

## Be Kind

A few posts ago I issued the challenge for people to speak out about the abuse they've suffered, to be the one who isn't afraid to talk about it to help others to talk about it and find healing.

I'll say it again: the more people I meet, the more survivors of abuse I meet.

- A friend who was molested repeatedly by a grandfather.
- The another friend molested by her brother and raped by a stranger.
- An acquaintance who was molested by her grandfather and a neighbor. Her mother was repeatedly raped by the grandfather because the grandmother was too ill for intercourse.
- Yet another friend raped and brutally beaten by her ex-husband.
- Someone's sister raped repeatedly by their gardener.
- A friend from church who was raped by her step-grandfather and bullied in school.
- The daughter of a couple at church who was drugged then date raped.
- A friend attacked (physically, sexually, emotionally) by her husband.
- A family friend molested as a boy, who in turn molested his own sisters and ME, (As an 11 yr old I spoke up about this but it wasn't till I was 16 yrs old, when it came out that he had been doing it to his own sisters, that anyone believed me.)
- Myself, drugged and then brutally date raped in a school playground meters from my mother's bedroom window.

Friend, family, or stranger, everyone has been through or is going through a traumatic or trying time. And it will manifest in unhealthy ways: addiction, eating disorders, self-injury, suicide, depression, over-achieving, OCD, gender confusion, inability to interact normally with others or have a normal romantic relationship . . . the list goes on.

When I say everyone, I mean *everyone*. Gender, race, religion, culture, and economic and social status will not exempt people from abuse. Musicians, moguls, comedians, celebrities, average Joes and Janes: they've all be through hell and back. And none without scars.

So, never knowing the past of the next new person I meet, I follow the saying of Plato: *Be kind*,

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*for everyone you meet is fighting a harder battle.*