

Survivor Story shared by Jenn Petays-Tschetter for a friend .. Eileen

I have been given permission to share this.

TW....CSA.

Hi, my name is Eileen. I thank you all deeply for being here. I suspect that you are here because you care and want to help.

I want to first briefly share some of my story.

My abuser was my father, Howard Campbell, and my abuse started at 4 with more serious abuse starting at 6. Through therapy I have been able to identify that it was more than sexual abuse, it was also psychological, emotional, and spiritual abuse.

Every adult in my life failed me. My mother who walked away when I told her. A person that was a child when was a victim, and then as an adult did nothing to prevent her daughter from becoming a victim. She certainly knew. My uncle that brushed me off when I told him because I wanted to protect my little cousins, and as a result of his inaction my cousins were not safe. Many of the friends, and the ministry failed because they knew of the abuse and did nothing.

I do not understand the egregious behavior of my Mother, my Aunt, Uncle, and ministers that would allow themselves to be manipulated into covering up sexual abuse, and in doing nothing perpetuate the abuse.

I recently talked to a cousin of mine. We have been so secretive that while we did talk around what happened to us, we never truly discussed it. We discovered that she had been molested after I spoke up. If her parents, my Mother, or the workers had acted on what they knew instead of covering it up, my story would not have been her story. This grieves me deeply.

It also grieves me that the abuse of another cousin (by someone other than Campbell) continued for at least 5 or more years after it was discovered. Five. More. Years. Let me repeat that. Adults, our parents, knew of the abuse and did nothing except require forgiveness and allow the abuser access. They also took up the same views as the workers: our hurt is bitterness and unforgiveness.

I speak out now because I was the oldest and feel so guilty and ashamed that I didn't report to the police myself. How is it that the ministry and those in charge do not listen? Why are they not taking decisive action?

In 1969 Campbell was convicted of rape. He gained entry by telling the victim he was there to feed the horses. He hid in the house until the victim was asleep, cut the power, brutally raped her, and threatened to kill her if she told. It is egregious that the workers would put a meeting in his home, and look the other way when he victimized again... and again. Two years ago, Mark Simmons added Campbell as a backup elder (Campbell has since been removed). Mark Simmons says he had no knowledge of Campbell's background. Egregious.

The ministry played a pivotal role in this dynamic. The Wounded Heart by Dr. Dan B. Allender, outlines the 4 stages of sexual abuse. The ministry fits into stages 1 and 4.

Stage 1: intimacy and secrecy

This last couple months I have dug into my story. I have interviewed everyone that knew of the abuse. All across the board they told me the same thing: we were told not to report. Some told me they felt it was "up to us girls". One person said that she tried to report but the police insisted the guardians needed to report. I have a letter from my mother informing me that the workers told her not to call the police. This is secrecy, and people obeyed. I obeyed, and it cost my cousin at least 5 years more of abuse. Ed Alexander details in his 2005 letter his child sexual abuse training and states that he is aware an offender often has many victims, He admits he is a mandatory reporter, and details how he gets around the law. The ministry paved the way for pedophiles.

Stage 4: Securing of silence and or maintenance of sexual abuse through threat and/or punishment

This stage happens after the actual physical abuse. I noticed that some of the ministry's abuse paralleled Campbell's abuse.

- My salvation was weaponized. You won't get to heaven if you don't forgive. Exactly what Campbell would say
- The burden of other people's salvation was put on me. If someone should find out, they could lose out. I knew that losing out meant leaving meeting, and leaving meeting meant a lost eternity. Again, Campbell used this against me as well
- Ed Alexander told me to not tell. He instructed that if it were to be reported it needed to come from "without". I wouldn't want anyone to "lose out". For years and years I never told. He secured my silence.

Many victims like me have been silenced.

My story has been hard. It is currently hard. Yet I rejoice. Through this experience I have come to know Jesus, understand the greatest gift of all, salvation, and know that I can come as I am, sinful, weak, doubting, and his blood covers it all. The way is actually Jesus, not a meeting system.

God has given me a heart that is not bitter. Yes, I am angry. I am angry that workers and friends continue to perpetuate hurt. And yet God has tempered that with understanding that we all have a process, and we don't know what we don't know.

