

# Abuse disclosure

Aug 10

I think I'm finally ready to share my story. I've been wanting to share for months but to be honest this trauma runs so deep in me that it's hard to live life AND face this.

I was sexually assaulted by a worker, [JR], when I was 9 years old. I suppressed this memory for years, but always wondered why I had certain thoughts/ memories/ behaviors, and always had the gut feeling that something had happened that I wasn't yet able to face.

As a child, I remember going from a pretty chill normal kid to a little girl who was hiding in my closet, being terrified of being alone in the house without my parents, checking cupboards to ensure nobody was watching me before I'd take a bath... and on & on. Seemingly overnight.

Looking back, it all makes perfect sense.

I turned to controlling food & my body, which led me down a path of struggling with anorexia for over 20 years. My body didn't feel like a safe place to exist & I was thrashing about trying to find some semblance of safety.

My first true memory of the CSA came about 8 or so years ago. Of course, I brushed it off but it haunted me. While working on indigenous reservations teaching yoga & women's empowerment I started to note how similarly I felt to those women who had survived childhood assault. Again, I tried to ignore it as a possibility. It couldn't be true right? But by then I'd been struggling with anorexia for many years and the root cause always seems to come back to a lack of safety both in my body & just as a general feeling of things being "out of control". And a deep-rooted feeling that I was broken.

I finally committed to going deep. I worked with a trauma therapist & did some deep subconscious work specific to my memories around CSA. The first time I realized who the perpetrator was, I was shocked & devastated. JR was a worker that I saw as a 'family friend'. Someone I never would have guessed would violate my innocence. And yet, I couldn't deny the dread I felt at seeing a picture of him on my parents' fridge one Christmas, or the panic attack I had (after years without having panic attacks) when my BIL showed me a video that had him in it. An indescribable feeling of stored trauma rising to the surface.

I swore I'd never tell my parents - I just couldn't comprehend having to tell them that someone they trusted to be in their home had stolen so much from their little girl. That the faith that was their entire world has created an opportunity for so much pain.

And yet, in time it became apparent that I needed to be honest with them. So, long story a little less long, I told my parents in January this year (2023). I'll never forget the way it felt to have them look me in the eye and say "we believe you". I'm so grateful for this, as I know there are those without this acknowledgment given to them.

They asked my permission to share with the workers in their field. I agreed. Those workers called the overseer, Jim Atchison, who needed to "process this". After months of hearing nothing back my parents were contacted by JA who essentially said he'd asked JR who "had no memory of it" (shocking right?!) & invalidated the possibility of the allegations, going so far as to ask if I had had hallucinations. JA then requested I provide details. I was unwilling to provide details to my parents who had struggled enough with accepting all this & asked JA to contact me directly.

Again, to make a long story a little bit less long, I shared my story with JA, including that I wasn't about to share details to "jog JR's memory" when he'd denied any memory. After months going by again, I essentially got a thank you for your story, happy healing, hope you feel better now, bye.

After following up with JA, my parents received a message from him that he'd be doing nothing further, I'm an adult who should deal with it, said "you just can't let it go can you" to them (well duh), and went so far as to (in the oh so sweet "we should remember" type way) accuse my parents of slander.

So that's my story. I'm done feeling small & invalidated by these assholes who think they're invincible.

Where there's one, there's more. I've been in touch with Cynthia & would encourage anyone with a story to do the same - she's incredible.