

Pandora's Project

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Keeping Up With Pandora's Project

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Pandora's Project continues to be a leader in the mission to help survivors of sexual violence and their supporters.

Our organization continues to send *survivor care packages* to members who have recently been assaulted or abused. This small gesture is just one way to let survivors know that they are not alone.

In an effort to expand our reach and allow members more access to support, we continue to use *social media* outlets such as Twitter

and Facebook. In the past volunteer interns have addressed this need but we are currently seeking tech-savvy individuals who would be interesting in volunteering their services to assume this responsibility. If you are interested in applying for this opportunity, please email us

admin@pandys.org.

One of the many accolades our organization has received was the L'Oréal *Women of Worth* award that founder Shannon Lambert received. This highly

publicized award provided our organization with \$25,000 to continue the work of helping support survivors. We are so proud of Shannon!



Shannon Lambert at the Variety Power of Women Celebration

Pandora's Aquarium: Ten Years Later

Pandora's Aquarium was started as a small message board for survivors of sexual violence in 2001.

Now, ten years later, we have an international

membership of over 40,000 survivors of all types of sexual violence.

With a vibrant chat room, a vast array of survivor-related forums and regular guest speaker

chats Pandora's has something to offer everyone!

We look forward to the next ten years.

The current moderating team consists of Kate, Susan, Tracy & Ruth.

Spotlight on Louise McOrmond-Plummer

I am a survivor of Intimate Partner Sexual Violence (IPSV). Many years ago I escaped an extremely violent relationship with a man who repeatedly raped me. I consider myself lucky to be alive.

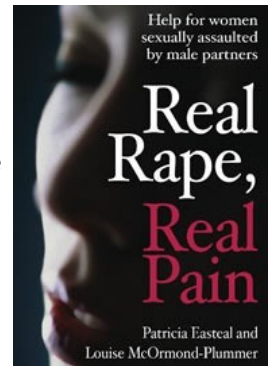
In attempting to disclose or seek help for my experiences, I discovered that there was very little understanding socially. "Real" rape was something committed by strangers and rape by a partner was just sex one more time with him. I concluded that there must be something wrong with the levels of trauma I felt.

Nevertheless, I did much thinking and making sense of what happened to me over the years, and I rebelled. I decided that there was nothing wrong with my feelings, rather, it is the social response to IPSV that is wrong. At this point I began to heal. I decided that I would study IPSV both in and out of an academic setting in order to equip me to address it professionally.

It has been tremendously healing for me to have opportunities to reach out to other survivors of IPSV, many of whom still have trouble naming what happened to them, and who often feel very alone. Resources I have made available include my website Aphrodite Wounded (www.aphroditewounded.org) and my book, *Real Rape Real Pain: Help for Women Sexually Assaulted by Male Partners* (www.aphroditewounded.org/book.html).

Part of my work also entails educating professionals about IPSV and the needs of survivors. To this end, I am currently coediting a book about which more information can be seen here: <http://www.aphroditewounded.org/ipsvprof.html>

To any survivor of IPSV reading this, you are not alone. What happened to you and the way you feel, counts. Please seek the support you deserve, and know that you will be made very welcome at Pandora's Aquarium, where there are many healing partner rape survivors.



Healing Exercise: Teaching Ourselves That They Were Wrong

Teaching ourselves that they were wrong: This is a simple exercise designed to help survivors unlearn harmful things that we've been taught about ourselves. It can take time to retrain ourselves to challenge the cruel and painful things that may be stuck in our heads.

To retrain your thinking, come up with one thing that your abuser told you that you want to

work on not believing anymore. Then, come up with ways to challenge your thoughts and to help you stop believing those words.

[For examples and more ideas, visit Pandya's](#)

The thing that I'm going to try to not believe is...

I am going to do this by...

Are You Traveling This Summer?

Pandy's wants to help you minimize anxiety and triggers during your summer holidays. New airport security screening procedures can be difficult for survivors, as they may bring up feelings related to feeling exposed, feeling watched or being touched. While full-body scans or physical pat-downs are important steps in the security process, the very idea of these procedures may be frightening and triggering to survivors of sexual violence. Learning as much as you can about the procedures and about what you can do may help relieve stress and make your travels more enjoyable.

Before you travel, read up on the process and learn your rights to help you feel more prepared. Learning about the process can help relieve anxiety and give you a sense of control.

