

## BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVOR'S SPEAKER'S BUREAU.



Mother's Day is approaching, and as we all look forward to celebrating the most important Women in our lives, we cannot ignore sobering Realities about violence

Mother's Day and EveryDay A Chance To Stop Domestic Violence

The invisibility of mothers and the issues that most effect mother's.

Lives both

Reflects and perpetuates our society.

Undervaluing of mother's – an undervaluing that allows men's

Violence against them to continue unrecognized, unaddressed, and unabated.

A billion women – one of

Every three women on the planet – will be raped or beaten in her

Lifetime. That's ONE BILLION mother's daughter's, sister's, Partners, and friends violated.

## HONORING

MOTHER 'S DAY.

MISSION AND VALUES

GRADUATION

GRADUATE FIRST SPEECHES.

SAFETY PLANNING

SAFETY PLANNING IN EVENT OF STORM.

Bring awareness to domestic violence and animal abuse

FROM THE EDITOR THERESA.

APRIL-, MAY,-JUNE, Speaking Matters.

This months feature's include Graduation. Mother's day, Animal abuse, Our survivor's poetry corner, real life really stories. Real healing, and not to forget safety planning, and to always be prepared. I have had a great time bring you news and updates, As we move into the warmer whether, it is Important to share as advocate I Engaging with survivors in New innovative and meaningful ways. I hope you are enjoying the spring.

TMC.





## **Our Mission,**

## **Vision & Values**

### **Mission**

Barrier Free Living empowers individuals with disabilities to live independent, Dignified lives free of abuse.

### **Vision**

Barrier Free Living is our vision. We strive for a world free from abuse and bias, Where people with disabilities live in a supportive physical environment. In this World, society values all its members and individuals with disabilities are free of any Internal barriers barring them from reaching their fullest potential.

### **Values**

- 1 The power to change lies within the individual.
- 2 Taking personal responsibility enhances an individual.s self esteem.
- 3 An individual.s strengths are the building blocks to achieving life.s goals.
- 4 People who understand and build the skills and the mind set to become independent are less likely to accept abuse or be abusive.
- 5 Failure is an integral part of growth, which can lead to progress and success.
- 6 Parents who value themselves provide a solid foundation for their children's Growth.
- 7 Healthy families place a value on children.s voices.
- 8 Information is empowerment. Sharing knowledge helps everyone.
- 9 Trusting relationships are built on a foundation of confidentiality.
- 10 A holistic perspective embraces the individual.s self-determination, culture, Religion and values.
- 11 The goals of staff and consumers are best achieved through teamwork.



Barrier Free Living, Inc. Speakers Bureau was founded in May 2012 by Theresa A.H. Macintosh. Ms. Macintosh, a survivor of Domestic Violence and an amputee, is a Mayoral Appointee of the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence and is a Trustee on the Board of Barrier Free Living's Freedom House.

Ms. Macintosh is also a member of the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Hotline Advisory Committee, Voices of Women Organizing Project (VOW) and the Best Practices Committee of the New York Coalition of Domestic Violence Residential Service Providers.

She is a passionate participant in many other programs all of which represent and champion of women. Theresa is a tireless advocate of issues that intersect the disabled community and domestic violence issues. To this end, the Speakers Bureau provides training and encouragement to Disabled Survivors of Domestic Violence. Women with disabilities are among the more vulnerable and marginalized groups. Often these individuals and their needs are invisible and unmet. The Speakers Bureau promotes awareness and education with workshops, trainings and creating community events where by survivors can give voice to their struggles and successes through sharing their stories.

Barrier Free Living is proud to endorse and participate with the Speaker Bureau as, together, we seek to remove those barriers which obstruct the achieving of personal independence.

