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**A self-reflective
film-based learning
resource**

on three forms of modern slavery

August 2025

SSI For equality
of life.

Introduction

This guide has been created for individuals to watch the films independently and engage in thoughtful reflection using the accompanying questions provided under each story.

Developed by SSI and
the SToP Modern Slavery Project
Reference Group
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This guide is designed to deepen their understanding of forced marriage, servitude, and forced labour through personal reflection. With each video there is a section with reflective questions, points of law, and information about support services.

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Understanding modern slavery

Modern slavery is an umbrella term that describes practices which involve the use of coercion, threats, deception, or abuse of power to exploit people and deny them their right to choice and freedom.

Common forms of modern slavery are:

- Human trafficking
- Slavery
- Worst forms of child labour
- Forced marriage
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Debt bondage
- Deceptive recruitment

Common indicators of modern slavery are:

- Someone is not allowed to leave their work or home freely.
 - A person's passport or important documents are held by someone else.
 - No wages or wages are withheld.
 - Abusive working or living conditions.
 - A person owes debt to their employer.
 - A person has restricted movement or is unable to leave employment.
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What you will need

- A room or space where you feel safe and comfortable.
- A room where children do not pass through while immersing yourself.
- A laptop with internet access.

Creating a safe space

- We encourage you to take breaks if needed.
- We encourage you to reflect on your responses to the questions being asked.

How to watch the videos

- The videos have natural community discussion sections. Here you can either pause to reflect on the questions provided or watch the whole video before reflecting on the questions.
- Total session time: 15-20 minutes.

Trigger warning

The videos contain sensitive content related to forced marriage, domestic servitude, and labour exploitation. Please take care of yourself during the session.

Self-reflective guide

Forced marriage

Overview

You will watch a short video to explore the topic of marriage and reflect on it.

Objectives

- Understand the difference between arranged and forced marriage.
- Learn about the role of choice, pressure, and the concept of free and full consent.
- Understand the personal, social, and legal impacts of forced marriage.
- Know where to get help and support.

Definition: forced marriage

When a person gets married without freely and fully consenting because of coercion, threat or deception or because they're incapable of understanding the nature and effect of the marriage ceremony because of age or mental capacity, or the individual is under the age of 16 years.



Background to the story

15-year-old Sara lives with her parents and three siblings - one older brother, a younger sister, and a younger brother. Sara's parents migrated to Australia when Sara was two years of age to provide a better life for the family. Sara wants to be a marine biologist when she grows up. She has a lot of career aspirations and wants to do well in life and make her parents proud. Sara is very close to her parents.

 **Ripples of a Promise:**
youtu.be/ELFmSOKrto8
(watch the video)

Self-reflective guide

Forced marriage

Scene 1: Breaking the news

Q 1: What is happening in this scene?

Reflection:

Think about how the father is making decisions and whether Sara is given much choice in the decision.

Q 2: Do conversations about marriage usually happen like this?

Reflection:

Is there a discussion here or is it decided by the parents. What about the concept of choice, and how does it play out in arranged vs forced marriages?

Scene 2: Talking to friends

Q 1: How might family, cultural and traditional expectations influence Sara's ability to say no?

Reflection:

Obedience, fear of shame, or family promises might prevent her from speaking up, and how these might be some of the reasons behind someone agreeing to a marriage even if they don't want to.

Q 2: What might happen if Sara is to go ahead with the marriage?

Reflection:

Dropping out of school, losing independence, health risks, early pregnancy, mental health issues, domestic, family and sexual violence, financial dependency, domestic servitude, limited or no career prospects.

Scene 3: Family pressure

Q 1: How do Sara's parents try to convince her?

Reflection:

Love, saying that Zac comes from a good family, future security. Reflect on whether they are trying to guilt her, express love, or talk about what's best for her. Reflect on coercion and how it is being used to persuade Sara into accepting the marriage.

Q 2: Does Sara have a genuine choice in this situation?

Reflection:

What does free and full consent look like, and, whether there is room for Sara to say no without pressure or consequences.

Additional reflection questions (optional)

- What have I learned about free and full consent?
 - How can I use this knowledge to support others or raise awareness in my community?
 - Who can I talk to if I see or suspect a situation of forced marriage?
-

Self-reflective guide

Forced marriage

What does the law say

- Forced marriage is illegal in Australia and it carries jail time.
- Marriage under 16 years of age falls under forced marriage.
- Irrespective of age, for a marriage to be legal, one must freely and fully consent to the marriage. Coerced consent does not equal to free and full consent.

