

All varieties of family units are essential to community life in Victoria. The ups and downs of life for each Victorian is not always constrained to a minor tremor, unfortunately on the downside we are all capable of erupting off any measurable scale. Single actions or multiple events can have life changing consequences for too many of us. Can we be helped in a better way ? Yes

For the remainder of this submission I will refer to family violence (fv) between 2 people. I will *not* refer to FV that can be proven beyond reasonable doubt.

The 'chargeable' violent act(s) and/or 'final' abusive/harassment tirade(s) are not single events. The point of no return to any form of **fv** is not a snapshot fixed by the click of a shutter. There are many parts of **fv** acting in parallel. Multiple action and strategies are needed to address the complexity of needs of the individuals involved. Each person is in need of proper assistance and care.

From my experience I believe AT SOME OR ALL OF THE STAGES OF A- CIVIL CASE-Interim Intervention Order, IO Hearing, IO Enforcement CRIMINAL CASE-Charge for breaking Interim IO, Charge for breaking IO, Charge under **fv**,
we are not providing

any proper assistance and care. If there is any assistance it is mainly down to the legal side, particularly the prosecution and be damned the "offender". Many cases involving one or more person with a mental illness or complex mental status whether diagnosed or not.

In order to further explain, please allow me to use **Working Memory** as that part of our functioning that relies on multiple cognitive processes:- our attention, **impulse control**, storing, monitoring, ordering and information manipulation. For many of us we can rely on our Working memory to recruit multiple brain circuits in parallel. However, working memory is highly vulnerable to neurological conditions hence some people can have **deficits**. People with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism, Alzheimer disease, dementia, HIV, Parkinson disease, strokes and normal healthy ageing can have **deficits**.

My major concern is within the processes of the above CIVIL and/or CRIMINAL CASES the proper assistance and care of individuals with **Working Memory deficits** is not being assessed and provided for.

I have directly been impacted upon by a person with **early onset dementia**. In most of the perceived claims of **fv** made against me, assertiveness has been (mis)taken in a black & white way as aggression. No recognition or graduations of understanding have been brought forward. I am prepared to provide further details should you require them.

Before listing my minor concerns I must express that I believe we should all be treated equal but in too many cases I have found a distinction is made particularly if you are a male. I tried to be part of hearings locally but were told in a kind & polite way on 1800 number, I was not allowed because I was male. Yet there is no mention of gender in the invite (advertisement) and local paper article-Friday, May1, 2015 Bendigo Advertiser.

Minor concerns are-

- stereo-typed treatment of males as being the aggressive person and/or offender, particularly the dominance of assault / sexual assault as the perceived basis
- legal advice being solely offered with no offer of mediation or interest in any matter other than the COST/ CAN YOU PAY of the PROCESS
- when Police are involved the lack of understanding of the situation only following procedure/ completing the paperwork then I will have to check with my superior. However in cities with sexual assault units exclusively women and treating each situation as a statistic

to guarantee their continued role regardless of the circumstances. They want to keep their jobs in the community they choose to live

- there needs to be a greater role played by professionals in assessment and recommendations for assistance and care for all involved.