

**Witness Name: Jasmine Amber Grew**

**Statement: WITN1160001**

**Exhibits: WITN1160002–03**

**Dated: 1 June 2022**

## **ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE**

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### **WITNESS STATEMENT OF JASMINE AMBER GREW**

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I, Jasmine Amber Grew, will say as follows: –

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 My name is Jasmine Amber Grew. I was born on GRO-C 1977 in Christchurch.
- 1.2 I have three children, two boys and one girl, 26, 19 and my youngest son is 16.
- 1.3 My partner is an engineer on a boat, he goes away for about six weeks at a time. I have my mother here in Nelson and my sister. I spend a lot of time with my mother.
- 1.4 My dad died in 2012 in a motorbike accident.
- 1.5 My older brother, his wife and children left the Jehovah's Witnesses about 10 years ago. My sister is eight years younger than me. She is no longer a Jehovah's Witness either. Because she is younger than me, she was not in the religion for as long as I was, and it was easier for her to leave it.

- 1.6 Due to health issues that I now have, I cannot work, and I cannot drive. I had a major stroke when I was 22 years old, and I could not walk or talk for a couple of years. Recovery took a long time. I also had epilepsy following-on from my stroke.
- 1.7 After some years of recovery, I resumed working full-time. I have worked as a hairdresser and as a Youth Social Worker.
- 1.8 About four years ago, suddenly my speech and fine motor skills, including my dexterity, deteriorated. An EEG showed that I was having around 100 seizures a day.
- 1.9 I was sick for about six months and had to use a walking stick. These seizures have reduced in frequency although I still get nerve pain and I am aware of my seizures. I have been told that I will not get any better. I do not dwell on this. I have good things in my life. Life is too short, if you do not laugh, you will cry.
- 1.10 My life now is good, and I am grateful for everything. I have family, and good friend support.

## **2. STATEMENT PURPOSE**

- 2.1 I have come forward to the Royal Commission because it is important to me, that I share with others, my experiences in the Jehovah's Witnesses religion. I believe that too many lives are impacted by abuse within the religion, and by the abusive Jehovah's Witnesses processes on members of the faith.
- 2.2 I also want to make this subject less taboo. There is so much stigma around sexual abuse, and if it is not talked about openly, it will remain hidden.
- 2.3 I know that Jehovah's Witnesses are being told by elders in their congregations, not look at the Royal Commission of Inquiry (AiC) website.
- 2.4 In 2022 there needs to be more openness and transparency in faith-based institutions. I believe that the more it is exposed, the less it will happen.
- 2.5 Ex-Jehovah's Witnesses have a Facebook page where this stuff is shared. There has been a lot of content on this page about the Royal Commissions. This includes content from Australian ex-Witnesses.

### **3. JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES – PATHWAY INTO CARE**

- 3.1 When I was two years old, my mother and father were GRO-B hippies when Jehovah's Witnesses knocked on the door of their Greta Valley, North Canterbury home.
- 3.2 My mother was only 24, and a very vulnerable solo mum. It seemed inevitable that she would split up with my father, anyway.
- 3.3 She was not working. Both my parents were susceptible to a convincing approach by a religious faith. The Jehovah's Witnesses prey on people who are most vulnerable. They give false hope. They provide the vulnerable with a community and a family and a sense of belonging.
- 3.4 When people outside of the religion open their door to Jehovah's Witnesses and accept the JW magazine, the Jehovah's Witnesses return to the person's door and invite them to begin studying with the Witnesses. They work their way into your life, so the relationship becomes very tight. They also instill in you fear of the outside world.
- 3.5 So, in anticipating becoming a solo parent, my mother knew she had children to protect.
- 3.6 My father decided against becoming too involved in the religion and my mum said, "Well I'm going," and they split up over it. Our congregation was Gloucester Street from then on.
- 3.7 My father took a different direction and I did not see him again until I was 14 years old.
- 3.8 On Tuesday nights, at other members' homes, my mother became involved in the Jehovah's Witnesses book studies, showing religious verses and scriptures, the purpose being to demonstrate how good your life could be.
- 3.9 Being baptised in the Jehovah's Witnesses is different from other religions. It is when the Jehovah's Witnesses decide you are ready to commit completely to the faith. My mother applied to the congregation elders, and she was baptised. This is how my siblings and I became Jehovah's Witnesses.

### **4. LIFE AS A WITNESS**

- 4.1 As a Jehovah's Witness fear is embedded in you.

