



**Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Newsletter**  
**A monthly newsletter brought to you by the**  
**Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership**

**October 2021**

Hi All!

I'm sure you have all seen the news and the prominence of reporting about male violence against women and girls. 80 women have been killed by men since the murder of Sarah Everard, highlighting the importance of the work you are all doing, and we thank each and every one of you for your contribution to reduce violence and increase safety. Across the county we have seen a number of men and women taking their own lives following domestic abuse. All our specialist DASV Staff received training from MIND earlier in the year, and a Stop Suicide Briefing has been published to specifically highlight this issue.

Two women have been killed by their adult sons in Cambridgeshire this year. With a partnership bid, the YMCA will be delivering 1-1 sessions with children aged 10-16 who are using abusive behaviours at home – Mel, from the YMCA has written a piece in this newsletter.

There are a number of new initiatives underway – please have a read through to see what may work for those you engage with.

We have been working with the media recently too – Julia was on BBC Look East where they featured a survivor's story, Vickie spoke on Fenland Youth Radio about support available for their story on a survivor of coercive control and Amanda was on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire talking about The Hideaway book that is going to all schools and libraries. Links are on our Facebook page (links below).

Finally, next month sees the International Action for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls, as well as White Ribbon Day – if there is anything you are doing to mark this important time, please let us know. We are compiling a list of events that we will be sending round to partners.

Take care of yourselves and each other, and thank you again.

**Vickie Crompton & Julia Cullum**  
**DASV Partnership Managers**



## What is the Family Respect project?

Our Family Respect project is part of a larger domestic abuse programme across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire which is being funded by the Home Office. The programme in its entirety has three strands which focus on: stalking and harassment, healthy relationships, and child to parent abuse.

The Family Respect project is being led by YMCA Trinity Group through collaboration with The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, and Respect UK.

Our Family Respect project focuses on working with children and young people aged 10 to 16 years of age, who display any abusive behaviours towards their parents and carers, and other people in their family. The focus is to support families who are experiencing child to parent abuse with a particular focus on working with the child or young person to facilitate change and growth within the family as a wider system.



## Can I make a referral to Family Respect?

As we know, abuse takes many forms, and the signs are often invisible to those on the outside of it. Child to parent abuse is particularly hidden and misunderstood which often results in parents and carers feeling isolated, without any support.

Do you have a professional involvement with a child or young person aged 10 to 16 years of age, who you know is showing physical or violent behaviours towards other people in their home? Maybe they have caused damage to items in their home, or to items which belong to someone else? Have they used coercion and manipulation to control the freedom and choices of other people they live with? It could be that they use verbal insults or threats to other family members? Or perhaps the abuse focuses on stealing, demanding money, or other people's property?

For us to be able to accept a referral for a family we need to ensure that someone in the family has reached out to the police for support with the abusive behaviour and this might have been a phone call or by looking at information online. If a young person has engaged with youth offending services, this is another way we can accept a referral.

If you know a child or young person between 10 and 16 years of age who needs support because of any abusive behaviours they are exhibiting towards their parents or carers, or towards other people in their home, this could be a well-suited programme for them to get involved with.

If you know a young person outside of the age range, we still might be able to help provide support to them, so get in touch with us to discuss the referral in more detail so we can consider the support we might be able to offer.

The project is operating in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and referrals will be taken based on the location the young person resides.

### **How does the Family Respect work take place?**

Our Family Respect project works with the child or young person in a face-to-face environment (where this is possible), working with them as part of the solution, rather than viewing them as the problem. The intention is for young people to build a trusting relationship through the duration of our involvement.

- Each family will be allocated a Family Respect worker who will complete the programme over a period of around 13 weeks.
- Throughout the duration of the programme, parent/carers will be offered support whilst the young person will be offered 8 individual sessions.
- 2 sessions will take place collaboratively with the young person and their parents, carers, or alongside other family members as appropriate.
- Each parent or carer will have the option to have their own support from an advocate which will enable them to share their own feelings and experiences about what has been happening, whilst giving thought to what the future might look like.

Our intention is to rebuild family relationships and create long lasting change for everyone in the family, by providing healthy and sustainable approaches to managing conflict.

