

I have been in 2 DV relationships in the past 1 was coercive control at a time when the term wasn't used.

I am now out of those relationships and recognise what the red flags are that can lead to domestic violence situation. However, at the time I did not recognise the abuse was happening due to my disability which is autism. Many of his friends and family are under his manipulation and have now apologised for not stopping the abuse.

While he recognised his abusive behaviour when we broke up in [REDACTED] he has since denied the abuse.

I wish I had been taught to recognise the green flags that are present in a healthy relationship.

My 2nd DV relationship started during Covid and got worse when I moved to the [REDACTED] Valley, luckily enough I was able to recognise the red flags of coercive control. As [REDACTED] is a rural area there were very few local services and places to go, fortunately my NDIS provider supported me to escape and go into hiding until my location was tipped off by the landlord. Services couldn't help me any longer due to lack of funding so I stayed in [REDACTED] for another month before returning to Adelaide and my family where I am now safe.

I was able to survive these situations through accessing services via my NDIS funding, I was later diagnosed with complex PTSD and BP and continue to access supports Adelaide.

These are my thoughts and recommendations:

- DV can be caused by family history and growing up around it, mental health and trauma.
- Measures to prevent DV include: More laws and stricter bail conditions, counselling schools educating about and DV what is DV and how to recognise, demonstrations and plays in schools.
- Influencers eg youtubers like Andrew Tate and young men not knowing their role in society these days could be increasing DV incidents.
- We see lots of public campaigns about DV which may have some effect but DV is getting worse.
- There are no real systems for helping people identifying DV. I personally had an experience of job provider telling me I was in a DV relationship but didn't know what actions were DV.
- Police should have more power to arrest someone or remove them from home, put victims into safe accommodation.
- Barriers to getting help include: stalking, harassment, safety, police don't really do anything, perpetrators let out of custody in a few hours, manipulation, lack of services in rural areas, not knowing who to report to.
- To successfully leave a DV situation people need counselling, housing, family and access to finances and education on healthy relationships.
- Children need the above but also access to family services,
- Perpetrators need to get help e.g. therapies and to stay in jail until rehabilitated
- If a victim has to attend hospital they need police guard, counselling in hospital, kept away from perpetrator.
- There need to be more services in rural areas
- There need to be more services for men and members of the LGBTIQ+ community