Removing the Mask: The Reality of Domestic Violence Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction and Domestic Violence Trigger Warning

Welcome to the coalition. This is a talk show dedicated to discussing health, wellness and inspiration. I'm your host, Doctor Shani Belgrade. Trigger warning.

In this episode, we discuss domestic violence, including its impact and realities. Hello, everybody. Thank you so much for joining the coalition. I'm your host after Shani Belgrave.

I am a bariatric and minimally invasive surgeon in Atlanta, Georgia. You can learn more about me and get connected at Doctor Shani belgrade.com. I am excited to welcome to the show today, Doctor Priscilla Hubbard.

Doctor Priscilla Hubbard joins the show right on time for Domestic Violence Awareness Month to share her story as a survivor of domestic violence, and also to discuss her new memoir, Removing the Mask from Pain to Purpose.

Doctor Priscilla Hubbard, thank you so much for joining the coalition. Thank you so much. Got to be great for having me. I greatly appreciate this opportunity.

Well, thank you so much. As you know, the show is all things health, wellness and inspiration. And so your story is definitely inspirational and I'm grateful that you have joined the show.

So can you please tell us, first of all, who is Doctor Priscilla Harper?

Meet Dr. Priscilla Hubbard

Well, I am Doctor Priscilla Hubbard. I am the president and CEO of my consulting firm, White Consulting, and I'm also the executive director and chief operating officer for the illustrious Atlanta medical Association and the Heritage Fine.

But most and foremost, my important role is being the mother of my one son and my three beautiful grandchildren. Fantastic. Well, please get it started by telling us a little bit about your story and your journey.

My journey started with dating a young man who I felt was. I thought he was the one. We dated for about eight years. The first two years were actually.

They were beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. Then as we were going into our third year, everything just fell apart. He I started experience something I've never experienced before.

He was began to be jealous just because at this particular time, my girlfriend and I were going to go shopping and she was staying with my brother. Would like to come along just to just be with us for sure.

Somehow my boyfriend at the time found out and he thought that I was going and I was cheating on him.

Early Relationship and Abuse Begins

When he found out, he got very, very abusive, to the fact that he started choking me. And as I was beginning to go, escape from the situation, to go across the hall when my mother used to live at that particular time, he found me, drag me back and try to really choke me again.

And somehow I fought myself off, got into a fetal position, and somehow went back and actually called the police. And at that particular point, and when my mother did come, she really thought that I did.

Something devastated them. But at that point, I was in total shock because I've never had something like that to happen to me. Then as time became a part of itself, things subsided and we just, you know, things got back to a normal situation.

I thought. And then I realized each time that he felt like he did not have control. That's when he got very abusive. He became, emotional, physical and.

Abusive to me. And for about six years, on and off, we were going back and forth, and I was in an abusive type of relationship. It was one time that I ended up having to flee my home with nothing but the clothes on my back, and a few articles in a bag with my son just to hide out because of the fact that he was, planning to do something devastating to my son and myself.

It was a situation where I was not intimate with him, Doctor Belgrave, the way he wanted. He got there very aggressive, and I'd gotten to a point when I told my son, I said, look, if anything ever happened to God, because he would use my son some time as a shield to get toward me.

And then from there, I said hi until mommy can get some help. And that particular night, I was able to get leave the hall with nothing on but a night gal trying to find us.

You know, he found me, dragged me back down the middle of a highway over gravel and placed me on a deep freezer and put a gun to my head and he told me, if I can't have you, nobody can.

And at that time, my son walked in and I said, so you're going to kill me right in front of my son? And I could feel the cold coldness of the gun on my side of my forehead.

He looked at me. He looked at my son, pulled back the hammer and left. Then it was a situation where I found out he did he actually cheat on me? I confronted him and because of the emotional balance he had caused me in my life to that particular point and the stress, he got devastatingly upset with me again.

Escalating Violence and Leaving for Safety

Kicked me in my stomach in just gasoline. Emotionally abusive to me at that particular point. Mentally. I went to work that night and I'm thinking that I was having my monthly, but I don't come to play.

And I started bleeding profusely. And when I got to the E. R., the doctor confronted me. He said, did you realize you was pregnant? I said, no, I did not.

He said, well, you were, and you're going to have to do a procedure to ensure that that there are no infections or anything. And it's gotten to the point.

I just couldn't take it anymore. I was just devastated. And at that time, several other things happened to me thereafter. And then as time went on, I just realized it was time for me to leave this type of a safer situation because it was not healthy for me, nor was it healthy for my son.