### **What consent do I need to have from the family?**

If you submit a referral to the Family Respect programme, it is a mandatory requirement and expectation that you have already gathered consent from anyone who has parental responsibility for the child or young person.

The family must understand that their consent means they are agreeing to being contacted by the Family Respect project.

You must obtain consent from the young person themselves where they are able to give their own consent.

You must have gained this consent from all relevant people prior to the referral form being submitted to us; referrals will not be able to progress without consent being in place.

If you'd like to make a referral please get in touch with the team by emailing [familyrespect@ymcatrinity.org.uk](mailto:familyrespect@ymcatrinity.org.uk) or by calling Melanie Khan (Family Respect Project/Service Manager) on 07771357187.

### **How do I learn more about the Family Respect project?**

We are running two sessions in November on Working with Children using abusive behaviours against their parents. The sessions will include a presentation from Respect & YMCA about the new programme starting in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (more information below).

The sessions will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov at 1pm-2pm and 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov – 10am-11am via TEAMS

To book a session, please email [DASVChampions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:DASVChampions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

## **New leaflet for professionals – DA and Mental Health**

As part of recommendations from a Fenland Domestic Homicide Review to improve knowledge across services about Domestic Abuse and mental health, we have developed a new leaflet aimed at professionals working in the Health and Mental Health sector. The leaflet can be downloaded from our website at [Welcome to Cambridgeshire DASV Partnership \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](https://cambsdasv.org.uk)

### **Free listening service still open to those working and volunteering on the front line.**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, in partnership with CPFT, launched a new support service in response to the pandemic back in July.



This line has now extended the hours to 11:00 am - 7 pm and is free to all those working/volunteering on the front line wanting to just talk. Those on the other side can refer into medical support or if you wish just be that ear to hear what you're going through.

Telephone: 0808 801 0377

For more information on the services available [click here](#)

## **Own my Life course for domestic abuse survivors**

Own my Life is a course of 12 sessions (with another 4 optional for support and de-brief) for survivors of domestic abuse who are no longer in the abusive relationship. Each session is an hour long with a maximum of 12 participants. Refuge are now running the Own my Life course in Fenland / Peterborough / Huntingdon areas (first sessions will be on Zoom).

Refuge are also running a different version for male victims which will be more about awareness and recognising abuse.

The first zoom course will start on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and there are 2 places left for this course.

The next course will be starting on the 1st November 2021. This may be on Zoom or face to face depending on locality of the next cohort.

If any clients wish to participate, please ask them to email [Cambsgroupwork@refuge.org.uk](mailto:Cambsgroupwork@refuge.org.uk)

Please see the leaflet at the end of the newsletter.

For more details, contact [Carolyn\\_Shaw@refuge.org.uk](mailto:Carolyn_Shaw@refuge.org.uk) [www.ownmylifecourse.org](http://www.ownmylifecourse.org)

## Managed Reciprocals

Our local managed housing reciprocal scheme enables individuals and families who are at risk of domestic abuse or violence and who have a social tenancy, to move to a safe area (within Cambridgeshire or Peterborough) whilst retaining their tenancy. This process is coordinated by the IDVA Service.

The loss of a social tenancy can be a form of re-victimisation for victim/survivors. Not only are victim/survivors asked to leave their home to escape violence and abuse perpetrated by someone else, but by doing so are penalised through the loss of their social tenancy.

Ideally, victim/survivors should not have to give up their homes and rights to keep safe from abuse. However, measures to prevent perpetrators from accessing the home (Sanctuary Schemes) and/or to remove perpetrators from the home (court order or custody) are not always adequate or appropriate. Sometimes, victim/survivors do not want to pursue criminal or court proceedings and, instead of adding security measures to their homes, would prefer to leave. In these cases, a reciprocal move offers an option for victim/survivors to access affordable and stable housing and rebuild their lives.

This scheme wouldn't be suitable as an "emergency response", as it could take some time to identify an alternative home.

The Cambridgeshire reciprocal scheme is the only one in the UK which provides the option of relocating the perpetrator if it is deemed safe to do so. This allows the victim/survivor to remain in their home and it is often quicker to identify a property for a single person than a family-size property.

To be considered for a move under this scheme, a victim/survivor must be working with a domestic abuse specialist to ensure all relevant safety measures are in place and that the proposed new home would be suitable for their needs.