To learn more visit:

mybluesky.org.au/i-might-be-getting-married

Where to get help

- **My Blue Sky**
mybluesky.org.au
- **Forced marriage specialist support program**
lwb.org.au/services/forced-marriage-support/
- **The Additional Referral Pathway**
salvationarmy.org.au/additional-referral-pathway/

To further enhance your knowledge and understanding about modern slavery you can undertake this free e-module developed by Anti-Slavery Australia
open.uts.edu.au/uts-open/study-area/law/modern-slavery/

Self-reflective guide

Domestic servitude

Overview

You will watch a short video to understand domestic servitude within an intimate or familial relationship. Domestic servitude is when someone is forced to work in a private home, often without pay, freedom, or the ability to leave. It might occur within familial relationships as well as within an employer context.

Objectives

- Recognise the signs of domestic servitude in private homes.
- Differentiate between domestic violence and domestic servitude.
- Understand the legal definition and rights of individuals.
- Promote reflection and awareness in the community.

Definition: domestic servitude

When a person does not consider themselves free to stop working or to leave their place of work or a relationship because of coercion, threat or deception and the person's freedom is significantly restricted.



Background to the story

Mimi was 20 years old when she migrated to Australia on a spouse visa. Mimi lived with her parents and two younger sisters in her home country before migrating to Australia. Mimi's parents have worked hard to provide well for her and her sisters, however life in her home country has limited opportunities, especially for women. The parents want to find good men for their daughters to marry.

 **My Truth:**
youtu.be/EI7T0LY4ZkA
(watch the video)

Self-reflective guide

Domestic servitude

Scene 1: Dinner with friends

Q 1: What is your impression of Mimi's and Lee's relationship?

Reflection:

How is power expressed in Lee's interaction with Mimi and whether this relationship feels equal, respectful, or caring? Does it show signs of control, fear, and power imbalance? Reflect on Mimi's body language, tone, and how much autonomy she has. Does she have a choice and voice in the relationship?

Q 2: What does this say about gender roles, expectations, and control?

Reflection:

Consider how traditional gender roles may be used to justify unequal treatment or unpaid work at home. Explore how societal and cultural norms might shape expectations that women should be obedient, invisible, or always be available to serve. Think about how these expectations can mask coercive control or domestic servitude, especially when combined with power imbalances like dependency, isolation, and immigration threats.

Scene 2: Fall out from dinner

Q 1: What are some warning signs of control and abuse?

Reflection:

Reflect on how Mimi responds to Lee and whether Lee is angry about the situation or is this about exerting control over Mimi? Observe Mimi's body language and how scared she looks. Does this go beyond a typical disagreement in a relationship? There is emotional and psychological abuse, financial abuse, restriction in movement, threats, coercive control, inequality in the relationship, and isolation.

Q 2: How might Mimi's family respond if they knew?

Reflection:

Reflect on the fear of bringing shame upon the family and the impact on family honour. In some families they may unintentionally dismiss signs of servitude as normal or as fulfilling ones' responsibility as a wife. Families might prioritise reputation, stability, keeping the peace, and potential impacts on the marriage prospects of other daughters over how the person is being treated.

Self-reflective guide

Domestic servitude

Scene 3: Personal reflections

Q 1: What barriers might prevent Mimi from leaving this situation?

Reflection:

Limited knowledge about her rights in Australia, she has no access to money, language barriers, fear of deportation, impacts on her wider family, not wanting to bring shame upon her family, family obligation, and a sense of duty towards her family. In some cultures, divorce might be considered a taboo.

Q 2: What is the difference between domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) and domestic servitude, and how does coercive control appear differently in each?

Reflection:

Mimi is often required to work like a servant under constant control, has no freedom to stop, and is isolated from others. She believes that she has no legal or social options. Mimi's story highlights psychological imprisonment and dependency, due to threat, deception, and coercion.

In DFSV, coercive control often includes emotional abuse, financial control, and isolation. In domestic servitude, these are compounded by forced labour, immigration threats, restricted movement, and the expectation of unpaid, ongoing work where the person has no choice and control over their situation.

