**Nyima**

I was born in Somita, a town in Gambia in West Africa.

My father passed away when I was only nine months old and when my mother remarried I was put up for adoption at a very young age. I had a very hard childhood but I got through it by the grace of God and it has made me the person who I am today. I am stronger because of it. I am a survivor.

I was forced into marriage at the age of fifteen. My husband decided to we should move to Spain. For a short while, life seemed bright but when my husband started to physically abuse me our relationship went downhill and life became unbearable. It left me broken but I found the strength to leave.

My brother and his family lived in Leeds so I came here in July 2014. I had visited my family in 2012 and I thought Leeds was a welcoming city.

I strongly believe the MCN+ project changed my life. Before starting the course, I was in a bad place. I didn't go out or socialise with people. I felt hopeless and had thoughts about ending my life but my fate changed when a member of Touchstone told me about the training.

When I began the course, I felt totally supported by the Touchstone staff. They helped me look at life in a positive way again and it gave me hope. I started meeting new people which was a wonderful change after isolating myself from others for so long. My English greatly improved too.

The experience gave me a new lease of life and reminded me of my strength. It gave me the confidence to find a job. I currently work as a Complex Care Worker at Interserve Healthcare which provides respite care through to live-in services.

When I was a young girl, whenever the school teacher asked me ‘when you grow up, where do you want to be?’, I would say ‘England’. And here I am today.