

A White Paper: Abuse of {Any Kind} - The Work Behind and 'Ahead of Us All'

By Gregg Tyler Milligan, Author & Abuse Prevention Advocate July 10, 2013

http://www.godmustbesleeping.com/

It was my sincere hope to actually make a much larger contribution since beginning my advocacy in 2009 within the area of abuse prevention and treatment of any kind. Further hope that I would continue to heal not only my wounds but those of others, and to also prevent new wounds of abuse not yet committed. Abuses all over the world are most assuredly occurring every second of every hour of every day. My original intentions were kept simple: show compassion for those who have been abused, help also those close to the abused who also suffer in the shadows of knowing not what to do, and prevent further abuses. I fought for a lasting alternative to a better world – one which offered a world as it was always meant to be.

This White Paper is dedicated to all those who have been abused past, present, and under a sleeping God, into a dismal future those left yet to suffer through the storm of abuse.

A snapshot into [my story]. I've always suffered from nightmares; both while awake in the form of daymares, and the chronic nightmares requiring medication which plague my sleep to this day. The nightmares are always a replay of the abuses endured from my past. In both my mind and heart, I had hoped I escaped the abuse; I had escaped death many times. However, each and every night I lay down to sleep I find myself faced with my abusive past repeatedly. It is during my sleep and in the form of these chronic nightmares I know that I am not done with being abused. During the day, I have my moments of manageable anxiety, but no matter what, an abusive past continues to find and haunt me while I struggle to live a life within an illusion of peace. So ingrained in this belief that I have finally found peace in my life, I am utterly surprised that when the abuse finds me — I honestly had no idea I was hiding.

One of the many ways in which I can explain my situation, along with the countless others who suffer from the remnants of abuse is by using a metaphor. Imagine you are an innocent child playing in a beautiful field. You have never been abused, but you know the field might be a dangerous place because this is what you have been taught. But you never felt real fear. Then, in a moment something terrible happens. You are abused. It can be only once or repeatedly. The abuse can be anything; physical, emotional, mental, hunger, abandonment, the denial or disregard of your inalienable rights as a citizen of any country and so on. The 'rights' I speak of are The Rights that were guaranteed by both a constitution which is soaked in the blood of the soldiers who fought and continue to fight for these rights – and the most prominent and important right, is what is so often intentionally and unintentionally overlooked – our Human Right(s). Meaning, you have the right to be free of abuse of any kind. Using the child playing in the field as an example, he/she is abused but they somehow survive. However, now that child will never see the field as beautiful ever again. Some will never return to the field. Some will be locked into repeating the cycle of abuse instead of breaking it. And even fewer will break the cycle, stand for compassion and do everything in their power to change the field back to its original beauty. But the child is broken from the moment of abuse. The same goes for an adult. Nothing will ever seem safe again. Because all human beings are programmed with the same survival mechanism, and once abused, the body, spirit, and mind will not allow those of us who are victims – even though we now call ourselves survivors – to ever go back to feeling safe in a world which at one time felt innocent.

The abused never forget what it felt like to have their human rights violated, stolen, and torn apart. Therefore, we will live in a state of sincere apprehension. A state of vigilance against the impending doom. What this brings is hypertension and anxiety even when there is no assumed danger present. But we the abused know there is always danger present. We know the truth

about life and that is those in a position of power "abuse" this power absolutely. They did with us as individuals. They consistently abuse openly and without discretion. To be explicitly clear: *I define those in a position of power as any individual or group of individuals who have the ability to help or hinder any other human being*. Once abused, we are changed and not for the better. That's nature. That's life. That is the truth.

With this said, my advocacy took a sharp tum about two years ago when I found that abuse prevention organizations were increasing, along with laws to protect the abused and deal justice to those who abuse. However, the actual number of both victims and forms of abuse were increasing at a much faster rate. Using logic, one would conclude that the number of abuse victims should be diminishing. The number of any form of abuse should be diminishing as well. A rational person would not conclude that more humans – both children and adults – are becoming victims of abuse [of any kind]. I thought to myself, "We are gaining ground in the fight against abuse, right?" But I was wrong. Dead wrong. We were not only losing ground – we were losing at an unprecedented rate. So far that we are actually going backwards and abuse victims are returning to rates not seen for years, long since social welfare reformations, the onslaught of abuse prevention organizations, and the justice system caught up with compassion.

