

Why Paris Hilton's Documentary is a Must-Watch for Any Trauma Survivor

YouTube Original's 'This is Paris' wasn't at all what I was expecting, but it was everything I needed.

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******Disclaimer: this article includes spoilers from the documentary******

The other day, I found myself pleasantly surprised when I finished watching YouTube Original's "*This is Paris*".

I turned it on, because I thought, "*Huh, why not watch a few minutes?*" while sipping my morning tea.

What I encountered instead? A phenomenal documentary that resonated so well with me as a survivor of sexual assault.

Truthfully? I've never been a fan of celebrities like Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian. While I can respect their savviness with working a brand, and their business intellect, the heiress/influencer thing has never really been my cup of tea.

But man, was I ever proven entirely wrong here — *and I'm glad I was.*

Paris Hilton is not the woman we've all grown to think she is these past 15 years of her fame.

She is a survivor. A thriver, despite the indisputable trauma she had suffered, which has followed her her entire life and career.

And that's why every survivor needs to watch this documentary— *because she's exactly like us.*

Silently carrying the burden of trauma that was forced upon her.

This is the reality of most trauma survivors — we never asked for what happened to us, we were just in the line of fire or the target on someone's radar.

Following the traumatic event, we experience guilt and shame for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Due to the guilt and shame, many of us live in silence and isolation, suffering quietly and feeling like we are alone in our battle.

Paris has been in those *exact* same shoes.

To briefly summarize, when Paris' family moved out to New York City when she was 15, she finally came to a head with her parents' ultra-conservative ways.

Desperate to be her own person, and no longer willing to be repressed and like a "*Stepford-wife, debutante*", as she called it, she began to rebel.

Staying out past curfew, hanging with her friends, wearing the clothes she wanted to wear, etc. You know, *pretty typical teenager stuff*.

At a certain point, Paris' parents no longer knew what to

do with her, so they enrolled her in an '*emotional rehabilitation centre for troubled teens*' in the middle of nowhere Utah.

But where this *really* gets troubling?

In the middle of the night, two large men entered Paris' bedroom while she slept, grabbed her, and carted her away.

Paris describes how she was screaming for help and bloody murder, because she thought she was being kidnapped by criminals.

As she was pulled out the front door, she saw her parents for a split second standing by their bedroom doorway, weeping.

No one explained to Paris what was happening.

She was just taken, with her parents' blessing, in the middle of the night, and didn't see or talk to her family for a long, long time.

As I heard her describe that night, I wanted to full-blown weep on her behalf.

I cannot *fathom* the fear of being a young woman who is pulled out forcibly from her bed by two large men she doesn't know, and is taken from her home.

I can't imagine how much of a betrayal it must have been to see her parents standing idly by, allowing this to take place.

I don't blame her for having trust issues.

I don't blame her for being wary of men.

What a truly horrific experience.

Thriving and rebuilding her life despite the abuse she endured.

Paris tells a horrible story about how she used to try and escape every 'school' she was sent to, and after the first attempt the staff "*beat the hell out of her in front of everyone*" to send a clear message to all of the students.

At her final school, the one she claims to be the most traumatic, she says they were all treated like prisoners, fed tons of drugs to incapacitate them, many were on suicide watch, and when Paris was found to be disposing of the drugs rather than consuming them, she was thrown in solitary confinement.

She describes how she sat in a cell alone, naked and

cold, for over 20 hours.

She specifically remembers that the only reason it didn't break her was because she envisioned how she was going to be successful and change her life after she got out of there.

Once she turned 18, and went back out into the world abused and broken, that's *exactly* what she did.

She redefined herself. She created a character with a high pitched voice, a glam, happy life, and a presence in the media that showed a "perfect" life — the exact life she wish she had when she was struggling to survive solitary confinement.

That persona is the Paris Hilton we've all know — that persona was something that got her through the pain and darkness she experienced at those rehabilitation schools.

I resonated with Paris so much in this case, *because I did the same thing.*

Right after my sexual assault, I wasn't ready to face the violation that happened to me, so I put myself to work.

I spent *all* of my waking hours studying, and then building my social media marketing business, and wouldn't give myself even a minute to breathe.

And I know why I didn't let myself take a break — because I knew that if I slowed down my trauma would catch up with me.

And that's *exactly* what ended up happening.

And so, despite what happened to you, you don't want that one event or part of your life be *the thing* that defines everything you are.

Which is why you actively work to create and build something else. Something that's all yours... something that no one else can touch or violate.

Something that you can be proud of, and can define you as more than just a victim.

Her trauma looks exactly like ours.

At the beginning of the documentary, Paris describes a recurring nightmare she has.

She's been diagnosed with insomnia, because she's

afraid to go sleep.

She relives her abduction by two men from her home in her nightmares, almost every night.

She gets bouts of anxiety and panic that are so crippling, she shifts to her alternate persona and character to protect herself from crumbling apart entirely.

Her trauma would come out in ways that sabotaged her, like entering one abusive after another, and it would heighten her despair when life got tough, like when her sex tape was leaked.

I could resonate with so much of her heartache and struggle. Because I'd been there too, in my own life, in many ways.

My trauma almost entirely sabotaged my business, and I still have days when I have to drop everything to focus on healing, because I've had another trauma flair up.

It's an exhausting, difficult and brutal journey.

And she had done *amazingly* to thrive despite all of this.

Final word.

Watching 'This is Paris' was incredibly therapeutic for me.

It spoke to so many of the messages that are repeated in the documentary that resonate with so many of us as survivors.

You are not alone.

You don't have to live in silence.

Your voice matters.

Life will get better.

You have support in this walk.

To see her have grown her own empire and international brand despite the trauma she has suffered, is incredible.

And to see her using her platform to spread awareness towards the cause of closing down these abusive and damaging schools is *beyond inspiring*.

I never thought I'd see the day that I'd be a Paris Hilton fan.

But that day has come.

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