

# ELYSE'S STORY

When I was 20, I met this guy who I thought was everything. We got married two years later, and I thought we had a perfect marriage, with only a few speed bumps.

---

It took me walking away from the situation to realize just how toxic the relationship was.

---

I never went anywhere alone: the grocery store, a friend's house, or even to see my parents. I wasn't allowed to go back to school, because he had a good job. It would have been a "waste of money" for me to finish my degree. He never hit me physically, but he hit me emotionally and mentally. If a fight got physical, it was at the expense of the bathroom door or a window. I always thought that as long as he kept his hands off me, everything was okay. He came from a verbally abusive family, and I got sucked right in. I was verbally abused by everyone, even the kids.

It wasn't until I couldn't make excuses for the broken windows anymore that I realized that I couldn't do it any longer. I started having panic attacks every time I was home. I started drinking all the time to be able to face him. I would lock myself in the bathroom or closet just to have the door kicked down and get yelled at for "being a crazy person."

When it finally ended, and I looked back, I realized the damage that had been done. The damage that still haunts me today. I had to take up a hobby to help me cope with the anxiety, and I chose nail art. Now, four years later, I'm a recovering alcoholic. I also had a friend steer me towards Jamberry. I was able to take my love of nail art, and turn it into a business -- a business that picked me up off the ground and helped me regain my confidence, pay my bills, and give me a sense of freedom... something I haven't had in a long time.



 **FIGHT**  
AGAINST DOMESTIC  
**VIOLENCE**™

I AM A  
SURVIVOR