

CHRONICLES

Volume XXIII
Summer 2023

Eradicating domestic abuse from the inside-out.

Awareness Into Domestic Abuse-AIDA 501c3 is a non-profit organization that seeks to bring awareness to communities. The AIDA Chronicles consists of testimonials of past participants, articles, domestic violence statistics and facts. Our goal for the reader is to gain a greater insight into the ongoing work of transforming themselves and their inferior belief systems. AIDA hopes that all who read the AIDA Chronicles will gain insight into ending domestic abuse in America.

CONGRATULATIONS CTF-CENTRAL GRADUATES!!!



AIDA Program participants, along with Program Facilitators join Jarret Keith (Director of Prison Program) and Janice Bonello (Program Coordinator) to celebrate the completion of Cycle 1.

On May 4, 2023, Awareness Into Domestic Abuse (AIDA) held their Cycle 1 Program Graduation. AIDA has been running since 2015 at CTF. In November 2022, AIDA staff were able to come in and continue alongside the facilitator in continuing the work of eradicating domestic abuse.

Janice Bonello was the Program Coordinator who bi-weekly came in to support the inside team. AIDA is currently in Cycle 2 now and excited to be able to provide space for more participants. They have moved from bi-weekly to weekly. We can't thank our Program Facilitators as well as our Sponsor enough for their dedication and commitment to AIDA.



SHARE YOUR BPH EXPERIENCE

If your case was domestic violence (DV) related and you went before the parole board in 2022 or this year, we want to hear about your experience--regardless of if successful or not. Please share with us any insight or programs that helped you. We are hoping to put together resources for our members to support them when preparing for the board.

WHEN WRITING US:

Don't forget that AIDA is not:

- A Pen-Pal Agency
- A Legal Assistance Program
- Able to write support letters currently.
- A point of contact
- If you send any romantic or explicit content in your letters you will be removed from our member list.

The postal service will return mail if it is not addressed to the organization directly. Be sure to address it as follow:

Awareness Into Domestic Abuse

PO BOX 5323

SACRAMENTO, CA. 95817

We can be reached via the GTL Tablets. Please follow the guidelines from above and be patient in waiting for a response. Sending multiple messages will not expedite a response. Thank you!

When You Can Expect the AIDA Chronicles



Submit your writing/photo, drawing, or poem for a possible print in one of our future AIDA Chronicles.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you have a loved one who would like to get involved, please send them our way. They do not have to live in Sacramento. We have plenty of remote volunteer opportunities.

The Importance of Self Perception Through Writing

By Linda Ricchio, CIW

I became actively involved with AIDA after completing the correspondence course. Once I more meaningfully reflected on my own responsibility as both a perpetrator and a victim of domestic abuse/violence, I found myself wanting to encourage others in their own recovery and self reflection and, in time, to forward AIDA's mission to eradicate domestic abuse from the inside out. I sought to begin growing the healing initiative for others as I applied it to myself, and also became a facilitator for the program.

Part of this ongoing process of promoting personal well-being and self-awareness is a communication with AIDA's founders, Vanessa and Floyd Collins—both contributing intelligent and supportive inquiries into my personal understanding and insight, my arriving at inner peace, acceptance and self forgiveness attributes to changed character, perception of others, and desires to effectuate AIDA's growth and its impact on those who internalize its message and choose to change.

To arrive at these graces, I had to understand the environments from which I developed my beliefs and the environments in which I presently reside. I had to make connections from then to now—in thoughts, in feelings, and in actions. Environments demonstrative of both abuse and violence in various forms and in various degrees, but not defining who I am now or who I choose to be today in character, in thought, and in feeling. Having made the inner changes and demonstrating them, I live peacefully and promote non-violence.

Floyd recently shared with me a written construct of his daily life inside San Quentin. I could hear the noise leap off of the page in the verbal exchange he vividly described inside his living environment. It was no less recognizable than verbal exchanges I hear in the hallways in the female prisons—loud, often intrusive distractions. Meditation has taught me this is not my space to enter, not my place to react to abusively nor violently.

Perception is everything to others, especially in a congregate setting where others—staff and prisoners alike—observe others' conduct religiously. However, perception of oneself and gaining self awareness through self discovery should be foremost—examining ourselves, asking ourselves who was I back then and who am I now?

How do I develop self awareness and self perception beyond participating in self help groups? What other resources are CDCR approved, offer RAC credits, and can help me un-layer connections? "Transformative and rehabilitative" writing workshops and courses are valuable means for recovering self, healing trauma, and finding truths.

