

# Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

June 2019 Vol. 17 No. 06  
This issue highlights issues affecting trafficked persons and what they see as helpful in their journey toward healing.



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## Survivors Speak

### A Victim Remembers

"My name is Mary (not actual names throughout) and I am a survivor of seven years of sexual trafficking. It started nine years ago now when I first met my trafficker. I had recently gone through a divorce -- with two kids and the end to an almost ten-year marriage. I wound up lost. I had been a wife and mother. That's all I knew. I made the decision to get out of an unhealthy marriage for myself and my kids, so we could find some peace.

"That was exactly the opposite of what happened. My job throughout my marriage was my kids and my home. Without a good support group and resource-

Remembering *cont.* pg. 2

### A Victim Finds Help

"I was raped by my boyfriend and a group of his friends. When I was trying to understand what happened to me, a friend comforted me and we started dating.

"I now realize that he was taking advantage of my vulnerability and was grooming me to begin pimping me out. I was sold on backpage.com for 4 years and tried to escape the situations many times. I got arrested for the fourth or fifth time and for the first time they arrested him as well. They wanted to get me to testify against him; however he threatened me and I got scared and was planning on committing perjury -- to say that he wasn't pimping me out.

"The lawyer I hired to defend me when I perjured myself spent two hours on the phone with me convincing me to testify against him and to get

my life back. I owe that man my life."





## Awareness

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### Remembering *cont. from pg. 1*

es in the community where I lived, I was forced to financially make a living and make decisions I wasn't prepared to make. Between the stress of what to do and where to go, I started drinking. I felt alone and abandoned and ashamed.

"What made things even worse was, in order to keep custody of my kids, I had to move a hundred miles from my ex-husband. Mind you, he too moved out of state, when our divorce became final. So now I'm in a new unfamiliar city. I was completely lost and out of my comfort zone.

"I had no real experience with work and no education, so I decided to start working at a bar. I thought it would be quick money and then I could get a real job. That job led to even more drinking and the people there could tell I was a 'fish out of water,' depressed and alone.

"That was the same bar I was lured out of by Robert, my trafficker. I was taken to a hotel room for a week and forced to stay there. I was being groomed by another woman and threatened if I tried to leave. He said he would kill me and my family. I was beaten as well. After that week I spent a good two years in his home but in the basement. I was on call for him 24/7. Forced hourly to sleep with men. His wife and kids were just upstairs. He kept me with black eyes. Beat me with belts, choked me until I was at the point of passing out, and then he would let go. I was raped by him. I had little sleep.

"After many years I gained what trust I could from him. I was no longer in the basement. I went from there to a room upstairs and then eventually to hotel rooms. At that point we traveled a lot, even went out of state. He realized I could make him more money by being in different geographic areas. It kept him somewhat sane because he would stay a step ahead of the police.

So, toward the end a guy named Tim wanted to purchase me and he did for \$500 dollars. To this day I call that man 'my angel.' He came out of nowhere and took me to a safe location with machine guns for protection. I stayed on a farm with him and a friend of his for almost two months. It took me that long to mentally and physically come to from the drugs Robert had me on and the trauma of what had happened to me."



### A Victim Struggles to Overcome

"Because my parents abused my sister and I, our grandfather, an immigrant from Italy, took over our care. He was a kind and hardworking man. He managed his own business and took care of us.

When I was three years old and my sister was 15, our grandfather died. Now we were all alone.

In 1999 we were kidnapped and kept in a bathroom. Again began the abuse by those who kept us captive. We tried to escape in 2009, but I was weak and could not run fast enough. My sister was killed by one of the kidnappers and I was caught.

But the police came and rescued me. They took me to a shelter. It was there that I learned to read and write. I was helped to learn how to do things others learn naturally as they grow up.

I have since graduated from high school and have a job. As I look back, the people working at the shelter could not really understand what it was like to be held against one's will for so many years. They need to learn more about the reality of human trafficking in order to understand the people they want to help.

Parents should help and love their children and teach them to understand that dangers are all around. Anyone, rich or poor, can be kidnapped and caught into human trafficking for their lives.

One night I took a ride with an Uber driver. He was in a car crash and I was in a coma. Now I face many more surgeries and am still struggling to be free and on my own. It is very hard for me to tell this story of my life."