- 4.2 You become brainwashed to believe everything the leaders say. Fear is instilled in members, from day one.
- 4.3 My mother was so convinced, her whole mindset changed. This is the case for most Jehovah's Witnesses.
- 4.4 The way I was brought up was that the whole congregation is your family. If anything goes wrong, the Jehovah's Witnesses will be there to fix it. It is your whole life. You go to them for anything. There is an obligation on members to report, to the elders, unacceptable behaviour by other members. This also extends to an obligation to confess your own sins to the elders.
- 4.5 There were about 100 people in the Gloucester Street congregation. Many of them from my age group have since left the religion.
- 4.6 Jehovah's Witnesses is a religious faith that is exclusive of people outside the religion but not to the same level of exclusivity as the Exclusive Brethren.
- 4.7 Book studies are on Tuesday evenings and typically at a local elder's home. Members have books they are studying. The congregation members arrive and sit in a circle and the elder guides the group. The elder will say, "Let's read from this book." They nominate the scripture. There would usually be around five families attending.
- 4.8 There is a Jehovah's Witness book called "The Day's Text". As a member you are expected to get up and have breakfast and read this scripture, it changes every day. The book covers a year of daily scriptures.
- 4.9 The congregation meetings are larger. They are held every Thursday evening.
- 4.10 Members sit and sing a song from the song book. The elders then talk on a topic such as how to fulfil your spiritual commitments.
- 4.11 There is also talk about topical social events, for example currently the Royal Commission of Inquiry (AiC). They reinforce to the faithful that it is all the devil's work.
- 4.12 The elders strongly advise against reading Internet content. The elders tell the faithful that they are to avoid the dishonest content of the news.
- 4.13 At these meetings, the elders set the females up with other females in the congregation to go on the stage and re-enact something biblical in front of people. This is one of the only things females could be involved in.

- 4.14 The elders are all males. Females play a subservient role in the Jehovah's Witnesses religion. They have no voice. Men hold the power and women are excluded from it.
- 4.15 Saturday morning is when the "witnessing" happens. "Witnessing" is when members knock on people's doors and attempt to convert them to the faith.
- 4.16 Sunday is also a meeting day. However, these meetings change depending on daylight savings. It could be two hours in the morning or in the evening. These meetings were spiritual.
- 4.17 For me knocking on doors as a child, with other JW adults, and later, as a teenager, was horrible. I was so embarrassed and used to pray that I would not see my friends from school. I used to hope that the doors we were knocking on were not the homes of other people I knew from outside of religion.
- 4.18 We had to recite what we were about to say, and these things have stayed in my memory.
- 4.19 There was also country "witnessing" where we would go out into the country, and it would be freezing in the middle of winter. As little kids you have a little picnic lunch and children are always with an older member. Children start doing this when they are just toddlers. Jehovah's Witnesses use their children to win people over, so they can extend the conversation at the door. Children must say something during the witnessing procedure.
- 4.20 Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to convert people from all levels of society, including gang members. They accept anyone, no matter what their history is.
- 4.21 If a person shows any degree of interest, the Witnesses note this down and arrange a second visit to the property.
- 4.22 When a person is disfellowshipped (excommunicated) their address is noted as being one to avoid when out witnessing.
- 4.23 My abuser's parents knocked on my door in Nelson in recent years. I told them not to come back, but they did. Because I had not been baptised I could not be disfellowshipped.
- 4.24 In this religion, sex before marriage is a sin. The Jehovah's Witnesses young females must be chaperoned everywhere they go.
- 4.25 You cannot live with the person before marriage, so you must make that commitment straight away and people get married young.

- 4.26 This can lead to violence in the home because you have not had the opportunity to get to know your marital partner nor the experience of living with that person before you are married.
- 4.27 Meeting a life partner outside the religion is not allowed. Jehovah's Witnesses religion has its own Tinder, and the only way to access it is through "The Day's Text".

