

BRUCE: Mr. Ford, let's see. Is that them? Hello? Nope. Let's try-- thank you.

HOST 1: You're welcome.

BRUCE: That's them.

HOST 2: Hi!

BRUCE: Hi!

HOST 3: How is everybody?

BRUCE: We're just fine.

HOST 3: Guess what? It's 2 o'clock again.

BRUCE: It is? Oh no, that must mean it's "After Hours."

HOST 3: It is.

HOST 2: It's "After Hours."

HOST 3: Celebrating life!

BRUCE: Yay!

BRUCE: From the heart of Montrose.

HOST 3: Ta-da.

HOST 2: Definitely Montrose.

HOST 3: There seems to be someone missing.

HOST 4: You're right. You're right.

HOST 2: Yes. I have noticed this.

BRUCE: Who's missing?

HOST 3: Gee.

HOST 2: Buddy!

BRUCE: Buddy?

HOST 4: Who?

HOST 2: Buddy! You know, the short little one who runs around.

HOST 3: Yeah, Mr. Johnston.

BRUCE: That's why I'm sitting in his chair. I wondered about that.

HOST 3: Where is he?

BRUCE: Buddy wanted to take the night off.

HOST 3: Buddy gets a vacation?

HOST 2: Wait a second.

HOST 5: That sounds like the name of a movie.

HOST 2: I have to get special permission to do things like that.

BRUCE: But he did ask us to do the show for him tonight and I think we can handle it. What do you all think?

HOST 3: Sure.

HOST 2: Why not?

BRUCE: We have a very special show for you tonight dealing with abuse. It's called "The Man and the Woman Next Door." Taken after a Rom and Paul song, which we'll play in a little bit, called "The Woman Next Door." But right now, why don't we see if we can get the show started here?

HOST 4: Yeah!

BRUCE: Here we go.

[AUDIO PLAYBACK]

- The disorders began with a routine police raid on a homosexual bar, The Stonewall on Christopher Street.

[CROWD CHANTING]

Say it loud! Gay and proud!

- We take great pride in what's happened in the gay community and what's going to happen.

- The People of Dade County have said enough, enough, enough.

[CROWD CHANTING]

Human rights are here to stay! Anita Bryant go away!

- There's no question in my mind that the people of California don't want homosexual teachers in the classroom.

- State Senator John Briggs has just conceded the election.

[CHEERING]

- Both Mayor Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk have been shot and killed.

- Dan White has been found guilty of one count each of voluntary manslaughter.

[CROWD CHANTING]

Fight now! Fight back!

- It has now broken loose. Cops are now bashing heads.

- And here comes the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

- Gay power, gay politics, that's what this report is about.

- There are gay and lesbian people singing out here. What's your reaction to that?

- I think it's terrible. If I had a rock, I'd throw it at them.

- The real message of these gay games is that every one of us is a winner.

- Tonight we are marching, as are others across America. And we shouldn't have to be.

- Say it so they can hear you in the Capitol! For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back!

- I think that's Robin Tyler on the stage leading the chant, for love and for life, we're not going back.

- Good afternoon, and welcome to the National March on Washington, DC for Gay and Lesbian Rights and choral reciting!

[CHEERING]

- Let's hear it out there!

[CHEERING]

- And I'm Lea Delaria.

- I'm Bruce Hopkins.

- I'm a dyke!

- I'm a faggot!

- And we're best friends!

[CHEERING]

- I want you to savor this next moment. I have the proud task of telling you that the official count of the Lesbian and Gay Rights March, the official count is over 500,000 strong! 500,000 strong! Look at you! 500,000 strong!

[CHEERING]

- 500,000 strong! One of the largest marches in the United States history!

[CHEERING]

- One of the largest marches in the United States history! 500,000 strong!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Well, we're back now.

- We must destroy the list once and for all and shatter them. We must continue to speak out. And most importantly, most importantly, every gay person must come out.

[CHEERING]

As difficult as it is, you must tell your immediate family. You must tell your relatives. You must tell your friends, if indeed they are your friends. You must tell your neighbors. You must tell the people you work with. You must tell the people at the stores you shop in.