If you have any questions, please email Vickie or Julia – [Vickie.crompton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Vickie.crompton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) / [Julia.cullum@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.cullum@cambridgeshire.gov.uk).

If you are a Domestic Abuse Specialist, please contact [Mandy.Thorp@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:Mandy.Thorp@peterborough.gov.uk) who coordinates referrals and can provide you with the appropriate forms to start this process.

## Tech Safety Advice

Tech abuse is often used by perpetrators of domestic abuse or stalkers to track the whereabouts of victims or to find out their internet browsing history.

Refuge have some great guidance on how to secure tech such as laptops and mobile phones and also a warning about recent iPhone updates.

[Secure my iPhone guide](#) | [Refuge Tech Safety](#)

## Shameless – a festival of activism against sexual violence

[Shameless! Festival of Activism Against Sexual Violence](#) will be held on 27 November at Battersea Arts Centre. Created in collaboration with WOW - Women of the World and [Birkbeck's SHaME](#) project, everyone is invited to join this vital festival to spark conversation, address the global crisis of sexual violence (in all its forms) and help get rid of the shame so often attached to it.

[Book a Day Pass for Shameless! Festival](#) for access to a variety of workshops, talks, performances and more taking place throughout the day from 9.15am-6pm.

Festival goers will be able to explore talks by high profile speakers, survivors, researchers and medical professionals, alongside performances by incredible artists, poets and musicians, interactive workshops, 'how to' clinics and wellness spaces.

Speakers announced so far include **WOW Founder Jude Kelly**; prizewinning author **Professor Joanna Bourke**; Founder of Black Mind and UK Slam champion **Rachel Nwokoro**; author and survivor **Winnie M Li**; activist **Payzee Mahmood**; **Soma Sara**, the Founder of Everyone's Invited; poet **Tanaka Mhishi**; authors **Laura Bates** and **Rachel Thompson**; Academic **Dr Rabiya Majeed-Ariss** and award winning podcaster **Sangeeta Pillai**.

There will also be pop ups, a marketplace, support on site for whoever needs it, and the chance to connect with experts working to end sexual violence.

All events will be BSL interpreted and/or Live Captioned. Tickets are Pay What You Can (recommended price £6). Tickets are strictly limited so book now!

## Increase to family mediation scheme

Thousands more families are set to benefit from a government mediation scheme that has been helping separating parents resolve disputes away from court.

The scheme, [launched by the Government in March](#), provides separating couples with a £500 voucher for mediation services with the aim of finding amicable solutions to their disagreements and freeing up space in the family courts. It seeks to spare them the trauma of going through often lengthy and costly courtroom battles, which can have a damaging impact on children. Normally each mediation session is charged for unless one of the parties has access to legal aid.

Hundreds of people have already accessed this vital support with around 130 vouchers currently being used every week. Early data from the Family Mediation Council (FMC), who run the programme, has shown that up to three-quarters of participants have been helped to reach full or partial agreement on their dispute.

Ministers are determined to build on this success and have today confirmed an additional £800,000 will go towards the scheme – almost doubling an initial £1 The scheme will be administered by the FMC, on behalf of the Ministry of Justice.

Further information about the scheme and how it works will be provided to parties at their Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting (MIAM), which all those involved in family cases are required to attend, unless they have a valid exemption.



*"Experiences of domestic abuse, and other forms of gender based violence, are known to have long term adverse impacts on psychological wellbeing, particularly when these harms are both traumatic and chronic in nature. Depression, post- traumatic stress, anxiety and their behavioural consequences, such as social isolation, substance misuse and self- harm (in its broadest sense), are common outcomes of such abuse. These negative consequences are recognised risks for suicide, and its precursor suicidality (suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts) amongst victims of domestic abuse, as well as the general population." Aitken & Munro, Domestic Abuse and Suicide*

Those suffering domestic abuse and sexual violence who are expressing suicidal ideation, are likely to be suffering psychological injury from the trauma of repeated abuse rather than having a psychiatric illness. Therefore, the response to those in this situation may be wider than a mental health intervention, and specialist domestic abuse or sexual violence support could be helpful.

### **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR)**

In Cambridgeshire, since May 2018, nine suicides relating to domestic abuse have been considered as requiring a DHR.

