

Truth Through Trauma

Domestic Abuse & Trauma Workbook



Overview

This workbook provides a trauma-informed approach to understanding domestic abuse and its impact. It combines lived experience with professional insight to guide you on a journey of reflection and healing.

Trauma-Informed | Lived Experience Led

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Understanding Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive, controlling, and harmful behaviors used by one person to gain and maintain power and control over another in an intimate relationship. It can take many forms, including:

- **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, kicking, or any form of physical harm.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Verbal abuse, intimidation, and manipulation.
- **Financial Abuse:** Controlling access to money or resources.
- **Psychological Abuse:** Threats, isolation, and gaslighting.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any unwanted sexual contact or coercion.

The Impact of Abuse

The impact of domestic abuse can be profound and long-lasting. Survivors may experience a range of emotional, psychological, and physical effects, including:

- **Anxiety and Depression:** Persistent feelings of worry, sadness, or hopelessness.
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Flashbacks, nightmares, and hypervigilance.
- **Difficulty Sleeping:** Insomnia or disturbed sleep patterns.
- **Low Self-Esteem:** Negative self-perception and feelings of worthlessness.
- **Physical Health Problems:** Chronic pain, fatigue, and other stress-related conditions.

Trauma Responses

Trauma responses are natural reactions to overwhelming and distressing events. Common trauma responses include:

- **Fight:** Feeling agitated and reactive, ready to defend yourself.
- **Flight:** Wanting to escape or avoid reminders of the trauma.
- **Freeze:** Feeling paralyzed or numb, unable to take action.
- **Fawn:** Trying to please or appease others to avoid conflict.

Understanding these responses can help you recognize and manage your reactions to triggers.

Professional Insight

It is important to seek professional support to process the trauma experienced. Therapists can help you to work through the traumatic experience and develop coping mechanisms to deal with the issues that arise.

Reflection Questions

Use the following questions for personal reflection. Take your time and be gentle with yourself.

- How has domestic abuse impacted my life?
- What are my common trauma responses?
- What are my strengths and resilience factors?
- What support systems do I have in place?

Practical Action

Taking practical steps can help you regain control and build a safer, more fulfilling life:

- **Set Boundaries:** Clearly define what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior.
- **Practice Self-Care:** Engage in activities that promote well-being and relaxation.
- **Seek Support:** Connect with trusted friends, family, or professionals.
- **Create a Safety Plan:** Identify steps to take if you feel threatened or unsafe.