



Mental health had always been an issue for me. I felt uncomfortable and hurt at school and home. My mother was just another bully in my life and it made me develop into a shy, submissive person. She was explosive in her bad moods, and I eventually ran away, left

school and moved in with a boyfriend. He was possessive and used my mental health issues against me. One day I made a mistake and he punched me in the face. He alienated me from others, I became paranoid, nervous, and trapped. One day my friend came out as trans, and explained their feelings to me and it all clicked. I finally understood why I felt so uncomfortable. I had been feeling this feeling my entire life but never knew why, I just assumed this hurting was normal. I told my boyfriend the feelings I had been having about my gender identity and he screamed and lashed out. I knew I had to get out.

I learned a lot about myself while finding the strength to leave that relationship. I'm finally able to be myself and be in the body I feel comfortable in, and now I want to direct my energy to helping people in similar situations. **If you or someone you know needs support, call One Roof at 613.776.9996.**

— River, homeless at age 15

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