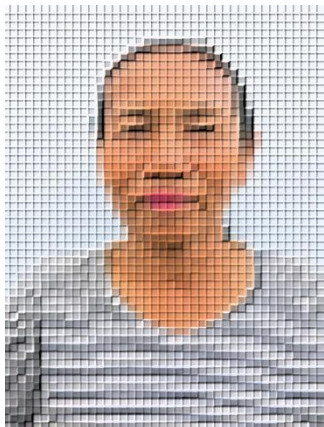


Case Study



Ms. C.S is 58 years old and is working as a farmer. She is currently living with her husband and her son in Kampong Speu province.

During the KR regime, Ms.S was exposed to several traumatic events like witnessing people being killed, the loss of close family members which led to her and her sister ending up as orphans. At that time, her uncle took her in and while **Ms.S** felt lucky to move in with her uncle, who treated her well, she endured more suffering. When living with her uncle, she suffered Domestic Violence by her uncle's wife and her daughter and was both physically and emotionally maltreated. She never had the chance to attend school either, leaving her uneducated. She was forced to marry at the end of 1978, and separated in 1979. Ms.S has never had an easy life even after the collapse of the KR regime.

She married an army soldier, living in poverty and was again exposed to Domestic Violence. Her mother-in-law and her husband verbally and physically assaulted her. She experienced inner pain and shame when her mother-in-law insulted her by saying that: "... if you were not engaged to my son, you would be a prostitute". The mother-in-law used to hit her with a broom or shoes. Her husband abused alcohol and was violent to her as well. Every time her husband abused her, she escaped to her neighbors' house, sometimes she stayed there for several days. Ms.S said, she has had a miserable life living with her husband and it was hard on her to raise her four children. Three of her children died of diseases due to the fact that no money for medical treatment was available.,

She still lives with her husband and feels extremely hopeless looking at his continuous violent behavior. Her son is the only source of support. Ms.S felt extremely disappointed looking at her life experience. Over the last years she

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became increasingly depressed and has attempted to end her life more than once. She worried constantly, was thinking too much and lacked sleep. , Ms.S mentioned that she had moments where she had a hard time breathing. It felt though as something is blocking her breath, her hands and feet become cold, and she appears to almost stop breathing.

She then decided to find justice for her and her family through filling a complaint to the ECCC, engaging in its process and simultaneously receiving psychological support from TPO. She then was further invited to more psycho social interventions on community level by TPO staff and decided to participate.

After receiving Testimonial Therapy and taking part in a Self-Help group, Ms.S can finally find purpose in life again and feels now that her life is just as valuable as other people's lives. She is able to share her experiences without feeling shameful or blaming herself for what has happened to her. Ms.S enjoys ongoing support support in her life from her son, the Self-Help Group members and TPO staff who checks in on her. All this makes her more hopeful, and also motivates her to work hard. She has become a happier woman all together.

She can control her emotions, copes with psychological symptoms better, and brings peace to herself through practicing mindfulness exercises including breathing meditation, or body tapping. However, she notices that since she has received psychological support from TPO, her husband can communicate better with her, he seems to listen more, and is less violent. Now she feel more motivated to talk to him about the impact his drinking and violence has on her. Now, she focus more on her son; she does everything for him.

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