TOPICS:

- .Domestic violence workshops,
- .Accessing healthcare and the barriers that people with disabilities face
- .Physical and programmatic accessibility to the services for the disabled.
- .Developing distribution resource material.
- . Housing

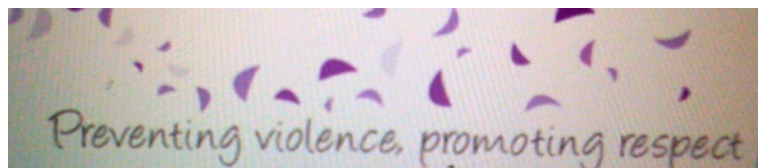


Antoinette Calabretta, case manager at Barrier Free Living Non-residential Domestic Violence program for over ten years. Antoinette's came from Italy in 1966. She obtained a Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology with a minor in Italian Literature from Brooklyn college and a Master Degree in Liberal Arts with concentration in English Literature also from Brooklyn College.

Antoinette also completed a four-year of Helix Counseling Training Program: a program geared towards the work of personal transformation using multidisciplinary methods of psychology, religion, philosophy and healing practice. She is New York City register minister. Antoinette is also a Reiki II practitioner, a Japanese method of "laying on hands" to awaken "life force energy" for stress reduction and relaxation

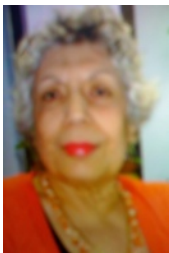
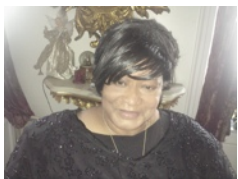
Antoinette Co facilitates the BFL's survivor Speaker Bureau with Theresa Macintosh, who is the founder and the leader of this wonderful mission.

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# B.F.L. Survivors Speaker's Bureau



The BFL Speaker's Bureau held its first gala Graduation March 27.

Graduates shared empowering stories of healing and their support of the Bureau's mission to continue to educate around the topics of domestic violence and disability. Founder Theresa McIntosh lead the celebration, which featured poetry and a visit from [Victor Calise](#), Commissioner of Mayors office for people with disabilities.

ROSIE MENDEZ'S OFFICE



March is National Women's History Month Celebrating Women of Courage. **What better way in celebrating our women's their graduation there work, energy to go beyond the aftermath of domestic violence, when I think of the lives of the women we honor today. Without a doubt, none of them expected to be celebrated Yet, each has demonstrated the courage to pave new paths, to push past what was considered safe. In so doing, they have created an expanded vision of what is possible for all of us to achieve, Our women were are hungry for action, and Edgar to give back by bring awareness and social justice in our community**

**When starting the speakers Bureau it was one way for me to giving back to what was giving to me**

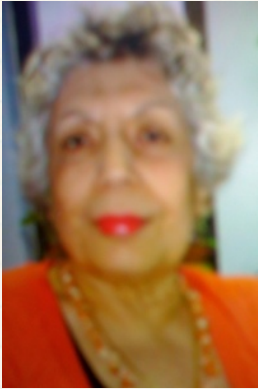
**This is are first year pilot year, in the months we educate, and helped the women in public speaking, presentation training, creating dynamic workshops, Today while our society deals with issues of the economy and it is evident that the best way to allocate funding and resources to persons with disability dealing with domestic violence was to educate those who care, and the people who plan to work with our population, seeking opportunities and our youth who are the implementers of the change we seek to created By doing fundraising and inviting us to your organization we are passionate and through e-mails and telephone calls from social media we will be asking for you to help build our speakers Bureau, real people real stories and a real opportunity Our mission is improving domestic violence public policy, implementation and the services That women and their children turn to when escaping abuse. For every act of family violence there needs to be a solution within the community, and so barrier free living survivors speaker bureau strives to engage community partners in creating the solution. In this minute, another woman is dying, today another Woman is crying, today another woman's life has been jeopardized by domestic violence. At Barrier free living we've seen the miracles that the dedicate staff are doing and to the Barrier free living staff I say thank you .The women you see before you are our miracles. They no longer live in silence, both Alexandrian and Zen have found their voices.**





## REMEMBRANCE.

# Survivor's Poetry Corner & STORY'S



A time to remember those women  
Who died dedicating their love  
And service's to their families  
And work without ever receiving  
A "Thank You"

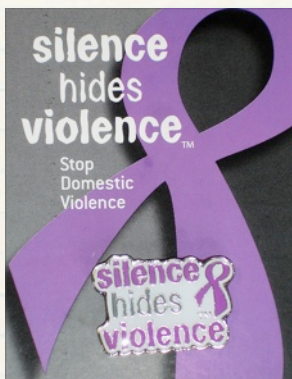
For those women who during their lives  
Never received a hug or a smile.

For those women who lived their lives  
Doing great things and were content  
to remain in the shadow.

For those women who died for daring  
To love a man out of their religion, race,  
Or political beliefs.

For those women who are still waiting for their  
unfulfilled promises.

For those women who shed tears in silence,  
And those who endured pain  
Without shedding a tear.





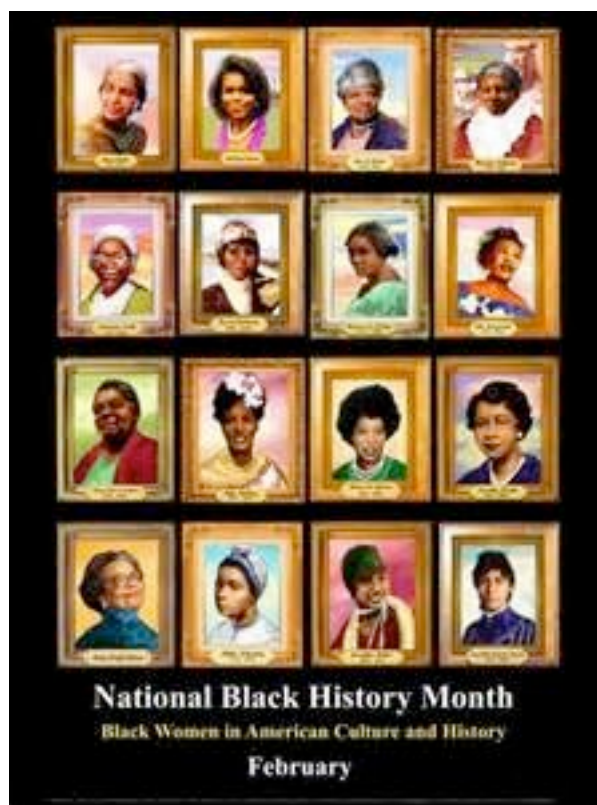
Make that call  
By J. L. Q.

Where do you begin, when you have been trapped for so long to your abuser. Your eye is stripped away from the palms of your hands, I would daydream each and every day, what my life would be, having dreams and aspirations seemed oceans away years kept passing me by, I try and made many attempts to leave, and I always went back, because I feared for the life of my daughter and myself, I believed I was worthless, I found no one would ever love me, and having no family, no money and nowhere to go, I was lost, I fell deeper and deeper into this cycle of abuse, and then I made a call to Barrier Fee Living, At that moment there was a spark of hope, I met with the case manager.

She listened to me

Gave me hope, courage, and she cared.

my life began at that moment, I have been weekly counseling with my case manager, she offered me array of services I finally began to feel independency was waiting for me, I was learning about services that I did not know of, now I'm getting all of the assistance I need, I left my abusive and went into a domestic violence shelter, this shelter saved my life, I am in the process of getting an apartment, this is the beginning of my life my dreams of becoming closer and closer to reach, I change my name and having new identity, I am now Johanna Leah Quinn, I am leaving that scars, behind me leaving the pain, hurt and tears, I am alive, I don't know where I would be without my case manager and barrier free living, I have love and empathy from her, I am beginning to write, I'm beginning to take steps towards freedom every day, as work towards freedom, I hope my story will help women walked towards the fight for freedom, we all deserve to breathe, to exist, no one has the right to choose our destiny, we all women, strong, loving, and driven, we can accomplish anything, when you're scared and feeling you are alone and have nowhere to go, make that call, the call to freedom and the ending of chapter of the abuse and the beginning of the page to your freedom.



## MY LIFE IN A LOVE STORY

As I grow up  
Had a child at 17 years old  
My relationship was not stable  
Misunderstanding and abuse was present

A runaway child was I called  
My mother did not understand  
Never took the time the time to find out  
Instead she wonder if I ever will grow up

Here words were  
Why can't you be like your sisters  
I grow up never understanding myself  
I ran from place to place

Life went on  
Still I was looking for something  
What it was I don't know  
I found love  
My heart was feeling open

A feeling that is felt when the opposite sex is not aware of  
It came and it left me  
But that feeling lingers on  
BY ALEJANDRINA CRUZ.



### Zen's first speech

Domestic abuse and violence should not have happened to me. why not I asked myself; Because I know what it is. I am a caring, educated, loving woman who married a decent, caring loyal man. I am a strong willed person and would not tolerate abusive behaviors. I would leave; and so I thought. What I did not realize is that behaviors change as life circumstances change. The tiny signs of controlling and revengeful attitude, emotional immaturity, immorality, deceitfulness exhibited by my abuser at the early stage of our relationship suddenly made sense and filled me with regret. I be came angry at myself for not heeding to these signs and blinded myself with only the qualities I thought were positive. These so called positive qualities turned out to be his greatest weapon against me and my children; for he used them and is still using them to beat us to submission ultimately burying us alive in pain and poverty.

After a 20 year relationship with my abuser, 17 years of which as his wife, I realized that there are many faces to domestic abuse and violence. Mine did not start out like a monster that he is, but Slowly through time, my abuser was able to strip me of every ounce of my self-awareness and power I had within. It was lethal not only to my relationship with him but to me and to my children as well. I Became a slave to his every need and wants. I had lost my voice, killed my intuition and made my self disappear in a relationship I thought was a partnership. I was no longer a protector for my children. I was an accomplice, delivering my children to him so they would like me. I made him the center of our Family life and made everybody else insignificant including myself.

The sad part of it all, is that, I did not even know that these were all happening to me. For years I thought my marriage is great because I did not feel complacent. I was always on the on the go and always dealing with major issues and events in our lives. My husband made sure I stayed this way by Ignoring my plea for stability. Eventually I got sick. I run out of steam, more so, he made sure I ran out





**BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER'S BUREAU  
SPEAKING MATTERS.**

Awareness Brings Clarity and Clarity is Power.



**Host:** Deon Ballard ~This show would elaborate on our spiritual connection with God. I want

to know do you know of his real goodness or your just subject to religious ideologies of going to church every Sunday makes you closer to him

**.Special Guest:** Theresa A.H. Macintosh

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Request a Speaker to present to your business, organization.

Call: 212-677-6668 ext 330 or email: [bflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org](mailto:bflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org)

Theresa Mc-Senior Coordinator and Founder

(Theresa we really enjoyed your interview with us...you must come back.)  
Again, Theresa ... we appreciate your support, sharing your experience of survival and the giving of your time. ("YOU" were such a great guest.)

Theresa, we welcome you back anytime.)

Radio Producer –  
Rebirth4Love



Sat, April 13, 2013 06:30



# Honoring Victims of Domestic Violence This Mother's Day



It is so easy to feel overwhelmed when thinking about what one person can do in the face of all the need there is in the world.

Imagine if you will, you and your family are dressed in your finest, out for a special brunch or dinner this Mother's Day, enjoying time together, a great meal and celebrating all the mothers in your family.

Now, imagine across town, there's another mother who has just escaped an abusive relationship. She has literally gone into hiding with her children and is spending her Mother's Day surrounded by strangers, and with few if any personal possessions. You see women who come to shelters arrive with little more than the clothes on their backs, rarely having the opportunity to pack personal items, extra clothing or even basic toiletries.

At a time like this, when your self esteem is at an all time low, something as simple as having your own bottle of shampoo, maybe a little fragrance, can lift the spirits. Make-up has a magical way of helping a woman feel better about the way she looks and feels, and that can be the first step toward rebuilding her self confidence. When you can begin to believe in yourself again, there is also the beginning of hope for the future

Here is a simple and inexpensive, yet meaningful outreach project anyone can do this Mother's Day (May 8th) to honor victims of domestic violence struggling to bring peace to their families . . .  
Mother's Day Gift Bags.

