

XYZ

Instructor Name

Course ID

Date

### How my Past Relationship Shaped me: A Story of my Domestic Violence

I often reminisce about the time in 2012 when I was 18 years old. A young and naïve teenager from a small village who dreamt of becoming an entrepreneur. All my aspirations were shattered when my parents engaged me to my cousin. Two months after my engagement, I got married. My husband and his family instantly asked me to drop my studies and give my exams privately. At that point, I realized that I had just settled after a tall, dark, handsome husband who would not heed my professional desires. My husband lived in the city, but his family did not allow me to move with him. A family of 11 burdened all the household work on me. I was not allowed to go out or talk to anyone. My husband paid visits on weekends which did nothing but add up to my suffocation. He used to torture me under his mother's instructions physically. My marriage lasted for two years but no word less than "nightmare" best defines my relationship with my partner and his family. Still, I am immensely grateful for my past because it helped shape who I am today, a strong and independent soul.

The biggest misconception I thought was that this was how things worked out in marital relationships, and things might change once we start to have children. A month after my marriage, I got pregnant, but the news did not assist me much in gaining the sympathies of my in-laws. There were not even the slightest changes in their attitude towards me. All they wanted was a son, but the news of me giving birth to my daughter made them even more enraged than before. So, having a child, and a daughter, added salt to my injuries.

I agreed to my unfortunate fate until, one day, I found my mentor who guided me away from my miseries. Two months after my first child, I got pregnant again. When I was 7<sup>th</sup> months pregnant with my second child, I visited an old hospital near my house for a regular checkup. There, I reunited with one of my female school teachers, who was quite astounded to see my poor condition. She motivated me to leave my ruthless husband and start a new refreshing life. So, one sad night, I, an 8<sup>th</sup>-months pregnant lady, along with my daughter, left my husband and his family.

My departure from hell paved my way to access the Women Protection Center in the nearby city. This organization helped me file for divorce and provided me with accommodation, food, and finances until I could bear my expenses. Soon I started working as a volunteer for that organization, too. My team and I worked together to hold my ex-husband and family accountable for the inflictions they laid upon me. Since then, my ambition has been to help women who go through similar domestic and emotional violence after their marriage.

Now coming back to the present, I am a single parent to two beautiful daughters and a successful entrepreneur. I am in the most content phase of my life. Stronger and willing to face any life challenge, I am no longer scared of taking risks and standing up for myself. An internship at the United Nations Program for Women would help me reach a larger audience for my cause. I would be part of a bigger plan to be the voice for those suppressed women who go through domestic violence, too. I know that story like mine is more likely to inspire such oppressed women to take a stand for themselves.