

Wednesday, 27 May 2015

Question 8

There are huge gaps in the way family violence is treated in our community and in my life. I had a mentally abusive and in the end, a physically abusive alcoholic husband a few years ago. I called the police in the end and they had a DVO placed on him. The ex was allowed to remain in the same house as me and my children.

This is wrong. When someone has a DVO placed on them it should be MANDATORY that they attend counselling and other groups such as AA. Women should be believed when they are scared of the ongoing mental cruelty in their lives which affects the children in a big way.

The biggest issue I have is with the children. They are always manipulated by their abusive fathers, which is easily achieved, because the children have been brought up in his presence and this is the only life they understand. When a DVO is given, counselling should be provided to the women and the children so they can begin to understand that this is not normal and not acceptable.

Not long after the DVO expired, suspicious circumstances led me to believe that my ex was stalking the property I lived on, which also belonged to him, his mobile phone was heard in the yard at [REDACTED]am, the property is at the end of a [REDACTED]km long dead end road [REDACTED]km outside of [REDACTED]. The ex was reporting he was living in [REDACTED] but on this day he was seen in the local service station. The very same day I luckily avoided a car accident as my new tyre blew out, the Manager at Kmart Tyre and Auto said in his opinion the tyre was slashed. The same thing happened again [REDACTED] weeks later, with the ex again being seen in the local area. After this second tyre slashing, I went to the local courts to have the DVO reinstated but this was refused, insufficient evidence. I don't know how I was going to collect evidence to prove he had been on the property nor that it was him who slashed the tyres. I could not afford security cameras, I was living in a shed with no money since he had closed our business and stolen all the money. I could not even afford a solicitor to fight for my share of the business or property, Legal Aide twice said they could not help me, so how could I prove this was going on?

People who have DVO's put on them should be made to attend counselling and not be allowed to be near their families until psychologists can claim that the family, women and children, feel safe. This has severe and long lasting impacts on the children for the rest of their lives. I know this, I have watched my children suffer guilt trips when seeing their father and I myself grew up with a mentally and abusive father, which is probably the reason I put up with this attitude for [REDACTED] years from my own husband, I thought this was NORMAL. It is NOT.

Question 14

The current system does NOTHING to hold people accountable for their behaviour. As stated above, my ex was abusive and in court he simply had to answer a few questions and that was the end of it. He was handed a piece of paper and he left court.

Even after I left the family home to move into a shed, all I could afford at the time, he continued his mental cruelty and turned my children against me with his lies and manipulation. It took many years for one of my children to talk to me again, I am still waiting for my 18 year old son to come back into my life. His manipulation on the children is also MENTAL ABUSE.

Alcoholics with a DVO should be forced into treatment to keep the rest of the family safe. It is not MY problem, it is HIS and he should have to be accountable for it not me and the children.

He has shown no care or concern for the mental cruelty and manipulation he has done to our children who think this is normal behaviour.

Question 21

The greatest impact in the short term would be to do the following-

- Ensure that women have a voice and are taken seriously.
- It is difficult to prove the abuse if it is not physical, it should be the onus of the abuser to prove he/she is not causing harm.
- The abuser should be forced into a minimum of 3 months weekly sessions with a psychologist and Alcoholics Anonymous or other group for addicts if needed.
- Provide counselling for women and children
- Force the perpetrators to be removed from the family home so the women and children can stay at home
- Ensure police attend a call to a home with an existing DVO as a priority and ensure that the perpetrator be locked up for a minimum of 2-3 days or until he attends court for breach. This will hopefully discourage further abuse and make them reconsider their actions or see that gaol time will be the outcome if abuse continues.
- JUST DO YOUR JOB and act on DVO breaches as high priority emergencies, because the outcome could be DEATH.