

"WHY I STAYED..."

The reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship beyond the first violent incident are varied and complex. Below is a list of common reasons why people report they stay.

1. I didn't think that what was happening was abuse or domestic violence.
2. I believe his/her promises to get help and/or to change.
3. I believed there was something I could do to help or change him/her.
4. I believed somehow or some way we could work it out.
5. I didn't understand there was such a thing as "Gay domestic violence."
6. I believed the abuse was my fault.
7. I loved him/her very much.
8. I believed that no matter what, I had to honor my commitment to him/her.
9. I wanted to leave but I had no place to go.
10. I lacked the financial resources to leave.
11. I did not know where or how to seek help.
12. I did not believe that people would believe me or help.
13. I actively sought assistance but I didn't receive it.
14. The good times outweighed the bad.
15. I thought of the abusive incidents as isolated exceptions, not as a repeating pattern.
16. I was afraid of being alone.
17. I didn't believe I would love or want anyone else the way I did him/her.
18. I didn't believe that anyone else would love me or want me the way he/she did.
19. I am HIV+ and did not want to die alone.
20. He/she was HIV+ and I did not want to abandon him/her.
21. The prospect of dating during the HIV epidemic made staying seem better.
22. I believed that we should stay together for the sake of our families/children/friends.
23. Others encouraged me to stay and work it out.
24. I was abused as a child and came to expect it as a part of love.
25. We owned property together and I had too much financially at stake to leave him/her.
26. I was afraid of what would happen to him/her if I left.
27. I was afraid he/she would seriously harm me or someone close to me if I left.
28. A part of me enjoyed taking care of him/her.
29. The fact that he/she was very attractive or that we had great sex made it difficult for me to leave him/her.
30. He/she exploited my emotional vulnerabilities and convinced me that I needed him/her.