More children are being abused, human trafficking is at an all-time high, more people are left homeless and hungry (according to WHO 2013 statistics, 17 million children go to bed hungry in the U.S. alone). Furthermore, rapes, molestations, child pornography, child sexual abuse, forced child labor and forced prostitution are now higher than when organizations began reporting on these figures in the 1950s. Why? When I finally understood why, the answer was a gut-punch. Abuse is getting worse because programs in order to fight abuse of any kind are being cut. Decimated would be a better descriptor. I began to dig deeper and found that these abuse prevention programs were being cut faster than abuse prevention organizations were allowed to form. By whom? Who would be so cruel and stupid to cut a program that literally ensures a more stable and functioning society? Who would be so heartless and obtuse?

Further still, I researched the issue and found that although there are laws in place to protect the abused, these laws are constantly overlooked, waivers are signed, and policies in support of victims are ignored. One of many significant examples of this is noted is a 2008 Presidential Proclamation that prohibits the relationship between the United States and any country which abuses its citizens. Specifically, countries in which children are into forced battle. (Source: A White Paper: Toy Soldiers, May 19 2013 by Gregg Milligan, http://godmustbesleeping.com/Portals/0/pdf/1_05-19-2013%20Toy%20Soldiers.pdf). From my research I discovered that these very children's average age is 8 – 12 years old. Look closely and you'll see that the U.S. has a proclamation {because we're leading the world in abuse prevention}, right? Wrong.

I am not political and find the practice of politics to be useless by any stretch of the imagination. The only necessary practice under the descriptor of politics should be to govern with compassion in all matters regarding any society. However, the current administration has since signed waiver after waiver with countries our government knows for a fact are engaged in abusive tactics against its own people. As I stated, I am not political and I am neither for nor against our existing administration. What I am is a realist and I know that in order to reduce the number of abuses and its victims, we must begin at the top. Begin with those in the highest positions of power and demand they act with both intellect and compassion. Demand that Human Rights be at the forefront of every political agenda. Not profit, but people.

What I am calling for and demand is a full investigation and refurbishment into all governments around the world. Where we find those who do not put Human Rights first, they must go; even if it means ousting/replacing a member of a government, monarchy or parliament. If you feel what I am saying is over the top, then tell that to a child who is being forced into prostitution

or someone being bought and sold like cattle for whatever ugly business their buyers and sellers feel that individual could best bring a profit. Yes, I am angry because I see the problem and the problem sits behind mahogany and marbled walls slashing the budgets of programs meant to sustain life. These same powerful people are making decisions that knowingly ruin innocent lives on a daily basis. These people are not allowed ignorance as an excuse. They know what they are doing. They know who they are hurting. They know the terrible results of their actions. I will not forgive these people in a position of power, because THEY KNOW WHAT THEY DO.

Governments are made up of humans, and like an abusive parent, a rapist, someone involved in the ugly business of child pornography or human trafficking, these humans are in a position of power and they wield their power without love and compassion. These are the people that simply will not do because of the responsibility they will not take. They must all go away and stay away.

The system is broken. It is rife with abusers and they have a lot of power. I say to you that the fight against abuse is a fruitless one unless we begin with those who hold the most power. Catching a pedophile, a rapist, an abuser from time to time is not solving the problem. It is simply not enough. There are too many hard questions that remain unanswered. For example, how can a team of individuals not question the actions of a man who claims he is taking a young boy for ice-cream or a movie and not return that young boy for 24 to 48 hours ... and this behavior lasted 12 years? Why didn't anyone ask the hard questions long before the Penn State scandal? How in the hell did Jerry Sandusky get away with abusing children for 12 years and no one noticed? The answer is that they did notice but for no good reason chose not to challenge his actions.

Well, I am challenging his actions and the actions of abusers all over the world. I am asking the hard questions and I am demanding a changing of the guard. We need to start from scratch and begin to rebuild our society based on the principles of Human Rights – Humane Action, and that society must not be limited to any one demographic or nation. We must see the problem of abuse as a one-world problem and we must see abuse as a disease. It is not only social issue and never was. Abuse is dismantling nations and has reached a fever-pitch in short order. The world is changing and it has become too easy to see people as no more than statistics. Nations are chosen as worthy or unworthy. I am saying without a doubt that Nations that are made up of people. Of human beings and the majority of them are innocent.