[CHEERING]

And once they realize that we are indeed their children and we are indeed everywhere, every myth, every lie, every innuendo will be destroyed once and for all. And once-- once you do you, you will feel so much better.

[CHEERING]

[CHANTING]

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay Rights!

- Harvey, do you have a few words for KPFT?

- Come on out! Join us! Bring your friends!

- What do you think about the turnout so far?

- Well it's never enough. Never enough, never enough.

- And I ask-- I ask people all over this country to do one thing. Come out! Come out, America! Come out!

[CHEERING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- OK, now we're back.

[END PLAYBACK]

HOST 2: You sure about that?

BRUCE: Maybe. I don't know. Am I sure about anything tonight? I don't know.

HOST 2: Well darling, you're doing all right.

HOST 3: Yeah.

BRUCE: Well, I'm trying hard. Buddy did leave us with an important public service announcement to make for him, though. So here comes a public service announcement.

HOST 3: What's it about?

BRUCE: Well, I don't know. Let's listen.

HOST 3: OK.

[AUDIO PLAYBACK]

- On November 27 1978, San Francisco's Mayor, George Moscone and Supervisor, Harvey Milk were assassinated in City Hall. Harvey Milk had served only 11 months on San Francisco's Board of Supervisors, but he had already come to represent something far greater than his office. The year before he was gunned down, Harvey Milk tape-recorded a will.

- This is to be played only in the event of my death by assassination. I fully realize that a person who stands for what I stand for-- an activist-- gay activist becomes the target or the potential target of somebody who is insecure, terrified, afraid, or very disturbed themselves-- knowing that I could be assassinated at any moment, any time-- I feel it's important that some people know my thoughts.

I stood for more than just a candidate. I have never considered myself a candidate. I have always considered myself part of a movement, part of a candidacy. I wish I had time to explain. Everything I did, almost everything was done in the eyes of the gay movement.

- To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Harvey Milk, you're invited to a free screening of "The Times of Harvey Milk" to be shown Friday, November 18 and Saturday, November 19. Beginning at 12:00 midnight at the River Oaks theater. Presented as a public service by the River Oaks theater Lobo and KPFT's "After Hours."

- It's all right. You may all come out.

[END PLAYBACK]

BRUCE: Well, have we all come out?

HOST 2: I have.

BRUCE: Well, wonderful. OK the title of the show tonight is "The Man and the Woman Next Door." We have three wonderful guests we'll be introducing to you throughout the night. Or throughout the morning, as the case is. Right now we're going to play "The Woman Next Door" from Romanowski and Phillips, which is the song that the show was based on. So listen up, everyone.

And again, the theme behind the show tonight is abuse and we're trying to make sure that everyone out there realizes we've all been abused at some point in our lives. Some of it may not be real major, some of it may be real minor. But we take abuse every day in our lives. And hopefully tonight we're going to learn a little bit about how to better deal with that abuse.

And if you're in an abusive relationship which is real bad, learn that you don't have to put up with it and you can take control of your life and be a better person for it. Romanowski and Phillips.

[MUSIC - ROMANOVSKI AND PHILLIPS, "THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR"]

BRUCE: Joining us now is Larry, who has also been in several abusive relationships. And he's here this morning to tell us his story. Good morning, Larry.

LARRY: Good morning, Bruce.

BRUCE: So can you give us a little input, I guess on your past?

LARRY: Well, I think at this point, I think of myself as a recovering abuse addict. I've been through a number of relationships, some long-term, some short-term. Many of them were abusive either emotionally or-- what's the word I'm looking for? Emotionally or-- not physically, but--

BRUCE: Mentally.

BRUCE: Mentally.

LARRY: Mentally. And they were abusive emotionally and mentally. And they finally progressed to the last relationship, which I had, which did become physical and which I fled from within fear for my life. Years ago, I was with a guy that I was crazy about and literally would have done anything for him. And in retrospect, I realized that I was completely obsessed and compulsive about it.

And him knowing that allowed him a lot of freedom to manipulate me. He manipulated me to the point in fact, that I moved out of my own house and moved in with a friend for a month so that he could have space to decide whether or not we should have a relationship at all. And in retrospect, I realized that that was abusive. That was beyond the point of reason.

