

## Our Story

Although I am a published author, I am not a very good story teller as such. This story deserves someone who is more adept at it than I to really do it justice so I am going to give you an idea of the story in the hope that you will find it interesting enough to want to do something further with it.

The reason that we are trying to get our story out to people is not because we after sensationalism or because we are chasing some cash. The reason is because it is through our story that we want to reach out to people to let them know that they do have the ability to change their lives and they do not have to settle for where things are right now.

In society today, more than ever before, it is a case that life is something that seems to happen to someone rather than something that is to be enjoyed, cherished and used to achieve something. It is almost as though people are so stuck on the treadmill that is their life, that not only do they not know how to get off the treadmill and do something else, most of the time it simply never occurs to them that they can or even want to actually do it.

Anyway, back to our story. This is the story of Ange - my wife, Me – Brian and how we came together from opposite sides of the world and how Ange was able to get out of a hell that was her life. Not only was she able to change herself enough to change it, she was able to take it to the ultimate point by having her husband at the time, charged and convicted of 5 counts of rape against her. He was convicted by a jury which came in at 11-1 in favour of a guilty verdict and was sentenced to five years in prison. To me, this sentence is about a third of what it should have been; after all he put Ange through 15 years of hell, so the punishment should at least be equal to that.

Ange got married for the first time when she was 20. It was almost immediately that the psychological games started and it only got worse from there. The physical abuse followed soon after and as these things do it got progressively worse. It was not just the physical abuse that was the big problem though it was the psychological factors such as humiliation, fear, ridicule and mental abuse that becomes the overriding factor.

When I say Ange was married for the first time it is because she actually married him twice. At one point, after about 7 years Ange actually ran; and I do mean physically ran away. She was able to even get a divorce from him, but it did not take him that long to get back under her defences and as Ange was then a singles mum with a disabled child he was able to offer some kind of relief. He then forced her to marry him again, using a combination of blackmail, brutality and control to achieve this.

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If you tell someone often enough how useless, ugly, fat and stupid they are sooner or later they are going to start believing it; then you throw in occasions of physical and sexual abuse. Once you have someone beaten down to that level you essentially have complete control over them. It gets to the point where a simple look is enough to invoke fear and anxiety.

Her ex-husband is a master at this. He is one of the nastiest most vicious people that I have ever encountered, yet a lot of people think he is all wonderful and charming. He would be out at the pub, drinking himself to a stupor night after night, being everybody's best mate and having a good time. Meanwhile his wife and two children were sat at home with barely any food to eat and waiting in fear for when he would come home and continue his abuse.

He never physically abused the children, but the scars from the mental abuse are still evident today and it has been three years since he was arrested and removed from the house.

The abuse did not only happen when he was drunk, it was constant. All of his money was spent on drink and women while his family went without. The five counts of rape that he was convicted of barely touches the number of times where he actually did this; it was only this small number of times that were able to be proved. Over a period of 15 years this was a constant theme; it would be closer to say that it was happening five times per week, not just five times. But this story is not about him; it is about what Ange went through for so many years and how she managed to drag herself and her kids out of this pit of hell and move on with her life.

Can you even begin to imagine how life would be for someone in that situation; I know that I honestly can't. I know pretty well what went on from day to day, but if I am honest it is beyond my comprehension to try and know what it was like to live that way. Ange has told me how as she was walking home she would have to pause at the end of the street and force herself to actually go home. Then when arriving at the gate, she would stop, take a deep breath and try to steel herself for what was to come. This is what it was like for her to even come home. Home is supposed to be the one place in the world where you are safe; not the place that you fear the most.

I should point out here that Ange's youngest; Kane (9) is disabled and has Aspergers Syndrome along with a multitude of other conditions that make life a struggle each and every day. If you add this on top of a drunken husband who was raping her on a regular occasion, who controlled every moment of her day, who kept her penniless and who kept her down for so long, that she really had nothing left, is it any wonder that suicide was only prevented with moments to spare, literally.

