

Meet Ms. Scott – A Rodeo Dental Patient and Domestic Violence Survivor

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, one in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. This translates to 1.3 million women being victims of physical assault by an intimate partner every year, and sadly most of these incidents go unreported and the abuse continues.

But Ms. Scott is proof that the cycle can be broken. She is a proud survivor of a 32 year marriage to an abusive husband, and she came to Rodeo Dental and Orthodontics looking for help to regain the beautiful smile that was taken from her. Her story is a testament to the power of social media and how a quick response can be life-changing.

“I called and said I didn’t have my insurance card.” She says, crying. “They said they were going to take care of it. And they did, and they have. Everyone there, the way they treat you, they treat you like you’re somebody. There’s nothing in the world I can do for them to repay what they’ve done for me.”

Here is her story.

So many women become caught in the cycle of an abusive relationship. How did you find yourself a victim?

I ran away from home when I was a teenager. My dad is an alcoholic and he abused and beat my mother, who is a good lady. When I was 13 he raped me. So I went out on my own and started dancing when I was 16 or 17 years old.

I did that for about eight years because it was the only way at my age that I could make some money. I saw a lot of drugs go through there, and a lot of chaos, but I wasn’t into drugs. There wasn’t anything really dramatic that happened to me at that time, but that’s where I met my husband.

At the time he was dating my roommate and he was a drug dealer. He would bring her drugs and buy her perfume. When I started dating him I thought I was in the big time. He had been in and out of prison but I’d never been in any trouble. We eventually got married and had a son.

What was it that helped you finally leave?

Alcohol is what caused him to knock out my teeth, and that’s what made me finally go. It took me a year to convince myself that I could leave.

I finally had to look in the mirror and tell myself that I know this isn’t right, and it doesn’t feel good, and there has to be something else out there or a different way. So I entered a treatment program because I didn’t know what else to do. I didn’t have any family, and my 26 year old son is incarcerated right now.

After that I got myself an apartment and was able to get disability, and then I could close that chapter and start a new one. I had to be the one to say enough is enough though, and that I’m worth something. And I forgave my dad, and took back the power that he had over me.

Social media is directly responsible for you becoming a Rodeo Dental patient. Tell us about how you came to know Dr. Mansour.

I went on Facebook and posted my testimony to Rodeo Dental, and asked for recommendations on how to get my teeth fixed. And I tell you within 8 minutes they wrote back and asked me to call the next day. And that’s when I told them I didn’t have my insurance card yet, and they said not to worry. I came into the office really nervous and I remember Dr. Mansour telling me, “I’m going to take care of it.”

You had a pretty strong dental phobia, correct? Were you scared when you walked in?

Yes! The first time I went in Dr. Mansour tried to distract me while he was giving me the shot. The next time I asked for laughing gas! After that I wasn't nervous anymore. I trust them explicitly.

The way they do things and the way they handle everything, they're just so loving and caring and make you feel like you're the only one in the room. If you're in pain, all you have to do is let them know. If they have to stay at the office past 10:00 p.m. to treat you, they do. You can't buy that anywhere. Rodeo Dental has been a godsend for me.

What kind of treatment plan did Dr. Mansour create for you?

He replaced six teeth in the front. I have partial dentures now because my gums weren't strong enough to hold implants. But I can do everything! I can eat with them and I don't even have to take them out if I don't want to. Next he's going to deep clean my bottom teeth and whiten them.

How has your new smile changed your life?

I feel like I have a new beginning, and life is good! I've been here at my new home for 3 years now and I'm alone a lot. Being alone is hard but I'm ok with it now. Today I can look in the mirror and love myself. I love who I'm becoming.

I am a member of a 12 step program and I was recently asked to speak at a meeting. It was the 24th anniversary of one of the groups, and when I walked in that was my debut! I got to show everyone my new teeth and they were amazed!

I know that our children live by example, and my son told me that he was proud of me. And then he cried. That's all I need. That's enough. I'm grateful, very grateful.

What would you say to women who are experiencing domestic violence and feel trapped? Do you have some advice for them?

I'd tell them not to wait as long as I did. It's a vicious cycle but the cycle can be broken.

I'd also say don't be afraid to tell people what's happened. Don't be ashamed of what you went through. And never be afraid to tell your story. I don't regret anything I've lived through, none of it. We all go through things in order to learn and if it takes a little while to get there, then that's what it takes.

I'd also say hold your head high and remember that it's not your fault and that you don't deserve it, just like it's not my fault and I didn't deserve it. I'm still here, and I'm not ashamed because I'm still here. But what I did was break that cycle, and that is empowering. Enough is enough, and it can be broken.

Any last thoughts for Rodeo Dental and Orthodontics, and for Dr. Mansour? I know what they've done for you has meant a lot.

I just want people to know that there's nothing in this world that I can do for them to repay what they've done for me. And I pray that the Lord blesses them, and that I don't let them down as far as living and enjoying life. Because they've given it to me.

As told to Elizabeth Haynes