

Sam's story

I was with my wife for six years. I used to do everything I could for her. I paid off her debts, paid her bills and paid for her car. But I soon learnt that nothing would ever be enough for her.

The emotional abuse started first. I was very rarely allowed to go anywhere by myself. When I was it would only be to work and even then she would phone me constantly throughout the day. I tried to leave her when this started, but she emotionally blackmailed me to stay by overdosing on tablets; which I later found out she would spit them out under the bed. She would also threaten to hurt any future girlfriends I have so badly that I wouldn't want to be with her.

Optimistically thinking that things could get better between us I proposed to her after two years of being together. This was the biggest mistake of my life- things went dramatically downhill from that moment.

The first time she viciously attacked me was on Good Friday 2008. I don't know why or what provoked her. She ran into the house, grabbed a knife and as soon as I walked in she was attacking me with it. She then grabbed my testicles and twisted them as hard as she could and would not let go. It was excruciatingly painful. To this day I still do not know what caused her to be so violent. She would just snap from nice to nasty in an instant.

The violence only got worse from there. The second time she attacked me, she followed me around the house punching me in the head, hitting me with a pint glass, knocked me to the floor and proceeded to drop her knee into my head repeatedly. It was ferocious and I genuinely feared for my life. I also remember on another occasion she was punching me in the eye when I was driving around a roundabout, so hard that she bruised her knuckles. I was however later in the wrong for causing the bruising. The most shocking attack however, happened on our wedding night. She really beat me, kicking and punching me repeatedly. I remember her digging her nails into my cheek, it felt like she was going to rip my cheek off. I managed to get away and ran down the road in bare feet and my wedding suit. I went back because she was threatening to hang herself with my wedding tie. I later got beaten because the cuts on my face ruined our honeymoon pictures.

She was eventually convicted of assault by beating three years ago and given a six month restraining order. She subsequently lost her job as a care assistant. I have been left with a lot of fear and I am constantly on a state of high alert. I am however in the process of explaining my experience to my therapist. I am working on dealing with what happened to me and slowly moving on. It is a long and difficult process but I now that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and I will not allow her ruin my future.