

Chapter 1 : The Shame Borne in Silence: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community by Abraham J. Twerski

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski is the Founder and Medical Director of Gateway Rehabilitation Center, a not-for-profit drug and alcohol treatment system in western Pennsylvania, cited by Forbes magazine as one of the 12 best drug and alcohol treatment centers in the United States.

Review of *The Shame Borne in Silence*: Twerski, prominent Chassidic rabbi, psychiatrist and prolific author, packs a powerful punch in his book about spousal abuse in the Orthodox Jewish community. In this second edition of the book the first edition was published in , the author adds a new preface and an updated final chapter with resources. The current reprinting of the book has not raised anything near that kind of ire, perhaps an indication that the Orthodox community more readily acknowledges domestic violence as a difficult reality we must face. Judaism views marriage as a holy, safe haven wherein a couple lives in harmony, with mutual respect. Unfortunately, though we prize marriage, we seem to have many marriages that are in trouble. The book concludes with a discussion on the fate of agunot as well as child abuse. Though husbands are also victims of abuse, the author focuses on women as victims because this is most often the case in physical abuse; women who abuse men are more likely to use emotional abuse which, while harmful, is not immediately life-threatening. Throughout the book, the author engages the reader with vignettes, using dialogue to illustrate how the abusive spouse establishes control and power while the victim doubts herself and accepts blame for her behavior. This stylistic technique allows readers to recognize the control tactics and to feel the hurt, bewilderment and resignation of the victim. The first step in remediating problems is acknowledgement. Twerski argues that to be guarded from wrongdoing, one must adhere to more than religious rituals; one must also work to develop ethically and spiritually. A running theme in the book is that abuse occurs because people do not respect themselves or others. If men would respect women and themselves , they would not resort to either physical or emotional abuse. He suggests that empowering women to be less emotionally and financially dependent on their husbands would foster more confidence, dignity and respect, and make women more likely to stand up for themselves. As a psychologist and college educator for Chassidic and Yeshivish students, I have witnessed the troubled aftereffects of some young newlyweds who lack knowledge and have misconceptions of what marriage is about. The author suggests that because young men and women from Chassidic and Yeshivish homes enter marriage very young, without experience in relating to the opposite gender, their rebbeim and teachers ought to address these matters in the latter half of high school. Education builds awareness and knowledge prepares people for different eventualities. This is not meant as a textbook on all aspects of abuse but rather as an eye-opener and helpful guide for community leaders to respond responsibly to the problems in our community. With regard to that, he has accomplished his goal. Inroads have been made; there are shelters and hotlines as well as organizations that work to educate the community. Nevertheless, more needs to be done. Faye Walkenfeld, PhD, is a licensed psychologist and assistant professor of psychology at Touro College. She maintains a private practice in New York. This article was featured in Jewish Action Fall

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The Shame Borne in Silence has 7 ratings and 0 reviews. The myth that Jews do not abuse their spouses must be shattered! Now for the first time, a direct.

