

WEIGHING IN ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (A man's view)

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From Personal Experience

I typed “domestic violence” into my *search engine*, and searched the web for information on *domestic violence*. With this *search-criteria* all of the information I found about *domestic violence* was about what women suffer, there was not anything about men, or what they might suffer. The only thing that seems to come up is domestic violence against women. Is there another side to this story? From personal experience, YES THERE IS. Let me share.

A Power Struggle

My last, and final, marriage was a power struggle. For the purpose of this construction I'm going to call my last wife “Kate,” not her real name. So, the power struggle came down to this, *who was going to control Mike*. Was Kate going to control Mike, or was Mike going to control Mike? Perhaps like a lot of men, I spent the first six or so months in our marriage on projects Kate wanted undertaken. But eventually there came a time when I felt that I needed to work on some things that were important to me. I do have my own rudder, and I do enjoy steering my own ship. It's not that I didn't do anything Kate asked me to do, but I cut down on her projects considerably. When she registered her unhappiness, I suggested she hire someone to do some of the things she wanted done, and this seemed to anger her. I don't like controlling people, especially my wife, but neither do I like being controlled. But let's get to a specific example.

An Example

Shortly after we were married, we bought a home in Red Bluff, California. I worked and so moving was done on the week-ends. We each had a pickup, and on Saturday, we each hauled two pick-up loads of household items from Oroville to Red Bluff, a distance of about 50-miles. After arriving, we unloaded, and put everything in its place in the new home. On Sunday I had a load of firewood coming at noon, so we got going early and hauled a pick-up load each. Returning to Red Bluff before noon, we unloaded both pick-ups and put everything away, just in time for the firewood to arrive.

The firewood was “green oak” and it was a *cord*, which if you don’t know, is a lot of wood. Working with the man who delivered the wood, he and I threw it off his pick-up and trailer on the ground. He left, and working alone, I stacked the *cord of wood*. I was forty-seven-years-old at the time, and out of shape, so this week-end was a very tiring task, and at the end of stacking the wood on Sunday evening, I was truly about to drop in my tracks. Too tired to eat anything, I sat down on the couch and drifted off to sleep almost immediately. In about twenty minutes, Kate woke me up and suggested I go to bed.

Good idea. I went in the bedroom, sat down on the end of the bed and with my feet on the floor, flopped back on the bed. Kate came in, flipping on the overhead light, which was a little blinding and a bit uncomfortable to the eyes as I lay looking up at it, and began demanding that I get up and get into bed. I said I would do that, but I wasn’t quite ready to move. But her demands continued, on and on. I had now, several times, asked Kate to turn off the overhead light, and finally, when I became caustic, she obliged and turned off the overhead light and left the bedroom.

Seeking Peace in the Guest Bedroom

In a couple minutes, I got up, undressed to my shorts and T-Shirt. It was October, and I opened the window at the head of the bed to let in the cool evening air. Lying down on top of the covers, I could feel the cool air coming in, and it felt sooooo good. Kate came in, prepared herself for bed, and got under the covers. Immediately she began demanding I get under the covers.

“Perhaps later during the night sweetheart.” I was overheated from being in the sun the majority of the day and very tired, but comfortable where I was, and wanting to just be left alone to rest. But OH NO, on and on and on went the demands. Finally, I stood up and announced, “I can see you want this bed to yourself, I’m going to the back bedroom and I’ll see you in the morning.”

Wifey Slaps Uncooperative Husband

And I went to the back bedroom, opened the window at the head of the bed, and lay down on top of the bed covers. The cool air coming in felt good. In five minutes, “click”, on goes that blinding overhead light. I rolled onto my left side, putting my back to the bedroom door and Kate. Kate walked up behind me and slapped my bare leg with considerable force, which stung, causing me to

flinch. I have a really bad back, injured some years before and this flinching caused me to pinch a nerve in my back, sending pains shooting down my right leg. I asked Kate to leave me alone, several times, but she kept slapping my leg, demanding that I come back to the bedroom and get into bed.

One Too Many Times

Finally, I was slapped one time too many and I came off the bed. From behind I wrapped my arms around Kate. Speaking softly to her right ear, "*Kate, you've got to stop hitting me.*" What did my sweet little wife do? She wrapped her four fingers around her thumb, making a fist with the *thumb knuckle* sticking out, and swung her fist over her shoulder, solidly landing that *thumb knuckle* on my nose and bloodied my nose.