I like to think that I don't tolerate that kind of manipulation in my life anymore, although I'm sure it's still possible. But the most dramatic relationship was the most recent also. I was involved with a man for six months, which was very short-term. But it was a very intensive relationship, very intense relationship. And we met and we were hardly separated from the moment that we met.

And against my better judgment, he persuaded and convinced me and cajoled and manipulated me and threatened me. In fact, he told me that if I didn't move in with him, that we couldn't have a relationship at all. And because of the issues going on in my head and in my life, such as self-worth and self-image, and also from a desire to have a relationship-- any relationship at any cost, I agreed and moved in.

Even knowing that we had already had a physical confrontation, which I'm glad to tell you and share with you later. But the point of the story is that I moved in on a Monday. And the following Sunday, less than a week later, because of an argument that we had had, I found a gun to my head that he told me was loaded and he proceeded to pull the trigger.

And I have never in my life been as scared as I was at that particular moment. I've always considered myself to be relatively non-violent person and when I find myself going over that line of nonviolence and into a violent-- even violent emotional reactions, I've always felt guilty and beat up on myself because of it.

But fortunately, I was able to control myself at that particular moment because I was convinced that he had gone out of his mind. And was literally in fear of my life and played along with him that day and just placated him that entire day because I knew that I was off the next day and that I would be able to move out of the house immediately.

So that's what I did. I moved out of the house immediately. So it was that kind of manipulation and finally, the fear of my life that sent me to-- I was already seeking help for other problems in my life and going to a therapist. Who, by the way, had been advising me ever since I met the man to get out of the relationship. And of course, I wasn't listening.

BRUCE: Of course not.

LARRY: Because I was completely overwhelmed and in love and ready to be in love. And so I went back to my therapist and he helped me work through what was going on, why it had gotten to that point, and how I had enabled that-- to happen.

And so I had to start beginning to look at what I was thinking and the thoughts that I was generating that allowed other people to think that they had permission somehow-- either implied or explicit that that kind of behavior was OK. That it was OK to act that way towards me.

And I've made quite a few changes in my life. And I don't tolerate that kind of behavior from friends or potential lovers or lovers. I haven't since-- I haven't gotten involved in a relationship since then. I've been a little gun shy, not to put too fine a point on it. But I've since looked back and realized that many of the relationships that I had were-- one way or the other, were abusive.

Some mildly, and some to the extreme-- the one that I mentioned earlier. A couple of the other ones included screaming fights and jealous fits and kinds of emotional blackmail that a lot of people have--

BRUCE: Experienced.

LARRY: Have experienced, yeah. And I've looked back and realized that I was the one that was enabling these people to do that. That there was something about the way that I looked at myself and presented myself that gave them permission. Or thought that they thought they had permission to treat me that way.

And not that I feel like I was playing a victim, because I don't, because I think I was a full participant in what was going on. But I also think that you can be blackmailed by someone that you care for very easily, probably very easily--

Because you're ready to just accept and hear what you want to hear. And sometimes-- I know that I look back and see that I wasn't listening. That they were all along, giving me signals that something was wrong with the relationship. And then a couple of cases, like the one where I moved out of the house, I was just hanging on for dear life and would have done anything to keep the relationship going when in fact, the relationship should have been terminated right there.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: So that's how I gave permission and enabled the other person to just walk all over me. I literally laid down and let them walk on me. But when it progressed to physical violence is when it truly frightened me. With the last relationship, him and I had had a number of discussions where we had talked about his past relationship and I considered him to be a good candidate for a relationship.

He was over 40, I'm over 40. He had a very stable job and a home life with children and mother and that sort of thing. He had just come out of a very long-term relationship, nine or so years. And I considered him to be a prime candidate for a long-term relationship, which is what I wanted in my life, probably still do.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: But he gave signals-- while we were still in the sort of dating stage, he gave signals and I just didn't pick up on them. He recounted stories of standing across the room and throwing China at his ex-lover.

BRUCE: OK.

LARRY: And I made comments at the time that the first thing he threw at me--

BRUCE: Better be the last.