The Shame Borne in Silence: Hertz in his edition to the Humash, we find the following: The respect and reverence which womanhood enjoyed in Judaism are not limited to noble and beautiful sayings. That respect and reverence were translated into life One test alone is sufficient to show the abyss, in actual life, between Jewish and non-Jewish chivalry down to modern times. That test is wife-beating Both Rabbenu Tam, the renowned grandson of Rashi, and Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg, the illustrious jurist, poet, martyr and leader of thirteenth century Judaism, could declare: In modern times, friend and foe of the Jew alike speak with admiration of his home The following description may well be quoted here of the Sabbath eve of a humble toiler in the London Ghetto [of the turn of the century] All around, their neighbours sought distraction in the blazing public-houses, and their tipsy bellowings resounded through the streets and mingled with the Hebrew hymns. Here and there the voice of a beaten woman rose on the air. But no Son of the Covenant was among the revelers or the wife-beaters. The truth is that Jews abuse alcohol and other chemical substances, and the truth is that Jews abuse their spouses. We do not have good statistics about the incidence of domestic abuse in Jewish families, but there is not a shadow of a doubt that such abuse occurs, and it is not the rare exception that "proves the rule. For all its patriarchal characteristics, historical Judaism did not give husbands the authority to assault their wives, verbally or physically including sexually. Unfortunately, the belief that Jewish men do not abuse their wives has made the situation of abused Jewish wives all the more difficult. I have sometimes used the phrase "domestic abuse" and sometimes the phrase "spousal abuse. Right now, I am not dealing with abuse of children or of parents. In principle, wives can abuse their husbands, just as husbands can abuse their wives. However, for historical social reasons, wife-abuse is more common than husband-abuse. When we are speaking of actual physical abuse, the difference in frequency between the two possibilities is overwhelming. It is a cruel irony that the value of shalom bayit is often invoked to deny or cover up the most blatant violations of domestic harmony. Relatives and friends of the victim may close their eyes to what is going on, or they may discount her story if she tells of abuse as exaggerated or hysterical. Rabbis may be so blinded by the conventional talk about how wonderful Jewish family life is that they do not recognize cases of abuse. Also, since it is still true that most rabbis are men, rabbis may find it hard to believe that other men, respected leaders of the synagogue or community, would behave in such a reprehensible, "unJewish", way. They may also be psychologically naive, and they may counsel people to work out their problems together, not realizing that they are, in fact, thereby advising the abused wife to suffer more abuse. Shouting at another person, demeaning or belittling another person, not to mention striking another person or coercing her to engage in sexual activity against her will, are wrong, even a single time. However, what is characteristic of abusive relationships is a recurring pattern of increasing tension, a violent outburst, and an apparent reconciliation. This last phase of the cycle is especially insidious, because it may lead people to believe that the incident of abuse was an isolated one. The abuser may, on some level, feel sorry for his behavior, and people may be misled into believing that he has truly done teshuvah repentance. However, the respite is temporary, lasting only until the next cycle begins. Here are some warning signs of an abusive situation: One partner tries to isolate the other from her family and friends 2. One partner demands that the other spend all her free time with him. One partner wants to know where the other is at all times. One partner is very impatient. One partner becomes angry if the other does not follow his advice. One partner always blames the other instead of taking responsibility for his own actions. One partner regularly belittles the other. An abusive partner may well have been the victim of abuse himself, and he needs help and counseling for his problem, but that need cannot be used as an excuse for abusing other people, nor should it deter a victim of domestic abuse from seeking help and safety herself. One of the aspects of abusive relationships, one which often leads to the tragedy of serious injury or death, is that the abused partner often remains in her situation, suffering emotional or physical abuse for years. That fact may lead people to believe that the situation is not so bad. No one should

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tolerate verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. If you feel that you are the victim of domestic abuse, get help immediately. I hope that my having written this article indicates that I will not dismiss the possibility of domestic abuse in Jewish Families. Call Jewish Family Service or another counselor. Ending the silence is the first step to ending the shame.

Chapter 3 : Review of The Shame Borne in Silence: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community - Jewish Acti

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Chapter 4 : Urim Publications: THE SHAME BORNE IN SILENCE: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community

The Shame Borne in Silence: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community By Abraham J. Twerski, M.D. Urim Publications New York, pages Reviewed by Faye Walkenfeld.

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Praise for The Shame Borne in Silence: "It is disturbing yet essential to discuss this tragedy. The relationship between husband and wife is one which should invite the Shechina, the Divine Presence, which radiates joy throughout the home.

Chapter 6 : Silence The Shame: Entertainment Executive Shanti Das Speaks Out On Mental Health | Black

Providing a religious lens on the topic, this book directly addresses the problem of spousal abuse in the Jewish community, in hopes of confronting the truth and taking definitive steps to end this violation of all that Judaism stands for.

Chapter 7 : Rabbi Barnard Sermon: Spousal Abuse

Shame Borne in Silence: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community, Paperback by Twerski, Abraham J., M.D., ISBN , ISBN "Providing a religious lens on the topic, this book directly addresses the problem of spousal abuse in the Jewish community.

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