Planning ahead and learning as much as you can about security procedures can help make you feel more in control and can help make your summer travel more enjoyable. Though these procedures may be triggering to some survivors, they are not intended to be traumatizing, and it is up to you to ask for what you need. Coming up with a plan to deal with any triggers that may come up can help make the process easier and can help ensure that the security process doesn't overshadow your summer holidays.

Tips:

Familiarize yourself with the process (e.g. watching any informational videos on government websites) and learn about your rights so that you know what to expect. See the links provided for more information.

Request a private screening if you feel that would be less triggering. In most countries, you have the right to have another individual present during the screening.

Ask the security officer to explain the process to you as they go along. You may also ask them to tell you where they are going to touch before they do so.

Practise grounding techniques before you travel, so that you have a prepared list of techniques that work for you. This may include such things as deep breathing, reminding yourself that you are safe, focusing on items in the room, etc. [Visit Pandy's for other coping tip ideas.](#)

Talk to your travel companion about your concerns and come up with a plan for what you will do if you become triggered.

Carry a Pandy's airport screening card to help you explain your concerns to the security officer.

Some helpful links:

[TSA Travel Assistant \(USA\)](#) [CATSA physical search info \(Canada\)](#)
[Department for Transport aviation security \(UK\)](#)
[Department of Infrastructure and Transport passenger screening \(Australia\)](#)

Sexual Assault Lending Library

[Pandora's Library](#) continues to expand its resources for healing from sexual violence.

We are currently maintaining a US library as well as an Australian library. Our libraries consist of a wide variety of books and

DVDs available to members of Pandora's Aquarium.

While we currently maintain over 100 donated books about sexual violence we always welcome donations, especially for our two most popular books,

The Courage to Heal and *The Sexual Healing Journey*.



What Would You Say to Survivors?

I believe you. And I believe that how you are feeling is justified - that you are not over-reacting, nor under-reacting, nor reacting weirdly. I can't tell you how to feel or what to do, but I will support every decision that you make. I believe that you are a strong and beautiful person. I believe that you will thrive beyond this. I believe in you.

~Rosie~

I am proud of you for seeking help. That was such a strong step to take. The road to recovery will not be easy and at times you will think you cannot make it, but you can. You will make it. You will have bad days, but you will have good days too. Hang in there to see what treasures life still has to offer you.

Lauren

You will never be able to have things go back to the way they were. I'm really sorry. Sexual violence changes people forever and it takes away a level of innocence that cannot be restored, but it's not a death sentence and even though it feels like it's ended or ruined your life, you will gain the power to change that as you keep getting better, day by day. Again, you will become stronger and soar higher than you think you can.

Pavitra

It is a long road, but it is possible. Don't give up.

Claire22

Join the conversation and share your thoughts at [Pandora's Aquarium](#) or send us an email at newsletter@pandys.org.

Outreach Worker

Pandora's Project has been looking to incorporate an outreach worker into our organization. This volunteer position will play a role in promoting awareness for our organization.

A significant part of this individual's responsibilities will be to work with others to "table" events such as Take Back the Night and Tori Amos concerts.

During these events, our volun-

teers set up a table with informational materials on Pandora's Project that will provide awareness and support for survivors of sexual assault and their supporters.

In addition to working at these types of events, our outreach worker will be reaching out to clinics and universities in an effort to form partnerships that provide support to survivors of sexual assault.

This past year we held several table events at some Tori Amos concerts and were greeted with overwhelmingly positive and appreciative feedback.

Stay tuned for information from our outreach worker on how to get involved!



Appointment Cards

I am a survivor of sexual assault

Often times I find my experience difficult to talk about, and some medical procedures are very triggering. I would be more comfortable with a female in the room.

Could you please...

- *Explain what you are doing before you do it?*
- *Explain what you are doing while you're doing it?*
- *Be patient with me?*
- *Schedule a longer appointment in case I need it?*

[Please visit our site to view all our quick information cards](#)



I am a Survivor of Sexual Assault

Often times I find it difficult to talk about, and some dental procedures are very triggering. I would be more comfortable with a female medical professional in the room.

Could you please...

- Explain what you're going to do before you do it?
- Explain what you're doing as you're doing it?
- Be patient with me?

I am under the care of a counselor and will sign a release if you need further information.

Pandora's Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that currently relies solely on donations from individuals to operate.

[Thank you for helping us continue our mission.](#)