



Katherine

- ✿ 19 years ago I was in an abusive relationship. I married someone I had known for one year, we worked in the same building. The honeymoon did not last long as the loving relationship turned into one of anger, jealousy, meanness...we stayed married for two years...I left when it escalated into a physical death threat...he continued to stalk and threaten for 1 ½ years...until he was arrested.
- ✿ I still live in the memory of that relationship although it fades with time
- ✿ It has impacted my life

What was important to me...

- ✿ To be safe – to be able to set up all systems to ensure my safety – security alarms, secret codes, close friends, seeing him every day so I could read his moods
- ✿ To live my life normally – no one, besides my closest friends, knew what was going on – it was important to me to keep my pride
- ✿ To be believed and respected (especially by the police) and to not feel belittled, less than or pathetic for needing their help

Supporting me then...

Having close friends who knew that a phone call could come at any time of day and night, with our code word that meant call 911...and they genuinely didn't mind a bit!!

To have close friends who would let me show up on their door step to spend the night (or three months) if I was feeling unsafe.

Letting me define what being safe meant – being 'safe' looks different for each of us

Not having people tell me what I should be doing or what they would do in my circumstance...they weren't

What I wanted people to understand...

That a restraining order is useless if you can't get to a phone.

That I needed to know where he was at all times so I could read whether something was going to happen or not... the justice system did not let me know when he was released from jail so I never knew when I was safe.

Supporting me now...

To know that the impact of that relationship and its traumatic times will never leave me. I remember with less reaction, but I still remember.