A key recommendation in the recommendations for a DHR in East Cambs, was that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership and Suicide Prevention Boards work together to examine how future deaths may be prevented. Further recommendations from the death of "Barry" in Fenland included this professional briefing. Often, domestic abuse is not disclosed to statutory agencies, so most suicides, where there has been domestic abuse, are unlikely to be raised as a DHR.

### **Suicidal Thoughts are Common for Victims of Domestic Abuse**

DASH Risk Assessments are completed by police at all DA incidents, these comprise of 27 questions, which include Q5. "Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?" In a study in Kent of 1,000 DASH Risk Assessments, 63% responded "yes" to this question. Cambridge Rape Crisis reported around a 20% increase in suicidal ideation of callers to their confidential helpline, during the "Covid Lockdown" period.

### **Research:**

- Domestic Abuse (DA) victims are 8x more at risk of suicide than the general population
- DA is a factor in around 12.5% of female suicide attempts
- 25% of those in DA services have felt suicidal due to the abuse
- 50% of DA victims who attempt suicide will undertake further attempts within a year
- 20% of DA victims attempting suicide are pregnant
- A third of female suicides are subject to DA
- "Suicidal acts..... are more likely where feelings of defeat and entrapment exist alongside beliefs that neither rescue or escape are possible" Williams (2001)
- 3-10 women a week die by suicide where they have suffered DA
- It is estimated 30 women each day attempt to take their own lives due to suffering DA

### **How can you help in your role?**

Is the person you are speaking to suffering domestic abuse from a current or former partner?

Do they feel hopeless that the situation will never end? Are they frightened that they, or their children, will be harmed? Have they suffered sexual abuse or violence and need specialist support?

If this is the case, there are a number of options available:

- If they are at risk from or frightened of their partner, complete a DASH Risk Assessment and refer to the IDVA service, this case may need to be heard at MARAC if there is a risk of significant harm or homicide: [www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral\\_forms/296136](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136)

Provide details of local support services found on [www.cambsdasv.org.uk](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk), including:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247
- Men's Advice Line - 0808 801 0327
- Galop (LGBT Support) - 0800 999 5428
- Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership - [www.caprccp.org.uk](http://www.caprccp.org.uk)

**The following information is taken from Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and South Lincolnshire (CPSL) Mind's STOP Suicide campaign website: [www.stopsuicidepledge.org](http://www.stopsuicidepledge.org)**

Around one in five of us will experience suicidal thoughts at some point in our lives and there are warning signs we can all look out for in others. These include:

- Actively looking for ways to kill themselves
- Talking about death/suicide, hopelessness, having no reason to live, being a burden or in pain
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Suddenly appearing very much 'recovered' after a period of depression
- Unexpectedly saying goodbye to people, making arrangements or setting affairs in order

You don't have to be a mental health professional to help someone who is feeling suicidal. If you're worried about someone, asking them directly about suicide is the right thing to do. Use questions like "Are you having thoughts of suicide?" or "Have you been thinking about killing yourself" rather than using ambiguous or invalidating phrases.

Many people fear that asking open questions about suicide might 'give the person the idea' but there is no evidence for this and, in fact, it can be a huge relief to the person to be asked the question in a direct way. Anyone who is experiencing suicidal thoughts should be taken seriously.

Listen in a compassionate and non-judgemental way and ask if they have a plan to take their life, this can help you find ways to keep that person safe. If the person has a specific plan and the means to take their life, then they need urgent help. **If they are at immediate risk, call 999.** Do not put your own safety at risk and take care of yourself after supporting someone.

Anybody in crisis in Cambridgeshire or Peterborough can get support 24/7 from the NHS First Response Service by dialling 111 and selecting option 2 to speak to a mental health professional.

Alternative helplines are available at [www.stopsuicidepledge.org/help-now](http://www.stopsuicidepledge.org/help-now) including the Samaritans national helpline on 116 123 and Lifeline in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on 0808 808 2121.



## **Councillor to run the Cambridge Half Marathon**

Councillor Hilary Cox-Condron, who leads on White Ribbon for Cambridgeshire County Council, is running in the Cambridge Half Marathon on 17<sup>th</sup> October to raise money for Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre. Hilary has a Just Giving page for donations [Hilary Cox Condron is fundraising for Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/HilaryCoxCondron)

## **Cambridge Women's Aid Trustee Vacancy**

Cambridge Women's Aid has been supporting women and children affected by domestic abuse for over 40 years. We are currently searching for new trustees to join our board.

