



FCC FRONTLINE

\ 'FRƏNT-,LĪN \ : THE MOST IMPORTANT OR INFLUENTIAL POSITION IN A DEBATE OR MOVEMENT



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SURVIVOR STORY: DROWNING IN INFIDELITY AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE

On November 14th, 2018, my husband of nearly 6 years came home from an overnight work trip and seemed off. He didn't even acknowledge me when he came in. Something was definitely wrong. As he was unpacking his bag, the text tone of his phone went off. Up until this point, we had had a completely trusting marriage. But something felt different this time. I asked who the text was from, and he immediately tensed up.

That night, I learned of several female "friendships" he was having unbeknownst to me. When I checked the phone records the next day, I found hundreds of

hours of phone calls to a female coworker 17 years his junior. After reaching out to her, she admitted that "feelings grew" between the two of them. I was hurt and suspicious, but I wanted to believe the best of him. And for the next three months, my husband denied the affair, saying it was nothing more than a friendship.

Then, in February of 2019, I found saved voice and text messages with content that made it clear this was an affair. That day, I found myself calling into work, sobbing on my couch while a good friend held me, and prayed over me. I felt like my safety and

security had been ripped from right underneath me. Everything I knew to be true was gone.

Over the next year, my husband used the "trickle truth method" to disclose his actions. He protected himself by only giving me bits and pieces of information, whenever he felt like it. He would share another detail and then swear nothing else had happened. At first, I thought there was one female. One became two. Two became three. After that, I simply lost count.

We began seeing a marriage counselor to try to work through

SURVIVOR STORY CONTINUED

the aftermath of infidelity. My husband controlled the narrative. He made it clear it was his story to tell and he would tell it on his terms, even though full disclosure was what our therapist recommended. Day after day, month after month, my husband watched me cry in bed. I was unable to be a mother, to cook, to clean. Sometimes I couldn't even shower. My whole world was crumbling. I felt afraid, betrayed, and so broken.

He allowed me to suffer, knowing there was more to the story, but he chose, still, to continue to deceive me. When confronted about the infidelity, he would get mad and berate me. He would yell that it was all we ever talked about. That we couldn't go longer than a few hours without talking about it. He would make comments about me crying all the time and spending hours and hours in bed. I couldn't do anything right.

We would go to the garage to talk so the kids wouldn't hear, and he would be so angry, he'd throw his tools around. If I became emotional about it in the car, he became so upset, he

would start speeding until I'd beg for him to slow down. If I initiated a conversation he was uncomfortable with, he would leave and intentionally go where the kids were. I would follow, and then he would yell at me for talking to him in front of the kids. If I so much as allowed a tear to drop in front of the kids, I was scolded. Very quickly, I felt like I was walking on eggshells.

I watched my husband of 6 years laugh in my face when I was crying. Smirk when I told him I was hurting. His response to my questions was classic gaslighting. He blasted me with mind games until I felt I was crazy. Then, he started shifting the blame. Pretty soon, it was my fault for not getting over it sooner. It was my fault he lied, because he was afraid of how I'd react. The manipulation was so severe. I left conversations feeling as if everything was my fault. Like I had completely misunderstood everything that happened. And I was guilty for making such a big deal out of things. My mind was in a constant state of panic. I was operating from my amygdala at all times: fight or flight.

Everything was a threat. Everything was a trigger.

My life was a nightmare for the next year. I can't even remember all the terrible things he did and said to hurt me. He lied, cheated, and twisted the whole situation out to be my fault. I've since escaped his manipulation and control, but let me tell you- it wasn't easy. If you are stuck with a partner who cheats and manipulates like my ex-husband did, you're not alone. You might feel like you can't talk about it, like no one would understand. But I'm here to tell you that's not true. There are people like me who have endured terrible emotional abuse and survived. There are people like me who understand. And there are people like me who can help.

It's okay to be broken and devastated by infidelity. It's not okay for your partner to use that as a weapon over you. It is NOT your fault. You are not crazy, and you shouldn't just "get over it." You don't have to keep putting up with abuse, because that's what a "good" husband or wife does. You have options. Talk to an advocate today by calling 1.800.382.5603 or text "IOWAHELP" to 20121.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking

With people staying home for such long periods of time, we knew an increase in domestic violence calls would be around the corner. Now that some restrictions are lifting, people are finding a safe place and time to call us. We are seeing an increase in calls from people needing help with abuse. Our advocates have focused on getting our phone number out there as much as possible so that every person is aware that help is available. Our services don't judge or discriminate. We serve every victim and survivor (females AND males) that needs our support. We are here to make sure that every victim and survivor is heard and feels supported. Our phone lines are available 24/7/365.



Homicide & Violent Crimes (WISH Unit)

As courts begin to open again, our Crime Victim Specialists have been busy attending video hearings, sentencing, and bench trials. Jury trials are set to resume in September. Due to COVID-19, many courthouses limit the number of people in the courtroom, making it hard for clients to have their support system present. Some family members are required to sit in alternate rooms to watch the proceeding on live stream. Sometimes, our clients need to travel to alternate courthouses simply because they allow for better social distancing. Face masks and face shields can make it hard to hear. Despite some of these challenges, we are doing what we can for our clients.



Iowa Victim Service Call Center & Hotline

The calls continue to come in and the needs continue to vary. Some people need help filing a protection order. Others need help finding local shelters and safe housing. Many are still struggling with the effects of the current pandemic. Regardless of the need, our advocates are here and ready for those calls. They listen with great empathy and compassion. They give each caller the support they need and deserve. If the caller just wants someone to listen? Our advocates do that. If they need help outside of what we can do? Our advocates connect them with all the resources they need. No matter the circumstances, someone will ALWAYS be here to answer the calls of people who deserve help & support.



Rapid Rehousing (Housing Program)

As COVID-19 restrictions began to lift in communities and throughout the state, we saw a rise in housing needs as victims of domestic violence were able to safely leave their situations. Our housing program has been able to adapt to the needs of our clients and the ever-changing environment we find ourselves in. We have been working with each client to address some of the challenges they continue to face, such as: childcare shortages, job loss, lack of support systems due to social distancing, limited access to resources, and more. Our services are tailored to fit each individual's needs.



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Join us as we bring all the Cyclone and Hawkeye fans together for a friendly game of golf! Not a fan of either? No problem – you can still support a great cause and enjoy a day on the course! Details below:

- **4 person best ball**
- **\$380 per team**
- **at The Ridge in Sioux Center**
- **Shotgun at 12pm**
- **Registration opens 11am**

What's included?

Golf, cart, chances at {flag prizes, door prizes, flight prizes}, lunch and supper!

Ready to register? Contact Tara at fcc@familycrisiscenters.org. **Sponsorship opportunities available!**

Favored FIVE

A list of our top 5 needs this quarter! You can find a full list of needs on our website or reach us at fcc@familycrisiscenters.org.

1. Financial Donations
2. Gas Gift Cards
3. Hand Soap
4. Shampoo/Conditioner
5. Laundry Detergent

Hope IN REVIEW

Hope in numbers from **last quarter**. These numbers represent the **number of** clients we provided services to last quarter.

Housing Nights.....	1,632
Call Center Calls.....	8,635
DV/Human Trafficking Clients....	101
WISH Clients.....	98
Clinic Outreach Clients.....	14