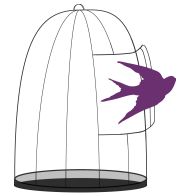


Women of Silicon Valley/WomenSV

A Closer Look at Services



Domestic violence crosses every profession, culture, country, religion and walk-of-life.

Our clients range from stay-at-home parents to doctors, lawyers, engineers, religious leaders, celebrities, and CEO's of their own companies. Their abusive partners fall into the same categories. In spite of their diverse ethnic, professional and religious backgrounds, what unites all of our clients is their shared experience of being involved with professionals who use their credentials, social status, power, money and influence to coerce and control their intimate partners, and often their children as well. Children are always the hidden victims of domestic violence.

At WomenSV, we work to help women free themselves from abuse, and at their own pace, so they can go on to build healthier, safer lives for themselves and for their children. We do this by working closely with each individual client to help them create their own strategy, updating it as needed to respond to new threats as they move through the most dangerous period in a domestic violence relationship: leaving their abuser. We work with each client for as long as they desire. We invite donations but are well aware of the financial abuse that has rendered many women homeless, living out of their cars, dependent upon the generosity of friends and relatives. **So there is never any charge for our services.**

WomenSV runs a helpline which is often the first point of contact for women seeking information and support around the issue of domestic violence. We educate women about the basic dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships with specific emphasis on behaviors and tactics of affluent abusers, some of which are extremely subtle and sophisticated. We suggest individualized counter-measures, placing the highest priority on all aspects of safety planning, including physical, emotional, technological and financial. It is very hard to live with an abuser, almost impossible to leave without outside support. We accompany clients to court, the police station and attorney appointments to provide emotional support, and so they do not have to face their abuser alone.

In our weekly support group, we cover topics such as red flags signaling potentially abusive behavior, the typical profile of an affluent abuser, types of abuse (ex: emotional, physical, technological, financial), the impact of domestic violence on women and children, protective strategies, and resources. Women share their stories and get informal support. Many have gone to work for one another, provided childcare, done house-sitting for one another, become best friends in a sorority made up of courageous survivors from all around the world.

Clients often tell us we are the first ones to "get it" when it comes to understanding and validating their experiences. While responding to individual needs and requests, we work to support, educate, and empower each client and connect them with trauma-informed and domestic-violence-informed services that include vocational mentoring, financial planning, personal counseling, attorneys, therapists, and cybersecurity experts to de-bug their cars, homes and electronics.

In our public presentations, we raise awareness about the specific risks and challenges of domestic violence in affluent areas. And in our **trainings,** we address the gap in domestic violence education amongst providers. Therapists, religious leaders, family law attorneys, medical staff and teachers receive extremely limited training in domestic violence (usually not more than 15 hours). Through our workshops and seminars, we help providers become more knowledgeable in general about the dynamics of power and control, and suggest strategies to help provide more effective care for those they serve.

We are creating more than a program at WomenSV. We are building a social movement promoting every woman and child's right to personal freedom, peace and safety in their own home.