

Questions and Answers from Caroline, contributor to [INVINCIBLE: The 10 Lies You Learn Growing Up with Domestic Violence, and the Truths to Set You Free](#)

What has having your story included in INVINCIBLE meant for you and/or allowed you to accomplish?

Being a part of this book, and being named a [CDV Champion](#) is a great honor. I am still a bit in awe seeing my story next to those of so many others who have suffered so much. I am thankful that what I experienced in my childhood can now be used to help others, to bring beauty out of ashes.

Does reading the book advance or shift your understanding of what you experienced in childhood and how it impacted you?

Yes, I realized many things before, but learned of many more while reading the book. One that really interested me was that children of domestic violence are often not taught social cues by their mothers, who are busy in survival mode. Because of this, they have trouble relating to other children, and those children often pick up on this. This explains why children of domestic violence are often bullied by other children and/or are very withdrawn. Or, the opposite may occur, these children may become bullies themselves. In my case, I was painfully shy as a young child, and often picked on by my peers.

In what ways have your everyday feelings, beliefs, thoughts and actions changed since reading INVINCIBLE?

I often struggle with fear in new situations, and tend to hang my head, and scrunch my shoulders. One helpful tool I now use when I feel fearful is the Power Pose - breathing deeply, lifting my head and shoulders. This DOES help me feel less fearful, and better able to handle frightening situations. That is a specific thing I do. But, generally, the best thing I took from reading the book was the knowledge that my childhood domestic violence didn't have to hinder me during my entire life. Instead, I could reframe my experience, and see the ways my childhood taught me things, and gave me the ability to do things others who haven't experienced domestic violence don't have.

Which chapter of INVINCIBLE was your story featured in and what other LIES have you struggled with besides the in the chapter where your story is featured?

My story was featured in the "WORTHLESS to ACCOMPLISHED" chapter of *INVINCIBLE*, but I've also struggled with some of the other LIES in the book.

Alone to Trusting – I have often felt alone in my life, toggling between being very dependent on others and too independent, as if I was the only one with the right answers. As I have been in a happy marriage these last few years, I have learned the value in giving my trust to someone who is trustworthy. I have begun the process of giving up the need to control every detail of my life and the lives of my family members (we really cannot control these things anyway). Giving up this need to always be "right" is very freeing.

Unloved to Loved – This has been a huge struggle for me throughout my life. I believe my parents loved me, but were unable to show it in a way that I was able to feel. Then, I married a man who, over our twenty year marriage, became very emotionally, and even physically abusive. This emphasized my inner feeling of being unloved. Since leaving that marriage, and remarrying a loving man, I have had the opportunity to become a domestic violence advocate, blogger, and author. Through those things, I have been privileged to be able to help many women who are in domestic violence relationships understand their intrinsic value. Because of this, I have assisted many of them in leaving their abusers. Helping others in this way also helps me to feel loved.

What was your turning point?

My turning point was when my first husband began physically abusing me, and then asked me to tell our kids he had never abused me. Something in me snapped at that moment. I had put up with so much from him, but telling our children that lie was something I refused to do. I couldn't bear the thought of them believing what he was doing either wasn't abuse or was acceptable. Once I decided NO in my heart, I began researching what domestic violence was, and realized just how dangerous a situation I was truly in. Then, I made a safety plan to escape with my kids. Once free from the abuse, I began the healing process, which I continue today.

What was it like contributing your story to and seeing it come to life in INVINCIBLE?

It was difficult because I had not shared the story of my childhood domestic violence in public previously. I have written extensively about the domestic violence I suffered in my marriage, but never shared about my childhood. Also, as mentioned in the book, my abuse was mostly emotional, so I felt somewhat unworthy (my lie) entering my story along with those of others who suffered serious physical abuse.

What TRUTHS do you cultivate daily to replace the LIES and how?

I cultivate the ACCOMPLISHED TRUTH daily by remembering I am a child of God, created in His image. This gives me worth before I get out of bed each morning. Beginning with this knowledge, I can move forward into each day, and accomplish what He wants me to do. Right now, He is directing me to help other victims of domestic violence through my writing. When people see what I write on my blog and Facebook page, and come to me for help, I am able to help them in ways I never would have imagined when I was a child, or when I suffered in my first, abusive marriage.

I cultivate the LOVED TRUTH by realizing how much I am loved, by God, my husband, my children and friends. Out of that love, I am able to give love to others through my writing and domestic violence advocate ministry. As I give in this way, the women I help often pour love back to me in beautiful, unexpected ways.

I cultivate the TRUSTING TRUTH by learning to trust God, my husband, and those around me. I find this TRUTH to be the hardest to incorporate into my life, because so many negative things have happened to me, I tend to be a worrier, and try to control every possible outcome. When I worry, I often turn to my husband, who is a person I can lean on. I am learning the value of prayer...allowing God to be God in my life. He has things in control, and I certainly don't.

Would you recommend INVINCIBLE to others who grew up living with domestic violence or anyone who cared about someone who did and why?

I would recommend INVINCIBLE to others who grew up living with domestic violence or anyone who cares about someone who did, because the LIES we as children of domestic violence grow up with can seriously hinder the happiness, freedom and success in our adult life. As Jesus says in John 8:32 "Then you will know the TRUTH and the TRUTH will set you free."