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## ADDRESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: AN EVER UNFINISHED AGENDA

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**Abstract:** History looks different when the contributions of women are included. Unfortunately, research shows that *domestic violence* against women is a longstanding phenomenon. Women have always been considered weak, vulnerable and in a position to be exploited. Violence has long been accepted as something that happens to women. 'Domestic violence' (*intimate partner violence*) can be understood as the **power misused** by one adult in a relationship to control another. It is the enterprise of **control** and **fear** in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse resulting in the loss of – the dignity of life, peace of mind and ease of routine.

*Colours of abuse against women include:* Women are threatened, humiliated and their belongings and properties are damaged by the male ego. Women are made lead a controlled life especially under their male counterparts. Women are denied financial freedom to spend money despite being rational and so forth.

*Pangs of Trauma of Abused Women:* For instance, an abused woman is often engulfed by fear, which can govern her every move – a fear of: further violence, the unknown, her safety and the safety of her children. Let us not underestimate the effects of her fears. This list goes on.

*The Need for Redressal to Women under Domestic Violence and so Let's vow to:* Talk to her and help her to open up. This paper offers a wide panorama of solutions against domestic violence against the female of species across the globe. A house where a woman is not happy is not a home. With the advent of globalization, women will not simply be mainstreamed into the polluted stream. Women are changing the stream, making it clean and green to make this world a better place, safe for all -- every gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, age, and ability. This paper written together by a *father* and his *daughter* (in all real service motto) comes to a graceful conclusion wishing the best of fruition and possession of eternal happiness to champion the cause of women empowerment.

**Key words:** Exploitation of Women, Control and Fear, Colours of Abuse, Pangs of Trauma, Redressal]

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### Hey ... Woman! Here is an Epistle for You.

You are born with potential.

You are born with goodness and trust.

You are born with ideals and dreams.

You are born with the strength of prominence.

You are born with the beauty of courage.

You are not meant for crawling, so don't.

You have wings of incredible talent.

Learn to use them and fly!

There is no force equal to a woman determined to rise! It would be interesting to know how many *great women* have had great fathers and husbands behind them. History looks different when the contributions of women are included. Unfortunately, research shows that *domestic violence* against women is a longstanding phenomenon. Women have always been considered weak, vulnerable and in a position to be exploited. Violence has long been accepted as something that happens to women. Cultural ethnicity, religious practices, economic and political conditions may set the primacy for initiating and perpetuating domestic violence, but ultimately committing an act of violence is a choice that the individual makes out of a range of options. The only way to solve the problem of women's subordination is to change people's mindset and to plant the new idea of gender equality into every mind by fair means or

foul depending on the context, time, place and action.

Not all wounds are visible! Although one cannot misjudge the importance of macro system-level forces (such as cultural and social standards) in the etiology of gender-based violence across the globe, individual-level variables (such as observing violence between one's parents while growing up, absent or rejecting father, delinquent peer relationships) also play vital roles in the increase of such violence. The gender imbalance in domestic violence is partly related to differences in physical vigour and size. Furthermore, women are socialized into their gender roles in different societies throughout the world. In societies with a patriarchal power structure and with inflexible gender roles, women are often poorly equipped to defend themselves in case their partners become violent. It's time women exposed what happens behind closed doors. Hanging onto resentment is letting someone you despise live rent-free in our head.

However, much of the discrepancy relates to how men-dependence and fearfulness amount to a cultural disarmament. Husbands who batter wives characteristically feel that they are exercising a right, maintaining good order in the family and punishing their wives' felony – especially the wives' failure to

keep their proper place. Governments define 'Domestic Violence' as "an incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality". All forms of domestic violence - psychological, economic, emotional and physical - come from the abuser's desire for power and control over other family members or intimate partners.

'Domestic violence' (*intimate partner violence*) can be understood as the **power misused** by one adult in a relationship to control another. It is the enterprise of **control** and **fear** in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse resulting in the loss of – the dignity of life, peace of mind and ease of routine. It usually appears in the form of physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, or sexual assault. The frequency of this havoc can be on and off, occasional or chronic.

#### **Colours of Abuse against Women:**

- Women are threatened, humiliated and their belongings and properties are damaged by the male ego.
- Women are made lead a controlled life especially under their male counterparts.
- Women are denied financial freedom to spend money despite being rational.
- Women are followed, visited are kept under the spy watch by villainous male sect.
- Culture, religion or personal problems are made use of as an excuse for male violent behaviour.
- Pushing, bullying, slapping, kicking, punching, and causing serious injury and so forth are inhuman acts of physical assault carried out by men on women.
- Enforcing for sex despite no consent on the part of women constitutes the gravest of all violence since it involves the concept of physical and mental readiness.

