

To the Royal Commission on Family Violence

Family violence is unacceptable whether it be physical or mental.

As a realist I accept that human behaviour cannot be changed, although I feel it can be steered through education, example and the understanding of relationships. There are so many relationships where hatred, lack of meaningful communication, isolation and parents struggling with balancing harmony within their family and within their extended family. Conflict within relationships will happen especially in the environment of work pressure, children problems, financial and where people often work shift work. Of course the end result of conflict in the bad cases will end in violence and death in the worst cases. We need to stop the cycle of conflict, cold violence and violence.

If we look at the current situation I consider it is not handled logically. We use police, who are not trained in marriage counselling in fact I would consider that the police group are ones who also have difficulty in relationships as they are dealing with stressful situations regularly and are also shift workers. Police are for dealing with law and order not family harmony. I feel if we use the police then only specially trained officers should be used as the first step towards rehabilitation of our community standards. I also see programs like the white ribbon campaign only fostering the idea of isolating men and placing blame on men. It is very short sighted. Our community needs to foster nurturing of relationships.

How do I see the results of violence at the moment:-

- Women and children are murdered.
- Women live in fear.
- Men end up in jail.
- Men lose their jobs.
- Men lose their children.
- Men find it difficult to get a good job when they have a criminal record.
- Costs the community greatly.
- Everyone loses.
- Police procedure inflames the family violence cycle.

Surely as a society we can do better than this. We can help families in a better way. I think it is disgraceful. As a society we need to look at our actions and what is the effect to the common good.

There are a few things that we need to look at and then implement solutions to combat the problems.

- Family communication.
- Foster nurturing of relationships.
- Look at why a relationship breaks down.
- Have trigger points to implement family guidance.
- Realise that physical violence is an end result.
- Not to isolate members of a family.
- Understand that both parties of a breakdown need to take responsibility.

- Review and ongoing help to families that have broken down.
- Family law also has a great deal to do with family breakdowns which needs to be reviewed if we are going to successfully foster family harmony in our society. (Family law is used as a tool to hurt.)
- Women are using entrapment to have men locked up.
- Stress that violence is not an answer, whether it is mental or physical.

Unfortunately our Australian society has many downfalls that need attention:

- Aggression and hatred.
- Bullying culture. From our Prime Minister down. (very unfortunate)
- Poor mental health support
- Using criminality to control families rather than a nurturing approach. (Women use this to destroy their partner.)
- We don't take responsibility for our actions.
- We use children as pawns.
- We isolate people in our society.
- Extremely poor and expensive legal system.
- We need to setup a committee that directs the legal system, policing, mental health, etc. To better protect and foster family unity in our society. Presently the various groups seem to work for their own interests.

I would like to put myself forward as an example to why relationships breakdown and as an example of how I was condemned however I have demonstrated that I am able to foster a wonderful relationship and have a harmonious family. I feel that the attitude of authorities and how our system works in Victoria is just so wrong and narrow minded. I am also interested if the government has researched family breakups and the long term effects and if the actions of the system were beneficial to the fabric of a family and to society.

In conclusion I would like to say that we need a system that doesn't isolate, has trigger points to implement family guidance and that we spend more money on keeping families or an orderly way of separating families instead of on legal systems, policing, and incarceration. We should nurture families and the fabric of society. I will look forward to the commission being able to think outside our present system and put myself forward to answer questions.