



Personal Story Fuels Meaning Behind Work at The Family Place

October 30, 2025 Claudia Carson-Habeeb

Survivors of domestic abuse have long found refuge at a Dallas-based nonprofit offering shelter, counseling, and life-saving support.

But behind the walls of this sanctuary lives a story few have heard — one that makes the organization's mission even more profound.

Tiffany Tate's expertise runs deep. As chief executive officer of **The Family Place**, she's devoted her professional life to helping others break free from the cycle of abuse. And personally, **Tate** understands the invisible wounds survivors carry — because she's carried them herself.

After years of helping others find their voice, the licensed clinical social worker shares that she, too, is a survivor of domestic abuse. "I learned not to express myself or to have any needs at all," she said, reflecting on more than a decade spent in an abusive relationship. "Tactics are used to manipulate and intimidate, leading partners to lose their sense of safety, self-worth, and identity."

Her story reflects a broader, often misunderstood reality, she explained.

Abuse doesn't always leave visible scars. More often, it tightens its grip through gaslighting, isolation, and emotional manipulation — while the abuser's public charm masks the truth behind closed doors.

"Abusers have the ability to be chameleons," she said. "Abuse arises when behaviors become a deliberate pattern used to strip away a partner's independence and autonomy. Often, abusers present different personas to the outside world, making their behavior invisible to others."

For many survivors, the road to healing isn't linear — it's winding, painful, and deeply personal. "When you don't trust the thoughts in your own head, that's very, very hard to recover from," she said. **Tate** recounts the disorienting years of control and manipulation punctuated by fleeting moments of warmth that blurred the lines and made her question what was real.

"The good times were just enough to replant the self-doubt," she said. "Narcissistic people prey on weaknesses. My reality was constantly challenged."

With more than two decades in social services, **Tate** has worked with people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and domestic violence. She joined **The Family Place** in 2014.

She credits her mentor, former CEO Paige Flink, for shaping her leadership with equal parts heart and innovation.

Just six months into her role, Flink offered Tate advice that still echoes: Sit in the lobby and listen to the personal stories and experience the courage that suppresses self-doubt as each survivor steps into the threshold of a renewed life.

In that small act of bearing witness to a survivor's first brave step, a daily reminder of why she does this work emerged.

"When someone walks through our doors, they've already taken the hardest step," she explained.

Today, as a leader, activist, mother, and survivor, Tate is living proof that healing is possible — that even the most shattered pieces of a life can be reassembled into something strong, resilient, and profoundly meaningful. And her message to those still living in silence is clear: You are not alone. You are not imagining it. And there is a way forward.

For Tate, reclaiming her voice isn't just about speaking her truth — it's about opening the door for others to do the same. And in that collective courage, she emphasized, real change begins.

"I own my story, and I want to share it to help others," said **Tate**. "The person who holds the narrative holds the power."