I want to live and thrive, but not at the expense of stomping all over the rights of another human being. I am not going to be wondering how I could have done things differently in my life. I am not going to have regrets based on my lack of action. I know exactly what I am doing and why I am doing it. I believe we are here to save one another. There is no other rational explanation to our existence. And no matter what has happened to me personally, I would not have changed a thing. It will forever be ... a case of moving forward and picking up as many people as possible along the way as possible. I once read that the world is one big party filled with all the love you will ever need – all you have to bring is yourself and just show up. This is the truth

Before I lose some into what may appear to be a 'feel good' or 'I still believe in love' pitch, remember this: The abused were once wholesome, but now they are damaged. From a medical perspective and this is based on empirical data: Post abuse, the body chemistry changes at a metabolic level. Just as it does when the body is attacked by a virus. Abuse is a disease – medically speaking. It changes the chemistry of the brain; particularly our internal communication system components called neurotransmitters. It requires medical attention through both psychiatric and pharmaceutical treatment. How is this not a disease? Abuse changes humans emotionally, and so does HIV/AIDS, Cancer, and the common cold.

Another aspect of abuse is an emotional wreckage of what once was. Take a child for example who has been abused. Their maturity level is much more advanced than that of their age. This is not a positive result, but negative. The child is now operating at a much higher level of comprehension along with having been dealt a severe loss of innocence. They are now constantly flooded with anxiety. With no way to deal with this level of maturation, the child breaks down physically, mentally, and emotionally. In other words, they are a speeding train soon to come off the tracks. Where anything is possible, and none of the results are good. Being abused as a child is like handing an adult a complicated math problem and telling them if they don't solve it in a matter of seconds, they will suffer and die.

Again, from my own personal experiences, there were three of us children trapped in a home ruled by the only person in a position of power – our abuser. It doesn't matter if it was our mother or father. All we needed was to know and trust that our care provider loved us and had a clear and definitive understanding of right and wrong. And why wouldn't me and my siblings believe this? Even at our young ages, we all possessed these attributes even before we were taught and/or learned the difference between right and wrong. When this original understanding is not only upset, but completely dismantled by something as awful as sexual abuse, the child is thrust into a world that has no future. It will become an incessant living hell – as were mine and my two other siblings' personal experiences. The same goes for an adult who is abused.

I cannot emphasize enough the power we as human beings have over one another. It is a dangerous power and must be seen as such. What we do to one another has lifelong effects. Whether it is good or bad. For example, something as seemingly innocuous, sold as a means in which to protect American citizens, is a current law giving the authorities the right to storm someone's home with guns in the *ready-to-kill* position based on a non-violent warrant. This is abuse of power by any definition. I promise you that afterwards, the residents of the home will not come away with a newfound respect for their government and law enforcement, but a sense of dull paranoia and may even go so far to purchasing weapons whereas before they never felt the need for them.

Abuse of any kind; including the abuse of power, will not improve the quality of life. Instead, it will destroy it and eventually you end up with a broken individual, a broken system, and a non-functioning dangerous society. It was abuse (in the name of greed) that has since placed this world on the brink of financial ruin and has severely damaged millions of lives. Abuse is pervasive and made worse by power unchecked. The system, which was put in place to protect the innocent, has itself been systematically torn down by budget cuts, waivers, secret wars, indifference, and decisions made without compassion. It's a cycle that continues to spiral out of control. The days of abuse only affecting the poor are over. Abuse has no boundaries and crosses oceans. *I ask...Why can't we do the same with compassion?*

Speaking of effects, the lasting effects of abuse are often varied and debilitating. You would be right to say with regard to abuse, "No one gets out alive." The physiological effects are traumatic. I've often heard the term used when referring to our returning war veterans, "Invisible Wounds." The brave men and women will tell you that there is nothing "Invisible" about their wounds. They are as real as cancer and just as life-threatening. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been proven to afflict abuse survivors and those who have been in the military, particularly in combat situations.

