



Strength & Spirit

JEWISH COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

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THE MANY FACES OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from the President	1
Author's Corner	2
Apps for Wellness	2
Red Flags	3
Executive Director's Message	3
Newest Staff Member	3
Recognizing Interns	4
Teen Involvement	4



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Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

As a parent, I frequently search for "teaching" moments. I also try to teach by example; treat others as you'd like to be treated; knock first; it's okay to fail as long as you tried your best; always include everyone on the playground; chew with your mouth closed; if you fall, get back up; always give back to your community; try something new, you might like it; and to give with both your time and your money - both are worth more than you know.

However, when I was asked to take on the JCADA presidency, I declined.

Not because I wasn't really needed, because I was. Not because I didn't feel confident in the staff or organization, because I am. Not because I was worried it would be too much to handle with small children at home; well, a little on that one. Since I'm being honest, the real reason was simple. It was out of my comfort zone.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Do one thing every day that scares you." If our clients are able to come forward and ask for help - and there are still many more people who haven't yet asked for it - then I can make sure, even if it scares me, that I do my part to ensure JCADA's work continues. By taking on this responsibility, I can do my small part in helping to eradicate the cycle of abuse. I am very proud to tell my children that I am president of an organization that offers services free of charge to anyone (female or male; young or old; Jewish or not; American born or immigrant; gay, straight or questioning) who needs it, that we provide educational programs to the Greater Washington community and that we offer a unique and interactive prevention program to local youth groups, Jewish day schools and camps. We are in the trenches every day teaching about healthy relationships, warning signs and ways to ask for help.

Now, I am excited to step out of my comfort zone and face my fears. I am eager to jump in and be an even louder champion for this cause. With your help - yes financial, but also your time, expertise and voices - we will continue to offer educational programs to our teens, teachers, youth group directors, clergy, and, of course, clinical services to whomever needs it, until it is no longer needed.

Now that is something to teach my children.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and sweet New Year.

With Much Appreciation,

Arielle Nathan Teitelbaum
President, JCADA

*Eleanor Roosevelt said,
"Do one thing every day
that scares you."*

Author's Corner

Talking with Michele Weldon

Michele Weldon is a mother of three, an award winning journalist, an author and a professor at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. We spoke with Weldon about dispelling the “type” myth and other false truths about domestic violence, her experience, and writing as a form of therapy. Weldon’s first book, *I Closed my Eyes*, was originally published in 1999. The memoir about her past marriage has since been translated into seven languages and was re-released in 2012. Weldon’s second book, *Writing to Save Your Life*, offers a guide for honest, expressive writing. This 2001 book has been translated into four languages and was also re-released in 2012.



JCADA: What motivated you to write about your experience with domestic abuse in your memoir, *I Closed My Eyes*?

MW: At that time I had been a journalist for 15 years working for newspapers, magazines and writing others’ personal stories. It felt hypocritical not to write my own personal story. I wrote essays, which I entered into a writing contest. When my essays won first place in the contest it felt like there was so much to be said and so many people to reach. It took me three years to write the book.

JCADA: What were some red flags that you recognize now when looking back on your relationship?

MW: He was highly controlling. There was no physical violence while we were dating, but he always wanted to know where I was. I convinced myself it was because he cared about me. Another sign was that he didn’t like being around my family. I’m really close with my family and he said I needed to be more independent.

JCADA: What are some benefits as well as challenges of “Scribotherapy,” [a type of writing therapy]?

MW: Writing helped me take back control. It’s a cognitive reality that by writing about experiences you take control of them. You get to tell the story in your own words about your own thoughts and behaviors. When you come from an honest place, not the way you wish the story was, but how it really was, you start to recover from it. Expressive writing is proven as a helpful form of therapy; it can decrease the frequency of getting colds, lower blood pressure and speed up recovery. There’s a mind-body connection. *Writing to Save Your Life* has a hundred exercises to help you interview yourself and to dig deep and unapologetically into the truth. It’s important to recognize that it can be painful to write about an experience, but it is also freeing.

JCADA: What do you know now that you wish you would have known when you were in the abusive relationship?

MW: That it wasn’t going to get better. I’m not sorry we were married, we have three incredible children and I tried really hard to change the situation. I didn’t put an end to the relationship until I felt helpless. I don’t have any regrets, but the one thing I wish I would have done was tell a friend, I wish I would have told someone I cared about.

JCADA: If you could share one message about domestic abuse what would it be?

MW: Domestic violence happens to every type of woman and man, there are no boundaries. It happens in every country, every race, all ages and different sexual orientations. That can be really deflating, but it can also help women who are suffering see that they are not alone. That while unfortunately it is highly prevalent it takes some shame and blame away from the issue. Women don’t seek it out, no type of women. We need to know it’s common and fight the myth about it and help those who encounter it in their lives.

MIND GAMES

Featuring apps for relaxation and wellness

iZEN GARDEN

The tradition of maintaining Zen gardens to aid meditation and tranquility originated in Asia in the 16th century. The iZen Garden app offers a modern twist on an ancient form of relaxation; it allows users to choose from hundreds of stones, plants, butterflies, soothing soundtracks and more to create a personalized calming space. The full iPhone app is available for \$3.99.

CALM

Transport to a cool lake with a mountain view, a beach sunset, or a gentle rain forest to unlock your inner calm. The Calm app offers both guided as well as unguided meditations ranging from two to 20 minutes. Finding time to relax can be difficult, but this app can help you quiet your mind and body for a few moments and emerge refreshed.

