

For many years, I never told anyone

I felt so embarrassed about what had happened to me that I never told anyone. I pretended to be a cheerful person, but every morning, I wake up to images of my father assaulting me. After being raped repeatedly for almost a decade in my own home, I somehow gathered the strength to run away and lodge a report. Now, two years later, I must finally face him in court.

On the first day of my [court hearing](#), tears streamed down my face without me noticing it. My hands were icy cold, and I shivered uncontrollably. I was so nervous and my heart was beating very hard. Even though I had a WCC staff, Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP), and two police officers by my side, I remained so terrified at the thought of seeing my father's friends and family that I wore the *purdah* (covered my face except for my eyes). We saw from afar, a large group of people whom we later found out were associated with my father. They were trying to intimidate me, and I was very glad the DPP had requested a closed court hearing, to ensure privacy. The DPP told us that, even she had felt intimidated by the crowd when they confronted her previously.

In the pre-trial briefing, I told my story to the DPP as clearly as I could even though it was very difficult for me, and shared many details which had never been told to anyone before. The DPP addressed my concerns and queries, and she also requested for a screen to be placed in front of me during the trial, so I would not have to face the man who had caused me so much harm for so long.

Unfortunately, that day, the trial was postponed without me having to give evidence. Getting through that first day felt like conquering a mountain for me and assistance from WCC staff helped alleviate my stress and fears which I had long been holding within me for a long time.

WCC supported Amy (not her real name) throughout her trial, ensuring her right to privacy, calming her during pre-trial briefing, and making her feel safer by requesting for two police officers to accompany her during the trial. We also talked through with her, the awkward necessity of explaining her case to her colleagues and taking leave from work, as well as informing her of her right regarding witness' travel claim for attending court.