

# WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

**Violence against women (VAW)** is “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (United Nations).



**LOVE**  
is using  
**KINDNESS**  
to make someone  
**STRONGER.**

**MYTH:** VAW is not a problem.

**FACT:** Approximately 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced some form of domestic violence.

In Sub Saharan Africa that number is even higher with 70% of women in rural Ethiopia to 35% of women in urban Namibia reporting physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.



**STARTING AT HOME**

Most acts of violence are committed by a man that the woman knows well, such as a family member or a spouse/partner.

**MYTH:** Women are just as violent as men.

**FACT:** In approximately 90% of domestic assaults reported, a man was the perpetrator.

While it is true that women can also be violent and that men can also suffer from violence, the dynamics and causes are different. Violence against women is a type of widespread, systemic oppression.

**TYPES OF ABUSE**

**PHYSICAL**

e.g., beating, slapping

**SEXUAL**

e.g., rape, coercion

**EMOTIONAL**

insults, threats

**ECONOMIC**

withholding due funds, not allowing to work


**WHY DOESN'T SHE LEAVE?**

For many women, their identities and relationships are tied to their partner or family. Furthermore, when a man is maintaining complete control over a woman, combined with unequal opportunities for women in society, it makes it difficult for a woman to leave the relationship due to financial dependence. Also, many women fear losing their children and their social status if they leave.

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & WHY IT HURTS**

Violence against women hurts everyone.  
It's an injustice of human rights.

**SPEAK OUT AGAINST WHAT FEELS WRONG IN YOUR HEART.**



Your mind will soon catch up.

**HOW WOMEN HURT**

HIV  
FEAR  
STDs  
INJURY  
SUICIDE  
ISOLATION  
HOMICIDE  
LOSS OF HOPE  
LOST OPPORTUNITIES  
DIMINISHED SELF-WORTH  
UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES  
EATING/SLEEP/EMOTIONAL DISORDERS

**THE DAMAGE GOES FURTHER HURTING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

**CHILDREN** can experience behavioral/emotional disturbances.

**CHILDREN** witnessing violence can grow up to use violence (boys) or have violence used against them (girls).

**MEN** lose their partner's and children's trust and love.

**COMMUNITIES** lose women's ideas and labor.

**SPEAK**

**SPEAK OUT** and let men using violence know that it's not okay.

**SPEAK OUT** when you see anyone dismissing or accepting violence against women.

**SPEAK WORDS OF SUPPORT** and non-judgment to women experiencing violence.

**SPEAK OPENLY WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY** about violence against women as a violation of human rights.

**SPEAK WITH LOCAL LEADERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**, and hold them accountable for cases reported and the consequences for perpetrators.

**NOW!**

# WHAT IS POWER?

Power is the ability to take charge of one’s own life and influence the lives of others in a **positive** or **negative** way.

YOU POWER LIVES INSIDE OF YOU

NEGATIVE POWER = POWER OVER WHEN POWER IS USED TO CONTROL OTHERS.

**NEGATIVE POWER** leads to human rights abuses, such as violence against women.

**POSITIVE POWER** celebrates our individual and collective strength to protect human rights.

If we tolerate **ANYONE** using negative power over women and girls, violence against women and girls will continue.

If we limit any **WOMEN OR GIRLS** from experiencing their positive power, violence against women and girls will continue.

The imbalance of power between women and men is the root cause of **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**.

This imbalance of power **LIMITS BOTH WOMEN AND MEN** from living their best lives.

DO YOU USE YOUR POWER FOR GOOD?

POSITIVE POWER =

**POWER WITHIN**  
The strength we feel within ourselves as we realize our worth as equal human beings and our ability to improve our life and community.

**POWER WITH**  
The cumulative strength when we join in solidarity with others to pursue a common, positive, transformational goal.

**POWER TO**  
The strength we have to turn values into action and speak out against injustice.

# BALANCING POWER

Power is infinite! Balancing power takes power from no one.

- 1 **LOOK AT HOW POWER IS USED** in our lives as individuals and with family, friends, and community (i.e., how we use power and our own experiences of power being used over us).
- 2 **CONSIDER THE POWER DYNAMICS** we have in our own organizations (i.e., how we interact as colleagues and use power amongst us, even as we work to balance power in communities).

Men who feel **POWERFUL** when balancing power with a woman are the **STRONGEST** men of all.

IN A RELATIONSHIP THAT BALANCES POWER, BOTH WOMEN AND MEN ...

- FEEL loved, valued, and respected
- MAKE their own decisions
- EXPRESS themselves as they prefer
- BECOME who they want to be
- CONTROL their own bodies and sexuality
- SHARE gender roles to support each other
- HAVE a voice!!!!

HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER FAMILIES  
ENJOYABLE SEX BETWEEN PARTNERS  
IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CHILDREN  
PROTECTION FROM STIS/HIV  
MORE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

EVERYONE WINS WITH BALANCED POWER!

# WHAT IS PATRIARCHY?

A social or political system that has chosen to treat men as superior to women.

## HOW PATRIARCHY IS ESTABLISHED

- 1 A society decides to give men control over resources and power.
- 2 Men feel obligated to maintain and show the power that patriarchy gives them, sometimes portraying that through violence and abuse.
- 3 The society defines women in relation to men’s power—denying them civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights intended for both women and men.
- 4 Patriarchy informs family life, law, policy, education, interpretations of faith, and more—influencing every aspect of life and self-identity.
- 5 Patriarchy becomes a mindset that even women begin to believe in, given the dangers of disagreeing with those in power.
- 6 Patriarchy makes violence against women seem natural.