LARRY: He'd better hit me.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: He'd better hit me and I'd better be out for a long time. But it became sort of a game and because I am a real firm believer in nonviolence, I think he took that to believe or took that to mean that therefore, I would not defend myself.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: That I was such a pacifist that I would not raise my hand to defend myself and that I was incapable of doing it. And that somehow fed his ego or his vision of what a relationship was and therefore, gave him the upper hand.

BRUCE: We'll be back in just a few minutes with more of Larry's story. You're listening to 90.1 KPFT FM.

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

We're back now talking with Larry. You talked some about your past relationships and the physical abuse in them, but could you talk just some more about how these relationships evolved?

LARRY: Sure. The last relationship-- the one that became physically abusive, started very mildly with just little verbal battles back and forth. The guy and I had gone out of the country on a vacation and he was displeased that I got sick and did not want to go out on our last night and became very verbally abusive.

And at that point, I was able to just turn over and go to sleep, basically because I was not feeling well enough to argue or deal with the problem whatsoever. And had decided at that point that I really didn't need this kind of thing in my life. And what happened was that the next day he was very contrite, and very apologetic, and very loving, and very attentive and convinced me that it would never happen again.

And I bought into that. I accepted his apology and I said that I would believe him that nothing like that would ever happen again. And I should-- in retrospect when I look back, I should have known that even though the red flags did go up, I should have known that was the beginning of a cycle.

Because he had recounted incidents with me with his past-- his ex-lover, that were along the same lines of a cycle of verbal, and then physical, and then apologies. And then fights and apologies and fights and apologies. And I should have realized something at that time, but I didn't. I wanted very much to have a relationship and was willing to tolerate and did tolerate a lot of things.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: Then the next time that anything incident happened-- we had taken a trip to New York and we had these wonderful plans. And I happen to love New York-- collect the bumper stickers. And really, I'm energized by the city and was very much having a good time and enjoying myself and my friend did not enjoy New York quite as much as I did.

He first of all, physically wasn't feeling too well. And also, he didn't like the fact that my attention was concentrated somewhere else, that I found something else that energized me other than him.

BRUCE: Right. OK.

LARRY: And made it very clear that he wasn't pleased. That New York wasn't-- it was dirty, and it wasn't an interesting city, and he had seen all of that before, and he'd been to big cities. And New York didn't impress him, even though this was his first time in New York.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: And the end result of that was that he started playing little mind games with me, like lagging behind me while we were walking down the streets. And then being upset because I walked ahead of him, not realizing that he had purposely slowed down, and then picking fights and that sort of thing.

We went to the theater that night and he was very upset. And even, in fact refused to sit in his seat next to me and disappeared at intermission and wouldn't go to dinner after. So when I went back to the hotel room, I was also upset by this point and decided to blow off our plans for the rest of the evening and change clothes and either take a walk or go out on my own.

While I was in the closet changing clothes, he came in and attacked me from behind physically, started beating on me. And it was at that point that something snapped inside of me. And I said, this is enough. I'm not going to take this anymore. And unfortunately, my outlet was also physical.

BRUCE: OK.

LARRY: And I reached around and grabbed him and lifted him up off the floor and pinned him to the wall until he turned blue. And then I finally caught myself and I let him go and he fell to the floor and I just looked at him. And I said-- I was so upset with myself at that point-- that I had gone over that edge, that I had espoused for so many years of nonviolence, that that really was the way.

And that I did not agree with violence in any form and I was so upset that I had gone over the edge that I just looked at him and told him just to leave me alone. And he wouldn't. He kept attacking me and coming at me.

And at one point, I held him pinned down on the floor and had his leg up, beating hitting him in the back of the head with his own foot and telling him if he didn't leave me alone, I was going to break his leg. And all during that, I was just feeling-- inside, I was just feeling sicker and sicker and sicker because I was losing-- I had lost control.

And I was really feeling very bad about myself for having done that. So I finally left the hotel room and walked around New York for a while and thought about it and told him-- and I had told him previously from the last trip when we went out of the country that if he ever got violent again or abusive again, that that would be the end of it.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: When I came back to the hotel room, I fully expected him to be gone, although he was still there. And again, he apologized and he was very contrite and very loving. And so again, I forgave him and I accepted his apology. And then when we came back to Houston, we were still seeing each other. And that's when the incident with the condominium came up.