### *The Belief*

- 4.28 Jehovah is God's name, and the faithful are God's witnesses. Jehovah's Witnesses are obligated to spread the word to save as many people as possible by converting them to the religion.
- 4.29 The overarching principle is the belief that Armageddon will come and destroy all evil on earth including all people who are not Jehovah's Witnesses.
- 4.30 As a Jehovah's Witness you are told, "if we look at what is happening around us, the end is near", and they have been saying that my whole life.
- 4.31 They say Armageddon will happen and you will live in a paradise earth.
- 4.32 You could have lions around you and be friends with them and they will not attack you. There are no faults or flaws. Nobody would be obese; everyone would be perfect.
- 4.33 That is the whole aim of all of it. Life is just euphoric. However, you must be a Witness to get to this paradise earth.
- 4.34 Jehovah's Witnesses are brainwashed to believe this, especially those who are born into it because they do not know any different. That is the scary thing. It is ingrained in you from birth. The fear of being destroyed in Armageddon ensures people remain faithful to the religion.
- 4.35 They believed that the year 2000 was when Armageddon would come. The faithful were particularly mindful of their faith in the lead-up to the millennium and of course, it came and went without incident.
- 4.36 In the faith there is so much fear of the outside world.
- 4.37 I remember being under 10 years old and being told by an elder in a talk that, if as a woman you are being raped, attacked, or assaulted, you should call out Jehovah's name and he will protect you.
- 4.38 The fear from hearing this from the elder remained in my memory and I always had this fear I was going to be raped.

4.39 This type of preaching had this effect on people in the congregation. We were taught to fear the world outside the religion.

### *School*

4.40 I went to South New Brighton Primary School.

4.41 Jehovah's Witnesses do not celebrate birthdays, Christmas, or Easter. As a Witness I was excluded from those celebrations.

4.42 At school assemblies I was not allowed to be present to sing the Christmas carols. I was taken out to sit in a back room. As a child this was humiliating.

4.43 There were about six of us at the school. We were not allowed to go to the birthday parties of other non-Witness children. This was so cruel.

4.44 I was not permitted to partake in the singing of the National Anthem.

4.45 As a child Witness you must not swear. I would accidentally swear and think "Oh God please forgive me," and then be so filled with fear that another Jehovah's Witness child had overheard me.

4.46 You must report to the elders any sins, like swearing. I never did, but that fear is always there.

4.47 You must pray before every meal. You can pray silently, and this is what I did, so nobody would know.

4.48 Jehovah's Witnesses children must not go to other school friends' homes after school. There were no sleepovers at friends' homes. It was strongly discouraged.

4.49 I was only permitted to play with all the other kids at school.

4.50 Most of my friends at school were non-religious people.

4.51 We moved to North Brighton Primary School and Intermediate School, and then I moved on to Aranui High School in Christchurch.

4.52 At high school I was taken out of sex education classes. It was embarrassing and horrible. I stayed at Aranui High until I was 14 years old.

4.53 This was around the time my father contacted me. We would then see each other every weekend.

4.54 My brother GRO-B  
1 discovered his own father living in GRO-B Australia, and he moved over there to be with him.

4.55 My mother, my sister GRO-B  
2 and I then moved to Nelson to be near my mother's parents.

### *Socialising*

- 4.56 Adult members of the religion are allowed to drink alcohol, but not become intoxicated.
- 4.57 My mum is loud and full of life, and the only thing she could do to socialise was to host potluck dinners and fancy-dress parties. She had these regularly. The guests had to be Witnesses.
- 4.58 Unmarried adults are chaperoned everywhere. If there are unmarried males and females in the same room, there must be someone else present. It was ridiculous.
- 4.59 I remember once my mum had a guy over to pick up some plants from our home and they were spied on by other Witnesses peeking in from outside the window.
- 4.60 They do not consider this intrusive and odd. It is just part of JW life.
- 4.61 The elders then questioned mum up about it.
- 4.62 My mum was a bit more free-willed than other Witnesses. She enjoyed having fun so was always hosting parties. Unfortunately, this provided opportunities for pedophiles in the religion.

### *Patriarchy*

- 4.63 Patriarchy in the Jehovah's Witnesses is accepted as normal.
- 4.64 Females must not wear pants to meetings or when witnessing (door knocking). Women cannot become builders or anything like that.
- 4.65 In a marriage as a woman, you cannot leave unless there has been adultery.
- 4.66 All the governing bodies are male.
- 4.67 "Pioneering" is the next level. Pioneers do not work outside of the religion. Their job is to peach and spread the word. Being a Pioneer is considered being employed, but without a wage.

### *Assemblies*

- 4.68 JW conventions or assemblies happen once or twice a year for about three days. A massive hall is hired, and everyone goes – one for the North Island, and one for the South.
- 4.69 When I was a member of the faith, the conventions were held in Dunedin. There would be food provided for thousands of people. It was a huge deal.



These included events like drama in which members would act out scenes from the bible.

