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Reader Response: Right Brain: The Unraveling

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We read with admiration “The Unraveling” [1] by Nara Michaelson in which the author compares her experience of treating women affected by intimate partner violence to women newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS).

At the University of Leeds and University of Nottingham, we share these concerns and have taken the next step in setting up the MS Domestic Violence and Abuse Research Initiative. This project involves two PhD students: one looking at people with MS who have experienced domestic violence and abuse (DVA), while another is researching the views of healthcare staff who support them. A research fellow will use the findings to develop a toolkit to guide and inform health practitioners.

Disabled people, regardless of gender, are more at risk[2] of DVA though it is significantly higher for women. In the United Kingdom, 150,000[3] people have MS and more than 70% of them are women. However, information about DVA and people with MS is almost non-existent as is research on how they access support. We hope to change that and raise awareness about this issue.

We welcome international collaborators for this vital work.

References

[1] Michaelson NM. Right Brain: The Unraveling. Neurology. 2024 May;102(10)

[2] Domestic Abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales. Office for National Statistics. Updated March 2022. Accessed June 15, 2024.
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[3] MS in the UK. MS Society UK. Updated May 2024. Accessed June 15, 2024.
<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/our-evidence/ms-in-the-uk>