However, the wounds the veterans and the abused deal with are dramatically different than cancer in a key way. With cancer, normally the individual suffering is the only one dealing with a life or death situation. PTSD and/or other effects of abuse cause significant risk to the life of the person suffering them – and – they can and have led to the deaths of others based on many adverse behavioral outcomes. An individual with cancer does not normally possess the will or reason to kill another person; however, an individual suffering from the effects of abuse and/or PTSD does and has.

The neurological and chemical effects of abuse are documented. We have whittled this explanation down to referring to it as "Breaking the Cycle." This quip does not encompass the complete picture of abuse. It does infer to the fact abuse begets abuse. However, it also provides a watered down version of what is really happening. Those who are abused often engage in abusive behaviors that harm not only themselves but other individuals. Yes, we must break the cycle for sure. Because the cycle of abuse really comes down to a non-functioning unpredictable human factory of violence. The more humans that are abused, the more dangerous the world becomes. It cannot become simpler than that. We must end human suffering where it is avoidable for the sake of humanity alone. One world and one chance is all we get. With so many other terrible battles we must face as humans, why would we add to our already heavy load of responsibility and danger? Abuse, of any kind, is one of those avoidable plagues on the world.

With further research into the effects of abuse, I have found a spectrum of outcomes. I found that on one end you have violent and dangerous behavior. On the other end you have someone who is emotionally numb and withdrawn. In the middle is a combination of these two with a spattering of functional human beings. Therefore, the only rational conclusion that can be reached is that abuse destroys not only human beings, but it is destroying the human race. This conclusion is alarming indeed; however, not enough to change the course of those in a position of power to act. Why? It can easily be summed up by stating the obvious – they have no compassion. What breeds this behavior is an established system of power which promotes this attitude. This is another cycle we need to break and break quickly before it is too late.

Governments and administrations all over the world have allowed abuses ranging from domestic violence to torture of innocent civilians to go unchecked. There is no rational or logical reasoning behind this decision. An obvious lack of compassion as I've stated before and caught-up in this New World Order is the fodder of innocence being abused. I say with absolute clarity that if the leaders of our world do not care about the basic human rights of their own citizens — what must be going on behind this sinister curtain? The answer: From my personal and professional experiences since beginning my advocacy I have found nothing but a myriad of posturing, but no legitimate action. If an abuse becomes so apparent; such as in the case of Jerry Sandusky, the players go into action, the speeches are made, the justice system by all appearances is on top of things and gives the illusion it works. However, why did it take twelve years to discover these outrageous unabashed abuses were taking place in plain sight? Why was nothing done until Joe Paterno's health was at the point where he would no longer serve as head coach for a National Championship college football team? All of this and more is not a coincidence.

Ask yourself if abuse prevention budgets are expanding or contracting. Here is another example of both abuse and posturing. The FBI scans routers of suspected child pornography which is fantastic. However, the FBI and local police departments have been granted under federal law the right to kick-in doors, guns drawn, with a shoot-to-kill order that could easily result in death when they find what they term [suspicious activity] on a router. We do not possess the technical means in which to be 100% sure if whomever the router belongs to is guilty or innocent – unless they are caught in the act and/or the child pornography is found on any media belonging to them. Furthermore, these teams often may not know if they have the right address, and in some cases, may not. I am opposed and have fought against child pornography as one of many abuses over the years; however, even this U.S. mandate seems extreme. A shoot-to-kill order by means of smashing down doors of non-violent U.S. citizens based on a router scan that provides only a 'suspicion' of illegal child pornographic activity? This makes for headline news, but has no teeth – no action to block the source of the pornography itself. I have found such activity by conducting my own research – as I do with abuse of {any kind} and when doing so, I have followed protocol. Meaning, I immediately send a detailed description of the crime being committed to law enforcement agencies; including the FBI (2x in the past year), high-ranking political officials, along with abuse prevention organizations regarding the availability of child pornography on the internet. Within my

complaint(s) I make it abundantly clear: "It is not enough to just scan a router – these sites must be BLOCKED." To date, all of my complaints by law enforcement and political officials have been ignored.

As per the fact I speak about abuse of any kind and I am always looking for areas where abuse may present itself (I never have to look too long before I find it), I was horrified to see child pornography on the internet still goes unchecked and unblocked. This is one of many related fights in which I am still involved.