Free for iPhone.

OPTIMISM

Gain a better understanding of your mental health by tracking mood, recognizing trigger points and patterns and developing strategies for maintaining wellbeing. Increase insight with this **free** and easy to use app.





From the Clinical Desk: Red Flags

By Olya Rich, JCADA Clinical Intern

Both women and men can fall for physical looks, sexual chemistry, and intelligence so blindly at times that they may miss or ignore red flags that are present in the beginning of a relationship. Abusive relationships often start off quickly and passionately, many even lead to marriage. Some people believe that red flags express themselves subtly, however, the majority of our clients indicate that the red flags in their relationships were very clear. Our clients report that they noticed the well-defined warning signs, but that each red flag on its own was either ignored or not enough for them to discontinue the relationship.

“A good relationship must strike a balance that includes healthy boundaries and mutual respect.”

Through direct work with our clients, we educate them about typical abusive behaviors such as harassing, manipulating, isolating, threatening physical harm and criticizing or humiliating a partner. These are some of the most common behaviors of abusers, however each clinical case varies. We also educate teens in our community about abusive behavior and red flags through JCADA's choose-your-own-path style teen prevention program, *It's Not Love*. Recognizing red flags early can prevent people from entering or remaining in potentially abusive or violent relationships.

One way to recognize abuse is to ask yourself if your partner is treating you as an equal. Is he or she giving you the most important things in a healthy relationship: love, respect, care and freedom to be independent and become who you want to be? A good relationship must strike a balance that includes healthy boundaries and mutual respect. In our work, we always suggest that our clients practice mindfulness by focusing on their emotions, feelings in both mind and body, breathing and surroundings for at least 10-15 minutes a day. Practicing mindfulness is a great way to recognize your core self and to be in touch with the environment and people around you.

At JCADA, we encourage our clients to listen to their intuition and pay attention to the details, like the way a partner talks about others, treats waiters at restaurants, whether he or she is controlling of others' actions or has a history of abuse in his or her family. In the end, it comes down to increasing self-awareness and being able to respond to red flags in the early stage of dating in order to avoid future abuse.

A Message from the Executive Director

As we enter the New Year, 5774, JCADA is reaching an important Jewish milestone: JCADA's 13th year. During this time it is important that we recognize not only the work we have done, but also reflect on the work we have left to do, ultimately hoping that one day domestic abuse will not be an issue and our clinical services will no longer be needed.

Throughout this year we will be increasing our outreach efforts and our community involvement. We invite you to join us as we highlight 13 attributes of a healthy relationship, share Divrei Torah that can be used for learning and discussion and participate in the Jewish tradition of taking on mitzvah projects (collecting cell phones, gift cards and kosher for Passover grocery items for clients and their children). Other programs will include friend-raisers, yoga and book club events. Stay tuned for details about our culminating 13th year event in October 2014!



This year is also the first and last time (well, for thousands of years) Thanksgiving and the first night of Hanukkah coincide. As part of our third annual Light The Way campaign we invite our entire community to join us, on the last night of Channukah, Wednesday, December 4th, in your own home, to light our purple candle as a shamash in support of victims of domestic abuse.

As we shine a light on ourselves in this season of self-reflection, renewal and growth, may our light grow together, revealing those who are suffering in darkness so that we may help light their way to safety.

Elissa Malter Schwartz

Executive Director, JCADA

Introducing our Newest Staff Member:

Hannah Porter,
Communications and
Administrative Assistant

Hannah graduated from the University of Maryland in May 2013 with a degree in journalism. She has experience working in editorial, marketing and communications settings.

As a day school graduate, a Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and a Nativ Leadership Program in Israel alumna Hannah is dedicated to the Jewish community and remains active in Jewish life and learning.

Hannah is originally from Minneapolis, Minnesota and loves yoga, rollerblading and dark chocolate. She is excited to be part of the JCADA team!

Recognizing Interns

JCADA is fortunate to have outstanding volunteers from our community! Over the summer we had six incredible interns, four who helped expand our AWARE program and two clinical interns. We would like to recognize them for their hard work and dedication. Thank you to Amanda Grolig, Andrew Kurlantzick, Erynn Penn, Lindsey Polishook, Tali Sadan and Olya Rich!

A special thanks to Claire Bernstein who has been an intern at JCADA for the past two and a half years. During her time at JCADA, Claire created and edited character stories for *It's Not Love*, worked on the development of the parent version of the *It's Not Love* workshop and wrote for the JCADA and AWARE blogs. This summer, Claire supervised JCADA's interns and oversaw the writing of *It's Not Love* character stories. We wish Claire great success as she begins her Master of Social Work degree this fall at the University of Maryland, Baltimore!

• • • • • Teen Impact • • • • •

Over the past year teens have had a remarkable influence on JCADA through their participation in AWARE, their commitment to our cause and their contributions of time and tzedakah.

OVER **\$3,200**
donated by teens so far

More than **100**
phones and giftcards
collected for JCADA by
teens in our community

F O U R
teen organizations
included JCADA in their
philanthropy projects:

Jewish Youth Philanthropy
Initiative • Charles E. Smith
Jewish Day School • Capital
Camps • Camp Tel Yehudah

8 5 0

teens, parents
and educators
participated in
It's Not Love

Four high school
interns
worked with us

**THANK
YOU**

1 full time teen clinician joining JCADA's staff in the fall



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The Jewish Federation
OF GREATER WASHINGTON

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