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https://www.losaltosonline.com/community/victim-protects-herself-from-technological-abuse/article_052eb271-057a-5b21-aa9f-29856a26a039.html

Victim protects herself from technological abuse

Ruth Patrick
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This is the fifth in a six-part series on domestic violence and technological abuse. Names, professions, history and other personal identifying features have been changed to create a composite character to protect confidentiality.

After leaving her abusive husband, Beth discovers that he has been using technology to stalk, frighten, control and discredit her and then learns what to do about it. To read parts 1-4, visit losaltosonline.com.

Although still a survivor of trauma, and working with a therapist to recover from the damage to her self-esteem, emotional state and quality of life, Beth is no longer alone and no longer believes that she is crazy – nor does anyone else.

Now Beth has the resources she needs to better defend herself against cyber attacks. She is receiving help and support from Safety Net, a branch of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, which works with victims of technological abuse.

Following are some of the steps Beth took to protect herself from further technological abuse.

- She changed all her passwords.
- She learned about countermeasures like camera detectors and “bump-proof” locks.
- She downloaded the free Presence app, enabling her to turn an old cellphone into a home surveillance camera and use another to monitor activity in her home.



- She blocked her ex-husband's phone number and arranged for all necessary communication to be conducted through their attorneys.
- She posted an explanation of the source of the compromising posts her ex-husband had written on her Facebook page.
- She then revisited her privacy settings on her social media accounts to opt for more privacy, choosing to block her ex altogether.
- She turned off "check-ins" and asked her friends not to tag her in any group photos.

In Part 6, we'll learn more about the strategies Beth used to protect and empower herself as she began to recover from years of emotional, physical and technological abuse, as well as resources that can help defend against technological abuse.

Ruth Patrick, M.A., is a local resident and domestic violence outreach specialist. She was recently named director of the WomenSV program under the nonprofit Domestic Violence Intervention Collaborative. WomenSV, formerly with Family and Children Services, is a Town Crier Holiday Fund recipient. For more information, call 996-2200.