- 4.70 There was a large family expense to attend conventions. This included travel and accommodation.
- 4.71 At the end of the hall there was a donation box. Everyone donated money. These donations boxes are in all Kingdom Halls.
- 4.72 Everyone bought new outfits and dresses to attend the conventions. It was like being on show. A lot of people find partners at these assemblies.
- 4.73 People are baptised there.
- 4.74 For males in the faith, it is a priority to get baptised and then work your way up to be a ministerial servant and then to become an elder.
- 4.75 Male members strive to become elders. It means respect and authority.
- 4.76 It is a position of standing in the congregation and means dominance and decision-making powers. They rule the place. Everything goes through them. Most elders are old, I remember all of ours were grey.

#### *Distrust of agencies*

- 4.77 There is a general distrust of government agencies including the Police. I know that if there is an issue in a family, elders must be contacted, and they then decide what action to take. It may involve the elder counselling the people involved.
- 4.78 There is no formal training or qualification in becoming an elder. If a man has been committed to the faith for a certain period, they may be approached to become an elder.
- 4.79 If a member gets involved in fornication or gambling, that person must confess to the elders.
- 4.80 No matter what, you are just told to go to them. People go and self-incriminate. The fear of not doing so is extremely powerful inside you.
- 4.81 I remember that there was a woman disfellowshipped five times for masturbating. She was so scared about Armageddon that she went and confessed to male elders five times, of her own accord.
- 4.82 It is the same concept of a judgement day, whether you will get through to the paradise earth.

### *Disfellowshipped*

- 4.83 When you are “disfellowshipped” you are shunned so to speak.
- 4.84 To return and be reinstated (and they all want to), the faithful must prove themselves worthy. They go along to the meetings and there is a back row for them only.
- 4.85 So, they sit in the back row by themselves, not allowed to talk to anyone. If the elders want the person back in the congregation and can see that they are trying, they will let them back in. The elders counsel them back into the religion.
- 4.86 Other members of the congregation are generally not informed of the reason for the disfellowship.
- 4.87 When you are a Jehovah’s Witness you only know the ways of the Witnesses. They are your friends and family. A lot of people within the religion work for each other.
- 4.88 So, if you are disfellowshipped, you are completely wiped, and you do not know how to go about your life outside of the Witnesses. They are your family, your social connection, and your support.
- 4.89 To break away, and start a life outside the religion, after being under its control, is extremely difficult.
- 4.90 If this happens when you are in the family home, some families are so devoted to the religion, that you would have to leave. It separates some families. Where do you go? What do you do? You have no realistic understanding of the world outside of the religion.
- 4.91 This fear prevents people from leaving the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

## **5. THE ABUSE**

- 5.1 Mum’s best friend, GRO-B-11, lived in GRO-B. She was also a solo mum.
- 5.2 Every school holiday period we would drive up or they would drive down to stay with us in Christchurch. We could go for weeks at a time to stay with her and her children.

- 5.3 [GRO-B-3] was my abuser; he was 19 years old when I was five years old. [GRO-B-3] was in the congregation, his dad was an elder, and he would always babysit for [GRO-B-11]'s children. When we were together, he would babysit us as well.
- 5.4 He would often travel down to Christchurch with [GRO-B-11]'s family when they visited us. It is such a community, that everybody trusts everybody in the Witnesses. It was not considered a weird thing for a young male to be babysitting, or to be offering to put us to bed.
- 5.5 Nowadays that may be questioned a bit more. But because it is the Jehovah's Witnesses religion, they all trust each other.
- 5.6 [GRO-B-4] [GRO-B-11]'s daughter, was two years older than me. She now goes by the name [GRO-B-5] and she lives in [GRO-B].
- 5.7 When [GRO-B-3] sexually abused me the first time, I was five years old. [GRO-B-4] was in the room at the time.
- 5.8 The abuse was through indecent touching and digital penetration.
- 5.9 [GRO-B-3] was reading me a Noddy book on his knee. When he finished, he left the room. [GRO-B-4] asked me, "What did he do to you, where did he touch you?"
- 5.10 I was embarrassed and felt shameful, so I denied that anything had happened. [GRO-B-4] told me that it was OK because he had done this to her too. I was so vulnerable and so embarrassed by it. I was only five, and he never told me not to tell. But I felt like I just could not say anything.
- 5.11 He went on to sexually abuse me in [GRO-B-11]'s home and in my own family home.
- 5.12 We wrote a sign for the bedroom door that said, no visitors allowed, especially [GRO-B-3]. These things feel so obvious now, but no one suspected anything. I never told anyone during these years, not even [GRO-B-4].
- 5.13 It happened every occasion that he babysat us, which was about two or three times a year.
- 5.14 The abuse stopped when my mother married my sister's dad, because we then stopped going up to [GRO-B].