Using clear cello bags you can pick up at any craft store, fill the bags with a few sample size products such as lip gloss or lipstick, maybe an eye shadow and a fragrance sample, small bottles of shampoo, shower gel and body lotion.

Travel products are the perfect size and you can usually find a good, inexpensive selection at stores such as Kmart . If you're a fan of Avon, they always have great .99 cent deals on lip glosses and travel size toiletry products. Promoting Mother's Day right now.)

Your gift bags can either be simply secured with a Pretty ribbon or, depending on your time and budget, you can add colorful gift tags with a thoughtful message or instead of using a ribbon fold the top of the bag over and secure it with an attractive sticker.

To determine how many gift bags to make, contact the local domestic violence advocacy agency in your area. Where I live the agency is Women Helping Women, and I know they have agencies throughout the country so that's a good place to start. Also, the location of domestic shelters is almost always confidential to prevent abusers from finding their victims, While it is certainly possible for one person to organize this, the project can take on even more meaning if done as a family or among a group of friends. When I first came up with this idea a few years ago I got a group of my friends involved and we organized a "Ladies Night" to assemble our gift bags. In addition to the toiletries we'd collected we added sample sizes of make-up, colorful foil wrapped Hershey Candies and cards with small vials of fragrance.

Tip: I like the fragrance vials much better than the sample fragrance packets because for about the same price you get more than one application. It is so easy to feel overwhelmed when thinking about in the face of all the need there is in the world. Personally, I believe life is in the details and ongoing small gestures can mean so much more than waiting for the right opportunity to contribute on a grand scale.



# The Connection Between Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty



## Victim Advocates and Domestic Violence Shelters Do?

- Work with victims to be sure they include pets in their safety planning
- Include questions about any threats or injuries to pets on your intake questionnaires
- Work with legislators to insure that pets can be included in orders of protection and educate judges about the necessity to do so
- Work with your local humane organizations or animal control to establish programs for the emergency housing of pets coming from homes experiencing violence

## Why do Abusers Batter Animals?

- 1 To demonstrate power and control over the family
- 2 To isolate the victim and children
- 3 To enforce submission
- 4 To perpetuate an environment of fear
- 5 To prevent the victim from leaving or coerce her to return
- 6 To punish for leaving or showing independence



Sadly, as if it wasn't already difficult enough to escape an abusive situation, victims of domestic violence often remain in dangerous or dysfunctional relationships to protect their pets. A study of women seeking temporary "safe haven" shelter showed that 71% of those having companion animals reported that their partners had threatened, hurt, or killed their animals. It is likewise well-documented that many more abuse victims never even go to a shelter because they fear for the safety of the pets they must leave behind.

The link between animal cruelty and violence towards humans is increasingly viewed as a serious issue by professionals in law enforcement and mental health—and agencies are sharing resources and beginning to engage in cross training. Also a growing number of states are enacting stiffer animal cruelty penalties ... it's a start, but no where nearly enough.



# What to keep in your first aid diabetes kit in case of emergency

For most people it rates, at best, as a major annoyance. But for people with diabetes, running out of gas in the middle of nowhere can quickly escalate from an annoyance to a life-threatening event. A bona fide emergency.

Now, I admit, when most of us think of emergency we think of disasters. Like Sandy. But that's what I call an Emergency Grande. You got it — Spanish for large, or widespread. And I don't mean to belittle how frightening and dangerous Sandy must have been for those in its path, but both emergencies are equally serious when it comes to your diabetes.

prescription to keep you alive in either case, is to accept that you are not immune from emergencies of any size, and to take an inoculation of emergency preparedness because events that are merely trying for others can be truly deadly for people with diabetes.

## What is emergency preparedness?

"Chance favors the prepared in mind." I say, "Worst-case scenarios don't happen to prepared diabetics."

The key to keeping any emergency, from becoming a diabetes disaster is to be prepared in advance. It's really not that hard to do. You just need to be ready by having three different types of supplies on hand.