And obviously, when it reached that point that I was really truly in fear of my life, I had to start examining myself and how I had gotten into that. I think I mentioned earlier, I finally came to the conclusion that I was enabling much of someone who lives with an alcoholic and enables them to be an alcoholic.

I wasn't just saying, no I won't accept this or I won't do that. And I didn't draw a limit and I didn't feel good about myself, therefore other people probably were not feeling good about me. So through a wonderful therapist, I started examining these emotions and why I felt so badly.

And I looked back and I realized that the physical abuseBRUCE:BRUCE: while it was the most traumatic, was just the end result of a whole syndrome that I had been going through for years and years and years all based on my lack of self-worth and my self-image, and all of which was negative at the time.

And I've worked since then probably now for about a year on changing that, on finding some value in my own life and some worth to my own life. And that all came out of a terrific therapist that I worked with.

BRUCE: You mentioned earlier to me how you realized that not only was this one relationship physical and mentally abusive, but that you had been in several relationships that were mentally abusive. Can we talk about that a little bit more?

LARRY: Well, yeah I mentioned the one relationship where it got so bad that I was so manipulated that I moved out of my own house. I owned everything in the house and I moved out of my own house in order to give space to the other person. The relationship before that one, I moved out of the state for the person I was with because by his own choice, he decided that he didn't want to live in a big city and he wanted to live closer to home.

So I moved out of state and lived out of state for four years during that relationship. And during that relationship, I remember very, very vividly one incident in particular where he disappeared for four days. Literally, he just was not there. Not at his mother's, and his mother lived in the area. Not at his mother's, not at any of our friends', and he was gone.

And then he showed back up. And until this point, I thought we were real happy. But obviously, we were not.

BRUCE: Having some problems.

LARRY: We were obviously having problems that I chose not to see. And just as a sideline, when I look back now, I realize that these were choices that I had to make. And sometimes I made bad choices. A lot of times I made bad choices.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: But in this case, when he showed back up, he had been out of the state in another city close by, a major city close by. We lived in the country, so big cities were not that close, so you had to fly or drive for hours. And he had been with-- staying the weekend or the four days with someone who was a carbon copy of me.

He was the same height, the same age, the same birth date-- literally the same birthday, same coloring, everything. He was with my twin and it was very disturbing, to say the least. It was like he was telling me that he liked me and my type and so forth and a lot about me, but that he didn't like me, that there was something inside of me.

And that was very disturbing. And shortly after that, we did finally, finally break up. And the excuse was that he had decided that he didn't want to be gay any longer, that he wasn't sure that he was gay. But the fact was that there was something wrong in the balance of our relationship.

And again in retrospect, and over about a year's worth of therapy, I realized that probably as a compensation and as a need in my own personality, I am a very controlling person and I tend to be very forceful about my opinions and so forth. And I overwhelm people.

And if someone comes into a relationship thinking that it's going to be 50-50 and in fact, the other person is not only offering their 50%, but wants to use 49% of yours, that can be very tiring. And I think that's basically what it was. And that goes back to what I was saying about choices. I was making bad choices.

Instead of getting in relationships that were 50-50 and were healthy, I was getting into relationships that began where I was 75% of the relationship. I made all the decisions. The other person allowed me to make the decisions. It's not like I was forcing them.

BRUCE: Yeah.

LARRY: I wasn't forcing my decisions on them, but it was little things like, where do you want to eat tonight? Oh, I don't care. You choose. Well, I always would, rather than--

BRUCE: Right. I don't care either.

LARRY: Yeah, I don't care either. I always said no, well let's go here and we would go there. And then while I was doing that, I was also kind of nurturing-- in two of the cases, I was nurturing my partners and encouraging them to make decisions for themselves and to make choices. Meanwhile, I was not making choices.

So what happened was that they grew through the relationship, where I stayed in one level-- the same level because control was important to me. And since I apparently seemed to be in control, I stayed at that level.

BRUCE: Right.

