

Against domestic violence

Domestic violence is a sad, hard reality; as much as we hate to admit it, it's part of our society.

Make a statement, be heard...



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Sports Co-Editor

I remember watching a music video on MTV, a song by Stevie Wonder called "Free." It was very sad, and brought me to tears. The video plot was a woman beaten by her husband, with their son watching. The son tried to help his mother, but was shoved away; helpless, and unable to watch more, he left.

The next scene was of neighbors, hearing the screams and thinking about knocking on the apartment door—but then just walking away.

I saw the mother with a gun, and a violent struggle; then the scene cut away to the little boy, outside. Ambulance lights were flashing and police were carrying out a body bag. I thought it held the mother, but the

video switched to show her being led away in handcuffs, with people standing around shaking their heads.

She pulled the trigger. When no one helped her, she helped herself.

I be-

lieve "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." If a man beats a woman, or visa-versa (don't laugh, it does happen), the same should be delivered to the aggressor tenfold.

More and more I notice people who act as if they think they are invincible, or superior to the opposite sex—which leads me to believe they have the misguided notion that love should be given with a fist. That is when we, as neighbors, friends and family, can help. If it takes a whole village to raise a child, who protects that child's mother, father, sister or brother?

We must begin to act rather than talk. If we're labeled as "nosy," so be it; I prefer that to being called an accessory to murder because I chose to walk

away rather than help. I'm not asking you to step into the middle of a knife fight. I'm pleading for you to call the police—or start shouting—if you pass by a residence and hear frightening noises.

Or, your act could even be as small as saying hello to a quiet neighbor, who may then look to you for help when she/he becomes that victim.

Just remember this when you hear a scream in the night: someone needs your help; it's your decision to interfere, or turn away; but somehow, get help—ACT, please.

For questions, comments or concerns, E-mail me at salenedelacruz@netscape.net.

MYTHS & FACTS

ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

MYTH: Low self-esteem causes victims to get involved in abusive relationships.

FACT: There isn't any proof to the theory that only women with low self-esteem are victims of domestic violence. However, some victims may have a decrease in self-esteem after the abuse begins, because perpetrators humiliate and criticize. (John S. Meier, *Domestic Violence and Feminist Jurisprudence: Toward a New Agenda*, 1995.)

MYTH: Batterers abuse their partners or spouses because of drug and alcohol abuse.

FACT: Although drug and alcohol abuse is used as an excuse, it's not the cause of the abuse. (Irene Anne Jilson, *Violence, Women and Alcohol: Reducing the Risks and Redressing the Consequences*, Department of Health and Human Services, 1995.)

MYTH: Domestic violence only occurs in poor, urban areas.

FACT: Women and men of all races, occupations, income levels and ages are battered. There are no boundaries exempting someone from being abused.

MYTH: It would be easy for battered women to leave their abuser.

FACT: Women who leave their abuser are at a 75% greater risk of being killed by their batterer than if they were to stay. (Barbara Hart, *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence*, 1988.)

Interview with a Counselor

Shelbi Wescott interviewed Jackie Hubka and Anne Pardington, certified counselors and part-time faculty at Clackamas, about their experiences with victims of domestic violence

What is your experience with domestic violence?

Hubka: I have worked in the field of mental health since 1972. I have a private mental health practice in Portland.

Pardington: I have dealt with clients and students who were victims for over 20 years, first with the YMCA in Portland, then at the Evergreen House in Clackamas County and now with students in the Life and Career Options Program.

What is a story or situation that stands out in your mind?

H: It's a haunting story of a woman who finally, after many years of being held hostage by her predatory and obsessive partner, acquired a job, a sense of independence and a support system. Despite the best efforts of her employer and her personal supports, her partner came to her workplace and shot her in an open parking lot as she left for lunch. He then turned the gun on himself. There was also a wonderful man who was being systematically physically abused by his wife. His greatest obstacle was admitting he was the victim and that he was entitled to seek help and defend himself.

What are some of the myths or misconceptions you had to let go of?

P: That the abuser can be any kind of person, even one who is highly educated and who seems nice in the public eye.

H: My myth was that all the victim had to do was leave. Leaving a long-term living arrangement is a complex process. The victim is often left in limbo, and without adequate supports they may return to the abusive situation for lack of security.

How can people prevent entering a violent relationship?

H: How wonderful it would be if we had a test people could administer in the formative stages of a relationship that would rule out the potential for domestic abuse. Anyone who feels seriously compromised or threatened in a relationship should make every effort to leave early on.

P: If you feel that something isn't right, don't ignore the problem. Look out for these behaviors in your partner: insistence on quick involvement, jealousy, controlling behavior, unrealistic expectations, isolation from family and friends, blaming others, verbal abuse, sudden mood swings or threats of actual violence.

How can someone at CCC help?

P: Offer support and let them talk, give them information. Most of all, don't be judgmental. They'll make it with help.

H: Also, consider making contributions to the many social service agencies who support victims of domestic abuse. Be an informed helper, not a naive well wisher.

If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence, call or encourage them to call one of these numbers:

Violence Hotline (800)799-SAFE	Victim's assistance (503)655-8616
Support Network for Battered Women (800)572-2782	Harbor Light (for men) (503)223-2043
Clackamas Women's Services (503)654-2288	Portland Rescue Mission (503)227-0421

what hope

the wind swirls in a violent rage
battering and pounding unmercifully
curled up in this ball of misery
i know you never listened
you never heard
i was but one more small voice
in the turmoil and rumblings of life!
what words are there which could wipe this pain?
what dream, what hope?
what is there to this life?
what is there left?
you have no idea the power
the control you have over me
nor the shame i face knowing
my love is the weakness
you turned on me.

by Dawn M. Fisher
<http://walkingdarklands.click2site.com>

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK

Oct. 18-22,
8 a.m.-5 p.m.
At the ASG booth
In the Community
Center
For more info,
contact Salda at
ext. 2598

We will be accepting
donations of warm
clothing, blankets,
canned goods, &
personal hygiene kits.
Kits consist of:
toothpaste, toothbrush,
small comb/brush,
Q-tips, & lotion in a
ziploc bag.