Upon reading more about abuse, I also found that there is a tremendous amount of discussion regarding what I call the four pillars of abuse: Child Abuse, Rape, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Assault. However, buried inside these four main areas are several underlying areas of abuse. For example, to make this point I will simply ask a question: Why does the U.S. Military need a Military Sexual Trauma Counselor? In short, not only are there men and women trapped in a war zone which comes with its own set of hazards, but now they have to be consumed with the fear of being raped. Obviously, there is a problem and I applaud the U.S. government for recognizing the problem. But like the child pornography on the internet, it is not enough just to 'scan' the routers; you have to block these sites. I would also like to see a world leader speak openly about the issue of rape inside the U.S. military. Or abuse itself. The problem of abuse is pervasive; however, it is never mentioned during the Presidential State of the Union Address. The 'hush' factor because the issue is too sensitive or the matter is too harsh and/or ugly just does not pass the litmus test any longer. Nations all over the world need to speak about and act quickly on the issue of abuse of any kind.

How ironic that a world leader or political official will speak about abuse while they are cutting off funding for social programs, decimating the budgets of abuse prevention organizations, and passing waivers in order to do business with countries known for torturing its own citizens. The message is conflicting and mixed. So, I say to world leaders ... are you with us or against us? Do you honestly care? Proof and Point: The U.S. has put in place these sexual trauma counselors within their military; however, the rape statistics are not going down – again ... they are going up.

I am simply stating facts and I am not degrading the brave efforts of the U.S. military or those currently in a position of power. Nor am I stating that every politician is corrupt. I am asking the hard questions. That's all. When I look for a problem which may exist, I do not set my hypothesis to avoid certain political parties because I am a Democrat or Republican; racial groups because I am a Caucasian; gender because I am a male; sexual orientation because I am not gay, etc. Without prejudice, I do my research and reach my conclusions based on fact. Even if that means shedding a not so positive light on my own government or my own gender, and/or color and so forth.

When an individual is abused, there remains a large part of them that cannot heal without the proper treatment; including compassion. They do not heal quickly. Their psyche is damaged and if left unchecked, just like power, it manifests itself into an awful and distorted monster both capable and successful at doing a great deal of harm. The world has recognized this is a fact, but has yet to address it.

The majority of those abused are barely functioning human beings. For example, when I was being abused, living hand-to-mouth, needing shelter, etc., I was not looking forward to competing in the National Spelling Bee. I was operating off pure survival, with little or no sleep, and when I became older – I was always at the ready to do great damage if threatened.

The further I delve into abuse prevention and treatment, the more I offend many people. Since 2009 I have developed many close relationships with those who can identify with me because they were abused. However, few can and will identify with me if they have not been abused. The approach I am constantly faced with is, "I don't want to talk about it" and when I honestly try and TALK ABOUT IT with anyone outside of a close circle of those that understand, I am shunned at the very least. Let me

agree wholeheartedly that the subject of abuse of any kind is a difficult matter to discuss, but so is cancer or HIV/AIDS, and/or "ANY" human suffering. I honestly thought that Penn State would bring a whirlwind of discussion regarding abuse and openness to the forefront, but it did not. As a matter of fact, judging it by the state of social programs, abuse prevention organizations, Child Advocacy Centers (CACs), and anything related to Human Rights, it has been further pushed to the background. There are moments when this is so abundantly obvious to me – it appears to be intentional. One of many reasons this is so disturbing is the fact we now have the cognitive and neurological studies to prove the critical effects of abuse. It feels like the more we learn about abuse, the less those in a position of power want us to know or do anything positive about it. It is almost like saying, if we fully understand how destructive abuse is; we as a society, as a world, would demand our leaders fix the problem. Or, at the very least ... care. Is that too much to ask? Based on current events all around the world, the answer is a resounding YES!

I have had discussions with advocates from all over the world and none have disagreed. Furthermore, I have purposely gone into each and every discussion with the intent on disproving the fact world leaders do not want to end abuse. It has been a very difficult eye-opening experience for me. Call it naivety, but I felt at one time people with the power to make the laws, were actually making them to preserve the value of human life, protect human rights, and with compassion. This belief is coming from a victim of abuse for the first 18 years of my life, so either I am a genuine optimist or an idiot.

