

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Submission from [REDACTED]
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Attachments: Cover Form.jpg

Thank you for the opportunity to respond. My submission will address the following question.

Question 3 ~ Royal Commission into Family Violence's Issues Paper

29. The Royal Commission is also interested in addressing the wider circumstances and conditions—within relationships and families, institutions and communities—which are associated with family violence. We want to hear from individuals or organisations who have sought to identify and address these circumstances and conditions. Family- or relationship-specific circumstances and conditions may include, for example, attitudes and values, experiences, mental health or substance abuse issues. Community-wide circumstances and conditions may include economic, social, geographical or cultural factors. These circumstances and conditions may be ongoing, or may arise from specific situations or events and include intersections between gender, age, race, disability and other factors.

It has troubled me that I was a child of two parents who lived dysfunctional upbringings. Because of secrecy and denial by my parents towards abuse in their childhood, dysfunction has played out in inter-generational dysfunction. Before I go any further, I want to express my concern that if The Royal Commission [TRC] fails to address the issue of inter-generational dysfunction, and concentrates solely on immediate threats of violence by perpetrator to victim, wider circumstances and conditions within relationships and families will NOT be addressed. At a pinch they may be skimmed over.

According to what I know my mother suffered emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Money was squandered away on gambling and drink by both her parents. My mother did not have a safe and happy childhood, and raised her siblings. There are stories about living in squalor.

My father was the son of a [REDACTED] veteran who came home [REDACTED] and would drink heavily. He according to my late father was verbally abusive to his wife. He would have been suffering with PTSD. My father as a young boy can remember cowering under the bed. There could have been more but I will never know. My father's siblings and their children [my cousins] appear to be distant and uncommunicative when more personal questions about ancestors are sought. Sometimes not replying at all.

I could go on but I feel TRC will get the picture of these two children in [REDACTED]

██████████

When my parents married they were two damaged people coming together to 'save' each other. My mother was particularly damaged. She is incapable of expressing her emotions and in my opinion is unable to love her children in a well adjusted way. My father is deceased and was my mother's enabler. As a child it felt like he was always saying to me, do not upset your mother as she has had a hard life, so be good. Of course this advice resulted in untoward effect of a sensitive and intuitive child [me] not being able to express her emotions and seek comfort.

There is more to the story and if TRC is interested I can expand if required.

What is important for me to get across now, is that I have estranged myself from my 'toxic' biological family. My mother was enabled for decades by my father, and now expects devotion from her children. I was labeled the scapegoat of the family because I wanted to know from a young age what was behind all the silence and blank stares. I sensed something was very wrong, especially with my mother. My ██████████ siblings are the golden children because they took on those toxic roles to survive.

We are all adult children now, with children of our own. I have grandchildren. It's not a happy story despite no physical and sexual violence to myself or my siblings. We had emotional abuse in the form of control in the household. This control was not discipline it was a control born out of fear and anger. And silence is definitely not golden and will always come back in a storm of emotion, as it did for me in later years. It played out for me in seeking love from men, getting married to one of those men and getting divorced of my own doing ██████████ years later. Seeking again and again to find someone to love me, like I was never loved by my mother, and could not be loved by my father because my mother felt threatened by me [she knew what fathers were capable of doing to their daughters]

There are more consequences to my story and if TRC is interested I can expand if required.

However, in all of this dysfunction my biological family was keen to present well to society. I was fed, clothed and educated. I played a team sport. I became a professional and have graduate diploma qualifications. I travelled. I worked hard and remarried at ██████████ I educated ██████████ children through the expensive private school system. I retired at ██████████ [was not good at working for controlling bosses and spoke up] I am not in debt. I spend my days advocating and lobbying for causes close to my heart. I will not be bullied and/or silenced. I have finally stood up to my mother and spoken out, however she remains silent and in control [for her survival]. I do not see or hear from my ██████████ or their ██████████ children [my nieces and nephews] I have had some texts and emails that have been bordering on spiteful and uncompassionate [but that does not surprise me given we were brought up with little emotion]

What makes my situation so gut wrenching at times, is that I have had the opportunity to see how 'loving and caring' families live. My husband's family is

not perfect but they do obviously love each other in a different way to my family. They have not been touched by domestic violence and it shows. I must share that there is a softness which is beautiful. It's heartwarming, however it can be 'in-the-face' full on, too much over the top. This difference between my upbringing and my husband's upbringing had to be negotiated in the early years of our marriage. We did seek counseling.

What I hope my story exposes to TRC, is that domestic violence does have toxic implications through the generations. My children rarely contact me, and I do believe they are still emotionally struggling with the divorce over [REDACTED] years ago. They are also, I believe, struggling with the fact I am estranged from their grandmother, [REDACTED]. All in all huge family breakdown brought on by me not willing to be the family scapegoat. I have been out casted and isolated partly of my own doing and reasons. For them they want to get on with their lives and be happy without all this past stuff being dragged up.

My submission is anonymous only because my mother is still alive. She's frail, lives alone and is in her mid [REDACTED]. However, it's okay for any part of it to be published and quoted from.

As mentioned I am free to be contacted by TRC. My cover form is attached to this email.

I wish the TRC all the very best in its undertakings.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]