## The Role of Professionals in Addressing the Needs of Women Suffering Oppression

In an article entitled, “*Multiple and intersecting experiences of women in prostitution: Improving access to helping services*” by Kathryn Hodges and Sarah Burch (*Dignity: A Journal of Sexual Exploitation and Violence*, 2019, Vol. 4, Issue 2, Art. 3, pgs. 1-22), they describe results of interviewing women, who had suffered sex trafficking. What follows is an adapted excerpt of their conclusions. To access the full text and references cited, go to: <http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol4/iss2/3>

“In a society with limited resources to invest in social care, helping services must be responsive to the experiences and needs of women in order to deliver good outcomes. Access to safe and secure housing is crucial. Lack of accommodation complicates women’s circumstances, harming their overall well-being and personal safety. Without somewhere safe to sleep, women’s ability to access support is impeded, significantly affecting the decisions and choices made when seeking help.

“Another issue is that the simple existence of services is not enough to guarantee that women will decide or be able to use them. Caring professionals not only need general communication skills, but also attention to how they interact with clients. An increase in peer support or survivor-centered services could secure greater trust from women. Also, women need help to access and navigate the myriad of services which are potentially available.

“Underpinning these factors, the study demonstrates that the way women’s experiences are considered as ‘needs’ in policy development has to be

addressed, with due attention given to the intersecting experiences that result from multiple oppressions. The provisions of the Nordic Law criminalize those who purchase sex and the individuals and gangs profiting from it, while decriminalizing those who are prostituted. Under such a law the current and future care of those women must also be considered. This requires training of social workers to understand the experiences and needs of women involved in prostitution. If the burden of responsibility is moved from women to the buyers and pimps, women’s intersecting experiences and needs must also be taken into account enabling their access to effective care and support.

“There is a dissonance in laws and policies that affect the way women are met and considered by law enforcers, health, and social care providers, policy makers and the wider community. As understanding of *Child Sexual Exploitation* (CSE) grows, social care professionals must understand that women involved in prostitution are frequently the same persons who were exploited as children. Yet there are very different legal approaches around CSE and prostitution -- as if an individual child’s ability to make decisions and choices develops overnight as they attain adulthood. While attention is brought to the needs and experiences of women, it is important to note that there is a continuum of abuse and violence against women of which prostitution is just one element. Using different terms to explain sexual exploitation alongside a range of legislative responses appears to result

in a situation where some women are considered victims while others are seen to make choices about their circumstances, ultimately having an impact on the care they receive.

“How women frame their experiences too often contrasts with the language and understanding of need and choice in policy and practice. If women do not understand their experiences as needs for which they are entitled to receive help, they are unlikely to access available support. Additionally, a lack of awareness among professional caregivers of how women frame their experiences as things that have happened to them further impedes women’s use of services. Women may require support with many experiences which are not currently termed as ‘needs.’ This could include a more explicit focus on exiting prostitution.

“The way professional caregivers ‘meet’ women influences whether and how they seek help. This is a particularly important consideration in the context of the stigma of prostitution, and the impact this has on women when discussing their experiences, an issue which requires further research. Women in the study decided they could trust professional caregivers by the way they were spoken to and the body language of staff. Women invested trust when staff did what they said they were going to do. They made their assessments of staff behavior quickly, reflecting a need to do this elsewhere in their lives to protect themselves. Therefore, the way services are delivered and how professionals relate to women have to be considered alongside the more customary concerns of resource allocation.” (Excerpted from the Article, pgs. 16-18)



## Awareness

### Complex Experience Care Model (CECM)

In the article by Hodges and Burch (pg. 3), they provide several charts that highlight the complex experiences women face that cause them to search for help and the impact service providers have in helping or hindering the results that follow. (Article pgs. 9, 16) The table below is an adapted version of their 'Complex Experience Care Model.' (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol4/iss2/3>)