Almost 6 years ago, I stopped coming to meeting. I didn't stop because I stopped believing. I believed meetings to be the truth. The only way. In hindsight I now understand I was starting to process trauma. My children were getting older, and that became very hard. Wounded hearts marry other wounded hearts, and I married a man that could not connect emotionally and could not set or respect boundaries. Children will absolutely leverage one parent against the other. Having boundaries and emotional needs ignored was what I was used to: I didn't have the awareness to understand my needs were not being met. My marriage fell apart. I had talked to Elders and workers. One worker got up from the table in the middle of me pouring out my heart. I was told by an elder and his wife that the problem was me. I was out of line and needed to submit. There was no counseling, no worker or elder talked to us together. They just blamed me. There were no boundaries or peace in my home. Meeting became a trigger, although I didn't even know what a trigger was. The emblems were especially troublesome because when I was to be baptized I requested that Campbell not be there. I was told that I shouldn't be baptized because I displayed an "unforgiving and bitter" heart. Every single Sunday for the next 23 years I could only think about how I really shouldn't have been baptized. I hit a wall. I couldn't get up in meeting and honestly share my heart.

Sundays were very hard for me. So I took an interpreting job in a local church. I hated it. I had been taught that no one there could possibly have true revelation. I felt I was doing the devil's work. I dreamt about my salvation every night. In my dreams workers and friends wouldn't talk to me. In an instant, I lost my community (I have since found out the worker here had instructed a younger worker to not reach out to me because I wasn't going to meeting. I was punished. This worker knew of my situation) I ended up in a mental health program. There I started understanding emotional and spiritual abuse and learned that rules aren't values. Rules can be tricky when you try to apply them to a variety of situations. There are loopholes and ways to get around it. Values, however, can easily be applied to a variety of situations. Cognitive dissonance is when your behavior doesn't line up with your values. It causes pain and stress.

For over four years I did not talk to God, read, or pray. I felt completely numb inside. It confused me that these strangers in a worldly church would reach out to me on the Sundays I didn't work. How is it that these people showed more care than God's family? What I received from my "meeting family" was many letters, mostly from workers. They all had the same basic outline. By leaving meeting, which was phrased as "the one true way", or "the way", my soul would be lost. This was assumed all without ever talking to me. One letter writer tells me of a WWII documentary, and the soldiers will to live. He impressed on me that I just needed to want to spiritually live. This was MY failing. A person that I shared my story with wrote that "the way is perfect, the people are not", and that sometimes "people with good intentions lack wisdom". My neglect, spiritual, and emotional abuse was excused. I was expected to have Grace simply because nobody is perfect. A worker wrote that he had struggled with something for 17 years, yet not once did he stop

going to meeting. A friend pointed out recently that while Jesus secured eternity for the thief on the cross, that thief still had to face the consequences of his actions. This dark time was so hard for me, and many, many people stepped on me. I wasn't heard. I wasn't even asked. Only one person sat with me in my heartache and struggle. Every letter blamed me and pointed me back to meeting without listening or taking the time to see my heart.

One Sunday, a worldly pastor in a worldly church announced after the service that the recovery pastor had relapsed. He held this man accountable for his actions, he wasn't allowed to be in the church until things had been set right. Actions met words. I was astonished. This worldly church had the courage to openly call out harmful behavior and set boundaries that protected the people. I got up and walked to my car and cried. I realized that this group I still considered myself to be a part of, that called itself the truth, was not openly declaring sin, taking decisive action, setting boundaries, and protecting people.

What would values and not rules look like in this time of crisis?

Have you read the recent letter from Lecil and Gaby Townsend? They want to protect from those, including workers, that allow predators to continue to cause harm. They will not allow harmful people on the Clever grounds. This is decisive action and clear boundaries. I feel so seen and supported. In the Townsends additional apology letter they fully acknowledge their accountability and are taking actions to back up these words. The ministry brushes off their accountability by repeatedly saying "They didn't know better". If the ministry had values instead of the 1992 sexual abuse guidelines they would have done better. A value would look like the ministry taking absolute accountability for their massive part in this crisis, stepping down and sincerely apologizing. Thank you Townsends for setting the example and showing you value honesty, accountability, and actions matching words.

