

This reflective piece was written to illustrate the identity crisis that comes with being in an emotionally abusive relationship. I performed this piece to give it the emotional integrity of lived experience, and to demonstrate a journey of self empowerment. It's important to me the piece interrogates and demystifies the stigma of victims in this situation: we are not weak. The moment of realisation that you've been abused is exactly that – a moment - it hits you like a train. You become unrecognisable to yourself without realising, due to the subtlety with which this abuse is carried out. Moreover, another stigma often faced by victims is that because we stay(ed) with our partners, it is our own fault. However, emotional abuse is extremely tricky to spot and comprehend, due to the subtle nature of the abuse, both from an outside perspective (family and friends etc.) and by the abused. Once spotted, we are drained by our experience and are not always in a safe enough position to leave. My piece intends to move viewers, evoke empathy for survivors and break stigmas surrounding this growing issue. I also intend to inspire hope for victims - you are worthy, loved, and powerful.