Complex Events and Challenges a Woman Faces	Decisions/Choices Made In Seeking Help	Behaviors of Service Providers That Promote Being Helped
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abusive childhood experiences; bullying;</li> <li>Disruptive childhood family history; divorce; alcohol;</li> <li>Difficulty to find safe housing; homeless; evictions;</li> <li>Abusive relationships;</li> <li>Having suffered rape and/or violence;</li> <li>Drug and alcohol use;</li> <li>Mental health issues;</li> <li>Loss of children to foster care, living with a relative, etc.;</li> <li>Immigration concerns; unable to find work; begging</li> <li>Problems around making, taking, and managing money; how to handle paperwork;</li> <li>Criminal record;</li> <li>Suffering grief and loss; depression; loneliness.</li> </ul>	It happened to me.	Her experiences are considered as needs in our policies and practices.
	I know I need help.	
	I can actually get help.	Helping services are available to her.
	Retelling my story, so it is heard.	Understanding the needs of a woman with multiple intersecting experiences.
	Have I actually been heard?	
	I can share because they are listening.	Ethos, values, culture of services that will meet needs expressed.
	I trust they will help me.	Staff do what they say they will do.
	I feel safe.	Service is a place of safety and a place to return to.
	I need to be pushed or I need someone to come with me.	Staff prompts, pushes, and goes along.
	Finding a way through; not going backward.	
I have hopes and plans for the future.	Silences are noticed, heard and attended to.	

### Survivors Contribute to Program Effectiveness

In 2017 a team of six non-government service providers and six survivor leaders worked together to develop recommendations on how to enhance service provision to survivors of human trafficking or those at risk of human trafficking using trauma-informed practices and survivor-informed principles.

A survivor-informed practice includes meaningful input from a diverse community of survivors at all stages of a program or project, including development, implementation, and evaluation.

A tool was developed to assist organizations in (1) assessing the degree to which their project or programming is survivor-informed and (2) in identifying areas for improvement. Areas for assessing survivor-informed practice include:

#### Meaningful Input

- Program/project provides employment opportunities for survivors.
- Survivors serve in leadership positions for the program/project (management, advisory board, etc.).
- In the absence of survivor staff, survivor consultants are hired to provide input.
- If direct survivor input is unavailable, survivor-developed guidance and resources are utilized.

#### Diverse Communities of Survivors

- Survivor input represents both sex and labor trafficking perspectives and domestic and foreign-national perspectives.
- Survivor input represents other diverse survivor perspectives (adults, minors, LGBTQ survivors, etc.).
- Project/program incorporates best practices from other survivor-informed fields (domestic violence, etc.).
- A strengths-based process is in place for determining appropriate areas and levels of survivor engagement.

Survivor Insight *cont. on pg. 7*



## Advocacy

### Trafficked Survivors Identify What Was Helpful in Their Transitions

'Stop Trafficking' invited survivors to contribute insights into what were some of the challenges they faced and resources they were given that facilitated their journey into self-reliance and freedom. Included here are some of their comments.

#### Challenges I Faced:

"Immigration, housing, school, food, monthly rent, loneliness etc... These were some of my challenges I have faced every day."

"Non-profits don't have access to apply to city housing programs or low income housing. It would have helped me on the transition to independent living a great deal."

"One of the biggest challenge of being in the world outside is the economic situation which I went through at the time I left the safe house. But getting a job because of legal documentation still remains the biggest challenge, followed by language barriers and low education levels. Also getting a safe place to live in is the hardest part of being independent."

"No doubt about facing what happened and coming to terms with the trauma and the way I looked at myself afterward wasn't easy at all. It was a whole new way of living again. I was always in hiding, so doing everyday things wasn't normal to me anymore."

"I was limited by my criminal record in finding a job. It was hard to find a therapist who wasn't judgmental. I had a large amount of guilt and suicidal thoughts. I was scared everyday for at least four years that he would come back and get me. Lastly, I couldn't make eye contact or form friendship for many years."



<https://isthmus.com/news/news/rescued-from-sex-trafficking-but-then-what/>

#### What Was Really Helpful:

"Having a safe space to sleep, be able to have a community of people who were there whenever I needed them. Also, having food without having to worry how to pay for it -- these things were truly amazingly helpful."

"To get through this long road back I first needed to continue to be in a safe place. A place to heal spiritually. After the things I had done and witnessed I needed understanding in a big way. So, I found a long-term safe housing placement where I could heal and find out the answers I needed on how and why this happened to me." (Mary, pg. 1)

"What was helpful to me was the knowledge from other people about what I experienced and understanding my feelings and needs as a human being. I received love, comprehension, gratitude, emotional support and much more. I experienced what it was like being free of my situation after all I survived."