## WHAT HAPPENED?

Patriarchy is an idea from before holy books were written. It is **not faith**. It is **not fixed**. It is **not natural**. It was simply an idea, and now we seem stuck.

## THE INJUSTICE OF PATRIARCHY

WOMEN

who want to give more to their families and communities ...

WOMEN

unable to protect their bodies and basic needs ...

WOMEN

Living with and dying from abuse ...  
They are surrounded by family and friends saying ...

“ENDURE IT. ACCEPT IT.  
This is how it’s meant to be.”  
But is it?

## WANTED

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

ONE THAT VALUES ALL PEOPLE AS EQUAL— WOMEN AND MEN, GIRLS AND BOYS.



# LIFE WITHOUT PATRIARCHY?

Dismantling patriarchy doesn’t take power from men; it allows everyone to have power.

## CHANGE GETS EASIER

When we rethink patriarchy, violence against women seems less normal. And something less normal is

**FAR EASIER TO END!**

LIVE  
LEARN  
MAKE CHANGE  
LIVE BETTER  
REPEAT



## WHAT DOES LIFE WITHOUT PATRIARCHY LOOK LIKE?

Women and men valuing and respecting themselves and each other.

Women and men debating ideas and co-creating solutions.

Women and men supporting each other across gender roles.

Women and men, girls and boys happier and healthier together.

COMMUNITIES PROSPERING  
ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY WITH  
LESS TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN!

## HOW TO DISMANTLE PATRIARCHY

- 1 Reflect on our collective power to change what feels unchangeable.
- 2 Start by changing small habits in your thinking/actions that exist because of patriarchy. It may be difficult. Just feel proud of yourself for the effort, and keep trying.
- 3 Look at larger patterns in your intimate relationship and parenting. Engage in dialogue with your family about doing things differently.
- 4 Consider problems in your community and how they could be resolved by looking beyond patriarchy to equality. Share these ideas with others, explaining the benefits to all.
- 5 Look at accepted behaviors in your workplace and programs that reinforce patriarchy. Make the case for alternatives, sharing your analysis of patriarchy and its harms.
- 6 Become more politicized, challenging injustices and policies born from patriarchy as well as violence against women in everyday life.
- 7 Share your actions and new perspectives with friends and family, and inspire thinking and action in others.



# What are Values?

**Values** are the qualities we most deeply **believe** in that **inspire** and **guide us** as activists.

There are **no positive values** that justify **violence** against women.

There are many values that call for it to end **equality, respect, non-discrimination, human dignity, and more**

Living by **somebody else's values** is like living in **somebody else's skin.**  
**be TRUE to YOU**

**INTEGRITY**

is living by **your values** when it is **hardest.**  
**Walking** the talk.  
Being your **beliefs.**  
Starting with your **own life.**

**Your values** hold the answers to your greatest dilemmas.

peace justice safety  
**WHAT DO YOU**  
kindness solidarity truth ...  
**VALUE MOST?**

**Social norms** are our **assumptions** about what **other people do** and **think is right.**

**LISTEN** to your **VALUES** and do what **YOU** think is right.

**Identify** your organisational values  
**Honour** them in decision making  
**Reflect** on them regularly  
**Hold** each other accountable  
**Celebrate** your strength and influence

If an organisation leads with **Words** people will **listen**



If an organisation leads with **actions** people will **follow.**

## VALUES-DRIVEN ORGANISATIONS

**Clear, concise, shared values can guide an organization while deeply influencing its culture.**

**SOCIAL JUSTICE** work succeeds when we live our organisational values in the community as well as **IN THE WORKPLACE.**  
It is about how we treat community members as well as **HOW WE TREAT EACH OTHER.**

shared personal values

social justice values

Positive organisational values

**Integrity**  
**Respect**  
**Activism...**

Organisations inspire by

**TAKING RISKS**

to do the right thing.



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# WHAT IS ACTIVISM?

**Activism** is doing something about injustice with the goal of **inspiring** and **creating** social change.

If there is a **vision** of change in your heart,

then there is an **activist** within.

**ACTIVISTS ARE ...**  
human, imperfect  
influenced by  
social norms  
sometimes scared  
of change



and **BRAVELY** fighting for justice anyway.

As activists for the prevention of violence against women

we are acting for change in the lives of others as well as our own.

**Activism** is a lifestyle sustained by a commitment to justice that runs

**LONG and DEEP.**

Being an **activist** is as much about using your **own power** as it is about helping others discover the **power within** themselves.

Let **power** rise up from within you to take action on what you believe.

Activists bring **PEOPLE TOGETHER.**

Activism is community building.

**Collective Activism** is organized action in public life.

Activism typically begins alongside others. We find our power and courage through each other's support, while our energy combines to create **Big Moments.**

However, our integrity as activists is truly realized when we take action in small moments standing alone, and when we live what we believe in the **Simplest Ways.**

**Personal Activism** is individual action in private life.

**ACTIVISM** is NOT about who can **SHOUT** the loudest



It's **KNOWLEDGE** and **ANALYSIS** of the issues that gives activists their **CONFIDENCE** and **STRENGTH.**



Let **OUTRAGE** be your inspiration and

**COMPASSION** be your self-expression.

## BEING AN ACTIVIST

When you decide to be an activist, you begin to look at the world differently, noticing the **injustices you want to eliminate** as well as the **beauty you want to celebrate.**



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