

# **BROKEN**

Breaking the Silence

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**Azelene Williams**

*In the end, it's getting up that pulls us through the dark,  
Life is full of challenges.  
painful days.  
I hope you find something special for yourself while  
reading through my book.  
All my love  
Azelen Williams*

Melbourne

New York

London

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**Azelene regularly leaves her signed books in public spaces around the world with the following message:**

*"If you find my book in a public space or if someone gave it to you to pass on, please help me to advocate against Domestic and Family Violence. By reading my book, sign it on any page and then leave it in a public space for others to find or pass it on to another Advocate, you would be able to change lives."*



# My Chosen Charity



WA Child Safety Services  
Creating Safer Communities



As a survivor of domestic violence I am a strong advocate for respectful relationships and personal safety. I work alongside WA Child Safety Services to deliver the *Teen Talk - Let's talk about healthy relationships* to young people. WA Child Safety Services provides quality child protection and abuse prevention education to children, parents, schools, professionals and community groups across Australia.

As part of my ongoing commitment to youth education, I regularly donate two of my *BROKEN Breaking the Silence* books to schools that have participated in the *Teen Talk*.

I was really inspired by your story. You are an amazing person and so strong. I was especially inspired when you said that you wouldn't want to do your life over again. So you could help us and protect youth.  
THANK YOU!

It was good learning these things from some one with actual experience. Usually its coming from some one who thinks they understand it but don't know fully what its like.

**Feedback from students:** "Thank you so much for educating us with this topic...your real life examples have changed our perspective immensely." "I found out that when you learn something from someone that has experience of what they're talking about they know how to deal with people that are going through the same thing."

**Feedback from educators:** "Educating our youth early is extremely essential." "Our youth are the future let them grow up with tools to recognise the early signs of domestic and family violence so that they can change the cycle."

I liked it when you  
Told your story,  
it was very interesting  
and sad.  
maybe tell some more  
stories about other

I really admire your courage  
at being able to get up  
and share your story,  
and teach people about things  
like this which is something  
we need to know but often don't  
feel comfortable talking about.

I found Keelene's story very  
inspiring and I think that her  
experiences are something that  
every youth should be educated  
about the dangers of unhealthy  
relations, grooming and other  
such subjects. Thank you Keelene

Thank you so much  
for educating us with  
this ~~subject~~ topic. I have not  
personally experienced  
this but your real life  
examples have changed  
our perspective immensely.

I think the program is  
important for youths  
to learn - knowing  
a true story of  
how abuse can  
affect an individual  
is important to help  
educate students.

I loved the story, though it  
was really inspiring.  
I liked the videos and  
how the talk was interactive

## Book and Program Reviews

This message was send to me from a High Schools in Perth where I have been fortunate enough to share my story and deliver the Teen Talk Program through WA Child Safety Services



Dear Azelene  
Thank you for sharing your story with our Year 12 students. It was deeply moving and you serve as an inspiration. Thank you also for the 2 copies of your book. We look forward to hopefully having you back at the College in 2018.  
Best wishes  
Annette Taylor

### **Lizelle**

*A great, great read. I could not put it down. Finished both your books in one weekend. A fantastic way to spread the word on domestic violence. Azelene, I love your writing style. Thank you for sharing your story.*

### **Belinda Hawes**

*Azelene, we share a passion for victims of domestic violence. My life motto is Knowledge Is Power. Education is the key. Ladies read the practical and helpful advice in his book before embarking on relationships. Prepare yourself. Don't trust that you will always get it right. Listen to your sixth sense girls and read this book!! Learn what is a healthy relationship. Learn what not to allow and don't become an enabler. Azelene my heart broke reading your story, but I am so proud to know that you have risen above and look at you today!!*





**I am dedicating this book to my Daughter:**

## **Sian Hunter Williams**

*a.k.a.*  
***My Oxygen***

“May you learn from my mistakes and see the signs of an unhealthy relationship before you are so deeply entangled that there is no way out.”

