

domestic VIOLENCE

An Invitation:

Domestic violence often seems like something that happens to other people; so, therefore, it must be someone else's problem. However, domestic violence affects us all, either directly, by being a part of our experience as a child or as an adult, or indirectly, because we know someone who is in a violent relationship. It's often simpler to ease the discomfort of violence in our community by saying things like, "It's not that bad, it's not my responsibility, it's none of my business, there's nothing I can do, what's the use?" But other communities have shown that domestic violence can only be solved by a communitywide response and by individuals taking an active interest. By reading this publication and being open-minded to the information at your fingertips, you're making an important step toward eliminating violence in our community.

A Definition:

Domestic violence is psychological, physical, and sexual abuse perpetrated against a person within the abuser's family system or intimate relationships. Abuse tactics may include coercion, threats, intimidation, harassment, control, isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming, using children, financial exploitation, or damage to people, pets, or property. Domestic violence is a systematic pattern of abuse escalating over time in frequency and severity. Domestic violence may appear to manifest as a single incident.

A Jefferson County Man Speaks Up About His Violence

"The Lonely Path" - One Man's Journey

I have learned a lot down this very lonely road. I was arrested, convicted in Court and placed on probation. I caused all of this.

My "belief window" was violent and abusive. I am an alcoholic. The drinking made matters worse. The more I drank, the more the violence increased. This finally stopped when I was arrested, taken to jail, and was prevented from having contact with my wife and family.

I cringe when I think of the violence that I exposed my family to. My wife even said that it would have been easier if she was hit rather than deal with the control, manipulation and abuse. My children heard everything. Do you know that a daughter raised in a violent home has a high chance of marrying a violent offender? I cringe. My teenage daughter finally had the courage to call the police and put an end to this. May God bless her for confronting me. We now have the strongest and healthiest relationship we've ever had.

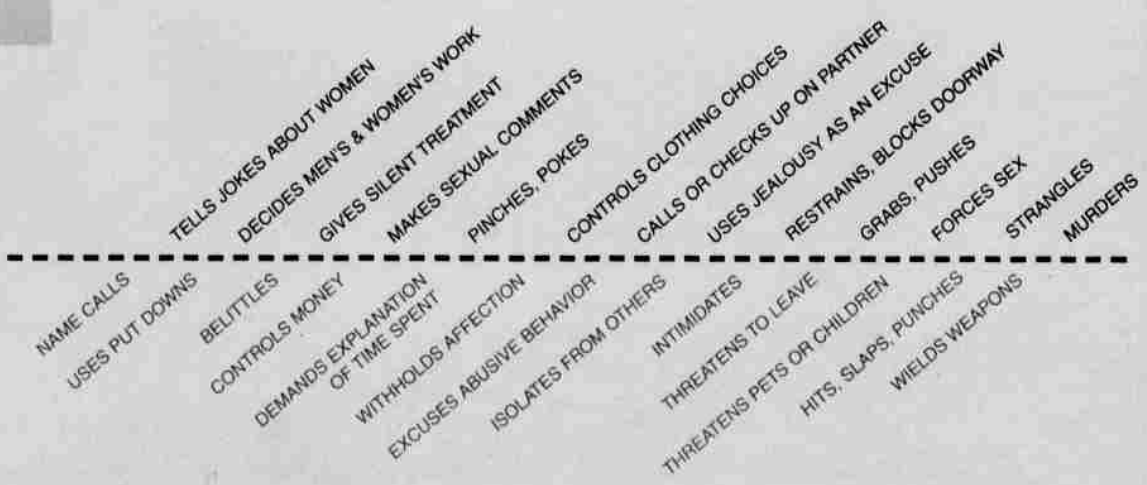
Today is a different day. I am sober and look at the world differently. My family is happier with me. The road has been long, tough and very challenging. The changes have come easier when I stopped drinking. The biggest challenge has been to change my behavior after years of doing things "my way". I am successful today because I finally started listening to others. Why did I wait this long?

This is my story. I am still walking down the road alone without my wife and family. I still have hope, have made a commitment to learn as much as I can, and still believe that I can make changes in the future.

My life has been changed forever. I encourage other people to support those trying to make positive changes in their lives. We need to stop exposing children to violence in the home. I would not be here without many supportive people in our community. My wish is that people will reach out for help before they lose everything like I did.

Anonymous!

continuum of ABUSE and VIOLENCE



WHERE DO YOU DRAW THE LINE?