

A psychological framework for understanding the Journey from Domestic Violence Victim to Corporate Thriver

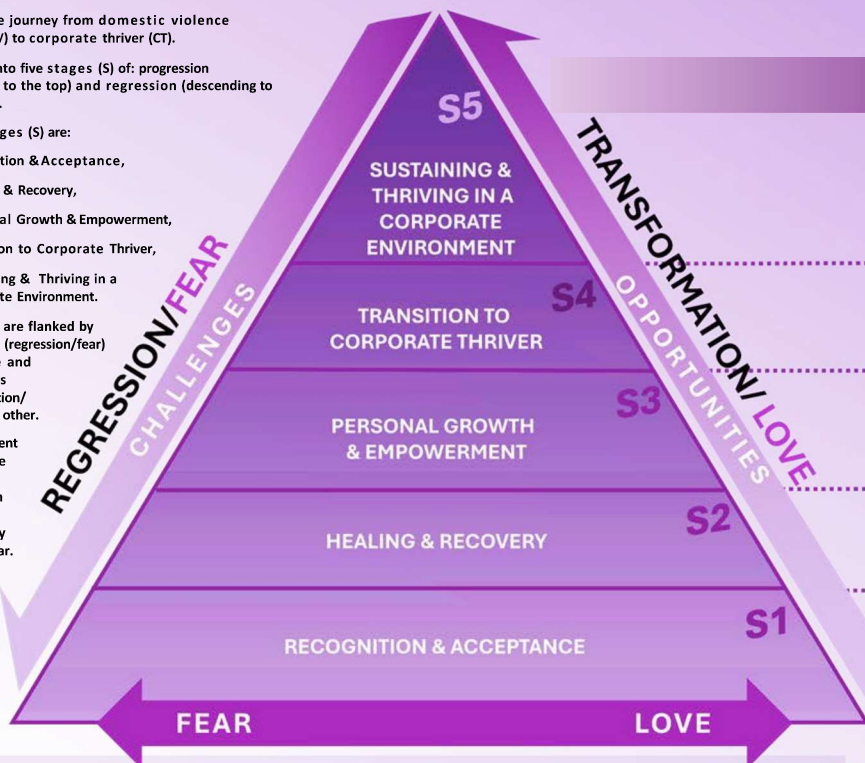
ORIENTATION	METHODOLOGY	PARTICIPANTS						FINDINGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic violence affects millions of women worldwide, with severe personal and professional impacts. Previous research has explored the journey of domestic violence victim to thriver but not the transition from Domestic violence victim to Corporate Thriver. This research aimed to develop a framework to understand the psychological journey from victim to professional success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A qualitative study, using constructivist grounded theory (CGT), was conducted in Alberta, Canada. Purposeful sampling of five female participants, using semi-structured interviews. CGT steps: Initial Data Collection and Coding, Focused Coding, Memo-Writing, Theoretical Sampling, Constant Comparative Method, Theory Development. 	Participant	Age range	Ethnicity	Currently not in abusive relationship	Leadership position	Marital status	Challenges and obstacles Overcoming Emotional Turmoil <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing overwhelming emotions, e.g. abandonment; self-doubt etc. The lingering effects of trauma created difficulties in navigating personal and professional lives. Psychological Struggles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing e.g. accusations of mental illness, lack of assertiveness. Struggles with e.g. self-esteem, trust issues, hindered ability to thrive in personal and professional lives.
	P1	40-50	Caucasian	YES	HR Manager	Married		
	P2	30-40	South East Asian (Chinese)	YES	Lawyer	Single		
	P3	50-60	South East Asian (Indian)	YES	Supervisor/ Team lead in Health industry	Widowed		
	P4	50-60	Caucasian	YES	Entrepreneur /author	Married		
	P5	30-40	Afro-Caribbean	YES	Nurse/ Nurse Educator	Single		

FRAMEWORK: ID Reclamation

IDENTITY RECLAMATION PYRAMID (mediated by Love and Fear)

Interpretation of the Identity Reclamation Pyramid

- Outlines the journey from domestic violence victim (DVV) to corporate thriver (CT).
- Is divided into five stages (S) of: progression (ascending to the top) and regression (descending to the bottom).
- The five stages (S) are:
 - S1: Recognition & Acceptance,
 - S2: Healing & Recovery,
 - S3: Personal Growth & Empowerment,
 - S4: Transition to Corporate Thriver,
 - S5: Sustaining & Thriving in a Corporate Environment.
- The stages are flanked by challenges (regression/fear) on one side and opportunities (transformation/love) on the other.
- The movement between the stages and within each stage is mediated by love and fear.



