

# Debra Regains Control of Her Life with Here4TN



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Debra\* grew up in an abusive household and learned at a young age how to cover up bruises and pretend everything was fine.

Unfortunately, her experience with abuse didn't end when she grew up and left home. As an adult, Debra found herself in an abusive marriage.

To hide the abuse from work colleagues, Debra wore clothing to cover her arms and legs — no matter how hot it got. She became good at making up stories to explain away any visible injuries.

Ashamed and feeling that she'd “allowed” abuse to continue into her adulthood, Debra became determined to end the cycle of abuse in her life, which had become increasingly more violent.

A work email reminded her of **Here4TN**, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered by Optum as a benefit to State of Tennessee employees and their dependents. Through **Here4TN**, Debra could get five in-person sessions with a master's-level therapist at no charge to her.

“I was nervous,” said Debra, who grew up in a culture where sharing personal problems was frowned upon. Nevertheless, she knew she needed help. It took her some time, but she eventually made a call to **Here4TN**.

“The person I spoke to had the kindest voice,” said Debra. “They were professional and compassionate. They didn't poke too much — just touched the surface. If they would have dug too much, I wouldn't have stayed on the call.”

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The **Here4TN** specialist gave Debra contact information for several therapists and the one she ended up meeting with helped her in so many ways.

“Sitting with the therapist helped me see the cycle I was in,” said Debra. “She had no judgment. She helped me work through healing from my past and helped me heal from what I was dealing with in the present.”

Eventually, Debra was able to regain control of her life and has left her abuser. She's now in a healthy relationship and uses the coping strategies she learned through **Here4TN** — including meditation — to deal with anxiety, depression and life's uncertainties.

Her advice to others in abusive relationships: “Take back who you are. Take advantage of talking to someone. No one has to stay in their situation, no matter what it is.”

Debra fears she wouldn't be alive today without the help of **Here4TN**.

“The network at **Here4TN** cares about your well-being — mentally, spiritually and physically.”



## Looking for support right now?

Call **Here4TN** anytime for confidential support and access to five online or in-person counseling sessions per issue, per year at no cost to you.

**855-Here4TN**  
(855-437-3486)

**Here4TN.com**



\*Name has been changed to protect member's privacy. Stock photo used.

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