The CDCR offers many initiatives:

- Autobiography/Memoir—Prison Education Project (PEP), USC
- Creative Writing with College Student, Pomona College
- Creative Writing "Transformative"—Inside Out Writers
- Poetry, Healing Trauma—Poetic Justice
- Trauma to Transformation—Poets and Writers
- Success Stories

Gaining insight and understanding into who you are by writing your story, and in the process accepting yourself, forgiving yourself, and making personal discovery lends to all things possible. Writing is a process; it reveals and brings to the surface, or resurfaces, both beauty and burden which most know well. This is precisely the purpose of writing—to surrender thought, emotion, and whatever was or could be to paper and figuring out the things that once held us abusive or violent, and where these ideas originated from.

Writing is a tool. It is another useful tool available to all of us, anywhere at any time—individually for ourselves and for others, if we choose. As I choose to share my story and, with AIDA, eradicating domestic abuse by demonstration and facilitating AIDA's correspondence course available upon written request to the Sacramento address.

I hope every person perceives themselves worthy to take the time to write their truth, to tell their inner story/stories, and to find out as much about themselves as they do.

Are You Being Emotionally Abusive?

By: Michael Shukry, San Quentin

The definition of Emotional Abuse: Any nonphysical behavior or attitude that is designed to control, intimidate, subjugate, demean, punish or isolate another person through the use of degradation, humiliation, or fear.

1. Do you believe you have a right to make most of the decisions in the relationship?
2. Do you insist your partner do as you say?
3. Do you perceive yourself as being superior to or “better than” your partner? Do you feel you have the right to special treatment or consideration in the relationship because of this?
4. Do you secretly disrespect or even despise your partner because you feel they are weak, inadequate, stupid, or a pushover?
5. Do you deliberately get involved with a partner who would allow you to maintain the dominant role in the relationship?
6. Do you give your partner the silent treatment or withhold approval, affection, sex, or money when they don’t do as you wish?
7. Do you threaten to leave the house or the relationship whenever you don’t get your way?
8. Do you think your partner and others are just too sensitive and that is why they get their feelings hurt so often by the things you say and do? Do you think your partner should just learn how to laugh at themselves instead of taking offense when you tease?
9. Have you insisted that your partner drop all of their friends and outside activities?
10. Have you ever denied doing or saying something just to make your partner doubt their perceptions or their sanity?
11. Do you think your partner should be willing to have sex with you whenever you are in the mood and that they should be willing to engage in any sexual activity you are interested in exploring?
12. Have you ever threatened to find someone willing to have sex with you if your partner doesn't comply?
13. Do you experience frequent mood shifts and blame the “ups and downs” on your partner?
14. Do you think that your partner should put other things to the side to tend to you and your needs? Do you insist they spend all their time with you and accuse them of not “loving you enough” if they don’t?
15. Do you call your partner at work just to make sure they’re there, but become enraged if they’re not?
16. Do you question your partner about their activities when you are apart? Do you insist that they account for every minute that they are gone and accuse them of sneaking around? Have you listened to phone conversations without permission? Do you check in on them at work just to make sure they are there?
17. Do you insist on being in control of the money and just insist on your partner having an allowance? Do you make your partner account for every penny they spend?
18. Do you expect your partner to have the same opinions as you, and to like the same activities?
19. Have you threatened to hurt them or destroy something of theirs? Have you threatened to hurt the kids, pets, or family and friends?
20. Have you ever broken objects in front of them, or driven the car erratically while they are in it, just to scare them? Have you ever refused to let them leave the room or house? Have you ever pushed or shoved your partner?

(Note: The first five questions reflect an emotionally abusive *attitude*.)

If you answered yes to even one of these questions it means that you have been guilty of *emotionally abusing* your partner. This doesn't mean you're a horrible person or that you should be labeled an “abuser”. We are all guilty of using *emotionally abusive* tactics on our partners from time to time. This certainly doesn't make it right; however, you should make a concerted effort to stop this behavior now that you know it's abusive.

If you answered yes to more than five questions, you have exhibited a pattern of *emotional abuse*, **and this is far more serious**. If you want to regain your self-respect and your partner's trust, you will need to become totally honest with yourself and to your partner about your behavior and attitude towards them.

“Be the change that you want to see in the world.”