Effective governance is key to the success and sustainability of our organisation. As a trustee, you will be able to use your experience, energy and creativity to shape our approach and help us to achieve our mission. There is no such thing as a 'typical' trustee, and you don't necessarily need previous board experience; we welcome women with a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and life experiences, who can commit and contribute to the success of our work.

At the moment, our Board of Trustees is particularly looking to build expertise in Legal, Finance, and HR. However, we welcome applications from all women with a commitment to our work, and are interested in hearing about full range of skills applicants can bring.

As a trustee, you will receive training to carry out your role, have opportunities to represent CWA in the community, and be part of a supportive and welcoming board. Being a trustee gives you the chance to gain experience in strategic planning, develop skills in new areas, and add significant value to a thriving charity.

### **Commitment**

Trustees are expected to attend four board meetings per year, plus one away day and one Annual General Meeting. Most trustees will get involved in the work of sub-committees, such as the Employment or Finance groups, and will attend around six sub-committee meetings per year. The minimum commitment is 3 years.

### **Location**

Cambridge city, with all meetings being conducted remotely for the time being.

### **Remuneration**

This is a voluntary position, but expenses are reimbursed.

More information at [We are looking for trustees to join our team! \(cambridgewa.org.uk\)](https://www.cambridgewa.org.uk)

## **White Ribbon Campaign Stall – Report and photograph by Louise Walker, Cambridge City Council Community Safety Partnership Support Officer**

A Cambridge City Council White Ribbon stall was held at the Abbey People's Big Lunch on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. It was a well organised outdoor community event bringing together over 500 local residents for a range of activities. The [White Ribbon campaign](#) aims to engage men in ending all forms of violence against women and girls.

Three of the Cambridge City White Ribbon Ambassadors attended: Cambridge City Mayor Councillor Russ McPherson; Shapour Meftah, Business Founder and Owner/Chair of Mill Road Traders' Association, and Sam Gomersall, Manager of Cambridge United Community Trust. They brought along friends: Mohammed Azamuddin, Business Founder/Owner, and Marvin the Moose, Cambridge United Football Club Mascot.

Simon Wall, Abbey People event organiser said: "Holding the Abbey People Big Lunch after such a difficult year was amazing. It was a fantastic way of bringing the community back together again, and allowed local organisations and charities, such as White Ribbon, to reconnect with local residents, offering them vital information and support, and raising awareness."

Cambridge City Mayor Councillor Russ McPherson said: "It was a real pleasure to be invited to open the 'Big Lunch' in Abbey ward on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. Everyone was really happy to be greeted by wonderful sunshine and what a great atmosphere there was with so many local people involved in organising the event and running some really good stalls and information stands. I was especially pleased to see our very own 'White Ribbon' campaign stand there; as a long-term Ambassador for White Ribbon, it's always good to see the campaign getting some much-needed publicity, and it was a delight to see my good friend Shapour, also a long term and very active ambassador for the campaign raising the profile. Violence against women and girls is an horrific issue and unfortunately more prolific than we would like to think in our 'civilized' society. Let's fight it together by bringing into the open this all-to-often hidden crime; let's join together and make our streets homes Pubs and clubs safe places to be. Join the campaign today – look for the website [www.whiteribbon.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbon.org.uk) to find out how you can help."

Shapour Meftah, Business Founder and Owner / Chair of Mill Road Traders' Association, said: "I am very proud and honoured to be a White Ribbon Ambassador. We have to listen, understand, learn and treat everyone with respect and work to achieve ending men's violence and abuse against women."

Sam Gomersall, Manager of Cambridge United Community Trust, said: "Our work with Abbey People is such a key priority for us: ensuring that we're at the heart of a stronger Abbey Community. It was great to head along to the Big Lunch after such a tough 18 months. It was great to see the White Ribbon Campaign out in the community raising awareness for this important issue. The city council team do fantastic work helping individuals in real need and I'm delighted to support them by being a White Ribbon Ambassador."

