

Safeguarding Adults:**An Independent Life after Long-term Abuse within the Family**

Narrator: Phillip has learning difficulties and cerebral palsy down his right hand side.

Phillip: I was physically and mentally abused by my mum.

Narrator: Twenty three percent of adults with learning disabilities experience physical abuse.

Phillip: She hit me everywhere on my body, all because I'm disabled, all because I've got a learning difficulty and she blames me for my disability, yes.

Narrator: Forty three percent of adults with learning disabilities experience verbal abuse and bullying.

Phillip: If I said anything to my dad my dad said to me, "you know what your mum's like Phillip don't you?" She was a controller of the house, she was the boss of the house.

Narrator: In almost a quarter of cases of physical abuse the perpetrator is a family member, partner or care worker.

Phillip: My mum was slimy because she always hit me when she was on her own, when we were on our own, when she had me on her own. Never with my mum's ... with my family, my dad my mum both were there with me. Always, always on my own. Yes, crafty cow. All's she wanted was my income support, my money. I didn't get my money at all, she had it all. I wrote my book out you know as you usually do and she took the book to the post office where I used to live and she took the money away. She said to me your no good to anyone [unclear 01.54] put together and she used to say to me, "you don't care about anyone else apart from your fucking self," excuse my language, that's how she spoke to me. She had foul language she did and that really hurt me, that really hurt me you know. I was sent upstairs watching telly whilst the others were downstairs and the whole family was downstairs, I was only allowed to watch telly. I went

to bed at nine o'clock while my brothers were allowed to stay up late and I felt so stupid, I felt like you know. I thought why me, why me why couldn't they do it to Ant or David but always me you know.

Narrator: Phillip's turbulent home life continued for thirty four years, it took a very courageous step to bring calm into his life for the first time.

Phillip: When my friends, our friends Stephen and Elaine said to me you've got marks on your back, you've been abused by your mum. I thought me? But you've got marks on your back or on your face you know and that's when I told Vic [sl: Donahue] what had been happening to me. He said right you're not going home, I said to him why, where am I going, where would I go? He said we'll find a place for you Phillip and he found me a place called The Days in Elstree in Borehamwood and I was a bit nervous going up there at first but after a while I thought yes, I've got freedom, I've got a life.

Narrator: By speaking out to his social worker, Phillip put an immediate stop to his abuse. He was moved out of his family home that same day and began living an independent life. In 1998 he met Suzy who suffered from severe Cerebral Palsy and they fell in love.

Phillip: I went down on my bended knee in front of everyone and asked Suzy to marry me and she said yes and we got married on the 14th June 2001 at the [unclear 04.09] registry office. None of my family came to the wedding and it was the best day of my life.

Narrator: Although Phillip only needed part time care, Suzy's condition meant that she needed care around the clock. The newly weds decided to hire care worker Becky on a full time basis and the three of them moved into a flat in North London together.

Phillip: It was very warming it was very nice it was you know that all three of us came into this flat you know, yeah.

Becky: I used to love looking after Phillip and Suzy because the love which they had is amazing, it's something which you don't see a lot.

Narrator: Over the next five years, Suzy's condition deteriorated and on the 23rd of June 2006 she died in hospital of bronchopneumonia.

Phillip: I miss my dear Suzy you know. She was a, she was a part of my life as well you know. She really was a part of my life.

Narrator: Following Suzy's death although Phillip only needed part time assistance Becky continued to live with and care for Phillip.

[Conversation between Becky and Phillip]

Phillip: Right look at your hand. No your card I meant, look at your hand.

Becky: Thank you.

Phillip: Oh, very witty.

Becky: You're a cheat, look at that. That is not.

Phillip: That's not allowed I know.

Becky: You're supposed to put four, not six.

Phillip: Okay, alright, okay.

[End of conversation between Becky and Phillip]

Becky: I mean he's pretty much like, he's fun really. Yeah in the relationship we have, myself and Phillip is very open. Phillip will tell me pretty much almost anything and we'll discuss it there which helps me helping me because he's telling me how he feels. I feel his family didn't give him a chance, I feel maybe they don't even know who he is. I feel I know who Phillip is and not seeing him happy I don't know what they know about him because when he's, somebody's happy that's when you really know who the person is so maybe in a way it's their lost. According to Phillip himself he does think that he's got his human rights from the day he stepped out of his family home because he can do pretty much everything because he can do pretty much everything he always dreamed of doing.

Phillip: I got, I got my own flat. I've got my own flat what I never thought I'd have my own flat at all, never.

Becky: Before you do something to somebody always ask yourself a question. If I was in that situation would I like people to treat me like that, then if the answer is no don't do it, stop right there.

Phillip: Becky.

Becky: Yes.

Phillip: Can I borrow you please, thanks a lot Becky. I'm not uptight anymore, I can relax I look forward to coming here, coming home here, yeah I've got freedom and do I regret leaving home? No way, no way.

[End of Recording]