"At the shelter I spent every day working on myself spiritually, emotionally and physically. I'd wake up and do daily devotions with gratitude. Daily AA or NA meet-

ings. Art therapy, individual therapy. Went to the YMCA, walks daily, as well. Us girls in the house always had an instant bond. Even not knowing each other, we could just see it in each other eyes that bonded us."

"I learned about love. The environment was supportive and the staff were encouraging. It was like home."

"Education on mindfulness and the effects of trauma were helpful for me."

"The staff and volunteers were always involved in our recovery. Everybody brought something to the table to help our healing. I will always and forever be grateful for the shelter."

"Always keep in mind transition back into the community is difficult. We are beaten down, so even decision making becomes stressful. Never give up on the survivor. We aren't used to having any type of real support. It does take love, patience and hard work to get an individual's life back. And, plenty of prayers don't hurt."





## Advocacy

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### Survivor Insight

cont. from pg. 4

#### At all stages of a program or project

- Survivor expertise is accessed in the development of initial program/project design.
- Survivor input is incorporated into development of policies and procedures.
- Survivor input is incorporated into the creation of program/project materials.
- Survivor expertise is accessed throughout program/project implementation.
- Survivor expertise is accessed in evaluation of program/project.
- A process is established and utilized for obtaining feedback from survivor participants.

To access the tool, go to:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resource/htlatool>

### Survivor Needs cont. from pg. 6

end this exploitation and join hands to do international legislation can minimize the problem if not eradicate altogether. Introducing programs and workshops for the survivors to overcome the fear and shame related to the stigma and help them transform into stronger leaders and use their voices to encourage others and put a stop to these practices can help a great deal in my opinion.

“Becoming a mom at 17, I ended up dropping out to work full time to take care of my family and never disciplined myself to go back to complete my high school education. My GED is

very important to me not only for my own personal satisfaction but to be able to show my children I completed it.”

“Financial assistance would ease the stress of having to try to balance a full time job, my kids, AND school. It would help me to be able to focus on a day to day basis with less stress and pressure. Financial support and help for my education would mean that someone believes in me enough to help open doors for me that I never even knew existed.”

## Read Survivor Stories

### “Freedom Has a Name: My Name is Also Freedom”

The second eldest of six girls, *Shari Ho* was wrenched from her life in a remote region of Taiwan when her father sold her, at age seven, to a broker — a fate for many young girls at the time. The broker took her to several places that dealt in human trafficking, but was told she was too small.

Ho ended up with a woman from a wealthy family. For 20 years, in Taiwan and the U.S. she was forced to cook, clean and do yard work — 20 hours a day with no pay. She was kicked, slapped and fed spoiled and leftover food in a kitchen where the refrigerator door was kept locked.

“The woman told me, ‘you are never going back,’” said Ho, who now leads a support group for other human trafficking survivors. “She told me, ‘Your dad sold you and you are my slave.

*If you go back, I will do something to your family.”*

Ho recalled, “People would ask, ‘Why is she always sad? Why is she always crying?’” One of those people was a neighbor woman who noticed that something was wrong. The woman slipped Ho her phone number one day. After about a year, Ho trusted her enough to call, and they arranged a getaway on the one night she had a few minutes unobserved.

Each week Ho took out the trash and watered the lawn. Her neighbor would be waiting in a car. Ho dropped the hose, and with only the clothes on her back, ran down the street and got into the woman’s car. “*She changed my whole life,*” Ho said about that woman. “*I want everyone to be like her.*”

Freedom was an adjustment. Ho didn’t read or write. She had serious trust issues. She didn’t know her birth date. She had no marketable skills — or so she thought. “*God gave me a special gift in being able to take care of children,*” she said. Her first job was at a private day care. “*I was surprised,*” she said. “*They liked me. And I loved working with them.*”

Ho has traveled back to Taiwan several times — even visiting her mother, whom she said she has forgiven.