That was it, the gorilla came out of the closet. I spun Kate around to slap her face, and hopefully slap some sense into her about antagonizing and abusing her husband. But when I went to slap her face, she got her hand up in time for me to snag her thumb and break it. She had to go to the hospital because of the *evil-abusive husband*. I felt horrible for that is certainly not what I intended, I just wanted some peace and to be left alone. Well, that's one incident.

A Second Example - Kate Takes the Key Out of the Ignition, Twice

In a second incident, we were returning from Oroville to Red Bluff in Kate's Eagle Talon, the same car as a Mitsubishi Eclipse. I was the one driving down the freeway, going into Chico from the South. Kate and I were having a discussion, read argument. I'm doing 80 mph and Kate, who has become angry, reaches over, turns-off the ignition, **AND** takes the key out of the ignition switch.

I said, "Kate, you've just locked the steering wheel!" The car is, of course, slowing down since the engine is no longer running, and by the time it has slowed down to about sixty, Kate sticks the key back in the ignition and turns it back on. I ran the car back up to 80-mph and said, "*Kate, for a smart woman you do some of the dumbest things I've ever seen anybody do!*" That did it, she reached over, turned-off the ignition and removed the key **a second time**.

The Steering Wheel is LOCKED AGAIN!

I said, “*Kate, you’ve locked the steering wheel again.*” I had let go of the steering wheel and it was wiggling a little because it had not rotated to the lock point. Kate said, “*It’s not locked*”, and reaching over, Kate grabbed the steering wheel and rotated it clockwise. Immediately the steering wheel went **CLUNK**. **NOW IT’S LOCKED**, and now I’m no longer going straight. I asked Kate to put the key back in the ignition switch and unlock the steering wheel.

I Went For A Flying Lesson

Kate ignored my requests. I was now drifting slowly to the right and just about the time the right front tire was about to drop off the pavement into the gravel, Kate thinks she should probably stick the key back in the ignition. But she’s about one-second too late and the right front tire drops off into the gravel. Now you couldn’t hit the ignition switch with a shotgun. It was a section of freeway where the bank on the right was about 25 to 30 feet deep. Over the bank I went, down through the weeds and toward the freeway fence.

I Lived Through That One

I wasn’t touching the steering-wheel, it was locked, there was nothing I could do other than apply the brakes of the car. I got the car stopped, fortunately we didn’t run into a concrete abutment or something similar and die. I reached over and wrestled the key from Kate, started the car, and surprisingly, that little front-wheel-drive rocket ship was able to back up the embankment to the freeway. People who saw the car go over the bank were pulling over and stopping. When I got the car back up to the top, I rolled down my window and sticking my arm out, waved at the people, letting them know we were OK. I then headed on down the freeway toward home.

A Death Threat

Because Kate had not only put our lives in danger, but also the lives of other motorists, twice, I told Kate, “*If you touch that key again before we get to Red Bluff, I’m going to KILL YOU. When the police arrive and want to know why you’re dead, I’m going to have the answers!!!*” The threat worked and she left the key, and ME, alone.

All the Time

And this kind of thing went on all the time. I would say to Kate, “*Kate, why do you want to antagonize a gorilla? Kate, leave the gorilla alone, this is not good for you.*” And, “*Kate, if you continue to torture the gorilla, I’m going to hurt you!!! Do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?*” But she wouldn’t quit torturing me, and I would go somewhere outside and find something to do, AWAY FROM KATE!!! There was no peace.

A Third Example

Driving from our home in Red Bluff to Wal-Mart, I was tortured the entire way. I had failed to mention her name in a conversation with my son the night before regarding help that I had provided to a family member. Kate had traveled with me that night to lend support, so she too should have been mentioned. But, Kate couldn’t make her displeasure known when my son was still visiting, she was making it known on the way to Walmart when I had no chance of immediate correction. I told Kate that I would make certain my son knew of her involvement next time I seen him, but that wasn’t good enough. She was like a dog with a bone she wasn’t going to let go of.

By the time I pulled into a parking space at Wal-Mart I’d had enough, and without shutting off the engine, backed my Toyota Pick-up back out of the parking space. Kate, who had opened the passenger door asked what I was doing. “*I’m going home, I’ve had enough of you for one day. It’s only a ten minute drive and you can come back and shop without me. Close the door please.*”

Kate Refused to Close the Vehicle Door As Asked

Kate refused to close the door as I was driving out of the parking lot, even though I asked her several more times. I finally told Kate that if she did not close the door, the coming dumpster **would** close the door.

