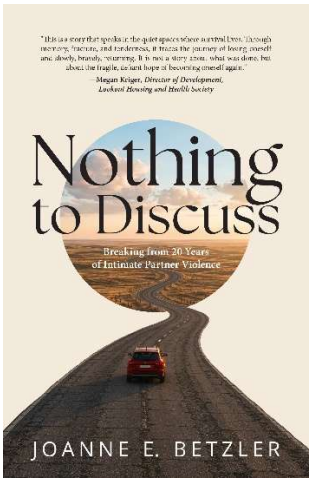
When Silence Is No Longer an Option



"'At one time, I'd seen my wedding ring as the promise of freedom, but that night I saw the truth. All those tiny pieces of jewellery ever did was move control of our lives from one man to another —like we were batons in a relay race."

Nothing to Discuss

Breaking From 20 Years of Intimate Partner Violence

Joanne E. Betzler

September 2026 / 344 pages / 978-1067-80220-2/ Clarity NPO / $24.99

For almost twenty years, Joanne Betzler's husband dragged their family city to city in search of the perfect job and the perfect lifestyle. Over time, his imposed prurient and alcoholic tendencies slowly eroded Joanne's confidence, her sense of self, and thwarted her dreams of having a meaningful career for herself.

After her sister's death, fate intervenes for Joanne in the form of a simple phone call offering her temporary employment. Suddenly a new window of friendship, discovery, and growth sets her on a path enabling much-needed emotional growth and healing.

Nothing To Discuss reads like a novel. Joanne navigates her grief and her own sense of self while reconciling past challenges. Friendship and trust develop with a work colleague whose confidence helps her gain insight into her controlling, alcohol-riddled marriage. This friendship serves as a bridge to the emotional growth that ultimately gives Joanne the self-assurance she needs to claim her true self.

Nothing to Discuss is the memoir that Joanne E Betzler needed to write in order to understand the story of her past and how it had shaped her life. As she assembled the pieces of this compelling memoir, Joanne discovered newspaper articles that astonished her by describing abusive scenarios similar to her own. Joanne delved into firsthand accounts of domestic violence and professional analyses on the topic of domestic partner violence and abuse to discover that she had never been alone. It became obvious to her that thousands of stories, in fact, have a common denominator: silence.

Learning that countless people share similar realities to hers was an epiphany that gave Joanne's story a new, collective purpose: to create awareness.

It may have taken her a quarter-century for Joanne Betzler to find the courage to share her own truth in ***Nothing To Discuss***, but her hope now is to inspire other controlled and abused people to shed their fear and shame to take back their stolen voices, the way sharing her story has allowed her to reclaim her own.

Praise for Nothing to Discuss

"Part testimony, part memoir, part explication, Nothing to Discuss pulls apart the hundreds of threads binding a woman to a marital situation that is inherently dangerous. For anyone who has wondered how intimate partner violence develops its web of constraints and traps, this memoir may help parse the push and pull of conflicting reactions."
— Elee Kraljii Gardiner, Poet Laureate of Vancouver
and editor of Against Death: 35 Essays on Living

"This is a story that speaks in the quiet spaces where survival lives. Through memory, fracture, and tenderness, it traces the journey of losing oneself and slowly, bravely, returning. It is not a story about what was done, but about the fragile, defiant hope of becoming oneself again."
— Megan Kriger, Director of Development, Lookout Housing and Health Society

"An intimate reflection on the devastating yet often unnamed abuse experienced through coercive control. Serving as a powerful reminder of how easily harmful behaviour can become normalized, this honest and vulnerable memoir helps readers to truly understand the bravery and strength required to take the long journey from silence to self-determination."
— Wendy Tynan, Calgary-based Executive, Board Member, and Community Leader.

"Betzler finds a way out, but the mourning for the lost sister,
the lost opportunities, makes her journey both hopeful and heartbreaking."
— Sonja Larsen, Author of Red Star Tattoo, My Life as a Girl Revolutionary

About the Author

Born and raised in Alberta, *Joanne E. Betzler* has lived in both Edmonton and Calgary. She now lives in New Westminster, B.C. and earned her Creative Writing Certificate from Simon Fraser University's The Writer's Studio. Her essays have appeared in The Globe and Mail and *Resonance: Essays on the Craft and Life of Writing (*Anvil Press) and the *New West Writers Anthology.* Joanne E Betzler fuels her writing momentum by connecting with other writers through The Forever Writers Apothecary, Royal City Literary Arts Society (RCLAS), and offering writing consults through Simon Fraser University's The Writer's Studio public library program and Word Vancouver.

To arrange an interview with **Joanne E. Betzler**
or for excerpt requests from ***Nothing To Discuss*** please contact chris@theideashop.ca