



SECRET GARDEN.
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

JANUARY
HAPPY NEW

FEBRUARY,
VALENTINES
DAYDAY

MARCH
GRADUATION.

Health &
Wellness

COMMUNITY
MATTERS
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

EVERY
FAMILY
DESERVES A
SAFE HOME

VOLUME 4
ISSUE I

Editor
THERESA
MCINTOSH.

SELF
CARE

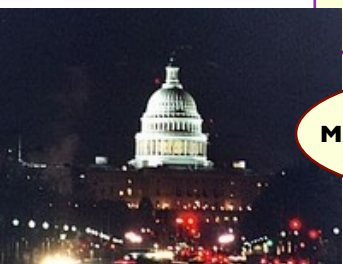
HOUSING

UN
TREATY on the
rights of the
disabled.

GETTING
BEYOND BARRIERS

SPEAKING
MATTERS

Accessibility
for people with
disabilities.



U.N. Treaty on the Rights of the Disabled

Brace yourselves, everyone, because here’s something that might be surprising: Elected officials who vote against the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities don’t necessarily hate disabled people. Strange but true! In fact, a number of leaders in Washington vehemently oppose the treaty, and for good reason: Senate ratification wouldn’t accomplish anything substantial for Americans. It wouldn’t significantly improve the living conditions of disabled people overseas, and it could potentially undermine American sovereignty.

John Kerry, one of the treaty’s main proponents in the Senate, has argued the opposite — that it won’t change U.S. law and could make life easier for disabled Americans traveling overseas. And the treaty’s supporters also emphasize that it has bipartisan support, from Senators John Barrasso and John McCain, among others. But it’s drawn criticism from prominent congressional conservatives, including Senators Mike Lee, Jim DeMint, Rand Paul, and Pat Toomey. Rick Santorum has also spoken out against the treaty, which prompted Dana Milbank to [write](#) for the *Washington Post* that his newest cause must be “opposing disabled people” — a statement so patently ridiculous that it’s not worth dignifying with a response.

The treaty is intended to protect the rights of the disabled, but the United States already has the strongest legal defenses for them of any country in the world. The White House argues that if we ratify the treaty, other countries might be more likely to do so as well, which might improve the international protection of persons with disabilities. that might make it more convenient for disabled Americans to travel in those countries.



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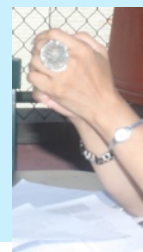
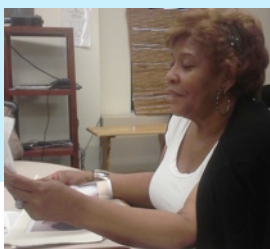
Barrier Free Living’s Domestic Violence Program Secret Garden Offers Reiki Sessions for consumers with Practitioner Antoinette Calabretta. Certified in Reiki, Antoinette is also a Case Manager at Secret Garden.

ANTOINETTE CALABRETTA
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GRADUATE. ZEN.

GRADUATE.
ALEXANDRIAN.





BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER BUREAU.



Theresa A. H. McIntosh Founder.

Theresa is a mayoral appointee representing the voices of the victims at the mayor's office to combat domestic violence. She is a motivational speaker and a community educator on domestic violence in the disabled community. Theresa was given a 2nd chance at life and has made a magnificent glass of lemonade. Theresa story is truly about learning from one's mistakes and the resilience of the human spirit. Theresa came to barrier free living in 1996 as a consumer and today she is not only a founder of the Barrier Free Living Speakers Bureau, she is also active on the Freedom House Board.

TOPICS:

- Domestic violence workshops,
- Accessing healthcare and the barriers that people with disabilities face
- Physical and programmatic accessibility to the services for the disabled.
- Developing distribution resource material.
- Housing

Mission.

Barrier Free Living empowers individuals with disabilities to live independent, dignified lives free of abuse.

Vision.

❖ TO ADVANCE THE MESSAGE, INPUT AND PARTICIPATION OF SURVIVORS WHILE TELLING OUR OWN STORY AND CREATING THE CHANGE WE WANT TO ESTABLISH IN SOCIETY.

Values

- 1 Power to change lies within the individual.
- 2 Taking personal responsibility enhances an individual's self esteem.
- 3 An individual's strengths are the building blocks to achieving life's goals.
- 4 People who understand and build the skills and the mind set to become independent are less likely to accept abuse or be abusive.
- 5 Failure is an integral part of growth, which can lead to progress and success.
- 6 Parents who value themselves provide a solid foundation for their children's growth.
- 7 Healthy families place a value on children's voices.
- 8 Information is empowerment. Sharing knowledge helps everyone.
- 9 Trusting relationships are built on a foundation of confidentiality.
- 10 A holistic perspective embraces the individual's self-determination, culture, religion and values.
- 11 The goals of staff and consumers are best achieved through teamwork.