That was the lowest point; after what was to become the final and most hurtful of all the rapes. Ange was sat in the bath at around midnight, bleeding from the most intimate places; with a large knife and was about to literally

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end her life, when I stopped her; from Australia. It was this moment that life changed forever. Not only for Ange and her kids, but for me as well; and most certainly for her ex-husband who was arrested the next morning.

I was living in Perth, Western Australia. I was married and had kids, but a year or so before this moment, Ange and I had been introduced by my then wife in Internet Messenger. My then wife and Ange had been friends from school age and had periodically kept in touch. When I first started talking to Ange she was just doing her best to survive each and every day; just trying to get through. Fighting with Kane each day; trying to fend off her husband and literally trying to find a way to get a meal on the table.

I had a good job and a stable home, although I have to say in hindsight that I was not particularly happy with my life, but that did not occur to me at the time. Once I started talking to Ange we sort of fell into a situation where I was talking to her a lot about her life and how she could change things, by changing herself; by getting some self-respect and self-esteem and to stop being pushed around by everyone.

You see once you are kept down like that you begin to think that you are not worthy of respect from anyone, it just becomes a natural instinct to do whatever is asked of you just because it never occurs to you that you do not have to allow everyone to walk all over you. When you think of yourself as a doormat you almost begin to invite people to wipe their feet on you, because that is where you believe you fit into things and that is where your self-worth and self-respect is at.

Anyway, during our long conversations I gave Ange a commitment that I would continue to help her until she was able to change her life. I think that it was because I was so far away and was in no way a threat that Ange was able to trust me enough to listen to what I was talking to her about and she was able to begin to dig herself out of the hole that had become her life.

We spent literally hundreds of hours talking to each other. I have been a student of self-help for about 15 years and I was also very much a self-learner and I was able to take all the things that I learned and put them all together in such a way to help Ange really look at herself and her life and realise that this was not what she wanted for herself and most definitely not the environment she wanted to raise her children in.

Her husband certainly did not change, but Ange was changing. She was beginning to get some self-respect and dignity as she was taking on board what I was talking to her about and was beginning to claw herself back as a person.

In fact at one time she told her husband that she did not want him there anymore and asked him to move out. This alone took a lot of courage from Ange, but as you would expect he was not interested in doing that. After all

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he had it all going on. He was working, tax free, and he kept all of his money for himself. He did not pay rent, food or anything for his family. He would essentially just drink it away each and every week. When he was home he had complete control. He did not even bother himself with Kane's disabilities; he got what he wanted when he wanted it. Even now we are paying of debts that he accumulated in Ange's name; as I said it three years later.

At one time he actually made Ange write an agreement to pay him £1000 cash and provide him with sex at least 3 times per week and he would move out. This is the kind of monster that she was stuck with.

Anyway, the rapes continued throughout this time, however they were starting to have more and more of an impact on Ange. Previous to this, although they were very unpleasant and at times quite vicious, Ange did not believe herself worthy of anything better so they were just one more thing that she had to deal with.

As I had been talking to her and giving her back her dignity and therefore some control over her life the rapes began to get much more personal and she started to realise the contempt and disdain of the way she was being treated. It took about a year, but the final straw finally happened one night.

It was January 2004 when he came home drunk as usual and after the usual problems he raped her again. This went on for some 2 hours before he finally passed out on the bed and Ange went into the bathroom with the knife and was about to end her life.

She sent me a txt message to tell me that she was sorry and that she released me from the commitment that I had made to her. There were a number of txt's back and forward before I phoned her on her mobile. She was not able to talk in case she was overheard, so all she did was sob almost uncontrollably down the phone.

