WOMEN'S RESOURCES

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www.womensresources.ca 705-878-4285

KATE'S STORY

Kate came from a "good" family, graduated university and operated a successful business. How did she end up in a women's shelter? The following story is written by Kate and illustrates a life of fear, self-doubt, and shame before she chose the path to healing and hope:

I celebrated my 57th birthday at Victoria's Emergency Shelter in Lindsay three months after I arrived at their door. Today, I struggle to clearly remember the specific events that prompted my call to the Women's Resources crisis line from a friend's house, but I distinctly recall the voice at the other end of the line saying there was a bed available and I could come – now.

Some weeks before this I had been to Women's Resources to talk with a counsellor. During that counselling session she asked me questions – I talked and cried. She gave me Kleenex and information. We prepared a safety plan in case I had to leave home unexpectedly, which I followed to the letter – just in case.

The next time I met with this counsellor, I was a shelter resident. She supported me throughout and after departing, I was better equipped to make my way alone.

At age 42 I was widowed with two sons ages 11 and 14. 16 months later I met a man and carried on a long-distance relationship for 8 years. Eventually I sold my house in the city, closed my business and moved in to his remote cottage up north. He maintained a successful business in the city and we shared expenses. It seemed like a simple arrangement for a great life together; plenty of love, laughter, and alcohol.

Some days, I woke up to him screaming at me. It was scary.

Until his drinking escalated and then the arguments would start. When he was intoxicated, he became violent toward other men. Our social circle shrank; he became distant and shunned any physical contact from me. He sought medical help, but to no avail. Maybe we should stop drinking? Was this the answer to our problems?

It wasn't. The following year we purchased an income property which I financed with the hope of better days. We sold the home we were in and moved to the new location with the understanding that he would manage this as well as his existing business. Sadly, it had the opposite effect. His other business, left in the hands of an employee, was sinking fast; he stopped paying household bills and contributing to the care of the new property. When I questioned our finances, he angrily stormed off in his truck. Some days, I woke up to him screaming at me. It was scary.

Continued on reverse side...

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Please make payment to Women's Resources of Kawartha Lakes

My contact preference:

By mail ☐

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You can make online donations at www.womensresources.ca or by e-transfer to give@womensresources.ca

Thank you for your donation 11/21 Charitable # 12981 8613 RR0001

The verbal abuse and erratic behaviour intensified. “How can such a smart woman be so stupid?” was frequently asked. I lost 25 pounds and withdrew. I was advised by my minister’s wife and a lawyer I consulted that I was being abused, to seek counselling and leave the relationship. I knew they were right, but I was afraid to end it and afraid to stay.

My partner resumed affiliations with unsavoury people from his distant past. His volatile behaviour continued and was escalating. I feared he’d lose control and anyone within striking distance would be at risk, and that would most likely be me. These days were a blur of anxiety and uncertainty.

I knew I had to leave and chose the day of the church picnic. My partner stayed home with one of his visiting ‘old friends’. I went to my girlfriend’s, dialed the shelter crisis line and drove myself to Victoria’s. Upon arrival I was greeted with many comfort items including a lined journal and pen. The intake worker suggested that I record every circumstance that brought me to the shelter in that journal. I filled that book and revisited it every time I was tempted to return home. I avoided listening to his voice mails or answering his calls. Without these strategies, I believe I would have gone back.

Shelter life became a comfortable routine, sharing daily tasks. I continued with counselling, and with the help of a lawyer, packed up my old life. Within a few months I found a new place to live. During my stay at Women’s Resources, I learned about the many forms of abuse, the connections between family of origin and co-dependence, tried art therapy, and chose to face my greatest fear - my alcoholism. Although I no longer drank, I needed more help which I was finally able to get.

When asked to share my story, I readily agreed, but soon discovered that remembering triggered difficult memories. I sought counselling again from the wonderful counsellors at Women’s Resources, and now feel that revisiting my abusive past through words has been a healing experience.

Nine years later my life is full and peaceful. I live too far from Lindsay to volunteer at Women’s Resources, but I encourage friends to support Vicky’s Values, make a donation or sign up for monthly giving. My advice to women in need? Don’t wait, the help is there, reach out and take it.

I’m honoured to share my story – written with a grateful heart.

Kate

If you have made a recent donation, **THANK YOU!**

What Kate experienced was psychological and financial abuse. When she received counselling, the healing began. Many other women are finding the courage to leave – especially since the isolating COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted and they are finally able to free themselves from their abusers.

We cannot do this work alone. The pandemic has made it even more critical for us to rely on the community for support. We hope you will consider making a donation to help maintain much needed programs and services.

Please, give what you can. Your contribution could save a woman’s life.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Fox – cfox@womensresources.ca – 705-324-7649 Ext 223

Shelter, Support and Referral for Abused Women and their Children

Working Together + Supporting Women + Building Community

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WOMEN’S RESOURCES

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