

VOICES IN ACTION, INC.

Adult and Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Trauma

THE CHORUS

SPOTLIGHT

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Ritual Abuse-Torture (RAT)

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"We've never been here before!" We said this to Sara [not her real name] when she sought our support to help her exit from a ritual abuse-torture (RAT) family/group into which she stated she had been born, and remained as a captive adult. Although we had attended a workshop on "ritual abuse" and Linda had a friend who disclosed that she had been born into a transgenerational RAT family, we had no experience on how to help a person exit from over thirty years of captivity. Reporting that she had suffered many forms of re-victimization within the mental health system, severely traumatized and barely clinging to life, we could not abandon her. And our worldview changed forever that day in 1993, as would Sara's.

We struggled to realize the violent behaviors RAT families/groups inflict so we could gain deeper insights into Sara's victimization. This helped us understand her

traumatization responses and care for her as effectively as possible. There was no 'how-to' book to guide us in helping Sara achieve her goals of exiting safely and without becoming fragmented. Painfully struggling through experiential memories we helped Sara achieve her goals. Undoing her confusion was disorientating for Sara as she had spent her whole life "trying to do good and be loved by 'the family'." Sara believed she was special because the family told her she was the "chosen one"; she believed RAT families/groups were superior to "outsiders"; she believed being good meant passing the torture tests as they were called, she believed she was an adult at seven, and she believed the pedophilic and adult torture she had endured was relationally normal. In 1998, we undertook our

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"kitchen table" participatory research project involving five other women with histories of ritual abuse-torture. The outcome - they and Sara's victimization made common reference to ten violent themes and behaviors used by the perpetrators, which were:

1. Organized family/group violence
2. Abuse and neglect of many forms
3. Terrorization
4. Torture—physical, sexual, and mind/spirit
5. Rampageous pedophilia
6. Human/animal violence including bestiality
7. Necrophilia and pseudo-necrophilia, such as drugging the victim into a stupor then raping their motionless body
8. Horrification
9. Human trafficking and exploitation, for example, forced into pedophilic and adult pornography, the 'sex' trade, or other criminal activities such a drug and gun running
10. Involvement in violent group gatherings called "rituals and ceremonies"

In 2004 and 2006, we sat on two non-governmental organization (NGOs) panels at the Commission on the Status of Women, United Nations Headquarters, New York, to present our work on RAT. In 2004, 61 people from six different

countries sent us over 400 pieces of artwork and stories to take with us. Variations of the ten violent thematic themes and behaviors we had identified with Sara and in the participatory research project were mirrored in their works.

With the launching of our website our work became increasingly global. Victimized persons are bravely showing us the RAT transnational human trafficking interconnections. They are also sending us signed one-page statements, contributing their efforts towards having RAT named as a violation of human rights and a form of 'non-state actor' torture. That is, the torturers are pedophilic parents, families, guardians, and the like-minded who abuse, torture, and traffic their and others children using organizing ritualism.

The victimized girl child can become a captive enslaved woman. Perpetrators do what they do for the purposes of expressing power and control over the victimized, for satisfying their sadistic pleasures and entertainment, and for some, making money in the pornography and human trafficking business. Dealing with RAT atrocities is essential to foster a non-violent world.

Contact us at flight@ns.sympatico.ca for criteria for submitting statements and for signing our petition. And check our website: www.ritualabusetorture.org.

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