

Campaign of Empowerment Women for Nonviolence

An Initiative of The Empowerment Program Advisory Council

Denver, Colorado

INFORMATION

All of us can help prevent violence. Individuals who are suicidal and/or homicidal create life-threatening emergency situations just as individuals struggling with heart attacks, strokes, and uncontrolled bleeding. An individual with a heart emergency may have symptoms of chest pains, labored breathing, and indigestion. Just as with heart disease, a person who has the capacity for violence has symptoms. He or she shuts down warm, loving emotions, may isolate, and may obsess on harmful ideas that may be intensified by using alcohol or other drugs.

A person challenged by a heart emergency may have risk factors, such as, smoking, not exercising and poor eating habits. An individual with the capacity for violent behavior may have the risk factors of lost status – been fired, suspended from school, been separated from someone significant, or joined a militant group. This person might be struggling with alcohol or other drugs.

The Campaign defines violence in the following way: Verbal violence (frightening, intimidating words and gestures), domestic violence, sexual and physical assault (encompassing rape and murder), child abuse, neglect, all pornography (on and off the internet), genocide, trafficking, torture (including harm to animals), environmental assaults, honor killings, declared and undeclared wars (including gang violence), violent staring, stalking behaviors, and suicide.

The epidemic nature of violence represents a worldwide public health crisis – your participation matters. It might be the difference between life and death. It is time to begin the discussion of how an individual becomes desensitized to the point he or she stops protecting human life and dignity.

Advocating for Emotional Safety and Sensitivity:

The Capacity to Provide Loving and Caring Emotional Responses to Yourself and Others

Components of Being **Emotionally Safe:**

1. Motivation!
2. Able to feel distress in your own body and perceive distress in others
3. Able to maintain balance – stay calm in the face of hardship
4. Able to separate from the issues of others – set personal boundaries
5. Able to anticipate adversity
6. Able to serve others expecting nothing in return
7. Able to be trustworthy
8. Able to uphold others in a thoughtful and caring manner
9. Able to ask for and give others validation and credit
10. Able to forgive self and others – make allowances
11. Able to identify being numb or spiritually dead and ask for help
12. Able to connect with others – preserve own dignity and others'
13. Able to show gratitude
14. Able to protect life and health – practice nonviolence



Empower Yourself to Prevent Possible Harm

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CHECKLIST

This Citizen Checklist can help you identify people who may be at risk for violent behavior:

✓ BE ALERT

Be attuned to people who have a blank stare, are silent, seem frozen or numb, and are isolating. Be aware that some people may appear courteous and successful, yet behave deceptively and violently in specific areas of their life. These are people you may know or observe to be behaving out of the ordinary.

✓ CREATE A BUDDY SYSTEM

- If you are on a public bus, recruit another passenger to stand beside you.
- If you are at a bar or restaurant, recruit a patron, waitress or waiter.
- If you are at home, recruit a family member or neighbor before taking action.

✓ ASK...

1. *Are you okay?*
2. *Would you like to talk?*
3. *Are you going through something?*
4. *Are you kind of numb?*
5. *Are you shutting down or feeling like hurting yourself?*
6. *Do you feel like hurting someone else?*

If the answers to the questions suggest increased risk for violence:

share you are concerned and wish him or her the best;

leave the scene and call 911 from another location.

Police officers in America are trained to evaluate risk.

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The Empowerment Program, Inc.

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