#### **Pangs of Trauma of Abused Women :**

- An abused woman is often engulfed by fear, which can govern her every move – a fear of: further violence, the unknown, her safety and the safety of her children. Let us not underestimate the effects of her fears.
- She often believes that she is at fault and that by changing her behaviour the abuse will stop. Research shows that this is not the case.
- She may experience a conflict of emotions. She may love her partner but hate his violence. She may live in hope that his humane side will reappear.
- She may be dependent upon her partner, emotionally and financially.

- She may experience feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment.
- She may feel resigned and hopeless and find it hard to make decisions about her future.

The *empowerment of women* refers to the provision of the rights and the responsibilities to women in order to make them self-reliant for complete utilization of their creative potentials with regard to influence decision-making process, planning, implementation and evaluation in tune with their age, education and employment status. Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power. Education empowers women in several perspectives.

#### **Reading an Abused Woman's Face to Stretch out the Helping Hand with a Listening Ear**

##### **Let's vow to:**

- Talk to her and help her to open up. We may have to try several times before she will confide in us.
- Try to be direct and start by saying something like, "I'm worried about you because ....." or "I'm concerned about your safety..."
- Judge not her by any means to settle things.
- Listen to and believe what she tells us – too often people do not believe a woman when she first discloses abuse she has undergone.
- Reassure her that the abuse is not her fault and that we are there for her.
- Tell not her to leave or criticise her for staying. Although we may want her to leave, she has to make that decision in her own time. It is important to remember that research shows an abused woman is at risk at the point of separation after leaving an abusive partner
- Remember that leaving takes a great deal of strength and courage. An abused woman often faces huge obstacles such as nowhere to go, no money and no-one to turn to her for support
- Focus on supporting her and building her self-confidence
- Acknowledge her strengths and frequently remind her that she is faring better with all the challenging and stressful situations.
- Perceive that an abused woman is often very isolated and has no trustworthy support.
- Help her develop or to honour her outside contacts. This helps to boost her self-esteem.
- If she has not spoken to anyone else, encourage her to seek the help of a local *domestic violence agency* that understands what she is going through and offers specialist support and advice.
- Be patient. It takes time for a woman to recognise she is being abused and even longer to take be able to take safe and permanent decisions about what to do. Recognising the sensitivity of the problem is an important first step.

*International Women's Day!* Today is deemed to be a new day for women again. It is a long awaited day every year for them to alert us become conscious of what we have done for them. Only insecure men belittle women. The greatest way to man-up is to empower women. They should not let their history interfere with their destiny! Let today be the day, they stop being a victim of their circumstances and start taking action towards the life they want to ... a life of dignity and decency of contentment and excellence! They have the power and the time to shape their life. They should prompt themselves to break themselves free from the poisonous victim mentality and embrace the truth of their greatness. They are not meant for a mundane or mediocre life! Girls compete with each other but women empower one another. The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any. Life is better without the abuse, no matter, how alone one may feel. With the advent of globalization, women will not simply be mainstreamed into the polluted stream. Women are changing the stream, making it clean and green to make this world a better place, safe for all -- every gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, age, and ability. The failure of women to have reached positions of leadership has been due in large part to social and professional discrimination. Monsters don't sleep under our bed. They sleep inside our head. Now, this paper written together by a *father*

and his *daughter* (in all real service motto) comes to a graceful conclusion with the best of our wishes to the female of the species wishing the complete enjoyment of all the virtuous good things rendered herein and all the fruition and possession of eternal happiness from this moment. A house where a woman is not happy is not a home. Silence hides violence. The scars we *can't see* are the hardest to heal. It's high time we believed action, not words. One's success/failure story is the key that unlocks someone else's prison. Let's allow no delay to share accomplishments in the encounter for women empowerment.

To conclude, domestic violence is a silent yet noisy epidemic. Sadly, we seem to be bombarded by stories in the media about domestic violence, of course, with all possible delay. The apparent disconnect between law and practice needs to be seriously looked into for the immediate redressal to the victimized. A *bill* alone will not help in preventing domestic abuse; what is needed is a change in mindsets. Hence addressing domestic violence against women is considered an ever unfinished agenda. As such, the responses to the problem must be based on integrated approach. The effectiveness of measures and initiatives will depend on coherence and coordination associated with their design and implementation.

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