



TASNEEM SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka, FGM/C takes place among the Moor, Malay, and Bohra communities. There is little research available on the prevalence, and there is no specific law against the practice.

“ When I was seven and living in Sri Lanka, like girls born into many Bohra families, my Mummy and Daddy drove me to a doctor to undergo FGM. I had no idea what was coming. Afterward, nothing was said, not a word.

Even after counseling, I don't remember anything about what actually happened, I can't remember the pain, I have completely locked the memories away to forget about them.

I was 16 when I started questioning my mum. She said: “We did it to make you clean, to make you a good wife and so you would stay with your husband. Girls who aren't cut become prostitutes.”

When I was 40, I went to tell my GP that I'd had FGM when I was seven, please can I have counseling. I could only do that because I was in Britain. The counselor was marvelous, she let me rage and cry. Now I am able to speak about things. The harm that FGM causes is not just physical, it is so much more.

When my genitals were cut, something was taken away from me that is part of what makes me a woman. It was taken from me without my consent and I can never get it back. This is fundamental - it was my right to have as a human being, they took it away and they didn't see it as harm.

I think we really need to change the face of FGM because it doesn't just happen to people in Africa, it is everywhere.

People are so tightly controlled and feel petrified. If you want to speak out against something like FGM, you have to make up your mind that you are happy to cut yourself completely from the community.

There is no halfway. ”



For Tasneem's full story head to equalitynow.org/Tasneem

FGM/C IS GLOBAL
but so is the
movement to end it