Picture on next page



Pictured from left are: Shapour Meftah, Business Founder and Owner / Chair of Mill Road Traders' Association; Sam Gomarsall, Manager of Cambridge United Community Trust; Cambridge City Mayor Councillor Russ McPherson; Cambridge United Football Club Mascot Marvin the Moose and Mohammed Azamuddin (Business Founder and Owner).

## Community Fair at The Edge

The Edge café in Cambridge are holding a Community Fair on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October from 11am - 9pm. The fair will feature a Clothes Swap, Retro Games, Stalls, Recovery Information, Drumming Workshop, and open mic session. Attendees can also enjoy fabulous food from the café including Posh Brunch, Afternoon Tea and Substantial Soup Supper.

The Edge also has a packed calendar of events every week including support groups for people in recovery and their families, yoga, art and writing groups with sessions delivered via Zoom too!

Visit [The Edge Cafe - Home \(theedgecafecambridge.com\)](https://theedgecafecambridge.com)

## New resources for working with young people

Safe Lives have developed a new resource pack for working with young people around Healthy Relationships. The information focuses on how to start conversations around healthy intimate or sexual relationships with young people aged 13-21 and includes activities and facilitator notes.

The DASV Partnership recommend the resources to any groups working with young people including schools.

[What does healthy look like? | Safelives](#)



## **Can you help Embrace make Christmas special for children harmed by crime?**

Embrace Child Victims Of Crime (Embrace CVOC) has launched its annual Dear Santa gift appeal to make Christmas magical for hundreds of children whose lives have been torn apart by crime.

Dear Santa aims to ensure children who have suffered trauma through physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect, have witnessed domestic abuse in their home or who have lost a parent or close family member through homicide get a gift they really wish for from Santa this Christmas.

But we really need your help.

Do you know a family whose children deserve to go on Santa's very special Christmas list this year?

Embrace Chief Executive Anne Campbell said: "We need the help of serving police officers and those who work for other statutory agencies and charities to identify those children and families who would benefit from a present from Santa this Christmas.

"We are helping Santa write a very special Christmas list for children who have suffered terrible trauma as a result of sexual abuse or exploitation, violence, neglect, or who have lost their mum, dad, brother, sister or close family member through homicide. They will then receive a gift under the tree that they'll really treasure this year.

"You will know and work with children who have had a terribly traumatic time and would really benefit from our Christmas appeal. Just five minutes of your time could make all the difference to these families this Christmas.

"We treat all information in the strictest confidence and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

"Those children who go on our list get to choose a gift up to the value of £35 that they'd really like to receive from Santa this year and the public get to buy those gifts knowing they are making a real difference to children's lives."

We need your referrals as soon as possible.

To make a referral visit <http://embracecvoc.org.uk/refer-a-child>.



# Freedom to be Me

In this 12 week course we look at the way that abusive men behave and what they believe about the roles of men and women in society.

The aim of the course is:

To help women who have experienced domestic violence make sense of and understand what has happened to them.

To recognise potential future abusers.

To help women gain self-esteem and the confidence to improve their lives, instead of the whole experience just feeling like a horrible mess.

This is a rolling, women only, programme running for 12 weeks.

These sessions look at:

How the abuser maintains control.

The tactics and beliefs of abusive men.

The effect of domestic violence and abuse on any children living in the home.

The sessions will also help women to understand that what has happened to them is not their fault, as well as providing them with the knowledge needed to protect themselves and their children from harm.

The Freedom Programme is a domestic violence programme which was created by Pat Craven who holds the copyright (all rights reserved) and evolved from her work with perpetrators of domestic violence. We provide information, not therapy. It is free of charge and open to all women, regardless of age, class, ethnic origin, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs. It is also open to women with or without children.

For more information, or to register/refer please contact me at:  
[gail@theedgecafecambridge.com](mailto:gail@theedgecafecambridge.com)

## WHAT WOULD COURSE ATTENDEES SAY TO OTHER WOMEN CONSIDERING ATTENDING THE COURSE?

"THIS COURSE IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL AND HAS CHANGED MY LIFE."

"DEFINITELY DO IT!! I HAVE BENEFITED SO MUCH FROM IT AND SO HAVE THE OTHERS IN THE GROUP. IT'S LIFE CHANGING!!"

