



Voices of Experience

**The threat of
violence is violence**

INSIGHT EXCHANGE

DEAR READER,

The **Voices of experience** are de-identified descriptions of people's lived experience of domestic, family and sexualised violence and other adversities. They have been developed by the author, assembled with Insight Exchange and are designed to affirm agency, uphold dignity and support safety.

The insights reveal the ways in which the person has resisted and responded to the violence used against them. The descriptions reveal some of the context in which the violence has occurred, how people, services and systems responded and how these responses were helpful, unhelpful or harmful.

Our thanks to every person who contributed insights for the benefit of many.

We acknowledge that despite our best efforts to listen to lived experiences of violence and abuse, we can never fully understand all that a person's experiences mean to them now or through their life. We understand that lived and living experiences can never be fully represented in language or any other form.

THANKS

The threat of violence is violence

He psychologically and verbally abused me every day; he would wake me regularly with a tirade of abuse, standing over me. I was terrified he was going to kill me, my 18 month old and my unborn baby. When I was pregnant with my second, he would regularly return home and lay his hunting knives out, near where my 18 month old was crawling.

I had to grab the baby and leave home on several occasions as I thought he was going to strangle me or stab me, putting my baby's car seat straps on as I was reversing out at speed, heavily pregnant, beside myself with fear. He never 'touched' my throat but his hands were close to my neck in a circle, he was standing over me. He's 40kg heavier than me and taller.

He gleefully recounted a story of a man who killed his toddler son because he 'heard his wife tried to leave him ...' He has sent letters and anonymous texts. He would call me 20 to 40 times a day threatening me. He would send messages to my extended family, 'presents' and 'gifts' to me in the post, my possessions would disappear.

When my 7 month old baby was very sick and was screaming in pain, in desperation I asked him to hold her for a minute. He responded by shouting in the baby's face and making motions like he was going to crush her. I thought he was going to kill her. He laughed it off afterwards – I'd 'never' hurt her.

We came home one day to our new house he was sitting in the dark in an armchair in my bedroom just waiting for me.

And people would tell me “it’s not that bad he never hit you” .

This text is an excerpt from
Sally | Voices of Insight
www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight

“...The threats from his systematic brutalisation of all aspects of our lives were not just threats to my safety and to the kid’s safety but equally threats to our liberty. The vast majority of responses we have had from service providers and from family and friends were from people who did not understand Domestic Violence. Their responses often minimised the violence.

I needed and still need the support of the system but the system has continually failed to adequately respond and support me. This has left me with the burden of responsibility to maintain our safety, wellbeing and liberty in the face of his continuing escalation of violence.

My fear is that he will hurt or kill me or the kids. He’s still around.”

My Safety Kit

'[My Safety Kit](#)' is a reflection resource designed to support people who are, or may be, experiencing domestic, family and sexualised violence.



www.insightexchange.net/my-safety-kit/

Follow My Lead

'[Follow My Lead](#)' is a resource designed to build on the understanding of people responding to control, abuse and violence.



www.insightexchange.net/follow-my-lead/

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Insight Exchange centres lived expertise of domestic, family and sexualised violence. It is designed to inform and strengthen social, service and system responses to violence and abuse.

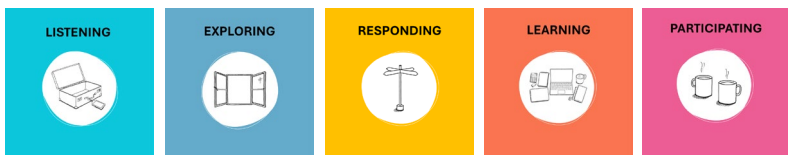
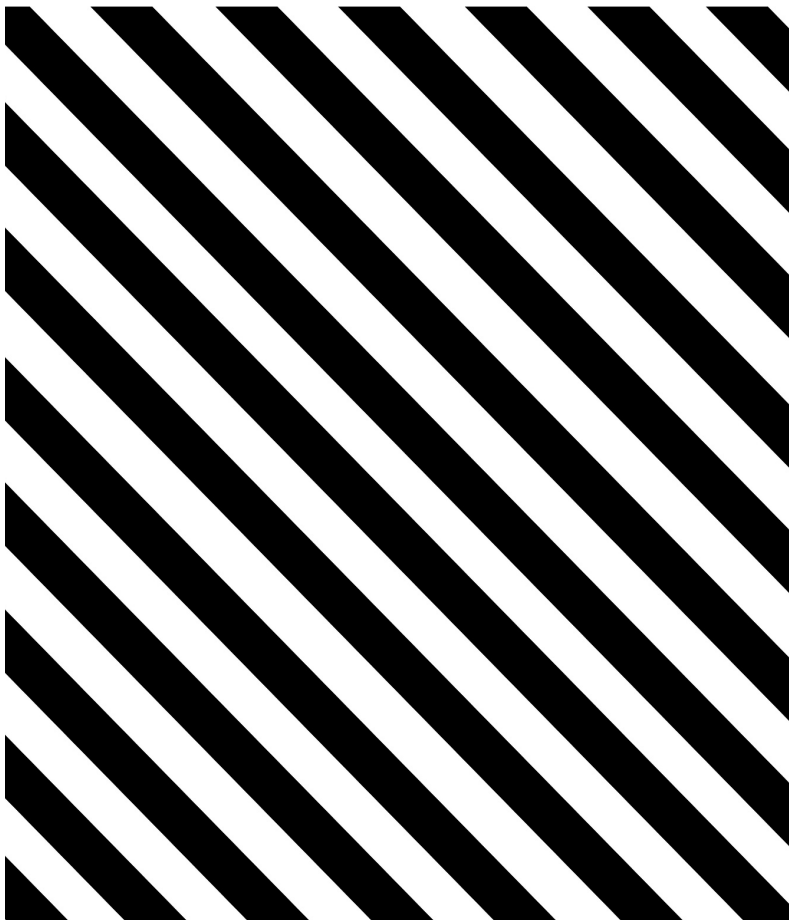
Insight Exchange provides free (donated) information, insights and reflection materials to people in any community, service or system.

Read more about using Insight Exchange:
www.insightexchange.net/guide-using/

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Insight Exchange acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our work and services operate and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend this respect to all First Nations peoples across the country and the world. We acknowledge that sovereignty of this land was never ceded. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.



The menus in the Insight Exchange website include listening, exploring, responding, learning and participating.

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Scan the static QR code to explore

www.insightexchange.net

(website has a quick-exit button)

