Domestic Violence

Mary Mann

Beal College

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Mr. Klaus Heyer

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Domestic Violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any intimate relationship that is used by one partner to maintain a sense of control over the other (Nealon, 2016). Domestic violence is all too familiar to me as for several year I was married to my abuser. Domestic violence affects twenty people a minute, one in three women and one in four men have some type of physical violence with a partner (*Some Statistics about Domestic Violence-. Project Sanctuary . 2020*). In one day over two hundred thousand calls come in the two domestic violence hotlines throughout the world, one in five women and one in seven men have experienced severe physical violence (*Some Statistics about Domestic Violence-. Project Sanctuary . 2020*). Domestic violence is more common in women ages eighteen to twenty-four and fifteen percent of all violent crimes come from an intimate partner. The statistic in Maine alone are 50% of murders in the state are domestic violence related. From January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2004 there were 33 domestic violence homicides in Maine, 70% of the victims were female while 82% were male perpetrators (New Hope for Women). New Hope for Women is a great program that assisted people who have experienced domestic violence. In my instance they helped me get safe housing, along with paying for a lawyer to help me get out of the situation I was in.

Domestic violence affects society as a whole. The amount of people who become involved when an incident takes place amazes me. But is also amazes me how long one lives with their abuser. Most people don’t even realize their best friend is a victim. As domestic

violence is not just physical abuse that can be seen by the naked eye. Domestic violence can be psychological, verbal and sexual instead of physical. In these cases, the abuse much of the time goes on for years. This can cause the person to slip into a severe depression and have a lot of anxiety. Some of their anxiety can come from worrying if they are doing something wrong to endure the abuse again. Many times, the abuser is jealous of what the other is doing. This causes the abuser to control everything that person does and doesn’t do. It the case with my ex-husband he had control over everything. He made me stay home and take care of his children therefore he had me trapped because I had no money to do anything. Finally, my family caught on and helped me out. I was then able to get a job and move out on my own before he became physically violent towards me. During this time, I was in a severe depression and required many medications to even continue living as I was suicidal. All of this effected how I raised my son. This also affected how my parents saw and along with friends I had not seen since being with him. However shortly after I left and became safe with my son, he took his domestic violence to another level of severe anger and ended up hurting a little girl. This not only affected the little girl but all the children involved as the department of health and human services got involved removing children from his care. The spiral this took effected my son and he was no longer allowed to see his father. All the children involved has had to seek lots of therapy as this really effected their mental health. The courts got involved and he eventually did a very short amount of time behind bars. However now he has charges against him and it will follow him the rest of his life. I am happy to say I was able to get out of my situation as many as so scared of their abuser they don't dare to seek help as they worry, they might be hurt even more. Some people are embarrassed to admit they have been abused. My challenging time and what I went through has allowed me to help several other women that have been in the same situation. I speak at the local

middle school about domestic violence. I explain how it is ok to feel scared and even embarrassed about the situation. I got into detail about the help especially New Hope for Women can give. I talk about how one may feel and why the abuser does this to them. I always remind them they have done nothing wrong. I go over some of the signs to look for in their friends and that many of the signs look much like depression would. Also, if they see their friends not doing the things they used to love or a change it their personality. Also, others may have physical bruises which the victim may only wear long sleeves and long pants to hide them. They may tell you they have fallen down to cover up the bruises. Many victims isolate themselves and you hardly ever see them. These are all normal responses to trauma. I make sure they know my email and even my cell phone number and I am a safe person to call if they need help. I feel as children ages they seen their parents doing these things and they think it is ok to continue to be this way. So, when they get into a relationship, they feel it is normal to act this way. I feel like the more we educate the younger generation the less we will see domestic violence in society. Have less means the violent crime rate will also go down and less resources such as cops and services to get a person help will be used.

With the coronavirus pandemic there has been a uprise in domestic violence case and many have become very dangerous as people have had to quarantine at home together all the time (Taub, 2020). Many people had no way to escape the abuse as they may have lost their jobs or began to work from home. The stress the pandemic has put on everyone make domestic violence so much easier to take things out on our loved ones. The hotline available to help in this situation are ringing off the hook. Along with the crisis at hand we are also facing the crisis of domestic violence. Children are seeing more of this happening in their household as their parents become stress of no money and they tend to blame the other adult. This is a worldwide problem

as everything was shut down for so long and we were trapped in our homes together for so long. Being able to deal with the abuse before the pandemic was not ideal but many were able to but since this there has been many severely physical abused people due to domestic violence becoming more severe. This country in itself has many crisis's at hand not just the corona virus. Domestic violence is a large one as it is not talked about a lot as many are ashamed by this. Some of the effect's children have due to domestic violence are feeling responsible for the abuse, anxiety, guilt for not stopping the abuse, abandonment, grief, needing excessive adult attention, and fear of being harmed themselves. Many children who witness abuse are scared to come forward as they are embarrassed and they fear the abuser will attack them. Each year 3.3 million children witness domestic violence in their homes (New Hope for Women).

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