

To Fresh Hope,

I want to extend my gratitude to you, the Fresh Hope team, and its partners. Never, in my wildest dreams, did I ever think that my life would come to where it is now, a point where I could not fix, help or rescue whatever I faced in life. Why did I feel this way? I had spent decades assisting, and even in my career, rescuing others. I was the fixer, the problem solver, and a true believer that with God, anything is possible. It was the drive within me to help struggling nonprofits or even create and build programs assisting thousands of kids and hundreds of families. My own non-profit, before going on pause due to a debilitating disease, helped many across the state. To my surprise, our work was recognized internationally, my favorite being a nod from Spain. Who knew? One project involved work to assist a specific group affected by PTSD and its impact on family members. You see, for me, it was quite personal. For years, I privately struggled to save my spouse, children, and myself from the darkest part of PTSD that can segue into full blown domestic violence.

I was for too many years in survival mode. I sought help and guidance from professionals of every kind, family and even my church. In my case, the weight of fixing our situation was further impressed upon me. "This is on you.", "Try being more submissive.", "Maybe if you give up your career and schooling and help your husband, things will get better", "You have to fix this.", "Just take it and stay out of the way", and my favorite, "What did you do, that made him do this". My abuser was shown Grace by everyone because his job was seen as that of hero's, all the while forcing me to live in the fear of his violence and threats, like "It's death or divorce, and I won't let you divorce me". It was a cryptic message just for me. So, I felt hopeless, carrying the responsibility and weight of his abuse and eventually even blaming myself.

Fast forward to this year, the abuse spiraled out of control. My life was on the line too many times. Literally, there were two attempts on my life just months after life insurance policies were taken out on my life. How did I get here? Who would help someone like me? It was Fresh Hope. I almost walked out of class the very first day because I didn't feel worthy to even be in your building and I thought that surely someone more deserving needed my spot in the class. I didn't know that 16 weeks later I would be running for my life, having to even leave the state because my abuser was so protected locally. In my darkest moment, God led me to your organization who came to my rescue.

Little did I know that the gas cards distributed from time to time would be my means to pay for my escape. Little did I know that the car repair would enable my vehicle to be the vessel to take me to places unknown for my protection. My abuser would not allow me to get my car fixed, but Fresh Hope stepped in and made it happen at no cost to me. Little did I know that as I came to class each week, I would be educated in a way that would give me the courage to escape and survive the right way with guidance and support every frightening step at a time. Every aspect of Fresh Hope played a critical part in saving my life. In my case, I had gone from once being an independent professional to living like a prisoner in my own home, denied access to our finances, isolated from friends and family and fighting to overcome a disease on top of it all with much difficulty as even access to my medications was severely limited by my abuser. I was body slammed, thrown off a porch, kicked, pushed and emotionally destroyed by the love of my life who I thought was a man of God when we married.

I can never express enough gratitude for all Fresh Hope has done for me along with those who donate towards its mission. Though I'm still navigating through the storm, I know I do not stand alone. I'm no longer crawling in fear but learning how to fly again and I couldn't do it without your support. Thank you for the inspiration, the classes, the speakers, the late-night mentoring when I was about to throw in the towel and return to my abuser because I was caught in a trauma bond. You taught me so much and provided for me even basic toiletries, food and clothing that I felt unworthy to receive. Fresh Hope provided in ways I never dreamed I would even need, like a hotel to stay in when my abuser had a tracking system that helped him find even my safe house out of state. You stayed up with me clear into the middle of the night, losing sleep with me, guiding me to get an emergency phone and an emergency location to escape to and rest.

It is because of the incredible staff of Fresh Hope and its contributors that I personally feel God's blessings and rescue in a most amazing way. With God all things are truly possible, and I am forever grateful that Fresh Hope is the vessel He used to rescue me and walk with me without judgement or abandonment.

May God bless your organization and your partners who I may never know.

Sincerely,

A Fresh Hope Woman

To learn more about our Fresh Hope program, click [here](#).