

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Toru Goto Escaped But Was Abducted Again

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The abduction of Toru Goto on 11th September 1995. Illustration: Grok xAI



Toru Goto speaking during the online conference September 19, 2026

His first confinement ended with a daring escape; four years later, his family guided by professional faith-breakers abducted him again and began a more than 12-year-long forced detention

Part 2 of "My Experience of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Deconversion", a testimony on 19th September 2026 by Toru Goto (後藤徹), a Japanese member of the [Family Federation](#) and victim of attempted coercive [faith-breaking](#) - locked up for [over 12 years](#) in [apartment turned prison](#). This first-hand witness account - of [high relevance for the current dissolution case](#) against the [Family Federation](#) in Japan - was delivered at a Zoom conference organized by [Peace and Reconciliation Together](#) (PnR-T), a Dutch-registered foundation focused on reconciliation, peacebuilding, dialogue, and healing historical conflicts.

Continued from part 1: [Apartment Turned Prison: 12 Years to Break Faith](#)

Then a man named Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻) appeared, who was known for his involvement in [faith-breaking](#) activities. Miyamura and former members forced me to listen to attacks and insults against the [church](#) and its teachings. Gradually, I was driven to the limits psychologically. I became deeply afraid that I might lose my faith.

I barricaded myself in the bathroom, shouting, "Let me out! Help me!" I struggled with my father and

brother. But there were several people against me, and I could not overpower them.



Professional faith-breaker Takashi Miyamura responsible for hundreds of [coercive faith-breakings](#) based on [abduction and forcible detention](#). He is said to have been advisor to the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP)

I realized that there was no way I could escape by force. So I decided that the only way to get out of confinement was to pretend that I had been deconverted. Several days later, I told my family that I had realized that the teachings of the [Unification Church](#) were wrong.

Even after leaving the hotel, however, I was moved to another apartment and remained under surveillance.

Then, when I was taken to a Christian church for Sunday worship, everyone began closing their eyes and praying. I thought, "This is my chance."

I told my mother that I was going to the bathroom. I left the building, ran as fast as I could, and jumped into a taxi.

That was how I escaped from my first period of confinement.

But even after escaping, I continued to live with the fear that I might be [abducted and confined](#) again at any time.

My brother began acting together with Miyamura and helping with [faith-breaking](#) activities.



Protesting the coercive faith-breaking (deprogramming) business in Japan. Toru Goto (second from the right, front row) and others from the [National Association of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Deconversion Victims](#) participating in a protest march, February 10, 2025, Suginami Ward, Tokyo

At that time, there were periods when the [church](#) was aware of around 300 cases a year, and fellow believers were disappearing one after another.

It is said that approximately 70 percent of believers subjected to this kind of confinement eventually were deconverted and left the [church](#).

[Faith-breaking](#) conducted while a person was deprived of freedom in this way was an extremely intense experience that placed enormous psychological pressure on people's minds and faith.

I changed the [church](#) congregation I belonged to so that my whereabouts would not be discovered. I

moved my base of residence without telling even my fellow believers where I was living.

Even then, I did not feel safe, so I adopted the alias Yuji Suzuki.

I was also forced to resign from a major general construction company and lived in a way that concealed my identity.

Later, my younger sister was also [abducted and held captive](#), and she lost her faith.

Furthermore, the woman to whom I had been engaged through a [Marriage Blessing](#) and with whom I had pledged our future was also [abducted and confined](#). She lost her faith and left me.

In this way, because of these [abductions and confinement](#), the people most precious to me were gradually taken away from me.

I lived each day wondering when I might again be [abducted and confined](#), and I became consumed by loneliness and anxiety.

But then I was given one "weapon" to tackle this situation: praying day after day.

And as I continued praying, I received an answer from [God](#).

Even if I were abducted and confined again, I had to build within myself a faith that could never be destroyed.

The problem was not the environment. The problem was myself.



How [Father Moon](#) described his own suffering was a tremendous help for Toru Goto while held captive for [12 years and 5 months](#). Here, an illustration of how [Sun Myung Moon](#) was tortured by the Japanese police in Korea in 1944 and 1945

In addition to praying, I earnestly immersed myself in [God](#)'s word. In particular, I memorized the words of [Sun Myung Moon](#) during his time of suffering and recited them repeatedly, so that I could recall them at any time, even if I were confined.