STAGES

Stage 5: Sustaining & Thriving in a Corporate Environment

The focus is on maintaining well-being, furthering personal and professional growth, and achieving long-term success and fulfillment in careers.

- Long-Term Success:** Aims for stability in a professional setting.
- Holistic Well-Being:** Emphasizes maintaining personal well-being alongside professional success.

Stage 4: Transition to Corporate Thriver

The focus is on significant personal growth, empowerment, and transformation as preparation to enter or re-enter the workforce and pursue career goals.

- Career Focus:** Emphasizes professional development and independence.
- Goal Orientation:** Encourages setting and achieving professional goals.

Stage 3: Personal Growth & Empowerment

The focus is on rebuilding self-worth, agency, and empowerment and involves actively pursuing personal development opportunities, making strategic life choices, and affirming one's identity and contributions.

- Empowerment:** Highlights regaining control and confidence.
- Skill Development:** Encourages building personal and professional skills

Stage 2: Healing & Recovery

The journey of emotional and psychological healing, personal growth, and empowerment is embarked upon.

- Healing Focus:** Prioritizes mental and emotional recovery.
- Support Mechanisms:** Emphasizes the need for therapeutic interventions.

Stage 1: Recognition & Acceptance

The reality of the abuse is confronted and acknowledged.

- Foundation of Healing:** Validates experiences, initiating the healing process.
- Self-Awareness:** Crucial for understanding the impact of domestic violence.

FINDINGS: Themes

Survivor Resilience:

Participants exhibited remarkable resilience in overcoming the trauma of domestic violence and navigating their paths to success in the corporate realm sharing stories of inner strength, determination, and perseverance despite facing significant challenges.



"I knew I had the ability and strength to get through this, because I had been through it before; my resilience had been reaffirmed."
Participant 2

Psychological Healing:

Participants highlighted the importance of a multifaceted approach psychological healing and self-care in their journey towards corporate success emphasising the need for therapy, support groups, and self-reflection to address the emotional scars left by domestic violence and rebuild their sense of self-worth and confidence.



"I'm telling you all those works with the You Tube and you know, listening to music, crystal healing, reading. Just doing things that I want to do that I enjoy, my hobbies, you know, weight training, even if it was twenty minutes a day, looking in the mirror." Participant 5.

Professional Growth:

Participants discussed their professional growth and development within the corporate environment. They shared insights into the skills, strategies, and support systems that helped them transform from a victim to a corporate thriver and advocate despite the obstacles they faced as domestic violence survivors.



"So, I've even given talks now to different groups on what to look for, what abuse actually is because a lot of people don't even know and even women will say I don't know if I'm being abused, my husband says I'm not abused." Participant 4

Empowerment and Advocacy:

Participants expressed a sense of empowerment and a desire to advocate for other domestic violence survivors. They showed involvement in activism, mentorship programs, and community initiatives aimed at raising awareness, providing support, and promoting systemic change. While also emphasising a journey of self-affirmation, the importance of self-worth and resilience in overcoming domestic violence and thriving.



"You should never let anybody abuse you, and you should never let somebody have power over you. And you should never let anyone make you feel like you are beneath them."
Participant 3

Social Support Networks:

The role of social support networks, both personal and professional, emerged as a crucial factor in participants' journeys. They emphasized the significance of supportive friends, family members, mentors, and colleagues in providing encouragement, guidance, and opportunities for advancement.



"When I first started dating after my last marriage, a few of my girlfriends said, 'Well, you are obviously not very good at making wise choices, so you have to vet whoever you're dating through us if you're ever getting into another relationship.'"
Participant 1

OVERALL ANALYSIS

Strengths: Structured path from victimhood to professional success with clear stages and a positive outlook.

Risks: Inflexible; Does not account for: setbacks, individual differences, survivor's unique journeys, external influences, sets unrealistic expectations re: support and empowerment.

GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Allows for enhanced practice guidelines for:

- Therapists:** Offers a practical guide to support clients transitioning from victim to corporate thrivership.
- Victims:** Provides steps, tools, and strategies to navigate their recovery journey to corporate thrivership. The emerging theory provides a framework for victims to achieve professional success.
- Organizations:** Offers resources to support and retain employees who are domestic violence survivors.