The National
Women's
History Project



MARCH 2013:
**Women Inspiring Innovation
Through Imagination**

[blog](#) | [web store](#)



Stamp ceremony kicks off day in Rosa Parks' honor

The new Rosa Parks Forever stamp being launched nationwide in Dearborn, Mich., and Detroit on Feb. 4, 2013, the 100th anniversary of her birth. Image received Jan. 22, 2013, from the United States Postal system. (Photo: USPS via Detroit Free Press) **DETROIT** -- In honor of Rosa Parks, the U.S. Postal Service on Monday morning is releasing a commemorative forever stamp with her image.

It will first be unveiled during a birthday breakfast celebration and live radio broadcast Monday at the Charles Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit. A second unveiling will take place later that afternoon at The Henry Ford museum complex in Dearborn, Mich., where activities are going on all day in honor of Parks.



Celebrate Valentine's Day by ending Domestic Violence.

People either love or hate Valentine's Day. They can be Uplifted or isolated by the explosion of red and pink decorations and gifts plastered with roses and cupids one way to recreate this holiday is to make it less about chocolates, jewelry, and admirers, and more about spreading love. Today, Crime Stoppers Atlanta hopes to raise awareness for the sinister side of relationships: domestic violence.



Domestic violence is defined as "the establishment of control or fear in a relationship through physical, sexual, emotional, and/or financial abuse" Such abuse can happen to anyone—no matter his or her background—and does not have to include physical abuse.

Too many men and women are affected by domestic violence: over one hundred Georgians every year are killed in domestic violence related incidents; 30% of all women in Georgia from the ages of 14 to 44 are assaulted; and the FBI reports that a woman is beaten every 9 seconds.

There are ways you can help:

- You can donate your time and money to local shelters, hot lines, and legal advocacy groups. Your generosity can provide a second chance for a victim.
- Be respectful and kind in all your relationships.
- Never turn a blind eye to a friend or family member's abuse. Check out [this link](#) for signs and steps to take.

Spend this Valentine's Day thankful for those you love, as well as mindful that healthy relationships don't hurt.



Congratulations To our Speakers Graduation.

First pilot year, it has been a full interesting journey to say the least however, we are commitment and bring to the front-lines. Our mission to educate and inform, community about domestic violence over the past year we have been training our speakers to bring awareness and educate their community, I hope that we can stop the violence against women and women with disabilities for if we teach one to teach one we can pass it on. I congratulate our graduates as they prepare for their graduation day Our graduates have been committed to the progress I am really proud of them. as we read these words today another woman is dying, today another woman is crying, today another woman's life has been jeopardized by domestic violence, we gather our voices in protesting and shouting out! stop the violence against our mothers, daughter sisters, and friends.

Stop the cycle!
 Stop the abuse
 Hands are not made to hit
 Word are not made to hurt.
 Stop Now.

most mountains start with small stones.we can start, be that light for women who are still walking in that darkness, Lets help as many women as we can bring them into the light, At Barrier free living we've seen the miracles that dedicate staff have seen and to the Barrier free living staff,I say thank you .The women you see before you are our miracles Today, They no longer live in silence, both Alexandrian and Zen have found their voices, Continue to support us by reading our news letter and to get the word out about the BFL Survivors Speaker Bureau. March 20,2013 is our tentative date for our inaugural Graduation. Have a successful New Year, Don't forget to live a little, laugh little, and love a lot.

PEACE AND LOVE
 THERESA MC. Editor.

As I grow up
 Had a child at 17 years old
 My relationship was not stable
 Misunderstanding and abuse was present

A runaway child was I called
 My mother did not understand
 Never took the time the time to find out
 Instead she wonder if I ever will grow up

Here words were
 Why can't you be like your sisters
 I grow up never understanding myself
 I ran from place to place

Life went on
 Still I was looking for something
 What it was I don't know
 I found love
 My heart was feeling open

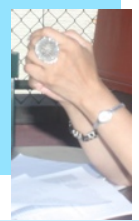
A feeling that is felt when the opposite sex is
 not aware of
 It came and it left me
 But that feeling lingers on

Do I understand it
 No I do not
 Does it hurt
 Yes it does
 Yet the feeling lingers on

My heart forever wonder if it is ever coming
 back
 Because my love is so real
 And forever lingers on

Alexandrian





ZEN'S FIRST SPEECH.