"YOU MAY FEEL YOUR LIFE ISN'T WORTH LIVING AS I DID BUT BY THE END OF THE COURSE YOU'LL FEEL YOU ARE AT THE BEGINNING OF NEW HAPPY CHAPTER AND FEEL FREE TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS FOR A GREAT FUTURE DOING WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY."

"THIS COURSE WILL HEAL YOUR LIFE, GIVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO MOVE ON AND FIND HAPPINESS AND HEALING IN YOUR JOURNEY."

"THIS COURSE WILL GIVE YOU THE TOOLS TO TAKE BACK THAT POWER TO BE A STRONG INDEPENDENT WOMAN, WHO IS AMAZING JUST AS YOU ARE RIGHT NOW."

"PLEASE DO IT. YOU'RE BRAVE AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT. IT'S BEEN SUCH AN EYE OPENER AND HAS HELPED ME SO MUCH."

"IT'S AMAZING AND MAKES YOU SEE THAT IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT."

"THIS IS THE COURSE THAT WILL TRULY GIVE YOU BACK YOUR LIFE AND HELP YOU TO LOOK FORWARD WITH HOPE!"

"DO IT! YOU WON'T REGRET IT! IT WILL BE THE BEST THING YOU EVER DID."

"THIS COURSE WILL PUT YOU IN A PLACE OF POWER."

"DO IT!!!! YOU WILL BECOME YOURSELF AGAIN!"

## THE OWN MY LIFE COURSE



[WWW.OWNMYLIFECOURSE.ORG](http://WWW.OWNMYLIFECOURSE.ORG)

HELPING WOMEN REGAIN OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LIVES



## WHAT IS THE OWN MY LIFE COURSE?

An innovative, creative, educational 12-week course for women, that can be run online or in-person. The course enables women to regain ownership of their lives after they have been in a relationship with someone who has hurt them. As part of a local service, the course facilitator will provide a caring, supportive and safe space for women to meet together and do the course (either in-person or online). It is really interactive with lots of short videos, quizzes, and discussion. Each woman receives the Own My Story journal which has all the ideas, key concepts and content from the course with space for reflection and notes.

## WHY IS THE COURSE NEEDED?

Lots of women are hurt badly in relationships. This impacts them and their children dramatically and in long-lasting ways. The Own My Life Course helps women to make sense of what has been done to them and gives them the skills to move forward. The course helps women to discover what their strengths are and how they can move forward with their lives.

**"YOU'VE GOT ALL THESE PEOPLE WHO THINK YOU'RE SILLY FOR GOING BACK OR STAYING WITH HIM AND THIS COURSE HELPS YOU TO KNOW WHY AND KNOW THAT YOU'RE NORMAL."**

COURSE ATTENDEE



## WHO CAN ATTEND THE OWN MY LIFE COURSE?:

Women who are dealing with a:

- Difficult relationship.
- Nightmare ex-partner.
- Horrible break up.
- Controlling partner or ex.

*To attend an online course, women must have separated (and living separately from) the partner who hurt them.*

## MARJORIE



Marjorie is trying to make sense of her relationship. Her partner Jerome makes her feel small and stupid, he mocks her and humiliates her. At first the relationship was amazing, Jerome couldn't do enough for her, it was a whirlwind romance, he'd moved in within weeks. He keeps telling her they should have a baby to make the relationship better, but then he spends all their money and doesn't like Marjorie talking to her mum or going out with her friends.

## SYLVIA



Sylvia's ex, Horatio, is a nightmare. He constantly changes the arrangements of when he's going to have the kids and when they come back from seeing him they're really difficult to manage. Horatio switches between sending Sylvia threatening messages and ringing her up crying and begging her to take him back. When they were together he cheated on her with her best friend and made her do sexual stuff she didn't like. Sylvia doesn't have any friends anymore, she feels anxious all the time.

## VIVIENNE



Vivienne feels stupid. Her husband Gordon treats her really badly, but every time she tries to leave him, she ends up going back. Even though he's hurt her really badly, she always finds herself apologising to him. He twists her words, scares her and uses the kids to make her do what he wants. Vivienne's family have given up on her, she's close to losing her job because of Gordon's behaviour, but she feels like she can't live without him. She keeps asking herself, "What's wrong with me?!"

The Own My Life course may be able to help Marjorie, Sylvia and Vivienne make sense of what's going on for them.