A value would look like listening to victims. Not blaming, shaming, gaslighting, invalidating, disbelieving or ignoring.

On July 7th this year Rob Newman reached out to me and offered his help and support in any way he could. I believe mostly to mollify one of the friends that kept after him about Campbell. I was set to meet with him and Richard Denherder. I was very clear about the fact that I would not be alone. Rob confirmed that he and Richard would both attend the meeting. A few days before the meeting neither Rob nor Richard had confirmed the google invitation. I sent out a group text to make sure we were all on the same page and that they had received the meeting link. It was only then that they both declined on the google invite. When pressed for a reason they respond, again on the google platform, that they didn't intend a discussion, but rather just to ensure I had adequate therapy. Later, Rob messaged the group text reading as follows "I am not refusing to hear you. I am glad to listen to you, but without including this large group". This large group would have been 9 people including 3 workers. He offered, through a professing friend, that he would agree to myself, my friend, Rob and Richard. So two brother workers, a professing female, and myself. Why would Rob and Richard need to meet alone with two women? A

value of care for a victim would look like allowing their support system. A value of honesty and transparency would not be afraid to have the others attend.

Rob very recently texted just me saying he really does care but a conference call scares him. A leader with a value to protect and care for every person would not turn aside from a hard conversation. If their value was clear communication and respect for peoples schedules and time they would not have secretly canceled the meeting without informing me, stonewalled the reason, and only communicated through a google app. (I would like to note that Darryl Doland took time out from so much, including convention, to hear me. I sense that he feels powerless.)

Richard has recently met with Campbell, but refused to meet with me. A value would look like hearing all parties. Richard reports that Campbell said he cannot be alone in a room with a child but Richard says he is safe and has the spirit of a lamb as he is willing for all the restrictions they have asked. Is this the same discernment Richard used when he worked alongside Dean Bruer?

A value would look like believing and acknowledging the harm done. A rule would be Rob and Richard creating a 1-10 scale to judge the seriousness of the violator's actions. Victims often minimize and deny their abuse as a coping strategy. Early on in the beginnings of this crisis explosion, Richard Denherder informs us that the dean bruer victims stated they were past it and they were fine. I challenge this because I too said for many years that I was fine. The real truth is I was praised for compliance and punished for expressing hurt. These "rules" create unsafe space to truly express trauma.

A value would look like transparency. The secrecy is part of the problem. The value looks like keeping people safe. Period. Transparency does not look like letters only to the workers, or letters that cannot be shared. Come before the people, inform them, set the boundaries, and take action.

A value is providing information about resources to victims - both professing and third-party. Let the victim choose how and where they get help.

Darryl Doland suggested it would take time to change culture. I do know that I have certainly learned so much myself these last 5 years. I have grace for those in the learning phase. However, clear boundaries and decisive action do not need time. I have friends still in meeting, saying things like "I guess it's too late for some", "At least they know we are watching", and praising letters addressed to workers, friends, and elders (not including people that have left), letters that seem so nice and hopeful but do not in any way match their actions. It hurts to think of people sitting in meeting listening to Rob Newman, Richard Denherder, and Ed Alexander preach knowing how they have treated victims and covered up serious abuse, and how they continue to treat victims: with lies and manipulation. While these are some of the workers involved in my situation, there are other workers just as complicit. I'm sure Cynthia Liles could send a list of all the workers that were involved in the many many cover-ups of other victims. A value would look like removing these harmful people.

I recently read a report from someone that suggested a large amount of people in meeting still aren't aware of the vast number of sexual abuse cases. A value would look like digging in for yourself and finding the truth of the matter. A value might even look like speaking up, even if you are the only one.

I have been called bitter, told I was unforgiving, gaslighted, ignored, abandoned by my family... I have not been valued.

To put it bluntly, if you sit silent, you are complicit. If you take no action, do not speak up, or give up when you are brushed aside, you are complicit.

What actions do your values call you to?

What rules might you have to buck to do it?