

## Deny violence of speech, writing and action against women

During the 16 days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign (25 November to 10 December), let us also recall that violence of speech, writing and art also hampers our ability to reach such a target.

 By Teresa Jenkins <sup>2</sup> Dec 2016



Speak out against comics, songs, pictures, novels and films that depict violence against women and children as part of 'society' or part of 'the nature of man'. Teach your children that glorifying violence and gangsterism only perpetuates this kind of behaviour and that evil is exactly that – a lifestyle that must be shunned. Add that using violent or brutal language towards women and children in these mediums encourages the belief that these are 'weaker' members of society and therefore not worthy of respect.

Teach your boys that the strength of a man arises from his compassion, tolerance and gentleness to all people of the world regardless of colour, creed or sexual belief. He does not need to use violence to express his place in the world or his power.

Teach your girls that they are equal citizens of the world and entitled to equal opportunity, kindness, safety and respect. They are not subject to anyone or anything and they are not to allow themselves to become a personal possession or to be treated as a lesser human.

Violence arises and inhumanity surfaces when we, as humans, lose our empathy towards others. It arises when we believe that other people matter less – Although we might not always agree, we always need to teach our children to respect all people.

Living in harmony with all people is not just a state of calm or the absence of harm, it is a considered and chosen way of life that views all of us as human, with failings that can all be accepted and accommodated.

Teach all your children that violence of spirit, word and action demeans not only the victim but also the perpetrator, who becomes more angry and bitter as he or she retreats from the commonality of people and becomes isolated in hate. Increase their self-efficiency, social responsibility and life skills to make better choices.

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Living in harmony with all people is not just a state of calm or the absence of harm, it is a considered and chosen way of life that views all of us as human, with failings that can all be accepted and accommodated. Given this, South Africa would be the rainbow nation it strives to be.

## ABOUT TERESA JENKINS

I am a passionate international marketer with a particular bias for building sustainable brands, from inception to managing premier clients' marketing strategies and results-driven Public Relations. Outside of work, I cherish spending time with family and friends, exploring wildlife and oceans through travel, indulging in reading, and embracing the adventure of lifelong learning facilitated by the Internet of Things.  
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