



Handout | Kati's Story

PART I

Kati is 28. She married Jan when she was 20 and he was 23. They have two children, who are 3 and 7 years of age. When Kati was a child, she often saw her father beating her mother. It happened several times a week. Kati remembers that sometimes her mother had to go to the hospital because of her injuries.

(Pause)

Co-facilitator covers "Kati" with first blanket.

Immediately after they get married, Jan tells Kati that he will take care of the family income, because Kati does not know how to save. He tells her she will get from him only enough money to buy food and household items. He tells her she will have to show him receipts to prove that she spent the money on what she asked the money for and that he approved.

(Pause)

Kati gets pregnant in the first year of their marriage. Jan starts to tell Kati regularly that she does not know how to run a household and that she is very lucky to have him, because nobody else would want her for a wife.

(Pause)

After the birth of their first child, Jan starts to beat Kati. He accuses her of loving the child more than him.

(Pause)

Kati goes to her mother and tells her about being beaten by Jan. Her mother tells her that this is part of marriage and she should learn to put up with it. According to her mother, "a woman has to stick with her husband".

(Pause)

As their first son grows older, Jan threatens and beats him too. Kati is worried, but at the same time she believes that it can be very harmful to children to separate them from their fathers.

(Pause)

Kati tells one of her co-workers that she is regularly beaten by Jan, and that she needs help. Her colleague tells the others at her workplace, and now everybody is talking about her.

(Pause)

Kati is increasingly absent from work without a proper excuse and she is laid off. Now she does not have a job or an income of her own.

(Pause)

Kati's Story

PART II

(Question to the person in the middle and to mark the transition from covering to uncovering Kati)

Kati, why do you have to live like this?

(Pause)

Why don't you leave your husband?

(Pause)

Kati reads a story in a magazine about a battered woman who manages to leave an abusive relationship. The article contains the phone numbers of hotlines, shelters, and drop-in centres for abused women. Kati decides that she cannot bear being abused any longer. She called a hotline where she had a long discussion with a woman who told her that she is one of many women experiencing domestic violence.

(Pause)

Co-facilitator removes one blanket

For the first time Kati has an open discussion with her older son about their shared fear of their violent husband and father.

(Pause)

After a few weeks of thinking and planning, Kati calls her sister and asks her whether she could move to her place with her sons for a short period. Her sister had long given up hope that Kati would ever leave her violent husband and now she is very glad to be of help.

(Pause)

One afternoon Kati packs up their everyday belongings and moves with her sons to her sister's place.

(Pause)

She starts to look for a job. Her sister helps by asking friends if they know of any opportunities, and they look through the job advertisements together.

(Pause)

Kati visits a lawyer to get information about custody and child visitation issues and advice about how the truth about Jan's violence towards them can be revealed. They also discuss divorce procedures.

(Pause)

Kati finds a job she likes and moves into a rented apartment with her sons. She visits Child Welfare Services and finds out that her older son can enrol in a support group for children who have fled from violent homes.

(Pause)

Kati finds a self-help group of women who have survived domestic violence. Through sharing and listening she learns to understand how and why her romantic relationship developed into an abusive one. She decides that once she feels she is back on her feet; she will join a group to support battered women herself.

(Pause)