Supporting Karma Nirvana

Karma Nirvana values the commitment and dedication of all of our volunteers. We recognise and appreciate the important role of our volunteers in sustaining our service and making a real difference.

Volunteering experiences vary dependent upon skills that you can offer. Volunteering can include:

- Training as a call handler
- Fundraising
- Awareness raising
- Events
- Campaigning

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or friend of Karma Nirvana, please visit our website on www.karmanirvana.org.uk.

Honour Network Helpline: 0800 5999 247

Useful Contact Details

Forced Marriage Unit
0207 008 0151
www.fco.gov.uk

Iranian and Kurdish Womens Rights Organisation
0207 920 6460
www.ikwro.org.uk

Sojourner Project (No Recourse to Public Funds)
0207 840 7147
www.eaves4women.co.uk

Training

Karma Nirvana design and deliver bespoke training to meet professional learning outcome. Our training is facilitated with real life experiences and we can arrange for a survivor to speak about their personal experience if requested.

If you are interested in finding out more, please email our events co-ordinator on events@karmanirvana.org.uk.

Booking forms can be found on our website www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Roadshows

Karma Nirvana delivers annual roadshows nationally. For more information on our roadshows please visit our website www.karmanirvana.org.uk.

Providing practical and emotional support to all victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour based abuse.

- Do you know someone who is being forced to marry against their will?
- Are you feeling pressured to enter a marriage that you are not sure about?
- Are you worried that you will let your family down if you say no?
- Do you fear you may bring SHAME on your family?

If you have answered YES or would like to talk to one of call handlers in confidence, please contact Karma Nirvana on the Honour Network Helpline: 0800 5999 247.
What does Karma Nirvana do?

Karma Nirvana is a national charity supporting victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour based abuse. We assist victims, survivors and professionals through our national Honour Network Helpline. We can support you in any circumstance:

- If you are living at home and need confidential support and guidance;
- If you have decided that you want to leave and are unsure what your options are;
- If you have left home and are living with disownment and feel isolated.

Our call handlers are trained to:

- Provide a confidential, non-judgemental and listening ear;
- Provide emotional and practical support;
- Assist in finding refuge and emergency accommodation;
- Provide safety planning and risk assessments;
- Provide options and guidance to individual circumstances.

The Facts

Honour based abuse is inexcusable. Everyone has the right to be respected and to not be abused and treated badly in the name of honour.

Honour based abuse is defined as:

“An incident or crime which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and or community”

Honour based abuse is where a person is being punished by their family or community for actually or allegedly undermining what they believe to be the correct code of behaviour. By not conforming it may be perceived that the person may have brought shame or dishonour to the family.

Forced marriage is unacceptable. Everyone has the right to choose who they marry and when they marry. No major religion or faith supports the practice of forced marriage.

A forced marriage is defined as where:

“…one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure…”

The Karma Nirvana Honour Network Helpline has been developed to support all victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour based abuse. We want to help victims and survivors to make their own choices about their own life.

All of our call handlers are trained in maintaining confidentiality, finding refuge/emergency accommodation, risk assessing, safety planning and providing options. Many of our call handlers are themselves survivors of forced marriage and honour based abuse. If you would like to speak to a survivor call handler, we can arrange this.

Please visit our website to learn more: www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Comments from callers to the helpline

Caller Testimonials:

“Deciding to leave and not marry the man my parents had chosen was the hardest decision I have ever had to make. I told my parents I did not want to marry but that did not matter. I had no option but to leave as they ignored my pleas not to marry. I called Karma Nirvana after seeing a poster in my college. They helped me to leave safely and made living without my family that bit easier. I still pray that one day my family might change, but I know that I made the right decision. If I didn’t leave when I did I would be chained to a man I did not even know; yet alone love. I am living a life for me now and will continue with or without my family. Karma Nirvana has helped me to keep strong”.

18 year old Female

“As a man, I didn’t know where to turn to. I felt it wasn’t macho for me to come forward. I didn’t think refuge was for men. I know now there are many men in similar situations and I am trying to use my experience to help them”

Male Survivor, aged 31 (Forced to marry at 10 years old)

“Me and my boyfriend have been secretly dating for years. We felt scared to tell our families. We knew they wouldn’t approve because we are different castes. When we told our families, I was not allowed to study and my boyfriend was attacked. My mum started talking about going away to get me married and that this was my own entire fault. We knew we had to leave if we wanted to be together. We contacted the police who helped us to move and gave us Karma Nirvana’s number. Karma Nirvana has been the only real support that has kept us going. They advised professionals who were unsure what to do with us. They advised us on how to change our name and keep our national insurance number secure. Most importantly Karma Nirvana kept us strong when we felt weak and that is something you can never forget. We will always be grateful for this.”

Couple aged 21 and 23 years old

If you would like advise, guidance or support, please call the Karma Nirvana Honour Network Helpline on 0800 5 999 247. Karma Nirvana promises to listen to you in a non-judgemental way providing information about your rights and choices.

Alternatively you can visit our website www.karmanirvana.org.uk and email us directly.