Domestic abuse and violence should not have happened to me. And why not I asked myself; because I know what it is. I am a caring, educated, loving woman who married a decent, caring loyal man. I am a strong willed person and would not tolerate abusive behaviors. I would leave; and so I thought. What I did not realize is that behaviors change as life circumstances change. The tiny signs of controlling and revengeful attitude, emotional immaturity, immorality, deceitfulness exhibited by my abuser at the early stage of our relationship suddenly made sense and filled me with regret. I became angry at myself for not heeding to these signs and blinded myself with only the qualities I thought were positive. These so called positive qualities turned out to be his greatest weapon against me and my children; for he used them and is still using them to beat us to submission ultimately burying us alive in pain and poverty.

After a 20 year relationship with my abuser, 17 years of which as his wife, I realized that there are many faces to domestic abuse and violence. Mine did not start out like a monster that he is, but slowly through time, my abuser was able to strip me of every ounce of my self-awareness and power I had within. It was lethal not only to my relationship with him but to me and to my children as well. I became a slave to his every need and wants. I had lost my voice, killed my intuition and made myself disappear in a relationship I thought was a partnership. I was no longer a protector for my children. I was an accomplice: delivering my children to him so they would like me. I made him the center of our family life and made everybody else insignificant including myself.

The sad part of it all, is that, I did not even know that these were all happening to me. For years I thought my marriage is great because I did not feel complacent. I was always on the on the go and always dealing with major issues and events in our lives. My husband made sure I stayed this way by ignoring my plea for stability. Eventually I got sick. I run out of steam, more so, he made sure I ran out of steam when he was ready to leave us. He found my replacement and a way of skipping the tedious and expensive college life of my children.

For about a year, I did nothing but wallow in self-pity, pain, anger, devastation. Even my faith in God was shaken; not by the uncertainty of the physical ailment I am oing through, but the betrayal of the one I gave myself to: the one who promised me for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health he will be with me.

Until one day I got so sick of these emotions and asked God to get rid of them. Through prayers I learned not to deny my love for him, instead accept it, and compared it to a food I love so much, yet one that is bad for my health. I learned to handle the pain, rejection, and all the evilness he has directed and is still directing toward me and the children. I learned to trust God more than ever. Surrendering to God, easier said than done, yet truly the only solution to a situation when all odds are stacked against you. I lived it, believed in it; each day asking for wisdom, patience, courage and endurance.

I now understand the journey my children and I have been asked to take. We are being led to a life of freedom, happiness and fulfillment, one that we will never achieve if we are placed in the control of a person evil enough to orchestrate our hardship, heartless enough to watch our pain, selfish enough to deprive us of ourselves, inadequate enough to be a normally grounded person, let alone a husband and a father.

I have met a lot of people who exhibited the same qualities as my abuser, in fact, they were his friends and acquaintances. Yet they did not make my vision of this world as dark as theirs, because along the way I have met people who gave me their heart, their time, their money, and their love to help me, heal me and make me understand that I am worth saving from a miserable life: that I am valuable and that God's miracles are true and alive through them. So for all those who believe it cannot happen to them, think again and re-evaluate your life.

EQUALITY.



Trust and Support - Both partners encourage each other's goals, acknowledge talents and strengths, value feelings and opinions even when different from their own, respect privacy, and listen non-judgementally.

Non-threatening Behavior - Both partners talk and act so the other feels comfortable expressing his/her opinions and making his/her own decisions. Both always feel safe around the other.

Sexual Safety - Both partners are able to say "no" to any sexual behavior they are not comfortable with, honor and respect each other's sexual decisions, communicate about sex, and practice "safe sex" if sexually active.

Financial/Economic Independence - Both partners control their own money and have equal control of household money. When gifts are given, they are given freely and without expectation for anything in return. There are no demands for money or material items.

Negotiation and Fairness - Both partners have equal decision-making power and are willing to compromise. Rules and agreements are made together and apply equally to both.

Responsible Parenting - Both partners communicate and make responsible decisions about pregnancy. If parenting, both share responsibilities and are positive, non-violent role models for children.

Honesty and Accountability - Both partners accept responsibility for their own actions, acknowledge mistakes and admit when wrong, communicate openly and truthfully, trust each other and are trustworthy.

Connections with Others - Both partners maintain friendships and family relationships, enjoy activities outside of their relationship and make their own decisions about where they go, what they do and who they are with.