LARRY: Whereas they, realizing that-- probably realizing that they had no control and that they saw how I kept control, they grew and started making choices for themselves. Life choices-- where to go to dinner, what colors to wear, who their friends were, and things like that. And once they grew beyond the point that I could tolerate them making choices, then there was a lot of friction that started happening.

And then the friction of course, became the crux of the relationship. It was constant bickering and fighting and bickering and fighting and reconciliation, a lot of that. Or just tremendous cycles of fights and reconciliation, fights and reconciliation. It all happened over and over again. And I-- again in retrospect, I see that what happened was that I was making really bad choices and I was stagnating.

I was staying at one level and that basically, I was unwilling to allow the other person to take back that 25% that I had sort of taken charge of. But I still basically wanted a relationship. So once the relationship started to deteriorate-- I also don't give up easily, so I would just do anything-- bend over backwards, do anything.

I moved out of the state, I would move out of my own home. I would just do anything to keep the relationship because then the relationship became more important than the two people involved.

BRUCE: OK. I'd love to thank you for coming on our show this morning. Hopefully you'll be able to stick around for some phone calls. We'll be trying to take some of those in just a few minutes. And we thank you again for being with us tonight, Larry.

LARRY: Thanks, Bruce.

BRUCE: You're listening to 90.1, KPFT FM.

[MUSIC - BOBBY MCFERRIN, "DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY"]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC - BOBBY MCFERRIN, "DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY"]

And that was Bobby McFerrin, and don't worry, be happy. And our next guest this morning is Judy. Good morning, Judy.

JUDY: Good morning.

BRUCE: You're here to tell us your story, right?

JUDY: Right.

BRUCE: Well, why don't we start at the beginning?

JUDY: Actually, the first time I was aware that there was any kind of a problem at home was really not the first time that anything happened. We'd been together a little over a year and she got angry one night and hit me. And it was just-- it was like a slap and it wasn't any big deal. And I thought about it later on and I was trying to really figure out what I had done to make her so angry that she would actually hit me.

And the answer is I made her mad, simple. But I didn't think anything else about it. I just thought, that's the way it is and some people lose their temper. It was several months after that before anything else happened. And that incident was more or less forgotten by then. And it was a little more of the same.

It was another incident and then again, I thought, what did I do to make her so angry? And from that point on, it was a series of small incidents. And before I realized it-- and of course, I can say this now, I couldn't have said it back then-- before I realized it, I was spending all of my time trying to figure out how not to make people mad because it must be my fault because I'm the one that's getting hit.

So after several months of that, it progressed into a more physical thing. And then it was more-- I guess, could be classified as more of a beating than a hit. And at that point, I decided the easiest thing to do would be just to keep peace in the house and not to cause any anger or any anguish or whatever. And it went on like that for maybe another year or so.

The incidents got a little more violent, but there was no major injury or anything of that nature. But then some really bizarre things started happening, too. Little things would trigger other little things and punishment was involved.

BRUCE: OK.

JUDY: I don't know why this is something I thought I could tolerate, but I did and I guess I took it in stride.

BRUCE: Yeah.

JUDY: In that particular period-- and I guess this can be divided into different periods of time, it lasted for quite a while. I could never really figure out what it was I did that was so horrible that would cause the punishment, but it had to be something.

BRUCE: And all this time, it was, what did I do? It wasn't--

JUDY: Yeah, it was always, what did I do? Because I would make her angry and she would punish me. She would retaliate. And the big thing is, don't make her angry, and there's no punishment. But it didn't work that way, because it seemed like no matter how good I was, I never was good enough.

There were incidences involving weapons and other objects that could be used as weapons, but it would keep me in line a little while. Like I said, I never could figure out what I did, but I was trying not to do it again. And I know a lot of this is stuff that I can look back on now and say, oh. But back then, it was a totally self-defeating type thing.

It had to be all my fault, but of course I realize now that it wasn't. But that's real hard to see when you're in the middle of all that.

BRUCE:

Right.

