

## **Moran Milman - From Psychiatric Survivor to Nurse to Activist**

The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) defines nursing as the therapeutic relationship which enables the client to attain, maintain, or regain optimal function by promoting the client's health through assessing, providing care for, and treating the client's health conditions. This was reiterated over and over while I was earning my nursing diploma, something I have dreamt about since a young age. It was apparent that the students were developing the belief that soon they will lead by example and be the best caregivers that can be. I, on the other hand, was not fooled. Knowing the horrors I have been through, while on the psychiatric ward at a reputable Toronto hospital only three and a half years earlier, I was well aware of the possibility of any potential nurse to forgo his/her oath of protecting the clients or to become an abuser. It became my duty to protect the patients on the floor from abuse by staff though no one knew about it. My first act of resistance was a letter of complaint to the CNO about more than ten nurses that have abused or witnessed abuse. To my surprise, it was met with apathy and the assertion that if I really wanted to proceed with the complaint, the most that could happen was a warning to these nurses. My disappointment was defeating. I developed serious anxieties about working in a profession that promised quality care and standards of practice while discouraging anyone from coming forward and reporting abuse. Less than a year after receiving my registration, I left nursing. I had a new dream now but had no choice in this one: become an activist. Having participated in the movement for resistance against psychiatry for almost two years now, I shared my insight into the conflicts and agreements between the movement and nursing. I also made suggestions on ways to attract nurses into the movement.