

SORRY, I CAN'T, I'M BROKEN

Quotes for survivors of domestic violence

H A N N A H D L I V I N G S T O N

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THIS IS WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE
TALK ABOUT ABUSE

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WHY

THIS IS A BOOK FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE, AND ANYONE QUESTIONING WHAT DOMESTIC ABUSE IS. IT INTENDS TO EXPLAIN, COMMUNICATE AND UPLIFT.

I USE THE TERM DOMESTIC ABUSE EVEN THOUGH I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT PHYSICAL VIOLENCE. EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND COERCIVE CONTROL IS THE MOST INSIDIOUS AND COMMON FORM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND IT IS ALSO THE LEAST UNDERSTOOD.

THIS IS DEDICATED TO MY FELLOW SURVIVORS. I SEE YOU, I HEAR YOU, I BELIEVE YOU.

1

CHAPTER

THIS IS WHAT WE TALK
ABOUT WHEN WE
TALK ABOUT ABUSE

Aloe vera plant background

“

Abuse isn't a steady stream.
It has ebbs and flows.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Emotional abuse is hard to
spot because it doesn't leave
a bruise. The scars are
internal

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Abuse can happen to anyone

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Abuse is when they gaslight
you into everything being
your fault.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

It started small. I didn't even
realize it was happening.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Taking a good thing - a
beautiful whole person - and
treating them like shit

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

Controlling food intake. It's
rarely talked about but so
many have been through
this.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

Having a completely
different manner when
around other people vs when
it would be just us.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



You can't express anything
without them exploding.
Then they will say you
started the fight.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Sleep deprivation

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Pretending to give you
choices. They're really not
your choices

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



The most insidious abuse
happens in tiny increments.
Months go by and you realize
you're living a life walking
on eggshells

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

Over time, it's meant to
erode your sense of self and
leave you with nothing
except them.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Emotional abuse is one of
the most sadistic and
manipulative forms of abuse.
It starts slow and you cannot
see it happening

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



So many assume abuse
means you are physically
harmed. But the control and
humiliation that come with
psychological abuse is so
much more common

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



The abuser will tell you no
one will love you because
you are worthless, stupid,
ugly, etc. In the same breath,
they will tell you they love
you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



If they physically block me
or push you around so you
can't get away in arguments.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Abusers will often refuse marriage counseling because they will try to convince you that you are the problem, not him.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Whenever you call them on
their abuse they tell you
you're too emotional and it's
your fault

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Abusers aren't obvious. They
aren't in low paying jobs.
They can be police officers,
doctors, lawyers, CEOs.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

They will apologize, promise
never to do it again, and do
it again.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

They will find different ways
to get their victim to stop
spending times with friends
and family

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Threatening suicide if you
leave them

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



If you need to ask if it's
abuse, then it's probably
abuse

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

They make you feel like a
bad person if you question
any of it

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

All couples fight. But most
don't scream for 30 minutes
until they break you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the foreground, with its leaves extending upwards and outwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I wish more people could
recognize gaslighting.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



The abuser will assume they
are right about everything

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

Their initial reaction to any
form of blame is to make you
feel bad, or crazy

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

Ghosting for days if they get
upset. You are always the
one who has to patch it up

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the foreground, with some leaves extending towards the center and right of the frame. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

They will say: “This is how healthy relationships are. If you care, you will do this for us.” And the requests get more and more toxic.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

They expect you to do
certain things without
telling you - then explode if
you don't do them exploding
at you for not doing the
things that were expecting.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Controlling behaviour is
abuse. Leave before it gets
worse.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

Just because he wasn't
hitting you yet, doesn't mean
he wasn't planning to.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Abuse is a choice. They know
how to be nice.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

2

CHAPTER

SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent white rounded rectangle is centered over the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

It's true it could have been a
lot worse, it does not
diminish that what I
experienced was very very
bad.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

How do you look after a child
when you're so sad you
might die

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

In his version of events, he
doesn't see himself as an
abuser. It is not in his
interest to change that
perception

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I'm finding it really hard to
cope with the fact that I was
abused and I find myself
both too trusting and too
skeptical and paranoid all at
once. I'm tired.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

He wanted me to ask
permission before doing
anything.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



I used to cry everyday
because I couldn't
understand what I had done
to deserve this

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

If he wanted something, it
was his way of the highway.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I used to think '17 years until
I get to kill myself'. I left my
husband to stay alive, but
I'm not sure what is left of
me.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



