

Domestic violence victim's new book

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She grew up with domestic violence so it was perhaps no surprise then that Joanne Robinson herself got caught in a cycle of going from one bad relationship to the next. But she managed to break out of that cycle and has now written a book to try to help other women do the same. She told her story to reporter Kim Briscoe.



Joanne Robinson,
author of *Loving*
Him means Hurting
Me

If you have noticed that your relationships are not what they could be then Joanne Robinson could be the woman to help.

In 2005 she set up Donna Intera, which means “whole woman” and she now runs workshops and coaching services to help women with relationship and self-confidence issues.

She said: “My background as a child was a domestic violence background. It meant I learned how not to have a relationship and I got stuck in a cycle of going from one bad relationship to the next.

“When I was 32 I realised I couldn't keep hoping and waiting for the man to change or for Mr Right.

“I started looking at my own feelings for men that didn't love very well.”

Her own experiences mean she is passionate about helping other victims of domestic abuse find their self worth and break the cycle of unhealthy relationship patterns.

Joanne, 40, moved to Norfolk from London six months ago. She now runs workshops across Norfolk, including Norwich, and is soon to open up a base in Dereham.

She said: “My passion and purpose is to improve the emotional, social and relational aspects of women.

“I believe that when women take personal responsibility for their lives and are equipped with the knowledge and skills to make the changes they want, they not only become empowered but everyone in their sphere of influence benefits too.

“I believe in change and actively promote and seek out ways to bring changes that heal.”

The women she helps are often recovering their self esteem after a long and difficult relationship and she tried to make them feel worthy of having a loving and caring partner. Others have difficulty asserting their true feelings and find that others do not respect them or take advantage of their silence.

Some women feel they have spent so long managing a difficult or abusive relationship that they have lost a sense of identity or their careers and life long dreams have suffered. For these women finding themselves again and setting new and exciting life goals is what they want to focus on.

Joanne, a mother of two, said: “Some women have dreams that if they found the right partner to love them they would find true happiness or they believe that if their existing mate would change then everything would be okay.

“Tackling false hope and feelings of emptiness and loneliness are often the chosen goals these women wish to work on.

“Learning how to attract or develop healthy relationships starts with how whole and complete we feel when we are not in a relationship.

“We can build that sense of wholeness by tackling our existing beliefs and values, relationship patterns, how past experiences and traumas are currently affect our behaviours and what our expectations and assumptions we have about love.”

With experience in obesity counselling and helping people recovering from alcohol and drug misuse, another of Joanne's specialist areas includes helping Christian women look at their relationships from a faith perspective.

She is the author of the newly-released book “When Loving Him Means Hurting Me”.

“It's a series of devotionals based on my own personal experience of dating the wrong man over and over again and how my faith helped me to break out of these patterns.”

Joanne will be speaking about her work at a national conference in Derbyshire at the end of this month.

The conference, organised by the Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC), will include talks by specialists on a variety of topics, with each looking at the related counselling issues and needs arising from a Christian counselling perspective

And Joanne has also organised her own alternative Valentine's Day event - by holding an open day for women looking to solve their relationship problems.

The open day will be held from 11.30am to 1pm on Saturday, February 14, in the main hall at the Well Spring Family Church in Neatherd Road, Dereham.

More information about Joanne Robinson and her work is available by logging on to www.donnaintera.co.uk.

Do you have a story for the Evening News? Contact reporter Kim Briscoe on 01603 772419 or email kim.briscoe@achant.co.uk

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