



M.S.'s Journey: From Trauma to Empowerment and Change

M.S. was a 20-year-old university student from a village near Ramallah, living a painful reality within a broken family. She resided with her father and five siblings in a home filled with tension, while her parents' divorce proceedings continued in the courts.

When M.S. attended a workshop at her college about violence and its forms, she felt as if someone was speaking directly about her personal suffering. Without hesitation, she approached the facilitator immediately after the workshop to request a consultation. She carried deep wounds from the physical violence inflicted by her father and worse, the sexual assault by her brother who took advantage of moments when the house was empty to harass her.

"I am so tired... All the responsibilities fall on me, and on top of that, I face violence, humiliation, beating, and harassment. I've been in this situation for a while and can no longer bear it. When I heard you at the workshop, I was encouraged and learned that there are organizations that can help, and I found the courage to speak with you."

M.S.'s healing journey began through individual counseling sessions. Initially, she was given a safe space to express her feelings and breathing exercises to help her speak. She was suffering from symptoms of psychological trauma: constant fear, anxiety, tension, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, headaches, and insomnia.

A comprehensive treatment plan was developed based on cognitive behavioral therapy, including techniques for managing anger and sadness, and activities to enhance self-confidence and self-esteem. M.S. learned about the meaning of trauma and post-traumatic symptoms, the importance of self-care, and empowerment.

Over time, M.S. began to notice positive changes in her life. She felt comfort and security, and acquired new skills to deal with herself and her surrounding environment.



Her self-confidence increased, and she became able to discuss and object to what she didn't like. Her personality developed to become stronger, and she learned to deal positively with difficult situations, confronting problems instead of isolating herself.

Most importantly, M.S. was able to firmly stop the sexual assault against her and took measures for protection and safety in the home. She was provided with necessary emergency numbers and continues to receive follow-up sessions.

Today, M.S. has transformed from a victim to an active advocate for women's rights. She joined the Young Women's Network at the association and participated in numerous workshops. Her story has become a source of inspiration for others going through similar circumstances, a living example that healing and empowerment are possible no matter how difficult the circumstances.