*I love you very much  
Mum!*



**Sian Williams #Kidzucate**  
[www.kidzucate.com](http://www.kidzucate.com)



*“A happy person is not a person  
in a certain set of circumstances,  
but rather a person with a  
certain set of attitudes.”*

**~Hugh Downs~  
American Broadcaster**



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*To protect the innocent, some names have been changed!*

1<sup>st</sup> Editor

**Dorothy Munro**

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**Janet Vila**



# Preface

## *To my dear readers:*

This year on the 23rd of January 2013 I turned 40 and so much has already happened in the last six months. I launched my 'Breaking the Silence' video today, and suddenly I am overwhelmed with strange feelings. I am also wondering if I have done the right thing to hit the enter button. Do I want to open myself once more to the world and to people who do and do not know me? If this turns out to be a big mistake, I will just need to get over it - fast!

I made the 'Breaking the Silence' YouTube video on impulse: exactly how most things in my life seem to happen. After I completed my Diploma in Holistic Counseling last year, I knew this was important. This was also when I decided to publish my second book, BROKEN Breaking the Silence. While I did my practical, I thought that I would go into fertility counseling. I mean, it made total sense to me. At the end of 2012, I published my first book Infertility: Road to Hell and Back. I believed, because it was a subject that I was very familiar with, that I would end up as a Fertility and Relationship Counselor. After all, I had been there myself and published a book about it.

But surprisingly, a lot of women came to see me with relationship issues, mostly to do with Domestic Violence (DV). In the beginning, I wanted to refer them to somebody else, because it was not my field of expertise. But my clients saw something in me that I had locked away for a very, very long time. It was a dark side of my past that I did not want to revisit or be reminded of ever again.

After one of my clients came to see me one day, I thought long and hard about it. I realized that I had empathy for what she was going through and that it did not distress me as deeply as I thought it would. I was able to push my hurt aside and help her with what she was going through. Suddenly I started to attract more and more clients going through Domestic and Family Violence.

More and more women asking me what grooming was, and why they fell for it. Some women were still caught up in it; others experienced it from childhood or previous relationships and were still struggling to deal with what happened to them. Some were simply not able to break the chain and needed help in moving on. In my heart I knew I was doing the right thing standing up for them, but it was still scary. Did I want people to know what happened to me as a teenager?

After I uploaded the recording on YouTube, I sat frozen for a couple of seconds in my office chair. I stared at my computer screen, as if waiting for an answer. But all I saw was a part of my face staring back at me from the video clip I had just uploaded. It was from the last segment and my face clearly portrayed my emotions.

My left index finger started tapping frantically on the send button, and I realized I was annoyed with myself and tired of waiting. I looked down and softly said, "Just hang on a second. If you do this, there's no turning back".

I looked up again and stared directly into my own green eyes, which begged me to go ahead and send the video - not just for myself, but for women all over the world.

My finger started tapping again, this time eager to back me up and I thought, "For God's sake, go on and do it! What the hell do you have to lose Azelene?"



For a second, I moved forward in my chair, wanting to hear my image on the screen say the words and give me the affirmation I seemed to so desperately need. I stared back and heard myself saying, "Yes! Yes, I have to do this. I have nothing to lose, nothing at all."

Before I could change my mind, I quickly pressed 'send'.

Moments later I realized I had just lifted a huge weight off my shoulders. Finally, I felt free. It was the release of something I had been harboring for years. Sure, I'd 'dealt' with my memories, dark demons and scars, but I always felt there was something more that I had to do. I'd like to believe it was because I never got the opportunity to look my tormentor in the eyes and say to his face, "*Fuck you, you bastard! Look at what you have done to me!*"

What I have learned from our dear friend Facebook is that he has a daughter and that she is the same age now as I was when he started abusing me. Knowing that was heartbreaking and many times I wanted to contact him to ask one question.

"How would you feel if someone did this to your daughter?" But that is something I'll never do. I will never contact him. Not even on the bad days when I have this vast cloud of rage towards him. This hatred has become less intense over the years, but never really disappeared. Now and then it surfaces, and it's at that point when I remind myself that this pain is what made me who I am today. And who I am today is important. I pray that God has protected her and her mother from his evil hands over the years. They say people do change, but sometimes I wonder.

Sliding back in my chair, both my hands fell into my lap, and I felt utterly relieved. I also felt so proud that I was

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