



Heart Betrayed: When Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence Overlap

Human trafficking is the fastest, largest growing criminal industry in the world because people can be sold repeatedly and for high profit. Every day in every town across the country people of all ages are being exploited. Through involuntary forced servitude and debt bondage, people are used as unpaid labor and/or are forced to have sex without consent (=rape).

For members of the criminal justice system and allied professionals, we are charged with the responsibility of effectively intervening, yet, by most meaningful metrics, there is very little success. Arrest rates of sex traffickers are dismal. We are lost in the mythology and often fail to see it as it plays out in our own communities.

A vast majority of human trafficking victims experience multiple forms of abuse including domestic violence. They are in some form of relationship with their trafficker- either in a romantic relationship or even in familial relationship. This truly complicates the dynamic and we often fail to see beyond the “Domestic Violence” designation. This training seeks to explore this very important set of relationships and to expand our lens in order to improve our response.

On average, a victim of human sex trafficking is raped over 9,000 times in their lifespan. Most, if not all, of them also experience strangulation which can have long term impact and increases the chance of homicide. We have an ethical responsibility to improve our response.

We will discuss human-centric methodologies: being trauma informed and healing inspired/organized. We will assert that we have a responsibility to actively try to transform the system and improve our intervention and move into prevention.

Objectives:

- Look at the overlap between DV and Trafficking
- Understand the financial incentive of familial trafficking
- Identifying and Understanding Human Trafficker Behavior
- Review the tactics traffickers groom and maintain control over their victims
- Identify ways traffickers use modern technologies to further their criminal pursuits
- Understand that trafficking is more than trafficking – it is also kidnapping, domestic violence, labor trafficking, child abuse, sexual assault, fraud, revenge porn, attempted murder, assault and so much more...