In 1995, I received the [Marriage Blessing](#) again. I told my partner, who was worried that I might once again be kidnapped and locked up, "Don't worry. Even if I am [abducted and confined](#), I will definitely come back. Please believe me."

I was 31 years old at the time. I was working hard in my mission and was filled with dreams and hope for the future.

One month later, my second abduction and confinement began.

On 11th September 1995, I was having dinner with my family at my parents' home.

When I finished eating and was about to leave, my father suddenly said,

"Wait a moment. There's something I want to talk to you about."

The peaceful atmosphere suddenly changed.

My mother looked down. My brother, sister-in-law and younger sister all fell silent.

My father said, "Everyone has been very worried about you," and suggested that we go somewhere else. I said,

"If you have something to discuss, we can discuss it here."

But my family would not accept that.

Then my uncle, a large, physically strong man who lived some distance away, also appeared.

I realized that it was happening again.

I immediately understood that they intended to confine me.

My mind was overwhelmed by tension and fear, and I became unable to move.

Eventually, my father and brother grabbed me by both arms, while my uncle also surrounded me. I crouched down and resisted, but an overwhelming sense of despair ran through my entire body.



Young believer being abducted in order to have his faith broken. Illustration

They dragged me out of the house and forced me into a van. Inside the vehicle, I was squeezed between people on both sides of the seat so that I could not escape.

After we had been driving on the expressway for about two hours, I needed to use the bathroom. I thought that if I could go to the bathroom, I might be able to take advantage of the opportunity and escape.

But my brother handed me a portable plastic toilet that they had prepared in advance. They had done this specifically to prevent me from having any opportunity to escape. Having to relieve myself in that vehicle, surrounded by my family and strangers, was a humiliation I can never forget.

The van continued through the darkness. Feeling as though I was about to be crushed by

despair, I closed my eyes and prayed:

"Heavenly Father, I believe a difficult battle awaits me from this point onward. But I will never betray you. I will surely return to you. Please be with me and protect and guide me."

To be continued. Part 3 coming soon

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Part 1 of **"My Experience of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Deconversion"**, a testimony on 19th September 2026 by Toru Goto (後藤 徹), a Japanese member of the [Family Federation](#) and victim of attempted coercive [faith-breaking](#) – locked up for [over 12 years in apartment turned prison](#). This first-hand witness account – of [high relevance for the current dissolution case against the Family Federation in Japan](#) – was delivered at a Zoom conference organized by [Peace and Reconciliation Together \(PnR-T\)](#), a Dutch-registered foundation focused on reconciliation, peacebuilding, dialogue, and healing historical conflicts.

See part 2: [Escaped from 1st Confinement, But Abducted Again](#)

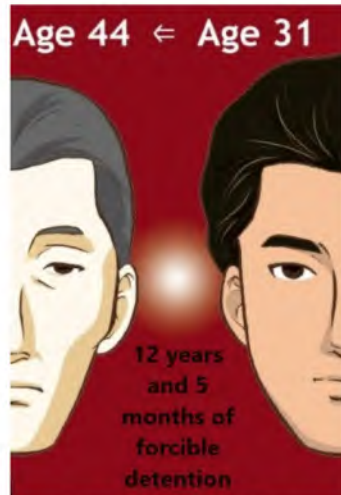
I was confined for 12 years and five months, from September 1995 until February 2008. In terms of age, I was 31 when it began and 44 when it ended. These should have been the brightest years of my life.

I was not confined in a foreign country or in some remote mountain area far from civilization. I was moved between three apartments, and for the last ten years or so I was confined in an apartment in Tokyo.

This photograph was taken immediately before I was confined for those 12 years and



Toru Goto at 31. Photo: Toru Goto



Toru Goto went through 12 years and 5 months of forcible detention. Illustration: [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#)

five months.

What I would like to tell you today is not simply what happened to me. I want to explain how I maintained my faith during those 12 years and five months of confinement – what I suffered, and what enabled me to preserve both my heart and my faith.