The right hand door of my Toyota pick-up still shows the signs of having been *caved in* by the dumpster to close the door. This being the result of Kate trying to force me to do something I really was not going to do. And this makes a point, ***that we men will sometimes take the wrong path, knowing it’s the wrong path, simply to show the woman that we are not going to be***

coerced, manipulated, forced or pushed into doing something that we really don't want to do!!! It's a really dangerous place to push a man to. If he has reached a point of being willing to cave in the door on his pickup, the woman is at serious risk of being injured. It is his *last-ditch-effort* to communicate with her before hurting her.

I would ask Kate, "*Why don't words work???*" But she didn't know, only that they do not work. Our marriage was over in two-years. In the aftermath, I concluded that I'm an idiot when it comes to picking a companion, and accepting that, I decided that I would live alone, and have now, for the past 23-years.

A Forth Example

In this example, I had done something that angered Kate, and truthfully, I no longer remember what it was that I did. However, it was typically of Kate to verbally attack me when unhappy with my attitude or behavior. I was *unkind, uncaring, unloving, selfish, self-centered, thoughtless, inconsiderate, obstinate...* the list went on for twenty or thirty descriptive words. Kate was a *supervisor* at *Child Protective Services*, she had a lot of descriptive words. By this time in our marriage I had heard this list so many times that I had memorized it. As soon as she started, I would chime in and go through the list with her, and such was the case in this event.

When she finished her demeaning descriptions of me, I reached for the *ash shovel*. We had a wood stove and a small light duty *ash shovel* to clean the ash out of the stove. I picked up this short light duty shovel, slapped myself on the forehead with the flat of the shovel a couple of times, and said, "*here Kate, take this shovel and smack me around a little, it'll feel a lot better.*"

My Wife Had Me Arrested as a Danger to Myself!

Well, the shovel was turned up a little on the sides and I made a tiny nick in the skin on my forehead, and since I take aspirin, which thins blood, I had this tiny trickle of blood running down my face, which I hadn't yet noticed. Kate saw her opportunity, called the police and had me arrested as a mental case who was a danger to himself, a 5150. I was taken to mental health facility in the back of a police car. *Mental Health* only held me about an hour before

turning me loose. Kate had taken off somewhere and wasn't available to pick me up and take me home. And, she wasn't at home when I finally managed to arrive. It was the beginning of the end for us.

Did you know that when you are arrested on a 5150, the police confiscate all your guns? Do you know how many hoops you have to jump through to get them back?

All of this makes it very difficult to be a caring, loving husband. Actually, for me it made it impossible!

But in our society it seems that it is ALWAYS the sweet little female who is the victim of the EVIL male. WELL, EXCUSE ME, BUT THAT IS A BUNCH OF BULL SHOT!

I've Know Others

I've known wives of other good men, who've been slapped around. In almost all cases the men have invariably told their wife, "*Honey, you need to let this go.*" "*Honey, you need to stop taking about this.*" "*Sweetheart, you're beginning to make me mad, let this go, please.*" On and on, those men tried to communicate with words. And when words didn't work, they issued a physical communication. They issued a physical communication so they could have peace and end the psychological torture and abuse.

1998

In 1998, the wife of a friend called me to negotiate for another woman who was battered. At a class I was taking I had seen the bruising on this woman, and I knew she was truly being struck, the *black-eye* was a sure giveaway. But having experience of my own, I was not willing to judge. At any rate, my friend's wife was asking me to take in this mistreated women and her five children as a step in leaving her marriage and seeking divorce. I lived alone. And although I was reluctant, I eventually agreed to help.

In December of 1998, Sharon (not her real name) came to live with me. They were a very poor family, and so I spent a few hundred dollars on Christmas gifts for the children. It was great to see the happiness and surprise on their

faces. I bought bicycles for the three oldest, a 15-year-old boy, the 14-year-old girl, and the 10-year-old girl. The 11-year-old boy had a bicycle and the 5-year-old girl was, in my opinion, too young for a bicycle, so I bought her some other gift of equivalent value.

In a month or so, Jack, the 15-year-old, ran into his 5-year-old sister with his new bicycle. She was hurt and bruised a little, and so, using a bicycle lock, I locked up Jack's bicycle, and told him he could have it back in a week.

