

## **Pain = Anger = Abuse**

### **My Childhood**

I was raised in a very abusive household. My mother was physically and emotionally abusive. It was confusing for me to feel like I had a mother who would do anything for her family and then, within seconds, watch her unpredictably fly into a rage lasting several days. From a young child's perspective, it was terrifying.

### **“People of the Lie”**

I read a book during my late teens that shed some light on my mother's behavior. It is a brilliant book by Scott Peck called “People of the Lie.” Scott begins the book with a story of a 12 year-old boy who has a near-psychotic break after being given a 22-caliber rifle for Christmas. His parents were confused because they felt that they were making a positive statement to him. Their son was entering his teen years and they wanted to send him the message that they trusted him enough to give him as big a responsibility as owning a gun. The problem is that it was the same gun his 15 year-old brother used to commit suicide the prior Christmas.

### **The Essence of Abuse**

The essence of abuse is being unaware of another person's needs. If you are consumed by anxiety and just trying to keep your head above water, there is a high chance you are unable to view a given situation through another person's eyes.

This is taken a step further with regards to anger. When you are angry, you cannot see anything clearly. It is truly all about you. Anger is temporary insanity, and it is dangerous to interact with people or make decisions in that state of mind. When you are experiencing chronic pain, you are frustrated and angry much of the time. You have a legitimate gripe in that your basic need to be pain-free is not being met. You feel the world, including your family, owes you something. You feel justified when you vent your anger whether it is directed at someone or just expressed.

### **Your Family's Perspective**

How do you think your children or partner perceives your mood and actions? You are frustrated because you have lost control of the pain and your life. How much control do you think a five-year old has when you are angry or in a rage after yet again being disappointed by the medical world or beat up by the worker's comp system?

You may not perceive your actions as abusive. However, I can guarantee you, it is abuse.

### **Rules of Engagement**

I now ask my patients as part of their healing process to ask their family what it is like to be around them when they are upset? I ask them to visualize scenarios from the receiving parties eyes. The answers are not pretty.

I now ask my patients to never talk to their family when they are upset. They have to go to another room or leave the house. They cannot re-engage until they have calmed down. You cannot suppress or control anger. But you don't have to become a living weapon. Anger must be dealt with using one of the

strategies that have been presented in other parts of this web site. [Protect Your Family from Your Pain – Now](#)

Wake up! There are 116 million of you in the US suffering from chronic pain. That is one in three. If you consider the effect your pain is having on your family, the numbers of people affected have to be well over half of the population.

I only recently figured out that my mother suffered from chronic pain.

—Dr. David Hanscom