



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROJECT

AL-AMAN PROJECT

Magi & Marwan's Story

Marwan and Magi* got married a few years ago. Right after the wedding they came to live in London, where Marwan and his brother run a shop of their own: he was the breadwinner of the household and she was the carer of the family.

From the very beginning of their story together a sharp imbalance of power made Magi vulnerable to verbal, emotional, physical and economic abuse: not only was she financially dependent on her husband, but, being here on a spousal visa, she also had no recourse to public funds. On top of that, she spoke very little English. Over time her situation got worst.

Marwan's abusive behaviour became increasingly difficult to deal with, and during the umpteenth episode of violence he ended up breaking one of Magi's arms.

On this occasion, as well as on past ones, Magi did not seek help from the police: it would have been culturally inappropriate for her to report her husband.

However, this time Magi needed medical treatment.

At hospital she claimed that she had suffered the injury as result of falling down the stairs, but this explanation made the nurses very suspicious and social services were contacted soon after her examination. The case was then picked up by agencies and a referral was made to Al-Aman.

What did we do?

Marwan initially refused to engage with agencies, claiming that he was being treated unfairly. At that point Al-Aman proactively contacted him with the aim of both explaining the consequences to his actions and motivating him to join the violence prevention programme. After a lot of work by both Al-Aman and the social worker, Marwan agreed to join the violence prevention programme.

In the meantime, Magi became involved with Al-Aman's women's support services. Even though she was fearful of losing her children, she was extremely determined to change her situation.

Throughout Magi's time with Al-Aman, frontline workers provided a listening ear and emotional support. To respond to Magi's specific needs, the team also gave her practical advice around seeking accommodation, addressing her immigration status, finding work and accessing further education.

To help Magi build her self-confidence and well-being, Al-Aman invited her to support group sessions and workshops, and she enrolled on a course to improve her English.

Life after Al-Aman.

As a result of Marwan's engagement and completion of the violence prevention programme, Magi noticed a significant improvement in his behaviour. To date, there have been no further reports of Marwan using abuse towards Magi.

After all that she's been through, Magi is now committed to tackling domestic violence in her community: not only is she determined to raise awareness about the issue, but she also actively listens to and helps women that, just as she did, find themselves in abusive relationships.

**Names have been changed*