Additional reflection questions (optional)

- Why might a person experiencing domestic servitude within an intimate or familial relationship not see it as a form of abuse?
- How can I use this knowledge to support others or raise awareness in my community?
- Who can I talk to if I see or suspect a situation of domestic servitude?

Self-reflective guide

Domestic servitude

What does the law say

- Domestic servitude is one form of modern slavery and is a serious crime in Australia.
- The Commonwealth Criminal Code criminalises servitude and penalties can include imprisonment of up to 20 years.

Where to get help

- **The Additional Referral Pathway**
salvationarmy.org.au/additional-referral-pathway/
- **Anti-Slavery Australia**
antislavery.org.au/contact/

It is important to note that domestic servitude does not only happen within a family relationship and can happen outside of a family relationship such as when working for an employer. For example, someone is brought to Australia to work as a domestic worker in a private household but instead is exploited. It can happen in businesses as well. To learn more visit: modernslavery.gov.au/about-modern-slavery/types-modern-slavery/servitude

To further enhance your knowledge and understanding about modern slavery you can undertake this free e-module developed by Anti-Slavery Australia: open.uts.edu.au/uts-open/study-area/law/modern-slavery/

Self-reflective guide

Labour exploitation

Overview

This theme uses a video-based approach to unpack the differences between poor work practices and forced labour. You are encouraged to select a total of three videos: one introductory video, one video from the 'Poor Work Practices' category, and one from the 'Forced Labour' category for a balanced session. You can mix and match videos based on your preference.

How to watch the video

- Play the three videos (introduction, one poor work practices video, and one forced labour video) as three parts (scenes).
- After the end of each video, you can either pause to reflect on the questions provided or watch all three videos before reflecting on the questions.
- Total session time: 15-20 mins

Please note that each video has some unique aspects that you can reflect upon:

- **Food Delivery (Unaccounted Miles)**
ABN and what it means to work with an ABN.
- **Factory Worker (Keeping our Heads down)**
No access to unions or legal information, and safety equipment.
- **Waiter (You Are Welcome)**
Work references and how that works.
- **Sex Work (In Hope of Freedom)**
Sex work is legal in Australia and challenging some of the assumptions around stigma and victim-blaming.
- **Farm (We Trusted Him)**
Co-ethnic exploitation and child labour.
- **Cleaning (In Search of a Better Future)**
Sponsorship deduction and the risks of students being exploited in Australia.



Objectives

- Recognise the signs of labour exploitation.
- Differentiate between poor work practices and forced labour.
- Understand workers' rights regardless of visa status.
- Promote reflection and awareness about work exploitation and forced labour.

Definition: forced labour

When a person does not consider themselves free to stop working or to leave their place of work because of coercion, threat or deception.

Introduction

Labour exploitation happens when people work in unfair, unsafe, or illegal conditions. It ranges from poor work practices to forced labour, where individuals cannot leave due to threats or control.

 **Labour Exploitation Introduction:**
youtu.be/6FzvNQKLf0E
(watch the video)

Self-reflective guide

Labour exploitation

Scene 1: Scenes from different workplaces

Summary:

Footage of various industries where exploitation may occur.

Q 1: Have you ever witnessed unfair treatment in the workplace?

How did it make you feel?

Reflection:

Think about a job that you held and about what made it bad or good. Were your rights and entitlements respected?

Q 2: Did you have a choice to leave that job if you wanted to?

Reflection:

How hard was it for you to decide on changing employers? Reflect on the barriers and ultimately whether you had the choice to leave the employment if you wanted to.

Scene 2: Poor work practices (Choose one)

Waiter (You Are Welcome) youtu.be/OhiqSO0nbXk

At the time this video was made, the minimum pay was \$24.10. Please check the Fair Work Ombudsman website for the most current information.

Factory (Keeping Our Heads Down): youtu.be/QDOR3jETLao

Food Delivery (Unaccounted Miles): youtu.be/NgZyx8kgerA

Summary:

A waiter is underpaid in a restaurant, a factory worker is afraid of losing her job, a delivery driver is struggling with low pay.

Q 1: How are people drawn into exploitative work?

Reflection:

Cash-in-hand payments, visa status (depending upon the visa there might be limitations), no local experience, family responsibilities and pressure to send money home, someone from one's own community, language barriers.

Here you can reflect on cash-in-hand payments, superannuation and the importance of superannuation. What is your understanding around cash-in-hand payments – are they legal?