What I do know to be true is that abuse is avoidable and we have the ability to end it altogether. It was a decade after Vietnam before the medical community began to recognize the effects of PTSD was the cause of the veterans' problems. Before that, the general community believed that the Vietnam vets were just a bunch of crazy drug addicts and alcoholics. What changed was that there were individuals present in the medical community which began to approach the veterans returning home with both intellectually and with compassion. Intellect gave the medical community the tools to study the veterans; however, without compassion the decision never would have been made. There was no money in it. Or so they thought. However, an indirect benefit (one that wasn't expected) was that the more Vietnam veterans that received the proper help and treatment, the more veterans became functional human beings. This reduced crime, social problems, violence, and increased a workforce capable of paying taxes (and governments love taxes).

Where are we now? Exactly where we began... Segue into paying taxes and becoming functional human beings who contribute to society – this is at the core of the issue of abuse. I can see this. You can see this. Why can't those responsible at the local, state, and federal level? Why can't governments all over the world? Why can't my neighbor, my friend, some of my family members?

We as a world must be united in addressing abuse treatment and prevention. There is a litany of information supporting the fact abuse is tearing apart the fabric of our world. We are not even talking about abuse any longer – what are talking about and fighting for is to stop a failing humanity.

My advocacy is not a calling. I fell into this accidentally; having only the intention of understanding what was wrong with me. Never did I expect to help others. I felt I was alone due to the abuse and had no idea there were so many others suffering. It wasn't the right or wrong time when I spoke out. When is a good time to discuss abuse? The answer is <u>always</u>, when it is present.

There is a definite loss of compassion against human beings in this world today. I want the world to change for you and for me. I have a unique vantage point being a victim and now survivor. But it is not enough. I need your help. The effects of abuse are 24-7. The cumulative effects are catching up to all of us. Whenever I see the hopelessness and powerlessness, I am back in the

abusive environment again. I am back trapped in my abuser's home. Under their terrible reign. I am personally now in a place I thought I would never have to go back to; I am there every time I witness abuse of any kind.

Running rampant and unchecked is this abuse throughout the world and kept hidden within the corridors of power. Those abused are carrying all of this weight and shame with them through their/our lives. When life's problems present themselves it is even more difficult for us. So, it is critical not to push more trauma into the lives of individuals which means; No War, No Waivers, No Tolerance of inhumane action of any kind. As I stated earlier, those in a position of power need to recognize this basic fact and take great care when it comes to making decisions that could lead to the harm of individuals. It all seems so easy to understand for some, but not those making the global decisions. For example, a bank forecloses on the home of a combat veteran two days before he deploys to Iraq. This is abuse. The world turns up-side-down with one stroke of a pen by an individual in a position that has the power to make a compassionate decision, but doesn't.

Somewhere along the way we did not lose our sense of compassion – we gave it away. But we can take it back. We can fight. From the moment we were abused, we are thrust into a fight for our mental and emotional wellbeing. For our lives. I know you are tired. I am tired too. But we are haunted by the darkness and it's closing in. There is a stigma behind admitting we are broken. The world and its leaders appreciate this stigma very much. But they are wrong. They have no compassion. We do. We never gave it up and it was never was taken away from us. Because you cannot take away the love if you hold onto it and remember it always wins.

I understand more and more of what is wrong with me and so many others. It is centered on the continued loss of programs designed to create a better society. Educational services. Employment opportunities. Behavioral and Mental Health Services. We have lost and are continuing to lose these Human Rights and the most basic is that of humane action against one another. There will always be hate in the world, but there is love too. The hope and the power of fighting against the darkness. The abused are trapped between a life we never had and want, and the life we have but have no idea how to accept.

We have a long way to go. And, we have come such a long way from where we started. However, it breaks my heart to share with you this truth – We are not even halfway home. It is up to me, you, and everyone on this earth to change where we are – for our own and each other's sake.

Gregg Tyler Milligan is an internationally-known author and child abuse prevention advocate. He has written two books, A Beautiful World, detailing his childhood and the horrific suffering Milligan endured at the hands of his mother and strangers. Milligan later completed the continuation to A Beautiful World, describing his next eleven years. Both books are published under the same volume, titled God Must be Sleeping. Milligan is a member of the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) Speakers Bureau and continues to spread his message of hope.

In his words, "Please remember, the reason we are here is to save one another - Break the cycle." More information can be found at godmustbesleeping.com/.