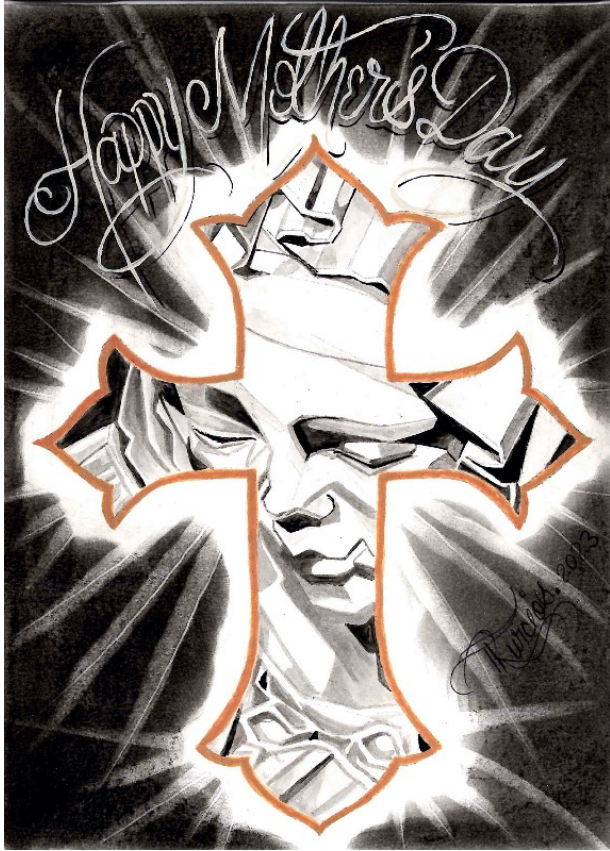
—Unknown Author

“Change your brain, change your life.”

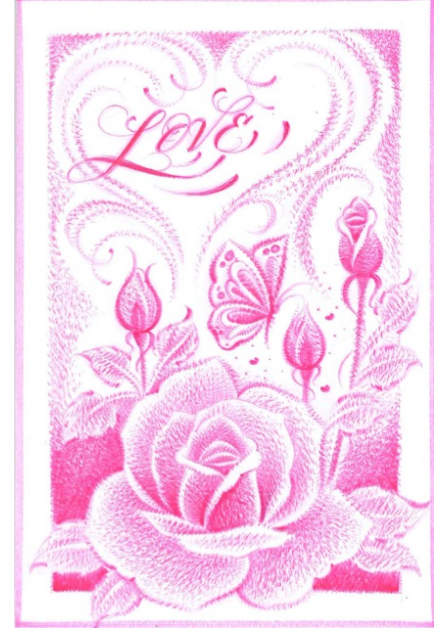
—Dr. Amen

Source: *The Emotionally Abusive Relationship* by Beverly Engel

This beautiful piece was sent by Robert Turcios-Centinelena State Prison



Thank you Joe Mora from SATF Corcoran for the numerous hand drawn greeting cards you gifted AIDA.



YOUR LOVED ONES CAN NOW VIEW ALL THE DONATED ART PIECES ON OUR WEBSITE. WE'D LOVE TO SHOWCASE YOUR TALENT—YOU CAN SEND DRAWINGS TO THE ADDRESS ON THE FRONT PAGE.

REGRET

By: Daniel Armendariz, SQSP

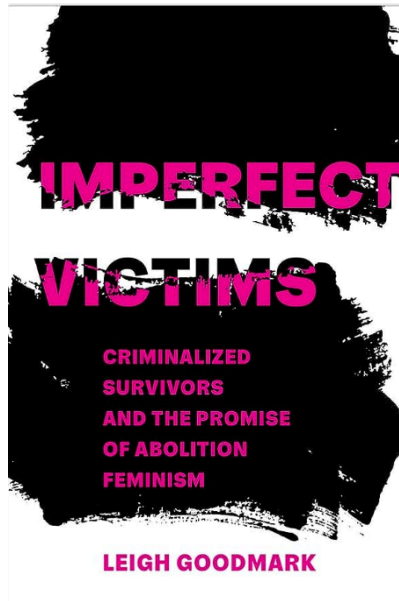
I painted blue skies,
that grew dark in time.

I walked in darkness,
for coldness was mine.

I sought refuge,
but still blind.

Only at the last,
did I see my regret.

It lies in my past.



Suggested Book Reading!

IMPERFECT VICTIMS

Imperfect Victims is a page turner that enlightens the reader to a demographic that is often never seen, nor heard because their pain is inflicted from a system that is supposedly designed to protect. This book will open your eyes to a whole new perspective of how victims become criminalized. Highly suggested for those who seek to gain knowledge on different aspects of domestic abuse, as well as abolition. Leigh Goodmark has given us a lot to think about.



Awarenessintodomesticabuse.com



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