I want to bear witness. I want to tell everyone what happened to me. I want to show everyone the recordings. And I want to tell no one. I hate myself for staying and I understand every reason I stayed. I am weak and I am strong and when I tell myself 'this is not your fault' I need to believe myself.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

He destroyed my phone for
posting a picture of our son.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

The gifts were never really
gifts. The good times were
never good

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Your abuser will lie about
you and to you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



When something doesn't feel
right in your relationship, it
probably isn't

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



I thought domestic violence
happened to other people.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

For years I have been so
scared to say what I want. I
am still scared. When will I
heal.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



If you feel humiliated, that's
how he wants you to feel.
The humiliation is the point

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

It's all about him - even
when I'm sick

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

It was never about what he
was "mad" about. That was
just his excuse to get angry

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

Before I met them I was
doing so well for myself. But
now I feel like a shadow of a
person

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I know I should leave her. I
would tell any of my friends
to leave if they experienced
this.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

Everytime I mentioned
anything about how he
treated me, he would take it
as an accusation, and then
do everything in his power to
convince me it was a false
one.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent white rounded rectangle is centered over the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I accepted him trampling
over my boundaries to avoid
how guilty he would make
me if I tried to stand up for
myself

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

He is so calm but insults
everything about me in such
a collected manner

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

Sometimes they treats me
like they loves me .
Sometimes like I'm the worst
person who has ever existed.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



You are lying to yourself.
One part of you is screaming,
no they love me, they
wouldn't abuse me, that's
crazy talk. Another part is
screaming 'it's abuse'

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I had to go to therapy
because he had me thinking
I was an awful person

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I didn't leave because I kept
believing it was my fault.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

I use to pray my ex would hit
me so I'd have a real reason
to leave

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

He would yell and gaslight
and storm around the house
and then tell me I wasn't
showing enough love to him.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

They're just so good at
making me feel worthless

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I've been in therapy trying to
figure out what was wrong
with me. It was him.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I find it hard to accept that
this lovely person who I
thought loved and cared for
me could say such nasty
insults to me

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the foreground, with its leaves extending upwards and outwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I find myself thinking 'Was it
really that bad or am I
exaggerating?'

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I knew I was upset or felt uncomfortable,, but I could never remember the exact details of what happened.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

Yes, it was bad. Yes it
happened.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent white rounded rectangle is centered over the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

It doesn't matter if they
were really nice sometimes.
They still abused you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I fell for the lies about how I
was being unreasonable

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

I blocked out the physical
abuse. Kept telling people
“he never laid a hand on
me”. He did.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Everyone saw it from the
outside. No one felt it was
their place to say anything

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

After a while, we don't know
what a healthy relationship
is supposed to be anymore

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

It would be easier to leave if
there were no good times
between the abuse

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

It started with him telling
me that I was too chubby.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

He laughed when he upset
me

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

I've started fighting back by
shouting. He tells me that
I'm acting crazy

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I believed him when he told
me no one else would ever
love me

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, serrated leaves. The plant is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with its leaves reaching upwards. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

I believed him when he told
me I was crazy

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

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“

Degrading comments,
gaslighting and threats
became my new normal.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

3

CHAPTER

HOW TO HEAL



**Doubting yourself is the
proof of the abuse. Abusers
break down your reality and
make you doubt your
instincts.**

**@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E**

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

Recovery doesn't always
mean being who you were. It
means being stronger

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



A better life is possible and
you have just taken the first
steps

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Healing isn't a straight line

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

It's like with grief. It has stages. You will learn what calm feels like again.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Their voice is still in your
head. It will take time to
silence it. But you can do it

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



There are stages. The best
stage is when you realize
your life belongs to you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

When you miss them, it's
because you got used to the
pain

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



It's normal and common to
worry it was your fault

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Go to therapy. Find someone
who understands trama. Find
someone who understands
domestic violence

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant with its characteristic thick, green, pointed leaves and serrated edges. The plant is set against a plain, light-colored wall. A large, white, rounded rectangular box is superimposed over the upper half of the image, containing text and a quote icon.

“

Cry. Be patient with yourself.

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Some people will judge you.
Because they're terrified
they will become you

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Try every day to love yourself

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



You cannot shame yourself
into healing

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E

“

It will take time. But you've
done the hardest part -
you've left

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E



Look in the mirror every day
and say 'I did the right thing'

@ E V E R Y D A Y D O M E S T I C V I
O L E N C E