there are things you can do to protect yourself and your children.

What are some of the ways you can make yourself safer? The thought of making a change can be frightening, especially if you don’t know what to do. Only you can decide what is best for you and your children. Some of these suggestions may work for you.

PLANNING FOR YOUR SAFETY

- Pack a bag in advance and leave it at a friend’s or neighbor’s house. Include an extra change of clothes and shoes for you and your children. Take some favorite toys or playthings.
- Hide an extra set of car and house keys outside the house in case you have to leave quickly.
- Keep a list of emergency telephone numbers with you.
- Gather together important papers such as:
 - birth certificates for you and your children
 - deed or lease to your house or apartment
 - checkbook and extra checks
 - car registration
 - medicine and medical records for you and your children
 - any court papers or orders
 - green card or work permit

- Set aside any extra money you can save. If you can, open a bank account in your name, or try to get a joint checking account with a person you can trust.
- Call a domestic violence hotline and ask for help.

By having someone to talk to, you can learn about your rights and the choices you can make. There are trained professionals to help you with your safety planning.

Think about where you would go if you decide to leave your house. Also there are legal ways for the court to tell the abuser to leave your home. The resource listing in this book can help you figure out what is best for you.

LEAVING THE HOUSE

- If you need to leave the house, take the important papers listed earlier, keys, telephone numbers and money. Sometimes people will surprise you when you ask for help. Is there someone you can stay with until you feel safe and have time to think about what you may want to do?
- If you do not have someplace safe to go, emergency shelters or safe houses may be available for you and your children. See the list of resources in this book for telephone numbers.
- If you leave, take your children with you. Stay with a woman friend or relative. Staying with a man who lives alone might cause problems for you and your children later on; however, do not let this stop you from protecting yourself in an emergency situation.

GOING TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM OR HOSPITAL

- Take good care of yourself; you deserve it. Ask the hospital to make a record of your injuries even if you don't feel safe telling the hospital staff how you were hurt. The records could help you later if you decide to go to court.
- If you feel safe, tell the hospital staff exactly what happened to you and how you were hurt.
- If the abuser is with you, try to be alone with the hospital staff.
- You might want to take a friend with you for support.

CALLING THE POLICE

- If you have been beaten or threatened, you can call 911. The police will come to your home. They can come into your home at your request or if they see you have been hurt. You also can call the police hours after you have been abused and even the next day.
- When the police arrive at your house, show them any legal or court papers that you have, like a protective order.
- The police can give you and your children a ride to a hospital or safe place. They can go with you to your house to get clothes, medicine and other important items.
- Tell police what happened. They will prepare a report. Have them take pictures of your injuries.

- The police must give you a list of resources in the community that you can call for help and information.
- Be sure to write down the officers' names and badge numbers. This information can be important if you have any questions about what happened. The police understand that you are concerned about your safety.
- Ask the police to take any evidence that shows you have been hurt, such as torn or bloody clothing, broken objects, weapons and the names and numbers of any witnesses.
- If you are leaving your house, you can ask the police to wait while you pack your things.
- If you have a hearing impairment or do not speak or understand English, ask the police for a qualified interpreter.
- If the abuser is taken to jail, he or she may be released quickly, depending on the court's bond schedule in your county. Once arrested and taken to jail, the abuser may be given the opportunity to post bond and get out of jail. Be prepared – the abuser may get out of jail within a few hours. To help you better plan for your safety, you can check with the jail to see if the abuser will be released. Local victim advocates may also have this information.

COUNSELING, ADVOCACY & SUPPORT GROUPS

Living with an abusive partner can be scary and confusing for the whole family. If your closest friends or family do not know how you really feel, or understand why you are still in the relationship, it may be hard to ask for help. However, sharing your story with a counselor, community advocate or other women begins to connect you with people who can ease your loneliness and shame. You will receive understanding, support and information. For places to call that can help you and your children, see the resource list in the back of the book.

GETTING A PROTECTIVE ORDER

You can get a protective order from the court that will tell the abuser to do certain things. You do not need a lawyer and you don't have to call the police if you want a protective order. You may have to talk to a judge and be interviewed by an investigator from the prosecutor's office. There is NO COST to obtain a protective order.

WHERE DO YOU GO?

- To get a protective order, you can call the county clerk of the court's office for information on the location of the court, hours available, etc. You can also receive this information from victim advocates or shelter staff.
- If you are married to the abuser, you do NOT have to file for divorce to get a protective order.
- The clerk's office staff will provide you with all protective order forms and helpful information about the process. The clerk and court staff are not permitted to give legal advice.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

When you leave the court, you will know if the protective order has been granted. The abuser will be notified by mail. An order for a “permanent” protective order will be set within 30 days of the emergency protective order. However, even though it is termed a “permanent” order, it is only in effect for one year. At that time, the order can be renewed for another year.

Before you go to court for your permanent protective order, you should gather information to help you prepare for the hearing.

Examples of what you may need for court are:

- witnesses
- pictures of your injuries
- police reports
- medical reports
- any other information you have about the violence

ADDITIONS TO A PROTECTIVE ORDER

Depending upon the circumstances, a judge may make additions to the protective order. They may include:

- Eviction of the abuser from the home
- An escort by a law enforcement officer to the home to collect emergency belongings

AT THE HEARING, THE JUDGE CAN:

- Order the abuser to stop the violence, leave your house, and stay away from you, your children and other household members
- Decide temporary custody and visitation rights if you have children and make child support orders
- Make the abuser go to treatment or counseling

The permanent protective order is good for one year. Carry a copy of the protective orders with you at all times and leave copies other places, such as your place of work and the children's school.

It is a crime if the abuser violates the protective order. If this happens, immediately call the police (911). If you received assistance from a legal advocate, also call them.

Remember: The abuser has no right to assault or harass you, and it is a crime to violate any terms of the court order.

You are not alone...

RESOURCES

Find shelters and non-residential programs by calling the 24-hour statewide hotline number at 1-800-332-7385.

Other resources:

- Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Admin: (317) 917-3685
Website: www.icadvinc.org
- Indiana State Medical Association
Admin: (317) 261-2060
Website: www.ismanet.org



322 Canal Walk
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