Unhealthy Relationships - Power & Control Wheel



Intimidation and Threats

- Using looks/actions/gestures/voice to scare partner
- Throwing/smashing things, showing weapons, destroying property, punching walls or other objects
- "Play fighting" that is meant to show strength and power over partner
- Threatening to hurt partner or someone s/he cares about
- Threatening to commit suicide

Emotional/Verbal Abuse

- Constant criticism, name-calling, put-downs
- Playing mind games
- Embarrassing or humiliating partner
- Guilt-trips
- The "silent treatment"
- Spreading rumors or telling secrets
- Insulting partner's race or heritage
- Damaging partner's personal property

Sexual Coercion

- Manipulating partner into sex, including using guilt trips or threats
- Unwanted touching
- Pressuring partner for sex
- "Playful" use of force during sex
- Treating partner like a sex object
- Sexual harassment
- Drugging someone/having sex while they are too drunk or high to make a clear decision about whether they want to have sex
- Preventing partner from getting/keeping a job
- Keeping partner on an allowance

▪

Financial/Economic Abuse

- Preventing partner from getting/keeping a job
- Keeping partner on an allowance
- Making partner give you his/her money
- Using someone for their money
- Expecting sexual acts in return for spending money are partner

Sexism

- Discrimination based on gender
- Using the belief that males are superior to females or that males have certain privileges that females should not have, to justify controlling partner
- Being the one to define male/female roles
- Expecting the male to make all the big decisions
- "Rules" for the relationship that are not the same for both partners

Using Children

- Pressuring partner to get pregnant
- Using children as a way of creating dependency
- Threatening to take away children or not allow contact with children
- Hurting or threatening to hurt the children
- Telling or threatening to tell the children negative things about partner
- Threatening to report partner to child welfare

Denying, Minimizing and Blaming

- Denying the abuse or acting like it is not that serious
- Not taking the partner's concerns about the abuse seriously
- Saying the partner "brought on" the abuse by something s/he did or didn't do or saying s/he deserves the abuse
- Not taking responsibility for one's own behavior

Isolation & Extreme Jealousy

- Controlling who partner is friends with, where s/he goes, what s/he does
- Separating partner from family
- Not letting partner work or be involved in his/her own activities
- Keeping constant tabs on partner, including through pager or cell phone
- Accusing partner of cheating as a way of manipulating him/her
- Using jealousy to justify controlling behavior



The cycle of violence in domestic abuse

Domestic abuse falls into a common pattern, or cycle of violence:

- **Abuse** – Your abusive partner lashes out with aggressive, belittling, or violent behavior. The abuse is a power play designed to show you "who is boss."
- **Guilt** – After abusing you, your partner feels guilt, but not over what he's done. He's more worried about the possibility of being caught and facing consequences for his abusive behavior.
- **Excuses** – Your abuser rationalizes what he or she has done. The person may come up with a string of excuses or blame you for the abusive behavior—anything to avoid taking responsibility.
- **"Normal" behavior** — The abuser does everything he can to regain control and keep the victim in the relationship. He may act as if nothing has happened, or he may turn on the charm. This peaceful honeymoon phase may give the victim hope that the abuser has really changed this time.
- **Fantasy and planning** – Your abuser begins to fantasize about abusing you again. He spends a lot of time thinking about what you've done wrong and how he'll make you pay. Then he makes a plan for turning the fantasy of abuse into reality.
- **Se-up** – Your abuser sets you up and puts his plan in motion, creating a situation where he can justify abusing you.

Your abuser's apologies and loving gestures in between the episodes of abuse can make it difficult to leave. He may make you believe that you are the only person who can help him, that things will be different this time, and that he truly loves you. However, the dangers of staying are very real.





Community Resources

Know the Problem

Know Your Players



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Thank you for supporting our efforts to promote healthy relationships. Ending violence begins with starting a conversation.

Request a Speaker.

To present to your business, organization,
by calling 212-677-6668 ext 330.

or - email-bflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org

Theresa Mc Senior coordinator and
Founder.

Barrier Free Living Survivors' Speakers
Bureau

(she who attempts the ridiculous, achieve
the impossible)



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE .FINDING SAFETY & SUPPORT- RESOURCES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINES.

NYC: 1-800-621-HOPE (4673) or dial 311

TTY: 1-866-604-5350

For a listing of domestic violence hotlines by county, go to the [NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence Website](#).

Additional New York State Resources

Other Hotlines in New York State

New York State Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-342-3720

New York State Adult Abuse Hotline

1-800-342-3009, press option 6

New York State Office for the Aging - Senior Citizens Hotline

1-800-342-9871

New York State Department of Health - Growing Up Healthy Hotline

1-800-522-5006

TTY 1-800-655-1789

Provides information about health care, nutrition and other health and human Services.

BFL Speakers Bureau Newsletter

[Advocacy](#), [BFL News](#), [Domestic Violence](#) •

Barrier Free Living Survivors Speakers Bureau, which started in May 2012, ended 2012 with the fourth edition of its, The Bureau looks “forward to meeting your speaker needs for women with Disabilities. Our Founder, Theresa McIntosh encourage your inquiries and opportunities to educate your organization, school, university or event on the issues of domestic violence and its intersection with disabilities.” **Info:** bflspeakersbureau@bflnyc.org