In Australia paying wages in cash is legal. If paying wages in cash employers must comply with all the employment laws which includes providing accurate payslips, paying superannuation, and withholding the correct amount of tax.

Visit the Australian Taxation Office website to learn more:

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Labour exploitation

ato.gov.au/individuals-and-families/jobs-and-employment-types/working-as-an-employee/receiving-cash-for-work-you-do

Q 2: What are some unfair and unsafe work practices shown in this story?

Reflection:

Underpayment of wages, long work hours, no payslips, no contract, no penalty for working overtime, no safety equipment, and an abusive workplace.

*What is being paid a minimum wage?
Does it matter if a contract has not been signed?*

Look up 'Fair Work' to see the most current minimum wage and industry awards as this is subject to change. It does not matter if a contract has been signed. All employees are automatically covered by the National Employment Standard regardless of whether they signed a contract. Visit the Fair Work Ombudsman website to learn more: fairwork.gov.au/employment-conditions/contracts#:~:text=All%20employees%20are%20covered%20by,than%20their%20minimum%20legal%20entitlements

Scene 3: Forced labour (choose one)

 **Farm (We Trusted Him)**
youtu.be/UN71a39w1Rs

 **Cleaning (In Search of a Better Future)**
youtu.be/maWUWikDI2M

 **Sex Work (In Hope of Freedom)**
youtu.be/o9zsqu2TPGw

Summary:

Three stories: cleaning, sex work, and farm work reveal deeper control, visa threats, and abuse.

Q 1: What are some forms of abuse you can identify in this story?

Reflection:

Cash-in-hand payments, long hours without breaks, threats to report to immigration, passport seized by employer, little or no personal freedom, deception, no payment, under payment, abusive working and living conditions, co-ethnic exploitation, and sponsorship deductions.

Wage theft is the deliberate underpayment or non-payment of wages or entitlements by an employer. There are legal services that can help with this.

In January 2025 intentional underpayment of wages became a criminal offence.

Visit the Fair Work Ombudsman website to learn more: fairwork.gov.au/about-us/workplace-laws/legislation-changes/closing-loopholes/criminalising-wage-underpayments-and-other-issues

You have **six years** from the date of the underpayment to put in an application to recover unpaid wages. Fair Work has a **Record My Hours** app which you can

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Labour exploitation

download on your smartphone to keep a record of the hours worked.

Q 2: What is stopping the person in this story from leaving their job, and how is this situation different from just having a bad job?

Reflection:

Fear of deportation, hope of a permanent visa, threats made by the employer, passport seized by the employer, not knowing their rights, restricted movement, debts, isolation, visa status (restrictions on visas creates vulnerabilities), language barriers, being misled about their rights.

Forced labour is not just about having a bad job. It is about a person not having choice and control over their situation. People in forced labour situations do not have a choice but to continue working for the employer due to threat, deception, and coercion. A person's freedom and choice get taken away and whether the threat is actual or perceived the person believes that he/she has no choice but to continue working for the employer.

Additional reflection questions (optional)

- What have I learned about power, control, and human rights?
 - How can I use this knowledge to support others or raise awareness in my community?
 - Who can I talk to if I see or suspect a situation of forced labour?
-

What does the law say

- Forced labour is a criminal offence under Australian law, penalties can include imprisonment of up to 12 years.
- Workers have legal protections regardless of their visa status.

Where to get help

- **Anti-Slavery Australia**
antislavery.org.au/contact/
- **Fair Work Ombudsman**
fairwork.gov.au
- **Working Women's Centre Australia**
wwc.org.au/help-and-contact
- **Australian Red Cross**
redcross.org.au/work-right-hub/directory/
- **Australian Federal Police**
afp.gov.au/crimes/human-trafficking-and-people-smuggling/human-trafficking-and-slavery

To further enhance your knowledge and understanding about labour exploitation you can undertake this free e-module developed by the Australian Red Cross: redcross.org.au/globalassets/html-sites/work-right-hub/labour-exploitation/story.html

SToP Modern Slavery Project

w: [ssi.org.au/our-services/health-wellbeing/
strategies-to-prevent-modern-slavery-program/](https://ssi.org.au/our-services/health-wellbeing/strategies-to-prevent-modern-slavery-program/)

e: info@ssi.org.au

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has access to equal opportunity.

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