All praise due to Allah Ta'ala alone, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful. May Allah Ta'ala shower peace and salutations upon our Nabi Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam).

Bismillahir rahmaanir raheem.

Assalaamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakaatuh.

I was born in a Christian family. I used to love going to church on Sundays and it was the only fun day, because it was the only day when I got to spend some time with my father.
My father was the minister of the church and he was the only parent that I had around.

When I was growing up, I would stay with my brothers and sisters. My father was always out of town for work and I didn't have a mother at home. Even though I had my brothers and sisters, I didn't have parents at home, and this made me feel lonely all the time. The loneliness would make me always have bad and negative thoughts in my mind.

There was no love, peace or unity in our home. My heart eventually became so hard that it had no forgiveness in it at all. When I would go to the church, they would preach about forgiveness and peace but I was just not 'feeling it' at all.

Then, in my early twenties, I stopped going to church because I couldn't see the point of it anymore. Thereafter, as time went by, I somehow became interested in Islam, but I wasn't sure about how to convert and become a Muslim. By now, I was beginning to worry and wonder what would happen to me if I died, because I was no longer a Christian at heart, and I wasn't a Muslim either.

Alhamdulillah, in 2011, I finally accepted Islam, just a few weeks before Ramaadhaan. I knew the words 'fasting' but didn't really know what it meant in Islam. I tried my best to follow the rules of Islam and also started going to a madrasah where the aapa began to teach me the basics of Deen.

When I accepted Islam, the people in my locality began to mock me saying, "Many other people accepted Islam and then went back to Christianity! You'll do the same!" When they would taunt me like this, I would say to myself, "They can talk all they want, they don't know what's in my heart!"

One of the worst experiences that I had was when I wore Islamic clothes and my aunty complimented me saying that it looked beautiful. My father heard her and angrily burst out, "She looks like a devil-worshipper!" He didn't want to accept that I was now a Muslim. He did not want to talk to me and would ignore me when he came back home for holidays.
Around this time, one of my brothers began to ill-treat me. I was still new in Islam and my heart was filled with hatred for him.

I was going to madrasah regularly, and one of the aapas said, "If you want to really enjoy the love of Allah Ta'ala in your heart, you must clean your heart of all hatred and ill feelings. You must forgive all those who harm you." From that moment, I always made du'aa to Allah Ta'ala to bless me with a soft and forgiving heart.

In the religion of Islam, I found love and peace. The other Muslim women became my sisters while the aapas became my mothers. Islam teaches us many qualities such as peace, love, unity and taqwa – and this is the quality of Islam that I did not feel at all in Christianity.

Alhamdulillah, I thereafter married a Muslim man and have since been blessed with two beautiful children. My father also finally accepted me as a Muslim. I thank Allah Ta'ala for choosing me, from all other women, to be a Muslim. We must always thank Allah Ta'ala for choosing us to be Muslims.

Difficulties will always be there in our lives, and they are there because Allah Ta'ala is testing

us. There are many disbelievers who are living glamorous lives, but they are not happy at all. If you have Allah Ta'ala then you have everything. If you don't have Allah Ta'ala then nothing that you desire will ever make you truly happy.

Do you have a personal story to share? Or do you perhaps know of someone whose life underwent a complete revolution as they strove in the quest for piety? If so, write and submit your story to info@uswatulmuslimah.co.za