Between that, my family didn't know being homeless and all the above, and when my sister lived here in Atlanta said this, you need to come and stay with me.

You bring my nephew and you come here. Stay with me and get away from all of it. And that's one of the reasons how I actually got here in Atlanta. Wow. Well, thank you so much for sharing your story.

What led you to write the book? Removing the Mask from Pain to Purpose. Write my book. Because during the whole entire time I had to put on a mask. My son could know, my family could know.

And at that time I was in law enforcement. And through all of this I experienced the horrific robbery where, I was getting out of my car to go home right after work.

And because of my job, I worked in, you know, on Public Eye. So this particular night, a man was coming down the sidewalk. I'm thinking just walking out.

He's not to buy me whatever I had one foot in my car, one foot out of my car, getting ready to get my purse and my gun to go into, my apartment. And he snatched my purse, pulled out a butcher's knife.

I was like, oh my God, this man is robbing me. He, went into my neck, to find my gun. I couldn't find my. And then at that point, he tried my pants up, he tried to sexual me, and I'm fighting.

I finally realized that he couldn't go any further with me.

Writing the Memoir and Surviving the Robbery

He dropped me back in the car, took my purse, put it up on his arm, took a few steps, steps, lit a cigaret, and I was. All I can know is, oh my God, I got to get out of here.

I got to get out. My son conceived this woman thinking it's even his way. And luckily, my keys had fallen out of my purse onto the floor. I would manage to get my keys, and at that time, I had to hurry up and get to the hospital because each time that I would breathe, I would still continues in losing the infinite amount of blood.

And so I drove about. I saw the person who robbed me out of my, right, peripheral view. I started to run him over, but I said, no, I need to get to the hospital.

So I drove about two blocks, and at that time, the guy was dating a cousin who was EMT. He, stopped. I finally waved him down. He stopped, pulled me over, grabbed me up, put me in his truck, and took me to the E. R..

I burst my way in. I told him that I had been robbed and it put me on a gurney, and they started throwing, you know, medicine in me. And they said, we have to give you a shot because you've been, you know, you said you you need to stay with a butcher's knife.

He said, do you want to be put to sleep? I said, no, I do not want to be put to sleep because I do not. I'm afraid if I do, I will not be able to wake up and see my son.

And at that time I said, oh God, my legs, my legs, and they ripped my pants up and come to find that same Albert, you have been stabbed on both of your legs as well.

In my time, they they sutured me up the first time, doctor Bill. Great. And then they call the plastic surgeon and they say, well, you have to take all of this out, these sutures out, because he's African American.

You have to suture them on the inside and then suture them on the outside to make sure you can get it smooth. Suture. Easy. You got to take all of this out.

Mind you, I had no anesthesia. I had no, no, I didn't have nothing. So from 11:15 p.m. to 4 a.m., that's how long it took them to suture me. Get me, clean me up. You know, to get home.

I had 75 stitches in my face, 55 in my neck and ten on both of my legs. I had to have police surveillance with me 24 hours a day for, six months after that.

I end up getting plastic surgery thereafter. And the most devastating about this whole thing is thought to be a great. The perpetrator who actually attacked me knew my boyfriend.

Wow. He often said, if I can't have it, nobody can. Yep. Wow. Yep. When I read your book.

Recovery, PTSD, and Finding Purpose

Yeah, when I read your book and I read your accounting of those events, it was really chilling. Really. And even to hear you say it now. So it speaks to your incredible strength.

Did you know that you would heal and become the woman you are today? Did you know that? I didn't know that I was. You actually get to this particular point because it really helped me to stay focused was my son.

That was my reason for living. That was everything. As everything I did, it was I got to stay here for my son. I got to stay here for my son. And this surgeon said he said, thank God, the butcher's knife.

It was done. He said, because it was one fourth from your main jugular vein in the way he tore my skin. He said, if it had, you probably would not be here today. Wow.

Yeah. So your book talks about From pain to purpose. And after having gone through everything that you went through, how did you heal? How did you overcome your pain and turn that into purpose?

To be honest with you, I got started healing once I moved to Atlanta. I researched, a therapist. She was phenomenal. I mean, absolutely phenomenal. She was breaking through barriers I never thought I was going to be able to do because I kept pushing everything backwards.

Because is, you know, sometimes for me, in situations, you know, you're bleeding, but you don't have time. To me, I didn't have to think about time to be all my main focus is with I had to support my son.

