



Resigning from the 'Abuse Club'

Have you had enough? Is it time to put abuse behind you, or do you want to keep your options open? You have found that the reasons for belonging to the 'Abuse Club' are no longer valid. You had little choice about joining - **membership is free when you are born male** - but you can make the decision to resign now that you are an adult.

So what will you do? Letting go of a lifestyle of abuse is like saying goodbye to an old friend. The friend may have got you into a great deal of trouble but you have been through a lot together, like real buddies or mates. There were pay-offs or benefits in being a member of the 'Abuse Club'. You often got what you wanted in the short term, at the expense of others.

Consider the following questions...

- *What do I fear most about resigning from the 'Abuse Club'?*
- *What feelings and thoughts do I have about walking away from the 'Abuse Club'?*
- *Will people respect me more, or less, for having resigned from the 'Abuse Club'?*
- *Which of my friends will try to convince me to renew my membership?*
- *What will I say to them about my reasons for resigning?*

More and more men are resigning from the 'Abuse Club' because they are sick and tired of the hassles that their membership causes. Like those around them, they have recognised that continuing with membership will have dire consequences for themselves and others. The 'Abuse Club' secretary is probably overloaded with resignations. If they continue at this rate the club will worry about its long-term chances of surviving, although one or two of the old diehards might stay with it to the end.

One day John, one of the men in a group I ran, brought the following letter in to read to us. He had left this letter on the fridge as a constant reminder of his commitment to a non-abusive lifestyle.

Check out John's letter on the following page...

John's letter

The Secretary

The Abuse Club

Dear Secretary and Committee Members

I have decided after much thought to resign from the 'Abuse Club'. I know I have been a member from a very young age, but I now find that I have outgrown what the club can offer me. I have also questioned over the past few months the very attitudes, principles and beliefs that the club is based on.

The aims of the Abuse Club have done little for me in helping me get along with others. They have got in the way, causing more pain than pleasure. This includes not just my own anguish, but that of my family and close friends. I can no longer live with the Old Rule Book and keep my self-respect as a man.

My intentions are to join a new club that has started up called the Respectful Relaters, which has a very interesting, charter and code book. It is more geared to what my needs are in today's world.

Yours faithfully

John

It is important to mark changes such as resigning from the Abuse Club. Some men want to celebrate with members of their family, friends and supporters of the **'Respectful Relaters Club'**. Some men will make a public statement to people who are important to them. This is useful, a bit like a person who has given up smoking telling others. Whatever you choose to do, call upon others to share the moment.