The next night, I came home from work, and Jack is riding his 14-year-old sister's bicycle. I asked Ruth if she had given him permission to ride her bicycle? She told me that, YES, she had given permission. That ticked me off a little, so I took her bicycle and locked it up with his, telling Ruth she could have her bicycle back in two weeks.

This pissed off their mother, Sharon. It had been apparent from the start that Sharon had issues with Jack and had treated him much less loving than the remainder of the children. Jack was OK, he just had the growing pains of a teenage boy.

And after sitting down in my easy chair (a Lazy-Boy) in the front-room, I came under verbal attack for my decision regarding Ruth's bicycle. I listened to Sharon's case, but was not swayed, Ruth's bicycle would remain locked up for two weeks. Sharon couldn't let it go. The verbal attack had gone-on for over a half hour when I told her that she needed to *let it go*. I reminded her that the children wouldn't even have bicycles if I hadn't bought them at Christmas. I told her that she was beginning to *piss-me-off* and if she didn't back off, this wasn't going to have a happy ending.

For reasons unknown to me, she couldn't hear my words, or if she could, she decided to ignore them. Since I was not getting any peace in my easy chair, **in my own home**, I got up, went to my shop, got my hack-saw, and I sawed Ruth's bicycle in half. Now in two pieces, nobody was ever going to ride it again and there would now be no debate regarding this bicycle. I went back into the house and told Sharon that I had sawed Ruth's bicycle in half and asked, "*is there anything else I'm providing you and your family over which you*

would like to make me miserable?” She didn’t answer, but instead got up, gathered all her children, and left the house, going for a walk.

She came back with her children in about an hour and a half. Sharon was accustomed to being beat-up when behaving as she had done with me as a means of manipulating the male to get what she wants. But this time, her child paid the price of her insolence and she had a difficult time processing this, thus the leaving and disappearing for a while. She and I spoke very little after this event, although my relationship with the children remained normal. Personally, I thought they were wonderful children and I enjoyed them.

Except for Jack, the fifteen-year-old, the younger four would all crawl into my chair with me to be held as I reclined and watched T.V., even the fourteen-year-old girl. They were very needy of love, acceptance and caring, and I did care very much for them, they were great children. I found out that Sharon actually had thirteen (13) children in all, this group of five children were all that were young enough to still be living at home!

After a period of six-months, Sharon returned home to her husband and former life. I don’t know exactly what she expected to gain in living with me, but I don’t think it was a *step in acquiring a divorce* as was portrayed. The wife of the friend did not speak to me again, who knows why.

Sharon rented a storage shed in town, and put a *combination-lock* on it, giving me the combination so that I could take the remainder of their belongings to the storage unit to be picked up by her and her husband at another time. Using this opportunity, I bought Ruth another brand-new bicycle and put it in the storage unit with a card attached.

Women Are Often the Approximate Cause of Their Own Injury

Over the years I have noticed that when abusive relationships end, and the male moves-on to the next woman, and the woman moves-on to the next male, **the abuse generally goes with the woman, not the man.** Not true in every case, but in my experience, it’s been true in probably 85% or more of the cases. And, of course, the police do not track or record reports of abuse and file them by the woman’s Social Security number so that they can see a pattern. They

are filed by the woman's name and address, which will change in divorce and re-marriage. What I'm suggesting here is that in many cases the woman is the approximate cause of her own injury. She engineers it. And why she does this, I don't have a clue, but I suspect it's a learned pattern of behavior to get what they want.

A Friend's Wife Broke His Ribs

I have a local friend, sixty-seven at the time, whose wife (in her mid 50's at the time) grabbed the cord(s) of a computer printer, and swung it like a *flail mace*, clobbered him in the rib cage and broke his ribs. If you're unfamiliar with the term *flail mace*, you may have seen them in the movies as a ball with spikes on the end of a chain and used in battle. Surprisingly, she was arrested, but she was not convicted on spousal abuse.

Don't Be Too Hasty to Judge

So, if you're a police officer or observer, don't be overly hasty to be judgmental, there may be more going on than you realize. We men do have a right to be at peace, to not be tortured or abused, either physically, emotionally or psychologically. If I have any advice for the men, call the police (911) and file a complaint. Yes, it may be the end of your marriage, but that's better your marriage comes to an end than you being in jail. Remember, if a crime is being committed, you can get it on the record and probably should.

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