

WHEN LOVE HURTS

STORIES OF WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN
LEARNING TO END THE VIOLENCE IN THEIR LIVES



SUDHA NAIR
and the team at PAVE

Lessons From Violence

I HAVE WORKED on the issue of domestic violence in Singapore on and off for the past 27 years. The social workers at PAVE were pioneers in this work even before I came to the National University of Singapore in 1991 for a one-year sabbatical. Each time I have returned to Singapore I have been gratified to see the work of PAVE expand and so many other systems become concerned and involved in solving the issue of domestic violence.

We hear of the occasional extreme violent case in the news but behind each news event are hundreds of others whose stories are never heard. This book tells the stories behind headlines and gives the reader a much greater understanding of the breadth and depth of domestic violence in the lives of women — young and old — as well as the men who perpetrate this violence and the children who must live in homes where this violence is occurring.

These stories, read together, tell the ways that domestic violence affects the very fibre of Singapore society and how these impacts are not just at the moment of violence but result in long-lasting influences on the women, men and children in these homes. Reading all of these stories at once may be overwhelming and depressing. Reading selected ones and reflecting on a few at a time may be the best way to incorporate the lessons learned from the hardships evident in these people's lives.

I am deeply grateful to the pioneers at PAVE who have worked so hard for decades to improve the lives of those affected by domestic violence and, thus, improve the quality of life for all Singaporeans. I

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look forward to the decades ahead when even more progress will be made in their work to create both a society and individual lives free of violence.

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