

#1 Think I wish Policy Makers Knew

I wish they knew how much it still hurts. June 6, 2009 was the day my son saved my life from my ex-husband. His grasp around my neck was so tight, I passed out. It was quick. I rose up towards what many would call Heaven, or the sky. I did not see any white light, I was not looking that way. I was looking down, at the earth, at what was happening. He was still standing over me, with his hands around my neck. Still. My son, a precious one and a half year old sat on the couch next to us, on my phone. Beep, beep, beep was all I heard aside from my own screaming, silenced within the confines of my own head.

He was standing over me. Still. But there was glimpses of my son playing football, a seemingly older version of my son. Another glimpse flashed of my little one graduating from high school. A third of him getting married. Glimpses into the future surely of what I would miss if I somehow did not take another breath. Beep, beep, beep.

But then, he let go. Slightly. His hands remained around my neck, still. But the pressure was off. My air way opened and a breath filled my lungs and back in by body I was. My eyes opened and I was able to turn my body around, now facing him. He strangled me again. This time with just his thumbs on my air way providing less pressure, I was able to fight for air. One more breathe. Beep, beep, beep.

When will this end? Will I really die, right here in my living room, on my favorite couch? I kept twisting from his grasp, barely, but just as I thought I could take another breath, he applied more pressure. He wanted to win, as he always did. He wanted to win my life. An eternity passed, I am absolutely certain of it! Beep, beep, beep.

And then, the loudest silence I have ever heard. The beeping ceased and then the baby screamed a blood curdling scream that shook the house. My ex-husband finally stopped, thinking the baby hurt himself. He did not. The baby simply looked up from my phone and witnessed something no child should ever have to witness. Mom, bloody, at the hands of Dad. Pure violent, evil, damaging, rage. If they bottled it, it would be a poisonous toxic blend. The baby, my son, saved my life.

Yes, I called the cops. Yes, I cooperated with the prosecution. No, the officers could not attend the hearing to testify as to my bloody face, scratched up neck and shaken demeanor that June night. Would that have taken the pain away? Would it have even mattered?

August of 2018 presents months shy of ten years since the worst, bloodiest day of my life. And it still hurts?! Right now, my back is killing me. I called the cops and went to court, but I did not want anyone touching me. Not for years. I went to a chiropractor over a year after that night and my neck had an arc in it going the wrong way. My hips were uneven and my shoulders were uneven too. He broke me. Strangled me. So why do my hips still get misaligned? Strangled me and in photos even now, one shoulder is higher than the other.

The number one thing I want policy makers to know is that it still hurts. When my son jumps on my back or I pick him up. When someone stands behind me in line at the store. When I'm in an elevator packed with people. When I try to go for a jog without stopping because my

throat starts to hurt. When people hug me. When a significant other tries to cuddle with me. It hurts, always.

Will harsher punishments for domestic violence and strangulation when the victim loses consciousness make it better? Will restitution to pay for ten plus years of chiropractic appointments and therapy make it better? Will mandatory child support to help with the cost of living make it better? None of it will. Preventative measures to combat poverty, childhood trauma and juvenile delinquency will. Helping those impoverished will. And understanding why it still hurts, will.