

Travis
Duluth Men's Group

History of violence

Me and my fiancé we have two kids. We just got into a real tight situation with money and life was, she was kind of young, and life wasn't, our life wasn't suited to have two kids yet. And just put a lot of stress on the whole situation, and a lot of anger, built up throughout the past with my family and there's a lot of violence in my family, throughout the history of my family. There was, one day I just I went to work, I came home from work, and I walked in the door and there was a bunch of stuff going on in the house, the house was a disaster, the rent wasn't paid, that was the number one stress. I didn't know how I was going to pay my rent. My son had been in the hospital, so I missed a bunch of work. We were just all stressed out, and then I just picked the little things of the house not being clean and ended up, first it started out as a verbal argument with cussing and swearing and going off on each other. Then after that everything kind of simmered away for awhile. Then after that she said something that piqued my boiling point. I ended up hitting her and going, everything went into the ordeal as the usual violent act would happen.

The first time I blew it off

Then, the cops showed up and everything, I ended up going to jail and I got the domestic assault and after that it was -- I came to the program, to DAIP. The first time I just kind of blew it off like I thought that the only reason I was here, was because the judge was making me come here, and I didn't care to be here, and I didn't have any will to change, and I still thought that I was just like any other man in normal society and I did what anybody else did. I ended up getting kicked out, didn't show up to class for a few times. I got kicked out of this class, and didn't take it serious, nothing changed. So, I went about my business, and ended up getting a second domestic charge and ended up losing my family. My girlfriend, my fiancé took off and left, took the kids. So, I ended up fighting to get my son back. Went through a lot of problems. I ended up going to court again and it ended up that I had to come back and complete this class.

They don't label you

I mean when I first came into this class I thought it was the biggest joke in the world. I thought it was like I just laughed about it like. I mean I remember going home talking and talking to my brother and being like man you should see this place it was just hilarious. After awhile things just changed, after you come to a few classes -- if you're willing to change the change is there. They're not here to enforce anything, they're not here to call you a bad name. They don't label you, they just let you all they're doing is helping the growing process of your mind. They're trying to expand your mind, instead of your mind being focused on what you learned in society and what you've seen as a

kid. That's what your mind is going to be consumed of unless you open it up and let other things come in. And pretty much, that's what they've done for me.

A complete 360

They've taught me to open up my doors and let other things come in and to explore other options. Because there's a lot of things in life that would change if I just opened up that door, rather than close it, and say this ain't benefiting me so I'm out of here. When I opened up that door I just made a lot of success. My life has done a complete 360 from where I was seven months ago. The best thing for me probably seven months ago would've been penitentiary. Here I am today, I got full custody of my son, I got, I mean I got, a wonderful job, I got this new girlfriend who just cherishes me, I cherish her, there's no fighting and arguing. It's all because I've taken the things that I've learned from this class and placed them into my life. It's just not like I, It's not like I walk into the class tonight and everything that was said, is said in the class, and then when you leave some guys just leave it there. They don't take it with them. But, after awhile I started discovering that if I took what I learned in class and took it home and actually placed it into my life it made changes.

I was going to be a wonderful father

My biggest thing was being part of my children's life. That's what made me want to be a different person. It wasn't necessarily that I, I mean I felt bad for what I did to her. But, I felt even worse because I was falling out and being a bad dad. I wasn't being the man who I should've been. My dad was never really around except for when I was a young child. Then from the time when I was eight years old up until I was 23 I never even talked to my dad. I always told myself throughout that whole time that I was going to be the perfect. I was going to be a wonderful father, I was going to give my kids all the things that my dad never gave me, and I seen myself pissing all that right down the drain. That's what made me want to be a different person and change who I was, go and complete these classes, quit drinking. That's what my motivation is to be a better dad. And I love my children. I would hate to be without them. I would hate to be without my children. I couldn't live life without them. They're the best thing that ever happened to me. Without my children, I probably would've had a domestic assault with her and moved onto another relationship and had another one, and moved onto another relationship and had another one if it wasn't for my children.