



My name is Stephanie Hill and I am 47 years old. My story starts as far back as I can remember because I have had a pretty rough life. I ask everyone, “Have you ever met someone that was born stupid?” I’m not saying that I am stupid but I have a learning disability. In school, it took me a little bit longer than everyone else to learn. I felt frustrated and my self esteem was very low.

I think my family was embarrassed about my disability. They always treated me different from everyone else. I felt like I didn’t fit in. All the abuse that I experienced really messed me up big time. I suffer from PTSD, mood swings and severe depression.

I left home the first time at the age of nineteen because I was tired of everything that was happening in the house. At the same time, I met my first husband. I only dated him for one week before I moved in with him. I gave him seven years of my life.

It started out good but then the mental abuse started. I just kept ignoring it. We dated for about four years and then we got married. I think that as soon as my last name changed he thought he owned me. Our marriage only lasted three years. It ended because of mental, physical and verbal abuse.

I had nowhere else to go so I had to move back home. I was back in the abuse of my family of origin. I stayed there two years. When I say “abuse,” I mean I always had to do what they said or they would scream at me and lecture me constantly. Also, my sister was treated better than me. I always said she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth while I had to work for everything I got.

I met my second husband two years after I moved back home. That relationship was crazy from the beginning. No one in my family liked him. They tried telling me the only reason he wanted me was for my money. Of course, when your in love, you don't listen to anyone. You have got to learn the hard way and trust me I did. I stayed with him for four years till I made the mistake of marrying him. I gave him fifteen years of my life. Everything was good as long as it was just me and him and as long as my family wasn't in the picture. He would always move me away from my

family so he could have more control over me. I always thought that he was trying to protect me from them when all along he was trying to isolate and control me. I wouldn't listen and I didn't realize he was a narcissist of the worst kind. He had me so brain washed that I would do anything he said at the drop of a dime.

He abused me in so many ways mentally, physically, verbally and financially. As long as he got his way, he was okay. I let the abuse happen for about fifteen years. At first I didn't see that it as abuse because I loved him so, so much. But when the physical abuse started, it took me a while to get the guts to get away from him. There were times he hit me so hard that my tongue turned purple.

It took fifteen years till I finally let myself realize what I was going through was abuse. I tried to get my debit card from him and ended up him beating me badly and he stabbed me.

That day was the last day I saw him. He beat me up so terribly that I knew I had to get away from him or he'd eventually kill me.

I played it smart that day. I knew I had a doctors appointment so I tried all day long to pack what I could. I ended up taking nothing with me. I had a ride taking me to the doctors where I would be away from him. When I got to the doctors and they saw me, he was reported and was taken to jail for the second time for abusing me.

The first time he went to jail, I should have stayed away but I didn't. This time I'd had enough. They took me to a domestic violence shelter and I had to stay there for two nights till they helped me get a bus ticket to go to my hometown.

I stayed with friends for about two months and got a plane ticket home. I moved back home with mom. By that time my father had passed away.

This shows what my mom thought about me all along... The only way I knew that my father had passed away was through Facebook. It took me picking and choosing who I talked to to find out what was going on. I wasn't mentioned in the obituary as his daughter. It about killed me to have to move back home.

My mother and I never really got along for the year that I lived there. I remember it like it was yesterday. I overspent on bills and couldn't afford to pay her rent so she kicked me out and I ended up homeless on the streets.

I got addicted to all kinds of drugs. I don't know how I survived the streets for a year but I did. I was raped twice.

I met a lady by the name of Leslie. She helped me get away and get clean and into recovery. She got me connected with my family.

I have been clean and sober going on two years. I am back home with my family. This time, things are different. My mom and I are closer now than we have ever been. It's my sister and my nieces that affect my anxiety and depression. So I have my good days and bad days.

I plan on staying here with my family until I can get back on my feet if I ever do. I'll help my mom till the good Lord takes her home which I hope isn't for a long time. I just wish I could get a place of my own so I could just come here to visit and have a place to go for peace. Maybe one day, but right now I am taking things one step at a time, one day at a time and

trusting God for my life. I've suffered much, but God has been faithful to never abandoned me. Life is hard sometimes but God is good all the time.