

Faces of Human Trafficking: Now That We Are Free

The concluding video in this series features survivors of human trafficking who are resilient, thriving members of their communities. They share insight on the support systems, services, and personal journeys that helped them persevere, with words of encouragement for others who were or may still be in situations of human trafficking. This video is intended for a general audience but will be especially useful for new staff and volunteers working on human trafficking issues or with at-risk populations, as well as stakeholders and allied professionals.

Key Points

- Victims of human trafficking are like any of us. They are victims of a terrible crime but they are also valuable, resilient individuals who have a critical role to play in anti-trafficking efforts.
- Victims of human trafficking may have long-term or life-long struggles resulting from the trafficking. With effective services and supportive assistance, however, they can thrive and build fulfilling lives for themselves and their families.
- Survivors are important advocates and partners. It is important to understand the vital role they play in developing stronger systemic responses to human trafficking, beyond their ability to describe their own experiences as trafficking victims.
- Trafficking impacts families. Services are often needed to help families reunite and recover (both foreign nationals and U.S. citizens).
- Economic empowerment is a long-term need; poverty or lack of family and community connections are often underlying and ongoing vulnerabilities that are exploited by traffickers.

Discussion Questions

1. How does this video portray victims and survivors differently than typical portrayals of trafficking victims? Why is this important?
2. What are some of the long-term needs a survivor or victim of human trafficking may have?
3. How can survivors of human trafficking help to improve your outreach work, program development, services, and approach to investigating and prosecuting trafficking crimes?

“What do you want to be in life, now that you are free, that you own your body?”

— Suamhirs
Survivor Advocate

4. For service providers, what are some of the ways that your organization supports survivor mentorship and leadership?

Supplemental Training Material

- Provide the federal definition, from the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, of “a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons” and “sex trafficking” (found at 22 U.S.C. 7102).

- Provide a brief history of modern human trafficking legislation in the United States, including the TVPA of 2000 and its reauthorizations, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, and relevant legislation in your state.

For more information, including additional resources for your trainings, please visit www.ovc.gov/trafficking or www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide.