

The Four Voices of Sexual Injustice

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Source: www.goshen.edu, www.wegiveadamn.org, www.stophumantraffickingny.wordpress.com, www.keshet.org

The Voice of a Sexual Assault Survivor

What I do remember is waking up the next morning in a strange room, alone, cold, mostly naked and confused. In a panic I got my clothes together. My heart sank into my stomach as I looked down at the blood-stained sheets. I was so frightened I didn't know what to do. I was hurriedly "pushed" out the door by the guy who lived in the room. Not much was said.

The Voice of the Real Me

My dad was standing in the kitchen, fighting a laugh. My mom was crying. Like ugly crying. She slapped me in the way that only mothers can. The kind of slap that conveys love and somehow brings you in for a hug simultaneously. She kept repeating between sobs that I didn't "look gay" and how people were so mean to gay people and she didn't want people to be mean to her oldest daughter.

The Voice of a Former Sex Slave

In 1995, I fell in love with a military man, who persuaded me to move with him to an undisclosed remote area. There, I was raped and beat continually while handcuffed to a door of an abandoned house. Eventually, through circumstances, I made my escape, but not before he had confiscated my naturalization papers, driver's license and social security card. With no proof of my identity, I could not acquire adequate shelter. I felt like an animal that has been cast into the street. My life became a scenario of sojourning from one homeless shelter to another.

The Voice of an Ally

The first step in advocating on behalf of others is to take a curious, humble, and open approach. An ally is open to learning new things and challenging their own assumptions. The lives of people we care about, our friends, family, and colleagues can be powerful catalysts for action. When we speak out against injustice because it's the right thing to do, regardless if someone we know and care about is affected, we act on behalf of our core values. As allies, we are often insulated from the vulnerabilities that people face in the world. We must be willing to take a risk in becoming an ally on behalf of the values and people we care about.