The editor of Ho’s book said, “*Her heart is set to help other survivors -- to get them everything they need. And there are so many different areas in which a survivor needs help.*”

Shari Ho’s incredible journey from slavery and survival to inspirational speaker will grip and challenge readers to speak up on behalf of silent victims.

Survivor Stories cont. on pg. 8



## Action

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### Survivor Stories *cont. from pg. 7*



Ho has written two books with the help of Melodie Fox: “Freedom Has a Name: My Name is Also Freedom” and “Finding Freedom Was Just the Beginning.”

(<https://www.amazon.com/My-Name-Also-Freedom-Shari/dp/0998832898/>)

(<https://www.oeregister.com/2019/01/15/human-trafficking-survivor-sold-by-father-at-7-to-share-story/>)

(<https://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Girl-Story-Modern-Day-Child/dp/1442481684/>)

### “Hidden Girl: The True Story of a Modern-Day Child Slave”

This is the title of an inspiring and compelling 2014 memoir from a young woman who lost her childhood to slavery—and built a new life grounded in determination and justice.



Shyima Hall was born in Egypt on September 29, 1989 -- the seventh child of desperately poor parents. At age eight, her parents sold her into slavery.

She lived in Cairo with a wealthy family and serve them eighteen hours a day, seven days a week.

When she was ten, her captors moved to Orange County, CA and smuggled Shyima with them. Two years later, an anonymous call to police by a neighbor ended Shyima’s servitude—but her journey to full freedom took far longer.

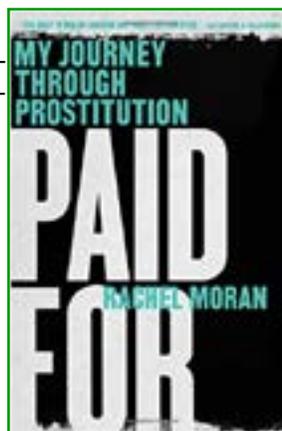
As a volunteer at her local police station since she was a teenager, Shyima is passionate about helping to rescue others who are in bondage. Now a U.S. citizen, she regularly speaks out about human trafficking and intends to one day become an immigration officer.

In “Hidden Girl,” Shyima candidly reveals how she overcame her harrowing circumstances and brings vital awareness to a current issue.

([www.amazon.com/Hidden-Girl-Story-Modern-Day-Child/dp/1442481684/](https://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Girl-Story-Modern-Day-Child/dp/1442481684/))

### ‘Paid For’

Born into a troubled family, Rachel Moran left home at the age of fourteen. Being homeless, she was driven into prostitution to survive. With intelligence and empathy, she describes the exploitation she and others endured on the streets and in the brothels. Moran also speaks to the psychological damage inherent to prostitution and the inevitable estrangement from one’s body. At twenty-two, Moran escaped the sex trade. She has since become a writer and an abolitionist activist.



(<https://www.amazon.com/Paid-My-Journey-Through-Prostitution/dp/0393351971/>)

**Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline**  
**National Human Trafficking**  
**Resource Center**  
**1.888.3737.888**  
**Text “BeFree” (233733)**

**Informative Web Sites:**  
 (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

**Survivor Organizations**  
**National Survivor Network:**

<https://nationalsurvivornetwork.org/>

**Survivor Alliance:**

<https://survivoralliance.org/>

**Rebecca Bender Initiative:**

<https://rebeccabender.org/>

**Resources to Assist in Aiding Survivors**

<https://instituteforsheltercare.org/research-library/>

**2017 Survey on**

**Shelter Policies and Practices**

<https://instituteforsheltercare.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Practices-Survey-Report-2017-1.pdf>

*“The best work by anyone on prostitution ever, Rachel Moran’s ‘Paid For’ fuses the memoirist’s lived poignancy with the philosopher’s conceptual sophistication.*

*The result is riveting, compelling, incontestable. Impossible to put down. This book provides all anyone needs to know about the reality of prostitution in moving, insightful prose that engages and disposes of every argument ever raised in its favor.”*

Catharine A. MacKinnon, law professor, Univ. of Michigan and Harvard Univ.

**Stop Trafficking!** is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among USCSAHT members, organizations and concerned persons, collaborating to eliminate all forms of human trafficking.

To access back issues, go to:  
<http://www.stopenslavement.org/past-issues-chronological.html>

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