## 6. DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE TO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

- 6.1 When I was 12 years old, in 1989, I had a good JW friend named GRO-B-6  
GRO-B-6.
- 6.2 I stayed at her home, and she told me her stepfather had abused her. I then told her what had happened to me because, through her disclosure to me, I then felt like I could tell her.
- 6.3 GRO-B-6 then told her stepfather. He then called and told my mother. I remember my mother came to pick me up from GRO-B-6's home and she was unhappy with me. She asked me why I had not told her. I was so embarrassed.
- 6.4 My Mum then told the elders at our congregation as she was expected, and obliged by the rules, to do.
- 6.5 The elders I remember were GRO-B-7, Brother GRO-B-8 Brother GRO-B-9
- 6.6 I attended the next Thursday meeting. Afterwards an elder came over to me and said, "We'd like to speak to you in the back room."
- 6.7 I went into the back room and the elders (males) were there. I had no support, no friend, no mother, nothing. My mother did not know, at the time, what was happening.
- 6.8 The elders interrogated me. They were asking the worst questions you can imagine, for someone who was just 12 years old.
- 6.9 They asked me, "Was it hard," referring to my abuser physically. They wanted to know everything. Their questions were inappropriate. At that age it was a terrifying experience for me. It seemed as abusive as the sexual abuse itself. This questioning went on for more than half an hour.
- 6.10 I was honest, and I told them everything because I had to be honest. I was fearful of the consequences of Armageddon.
- 6.11 The two words that come to me still now are humiliation and embarrassment.
- 6.12 They put the blame on me. They said I was wearing seductive clothing.
- 6.13 I was aged from five to eight years old at the time GRO-B-3 was sexually abusing me. I had been a friendly vibrant kid, but I do not remember the elders smiling or anything. They were very intimidating. They made no attempt to support or comfort me in this process.
- 6.14 When I came out from the meeting, everyone had gone home, apart from my family. We did not speak about it again.

- 6.15 My mother always felt that it was better for me not to talk to me about the abuse. She felt a lot of guilt about what happened, so it was not mentioned at all.
- 6.16 [GRO-B-6] and I did not speak about it ever again.
- 6.17 There was never any discussion of going to the Police. The elders said to my mother, that it is OK to just leave it with us.
- 6.18 Most Witnesses do not report such matters to the Police. Instead, they accept that raising it only with the elders is the appropriate course of action.
- 6.19 We moved to Nelson when I was 14, when my mother left my sister's dad. By coincidence, [GRO-B-3] s family, apart from him, was in our Nelson congregation.
- 6.20 They had moved from [GRO-B]. This is what opened everything up for me again, and why we left the congregation soon afterwards.

## 7. DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE (EXTERNAL)

- 7.1 When I was 15 years old, I was sent to the school Dean for wearing ripped jeans. It was at this time that I disclosed the abuse to the Dean, and I told her everything.
- 7.2 I then left school, got a full-time job and I went to Rape Crisis counselling for about 18 months. A few months later my mother, sister and I stopped going to the Jehovah's Witnesses meetings.

### *1994 Police Complaint*

- 7.3 I went through the Rape Crisis counselling, and through this I made a statement to the Police.

### ***Exhibit WITN1160002 – Police Statement: NZP0047808***

- 7.4 The Police asked if I wanted to press charges. I said that I did.
- 7.5 Detective Derek Milne was great. He contacted [GRO-B-4] but she declined to assist the investigation.
- 7.6 [GRO-B-3] was in Christchurch, no longer a Jehovah's Witness, working as a [GRO-B] at this time [GRO-B-3] was interviewed by the Police but denied sexually abusing me. The Police had insufficient evidence to proceed with charges against him.

7.7 Unfortunately, in this statement to the Police, I did not fully disclose the extent of [GRO-B-3]'s offending on me. For many years I had attempted to suppress and hide the memories of the abuse and for this reason, at this stage, could not disclose it completely.

#### *2011 Police Complaint*

7.8 It was not until 2011 that I spoke to the Police again.

7.9 Someone approached me about another woman who wanted to contact me about [GRO-B-3]. This was the other girl who had been abused by [GRO-B-3]. Her name was [GRO-B-10].

7.10 I contacted the Police and made another statement to Detective Ruth Collins on 29 July 2011. It was a video-recorded interview. I later signed a written statement the Police had prepared.