I manage to convince her not to go through with it and then to go to the police in the morning. After taking Kane to school the following morning she returned home and confronted him about it and told him to leave now or she was going to go to the police. He literally laughed in her face at this suggestion and said something like "what are you going to do, have me charged with rape, I am you husband it is my right"; that is how little he thought of Ange as a person, she was merely a piece of furniture that he could use when and where he liked, so she went to the police.

It was May 2004 when I came to England for a visit; I was born here and did not have any problem with visas so I decided to stay. My marriage had broken down and I was alone in Perth; the only difficulty that I had was leaving my children, but sometimes we have to make hard choices in life, and this was the hardest choice that I had to make. I am in constant contact with my kids and I love them dearly, but this story is not really about me.

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It took a little over a year for the case to reach the court; when it did Ange endured nearly 3 full days giving evidence in the Crown court. Once our evidence was finished we never returned to the court, we waited until the police notified us of the result. The court case was not about revenge or justice; it was about Ange facing her demons from the past and standing against the odds to finish this once and for all. The outcome was really not that important, but going through it did make a huge difference to Ange. This was the time when she finally told her ex-husband that he did not control her anymore. Regardless of the outcome, it was a big step forward for Ange.

If you think about it, for a wife to have her husband convicted of rape it essentially comes down to her word against his. There was no doubt that sex took place, it was a question of consent, so a wife has to be very sure of her story and be confident enough to get her story across.

I was also a witness in this case because of the things that Ange had told me, and I have to say it is a very frightening experience and one that I would not like to repeat in a hurry, and I was only on the stand for twenty minutes.

Ange was there for days and was being accused and blamed for all manner of things by the defence lawyer, it really does show how far Ange had come by then. From fifteen years of being abused, downtrodden and controlled, she was able to stand in court and fight her battle for three days and do it in such a way as to convince 11 out of 12 people beyond a reasonable doubt that the things she was saying had actually happened. She was able to do this; I should point out here, because she was telling the truth. It is not about who has the best story, it is about telling the truth, that doesn't change.

Since this time Ange returned to college and also began working for Social Service. This came about after I moved in with Ange and we started using a lot of the same principles that had worked for Ange with Kane and we were able to turn his life around. Social Services invited Ange to talk to a parents group and give some information on the things that we had done that had helped Kane so much, from there she was invited to join them to work with other families.

Kane story is one that is also quite special. For a little boy with some heavy disabilities he is doing fabulously well. He is in mainstream school and continues to work hard. I have written some of Kane's story and I have also written 2 booklets which we give to people with a lot of the tips and tricks that we use to help Kane transform from an almost feral child to a boy who is well behaved even for someone without disabilities.

Since then I have continued to work with Ange and kept her pushing forward to become all that she can be. I took some time and wrote a book called 'Wake up and Smell the Reality!' which contains a lot of the principles and

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philosophies that I used to help Ange grow from nowhere to become one of the most confident and in control people that I know.

It is written in real language and is aimed at ordinary people. It contains real information that real people can apply in the real world. We are not about fluff and false promises of huge wealth and huge success; we are about helping people get along better in the real world. This book was published in December 2006 and is readily available at online book stores.

Ange and I have also started our own business so that we can help people with the things that we have learned and taught in the past. We are trying to make it so that we are available to as many people as possible. We are not interested in getting rich of ordinary people, so we are willing to work with people for next to nothing in order to help.

I am currently about to finish writing a second book called 'Creating Adults – Not Raising children (weighing up the autistic scale)'. This book is written to provide real practical advice to parents and help them make the changes so their kids to become the kind of adults that they want them to become. It does have a heavy focus on Autism, but the information that is in there can be used universally.

If you do find our story interesting and if you are interested in learning more about it and assisting us to make it known to people so that they are able to learn from it and take inspiration from it, please contact me at [brian@smellthereality.com](mailto:brian@smellthereality.com) or on 07944845780.

We are ordinary people, who have good ideas and we are trying to do our best to help people benefit from what we have been through and what we have learned; are you able to help us to help others?

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you have taken something from it.