



For empowering women



S. HARIKISHORE I A S



Executive Director
Kudumbashree

Activities for women empowerment activities are one of the core areas of Kudumbashree's work. All these years, Kudumbashree have been conducting multiple trainings and many activities to raise the position of women in the society, to help them realise their rights and needs and to motivate them to unleash their real strengths. In today's article, I would like to share the life experience shared by a Kudumbashree member during a training session. She elaborates how Kudumbashree helped her in getting empowered.

Month - January 2019

Venue - Training Hall, Gender Self Learning Programme of Kudumbashree

Facilitator asked the participants to elaborate their experiences in general and one of the members stood up and shared her story, as given below

“I was brought up as the dearest daughter of my parents.

I had not faced any agonies in my life during my childhood. I have had the same freedom that the boys used to experience. I got married when i was studying in tenth standard. That made me realise that the society and family recognised that I am in a position to live a family life, give birth to children and to raise them.

After marriage, it was an introduction to a totally different living condition. I became part of a patriarchal family, where woman have to ask for permission for each and every action. None other than my husband spoke good words to me. My mother in law used to torture me and I had to do all the never ending household chores. I silently tolerated my mother on law who used to grab all the money and clothes, which my husband used to sent to me from abroad. I had to make use of the old used dresses! I thought that women are not supposed to react. So i suppressed all my worries and remained patient.

Before our marriage, my husband's family had assured to let me go for higher studies. When I approached my husbands family and expressed my desire to study, it was denied totally. On hearing my request, my mother in law shouted at me and said that all her children and in laws are educated and they need someone uneducated to take care of the household chores. I had no choice but to abandon my desire to study. Years passed and we

had three children. I lived all these years taking care of all of them.

After 10 years, my husband returned from abroad, with visa for me and our kids. I finally showed the courage to deny the objections somehow and we reached gulf. After that, I began to live my life fully. We raised our children well and built new home at our place. After 30 years, my husband returned to homeland. I became a neighborhood group member. I became part of meetings, discussions and awareness camps. I became CDS chairperson, panchayath member and even became block member, thanks to the social empowerment from Kudumbashree.

Now my husband's family need my help for anything and everything. I regret about the days during which I didnot respond. It is Kudumbashree which made me realise the real strength of women and raise me to a world of freedom, self respect and self realisation.”

We will discuss more about such activities (like what is Gender self learning etc) in the upcoming days.

Thanks to Smt. Rasiya, our Facilitator for recording and writing this story as told by a Kudumbashree member.