#### ***Exhibit WITN1160003 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Police Statement: NZP0047810***

7.11 I then discovered that [GRO-B-3] had abused multiple other girls. People in the religion had known of his offending, and he had simply been shifted from one congregation to the next. I do not know if he was disfellowshipped. I do not know if he had ever been baptised. A member can only be disfellowshipped if they have been baptised.

7.12 The Jehovah's Witnesses all said that it had been dealt with in the church, so they were not going to come forward and provide information to the Police. It was not a secret; people knew about it.

7.13 By this time, [GRO-B-3] was a [GRO-B] in [GRO-B]. This changed everything for us, we thought the police would not believe us [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B]

7.14 [GRO-B-10] and I were interviewed independently. I have never actually met her. I regret that I did not arrange a lawyer. Nobody told us to get a lawyer.

7.15 I went into Nelson Police Station and made a statement.

7.16 From then, it was a lengthy process. The detective guy attempted to get it through the court, but it failed to progress, because it was too historic.

7.17 The detective was nice and explained everything to us. I do not think that charges were ever laid but I am not certain of this.

- 7.18 I know of the statistics in charging someone, and I know how difficult it is to convict someone.
- 7.19 So many sex abuse cases do not even result in charges being laid.
- 7.20 So, this was not a surprise for me. The whole time the Police were saying, "This is quite historic" and "There may not be enough evidence."
- 7.21 At the conclusion of the case, the Police asked me whether we were prepared to go to a full trial to see whether [GRO-B-3] could keep his job in [GRO-B]
- 7.22 The whole time we were trying to get it to court, he was stood down from [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and I both said yes, and [GRO-B-3] resigned the next day.
- 7.23 In 2018 I was one of four Jehovah's Witnesses survivors who appeared on a TV documentary by The Spin-Off, called Silent Lambs. This documentary is still available for viewing on-line. We did not know each other but all had consistent accounts of our experiences as survivors of sexual abuse within the faith and of the abusive internal judicial processes we had been put through by the religion.
- 7.24 I know through the Silent Lambs documentary that [GRO-B-3] is now living in Australia.

## 8. IMPACT OF ABUSE

- 8.1 I am open now about what happened and how it has impacted me. It still affects me. From the age of 10 years, I have had nightmares about the sexual abuse I was subjected to.
- 8.2 I have nightmares still. It is things like this that stick with you. You sometimes think you are over it, but it is so ongoing.
- 8.3 It is when I am asleep, so it is in my subconscious, and it's ingrained in me.
- 8.4 I did not realise until talking to the Royal Commission of Inquiry (AiC) wellbeing team, that what I have is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I had never thought of it like that before.
- 8.5 When my daughter was about the same age as I had been, aged five to eight, that was a huge trigger for me. Everything came flooding back, the thoughts

and memories. I looked at her and thought, "I was that young." The thought of that happening to my daughter was really distressing for me.

- 8.6 It has been horrible for my poor kids, running into my room and trying to wake me up when I was having nightmares.
- 8.7 My kids have always known that I was sexually abused. I am so grateful they do because it has meant that my kids' friends have felt they can talk to me about what they have been going through. I have helped other victims.
- 8.8 I went to counselling when I was 15, and then again when I went to court. I think I will have to keep attending counselling every now and then because of the nightmares. I need them to stop.

## **9. REDRESS**

- 9.1 I have not claimed church compensation for the abuse I was subjected to or for the abusive judicial process the Jehovah's Witnesses put me through as a 12-year-old girl.
- 9.2 I have no confidence in the Jehovah's Witnesses religion ever acknowledging responsibility.
- 9.3 Their focus is, and has always been, firmly on reinstating the offender and forgiveness for what they consider sins, not crimes.

9.4

GRO-C

## **10. LOOKING FORWARD**

- 10.1 Abusive offending against children in faith-based care must stop. There must be a law introduced to mandate reporting of complaints of abuse to the Police by all faith-based institutions.
- 10.2 The Jehovah's Witnesses, other closed community religious faiths and all religious institutions should be held accountable for protecting offenders from public investigation and prosecution.
- 10.3 There needs to be transparency.



- 10.4 There needs to be checks and balances put in place to prevent abuse being covered up.
- 10.5 Sadly, I have little faith in the Jehovah's Witnesses ever changing their mindsets in this regard.

### STATEMENT OF TRUTH

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**GRO-C**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

7/6/2022

**GRO-C**