JUDY:

People ask me now, why did you put up with that? And the answer is very simple. Because back then, I deserved it and it was just a fact of life. It progressed to a point where we would go out to parties or to church-- social type things and I would be told, stick by me and keep your mouth shut. Just stick by me and keep your mouth shut because you don't have anything to contribute to the conversation, anyway.

So just keep the food and drink coming, so to speak. Sort of a servant type thing, I guess. So I just kind of stopped socializing, too. She would carry the conversation, make all the plans, basically make all the friends, too. Anyone who came in to our house was someone that she knew, or someone that she had met at some place, or someone that we knew that she had cultivated the friendship altogether.

And I was just sort of in the background. Someone had to do the cooking and the serving and that was fine with me because at that point, that was all I was supposed to do and I did it well. So later on, she would go out and do the socializing and I would stay home and wait for her to come home. And that worked out well, too because I didn't mix with groups very well.

And because sitting home was just fine with me. I wasn't particularly excited about the type of people that we were mixing with at the time. And so the less time I had to spend with them, the better, as far as I was concerned. One night when she did come home-- she'd been out visiting various bars and such.

And she brought someone home with her that she had met in the bar and basically I guess the easiest way to say it is that they had struck up a bargain. And she brought him home for me.

BRUCE:

OK.

JUDY:

And I was expected to cooperate with this gentleman in any fashion that he saw fit. And I guess that's really the first time in a relationship that I ever really retaliated and lived to regret it, so to speak. The gentleman got what he wanted and left and I can't honestly say that there was much of an argument after he left.

That I was definitely put in my place, so to speak. I also told her that was the first and last time anything like that would ever happen. And lived to regret those words. This went on for several years. Sometimes it was a gentleman, sometimes it was a lady, sometimes it was a couple of ladies and a couple of gentlemen. A couple of times it was even a couple-- a male and female.

BRUCE:

OK.

JUDY:

It was just whatever she found. And on several occasions, it was people that I knew. And I think that was probably the worst times.

BRUCE:

Right.

JUDY:

She would go camping, take trips, do various things with other people. And rather than vacations, they usually turned into nightmares. But it all went back to the fact that this is the way she wanted it, and this was the way it had to be, and this was my purpose on Earth, was to please her. She did not take part in these situations at all.

She preferred to watch and I had heard of such things, and I don't know if that's right or normal or whatever it is, but it's still a matter of cooperation. And at that point, I think it was more survival than cooperation because I didn't have anybody I could turn to. I didn't have any place I could go and it became a way of life. It really did.

BRUCE: We'll be back shortly with more of Judy's story. You're listening to "After Hours" on KPFT, 90.1 FM, Houston.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

We're back now talking with Judy. Judy you had talked a little bit about the social life and how her friends were the only ones that were allowed in your home. I know you told me that you had special friends in your life. What happened to them?

JUDY: Well, it was made perfectly obvious to the people here in town that whenever they did come by or call, they really weren't welcome. And it made them feel very uncomfortable, which I can understand. I could even understand it then, but I can understand it even more so now. And so as a result, they eventually just stopped coming by and calling.

One friend in particular, a lifelong friend that lived out of the city out of the state, was cut off by her. He was simply told that his calls were not necessary and were detrimental to our relationship, more or less and to just stop calling. And it was real hard for me at that point to agree with that or to comply with those wishes because this was a friend of like 18 years. And we were very close. And I think she considered him a threat.

I listened to him and I talked to him a lot. I never let him know what was going on in my life from this standpoint, but if he had something to say, if he had been aware of it and had told me that it was not a good situation, it was one I should get out of, then I'd have gotten out of it. It was very simple.

But I never had anybody tell me that because I never could tell anybody what was going on. It was, you don't tell the family secrets, you don't air your dirty laundry. And at that point, I felt like there wasn't anybody I could tell. Nobody lives like that. And to tell somebody what was going on, the first thing they're going to think is that I was crazy.

Or that I was a liar, I don't know which. But either way at that point, I don't think I could have heard that from anybody. And not having any place to go or anybody to turn to made it a lot easier to tolerate what was going on because if nothing else, it was-- I guess it was a form of love.

And to me, just to walk out and turn my back on it and have nothing and no one-- it was a lot of years that I had invested. And so I guess you do what you have to do.