



# Journey of Psychological Abuse Victim

I was just an ordinary housewife, married with two children. I thought I would live happily ever after I got married. But after 19 years of suffering from an abusive husband, I realized that I was totally wrong. I can't live happily ever after if I still have him in my life.

I lived in the shadow of my husband for 19 years. When we were just married, I obeyed what he asked me to do. But after 19 years of suffering, I couldn't take it anymore. I started to revolt. I ran away when he tried to force me to do whatever I didn't want to do. He began to get frustrated when he realized his "little rabbit" wouldn't listen to him anymore. In order for him to regain control over me, he made me suffer by forcing me to do things. He forced sex on me when I told him I was very tired. He even blew smoke into my face so that I could not fall asleep. He hung a tin on the door and made noise with it in the middle of the night. He stalked me wherever I went. He threatened me by saying he would take revenge on our children if I disobeyed him. He stopped me from keeping in touch with my friends. Financially, he did not give me money to support me. He had never physically beaten me, but he had abused me emotionally over and over again.

When I decided to leave him, I had no support. I first ran away to my mother's house. But I went back to him eventually because of my children. I tried leaving him several times but failed. One day, my son had to call the police when he couldn't take his father's abuse at me anymore. That was when I realized that I had to leave. I finally had the support of my grown-up children. They did not blame me for leaving them and encouraged me to leave my abusive husband. With their support, I took the courage to leave him, and never went back, no matter how he begged me.

I thought I would feel better after I left him. But I couldn't sleep after leaving him. I saw his face whenever I closed my eyes. I kept being reminded of the hurt he caused me. Why he did this to me? Why me? I didn't do anything wrong! He was still haunting me even though I had physically left him! I realized my leaving wouldn't stop him from torturing me as he had threatened me by saying he will teach my son a lesson. But I knew I must never go back if I wanted to start a new life.

He continued to stalk me, and threatened that he would kill me. In order to stop him from torturing me over and over again, I continued to lodge police reports, again and again. The police did not believe me. They did not take me as a victim of domestic violence because my husband did not physically harm me. At that moment, I really thought of giving up my life but I still kept my faith. Eventually I found out about WCC and sought help from them. The WCC social worker explained to me my rights and told me that I could apply for an interim protection order (IPO) to stop the abuse. I saw a glimmer of hope I knew I had to continue to fight for my rights, which meant freedom from my husband. I was assured that I was doing the right thing.

I met a Welfare officer who helped me to apply for an IPO. Finally, I got this piece of paper to protect myself. I thought I would live in peace, but my feelings were just the same as before leaving. Although I am far away from him, I still feel frightened when I go out. When I am out walking, I wonder whether anybody is stalking me or following me. What will he do when he finds me? What is his next move? With all these thoughts, sometimes I still feel that my problem has not been completely solved. However, I am still very thankful that WCC supported me whenever I wanted to give up. I understand now that the best way to protect myself is to be strong. No one can save me if I don't put in the effort to save myself. No matter what happens in life, we should not give up hope. I am proud of myself for not giving up seeking help and being strong. I am trying my best to develop a new life now. Lastly, I know I need to move on and I hope I can do it.

## Did you know....

When the victim who suffered emotional abuse from her husband went to the police to request they arrest her husband due to the breach of Interim Protection Order, the police officer told her "*tak kena pukul tak kira keganasan rumah tangga, kita pun tak boleh buat apa-apa.*" The amendments to the Domestic Violence Act 1994 in November 2011, stated that *domestic violence* means "*...causing injury on victim, not only physical abuse but also psychological abuse which includes emotional injury to the victim.*"

Shouldn't the police officers be better trained at their job?