You need a daily "Go-bag" that's with you all the time and holds what you need to survive, diabetes-wise, for 48 hours. This is the prescription for an Emergency. You also need a stash of diabetes goodies at home that could carry you through two weeks of blizzard conditions, civil unrest, or plagues of locust. Finally, you need a grab-and-go kit to keep one step ahead of rising water.

Let's talk a little more about all three. Create a support network to help in an emergency.

- Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Give one member of your support network a key to your house or apartment.
- Contact your city or county government's emergency information management office. Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so they can be located quickly in a sudden emergency.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.
- If you are dependent on dialysis or other life sustaining treatment, know the location and availability of more than one facility.
- Show others how to operate your wheelchair.
- Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.
- **Encourage electronic payments for federal benefit recipients.** Keep in mind a disaster can disrupt mail service for days or even weeks. For those who depend on the mail for their Social Security benefits, a difficult situation can become worse if they are evacuated or lose their mail service – as 85,000 check recipients learned after Hurricane Katrina. Switching to electronic payments is one simple, What to keep in your first aid diabetes kit in case of emergency



- Significant way people can protect themselves financially before disaster strikes. It also eliminates the risk of stolen checks.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury recommends two safer ways to get federal benefits:

- Direct deposit to a checking or savings account is the best option for people with bank accounts. Federal benefit recipients can sign up by calling (800) 333-1795 or at [www.GoDirect.org](http://www.GoDirect.org).
- The Direct Express® prepaid debit card is designed as a safe and easy alternative to paper checks for people who don't have a bank account. Sign up is easy – call toll-free at (877) 212-9991 or sign up online at [www.USDirectExpress.com](http://www.USDirectExpress.com).

Signing up for direct deposit or the Direct Express card is a simple but important step that can help protect your family's access to funds in case the unthinkable were to happen. If you or those close to you are still receiving Social Security or other federal benefits by check, please consider switching to one of these safer, easier options today.

### **Additional Supplies for People with Disabilities:**

- Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of any allergies.
- Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries.
- Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen.
- Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices.
- Medical insurance and Medicare cards.
- List of doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.



# Resource Directory

## Ramps, ADA Bathrooms and a Whole Lot More!

Information and tools related to emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities see the Interagency Coordinating Council on [Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities' Resource Center](#).

Keep in mind a disaster can disrupt mail service for days or even weeks. Consider direct deposit by calling the Go Direct toll-free helpline at (800) 333-1795 or sign up at [www.GoDirect.gov](http://www.GoDirect.gov). Sponsored by U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Banks, this option will ensure you get your social security or SSI payment on time each month.

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

## Conclusion and Additional Resources

Animal cruelty is increasingly viewed as a serious issue by professionals in law enforcement and mental health—as well as by the general public. The effective prosecution of animal abuse has many benefits. It can provide an early and timely response to those who are, or who are risk of becoming, a threat to the safety of others. It can provide an added tool for the protection of those who are victims of family violence. Finally, it can bring personal satisfaction in developing new skills and new understanding, and helping build a truly compassionate society.

### **ASPCA Legislative Services Department**

Email contact: [lobby@aspca.org](mailto:lobby@aspca.org)

### **National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence**

<http://www.ncdsv.org/>

### **National Network to End Domestic Violence**

<http://www.nnedv.org/>

### **Office on Violence Against Women**

[www.usdoj.gov/ovw/](http://www.usdoj.gov/ovw/)

### **Pet-Abuse.com**

Email contact: [info@pet-abuse.com](mailto:info@pet-abuse.com)

<http://www.pet-abuse.com/>

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**Request a Speaker.**

To present to your business, organization,  
by calling 212-677-6668 ext 330.

or - [email-bflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org](mailto:email-bflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org)

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[www.bflnyc.org](http://www.bflnyc.org)

[www.facebook.com/barrierfreelivingnyc](http://www.facebook.com/barrierfreelivingnyc)

-(she who attempts the ridiculous, achieve the impossible

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