

As a male victim of domestic violence you certainly feel alone

I was an investment banker who had worked on several continents around the world, when my violent ex-wife brought things to a head when we were living in New York.

I went from a happy and successful 'high-flying banker' to a broken man living in a motel not knowing where to turn, in the space of 18 months. To the extent that one day I had to go and see my boss and tell him, 'Look, this is what is happening, and I have to tell you, that I might have to get on a plane and leave the country, tomorrow'. Such was the veracity of my ex-wife's aggression and unpredictability.

I was a victim of my ex-wife who suffers from Borderline Personality Disorder. Few people in England seem to recognise the label, but most people seem to recognise the behaviour patterns.

At the start of our relationship my ex-wife held me up as perfect. Towards the end, I could do no right, it came to the point that I feared for my life.

She serially abused me, and when she threw me out of my home, under the threat of the police coming and arresting me on false allegations of me committing domestic violence against her, she tried to sue me for personal injury.

Her allegations were false and outlandish, so she could not make a case, but still she tried. Trouble is when a society denies that men can be victims, the chips are positively stacked against you.

In fact she was trying to rely on events where there were up to ten witnesses at a time, and these people uniformly responded with disbelief when they heard what was going on. Most of them offered to represent me as character witnesses, if it came to it. My ex-wife was turning night into day, and the culture that exists allowed her to do so and positively supported her.

My point is, that as a male victim you are alone. There is essentially no one there to help you. As a man you dare not admit that you are a victim. In fact I'd suggest that most men do not understand what being a male victim of DV means.

When I was faced with a female abuser making false accusations to the police, I spent several days barricaded in my bedroom. When I talked to the police, I was met with a withering response (unspoken: 'who are you trying to kid?'). When I called a local DV helpline, I felt uncertain that they were there to listen to men, in fact my opening line was 'I'm sorry I'm a male victim, I don't know whether you might be able to help me'. They were sympathetic, but couldn't. The feeling was, it was assumed that you are lying, claiming female on male violence.

When I managed to separate from my ex-wife, I spent several months with the blinds/curtains permanently drawn in my home, worrying when she would next show up on my doorstep, which she did unannounced quite regularly. This was just one amongst the many ironies. Whilst claiming to the police that I was violent towards her when we had been together, but refusing the police's offer of a restraining order, she would later turn up at my home.

You are not alone, plenty of other men have been abused by women, but few will be too open to talk about it. Trust in your friends. You will be surprised how many men will understand your experience and be able to help you.

Don't just look at the perpetrator, look at yourself. Seek to understand what it might be in your personality that enabled your victimiser to make you a victim.

Courtesy of www.bbc.co.uk