I didn't have time to think about anything for myself. And then when I moved here, I realized I needed to get some help because certain things was he was dealing with in school and things of this nature.

And I saw those things subsiding over the things that I was doing. And that's when I got the help that I needed. I didn't realize PTSD I had. I thought it was just people in the military.

And she told me, you know, when you go through a traumatic experience, you two can. So you you have separate PTSD and not a clue that I did. And once I started the healing process and I said, God, why am I here?

It's not about you. There's a purpose for you. And that's why the book is titled Removing the Mat, because I wore a mask for so many years, dealing with the things I had to deal with.

I didn't want anyone to know my pain that I was going through, what I was struggling with, trying to make each day to survive each day, to make sure I needed to do what I need to do for my son.

Advice for Survivors and Healing

And then I turned my pain into a purpose. Because in domestic violence situations, people don't survive. They either rolled out with a tote bag and rarely do they walk out.

And if they do walk out there, they are horrifically scarred mentally, physically and emotionally. And I'm just thankful that I'm here today to say that I'm no longer a victim.

I am a survivor, persevering. Well, the statistics are staggering. Intimate partner violence affects more than 12 million people every year. It's a devastating problem.

And it's something that, for obvious reasons, people don't really come forward and talk about. And there's all this concern for safety. So I'm so glad that you are opening up and sharing your story for a group of people that might be abused now and are looking for hope and looking to see someone who's made it to the other side, and or maybe someone who, like you, have made it to the other side, but still is not fully healed and it's still holding them back in other areas of their life.

What would you tell people? What would be your takeaway message about domestic violence? My takeaway is

seek the help that you need. Do whatever you have to do to remove that mask.

It might take time to get to that particular point, but once you make that decision to no longer allow the person or persons that may have hurt you to have a hold on you, and you decide you want to now be a survivor.

That is the beginning of your healing process. That is the beginning of you moving forward so you can have control of your life. It is not going to be easy.

I can guarantee you. It is not going to be easy because this book would not have been published if my son had not given me the money to actually publish it, because it's part of said he is in my life and he said that, mama, please, this is your truth.

And if your truth can help someone, then I want you to go ahead and let it be known, because you never know who you may help. Yes. Do I have good days now? Bad days.

And you're going to have them. But the main thing is to survive. Do whatever you have to do. Get the help that you need. That's why medical professionals are here.

They're here to help you get to that next step. I know we as African-Americans, we don't want to go to therapist.

How to Connect and Closing Remarks

We don't like a psychologist, psychologist or psychologist. But I'm here to tell you, as a witness, it helps you to get past those barriers. It helps you to break those chains that have been holding you back most of all.

So you can be free, free to stand in the position, such as myself, because everything that you're going through is not for you. I had to learn that what I went through, it wasn't for me.

It was for me to be here on this day, to tell others. Removing your mask so you can persevere toward pain from pain and move forward to your purpose. Because sometime you got to be a drum major in your own parade.

And that's what I had to do. I had to go ahead. If no one else can drum for me, no one else could fight for me. I had to go and fight for myself and be the drum major in my own great day.

My thing is, learn how to take your pain and turn it into your purpose. And trust me, that will be the best and most important step you can ever make in your life.

Well, thank you so much Doctor Priscilla Hubbard. For people listening that feel like they need to connect with you, what is the best way for them to reach out?

You can actually reach me on my other IG is d r d d a g underscore P Hubbard. Follow me on my Instagram. You may email me too as well. Is DRP Hubbard 3@gmail.com and my website will be up hopefully in the next few days.

And I will make sure that information is shared with everyone. But please get connected with me. Please allow me the opportunity to do whatever I can to help.

If you need me for certain things in the blog, well, speaking, engagement or whether it's for me to talk even deeper, I'll be more than happy to. Doctor Belgrave.

Wow, thanks so much for sharing. What is deeply personal for anyone watching that needs help. The number to the National Domestic Violence Hotline is (800) 799-7233.

Doctor Priscilla Hubbard, thank you so much for trusting us with such a powerful testimony. We hope to see you on a show another time. It's my pleasure and thank you so much for having me, doctor Bill gray.

Thank you. Well, everybody, thank you so much for tuning in to another impactful episode of The Coalition. I'm your host, Doctor Shani Belgrave. I am a bariatric and minimally invasive surgeon in Atlanta, Georgia.

You can stay connected with me at Doctor Shani belgrave.com. Very special thank you to Doctor Priscilla Hubbard for sharing a very powerful and personal testimony on her experience surviving domestic violence.

I'll see you all next time.