First, let me tell you about my family.

There were five of us: my parents, my older brother, myself, and my younger sister. We were a very ordinary family who lived happily and got along well.

My father was a company employee who was extremely dedicated to his work and very capable. Although he could be strict and scold us when necessary, he also had a warm and friendly side. For example, he would sometimes make food himself and serve it to the family.

My mother was gentle and reserved, somewhat prone to worrying and conscious of what other people thought, but she was a wonderful mother who sincerely loved her family.

My brother and I sometimes argued, but whenever I had a problem, he was someone I could turn to for advice. I remember teaching my younger sister before her exams and celebrating together when she achieved good grades.

Perhaps we were just an ordinary family like any other. But it was our unique place in this world – the one place that belonged to us.

None of us could ever have imagined that we would later engage in such a bitter struggle over this family and our living environment.

I first encountered the teachings of the [Unification Church](#) in 1986, when I was in my fourth year at university.



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Protesting against the evil of deprogramming (faith-breaking) in Shinjuku, Tokyo 8th December 2024. Here, Toru Goto (後藤徹), representing the [National Association of Victims of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Religious De-Conversion](#) (center), delivering a speech. The posters behind him carry pictures of Toru Goto hardly able to walk after more than 12 years of forcible confinement. Photo: Reiwa Kato (加藤玲和)

My older brother called me and said,

"There's a place where you can study some useful things.
Why don't you come with me and take a look?"

I was worried that my brother had gotten involved with something strange. My father also said, "Why don't you go and see what it's like?" I went with the intention, so to speak, of bringing my brother back.

When I first watched the introductory video, I found it boring and one-sided, and I complained quite strongly to the staff.

But my brother pleaded with me:

"I'm sure this will be useful to you in the future, so why don't you study it?"

I thought that if this really was a suspicious organization, I could simply leave together with my brother. So I began studying.

But once I actually began learning, I became deeply absorbed in its teachings.

At that time, I was struggling with spiritual and existential questions that I could not discuss even with my closest friends or family. I was depressed by the irrational things I encountered in the world – war, crime, adultery and so on – and I felt ashamed of my own selfishness. I was tormented by a sense of emptiness and meaninglessness, unable to find hope or value in human beings or in life itself.

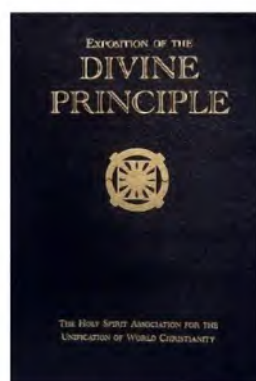
At the same time, somewhere deep inside me I was searching for a noble way of life and for an unchanging, genuine love.

It was precisely at such a time that, through my brother, I encountered the teachings of the [Unification Church](#).

For the first time I encountered ideas such as the [existence of God](#); that [God's](#) purpose in creating was to realize love and joy; that [God and human beings](#) are related as parent and child; and that human history is the history of [God's](#) efforts to save humanity.

I was deeply shocked and moved by these teachings, which were completely new to me. It felt as though a dead soul had come back to life, and I became a member of the [Unification Church](#).

In 1987, my older brother, who was the



[Exposition of the Divine Principle](#), the official English version of the [Unification Principles](#), published in 1996. Photo: [Fujita](#)

most devoted of the three siblings in his involvement with the [Unification Church](#), suddenly disappeared. [FFWPU](#)

Three months later, my father contacted me and said that my brother wanted to see me. We arranged to meet. My father took me to a hotel in Tokyo. When we entered one of the rooms, my brother was there.

Seeing him looking healthy, I almost cried with relief.

But then he told me that he had decided to leave the [Unification Church](#) and asked me to listen to what he had to say.

My brother had already been subjected to [abduction and confinement](#) for the purpose of breaking his faith, and he had lost his faith. Now they intended to break mine as well.

The door to the room had been secured so that it could not be opened from the inside.

I realized what had happened.

Continued in part 2: [Escaped from 1st Confinement, But Abducted Again](#)

Featured image above: Toru Goto. Image: [FFWPU](#)

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