



Ameya Ingawale is an eye surgeon. He was born and raised in India. He enjoys vacationing in different countries.

“Domestic violence”, the word itself sounds so scary! General perception is: “it's the sort of thing that happens to 'others', our family members and friends could never be abusers, no way! All the men in our families are good men. They cannot be abusive. Only drunkards, junkies or bad people can abuse their partners or family members”.... right? But that's a false assumption!

Domestic violence can happen to anybody and in any family. Sometimes it is so covert that we don't even recognize the abuse. A person (read 'man') getting angry and punching the wall- is a form of abuse. It makes the other person (read 'woman /child') scared, they can see that the first person wanted to punch them, but chose to punch the wall instead. It can be painful, humiliating and agonizing experience for someone. A person getting angry, and smoldering silently, with an implicit threat of violence is indeed an abuse. Domestic violence / abuse can have several shades that sometimes not even clearly perceived as “domestic violence” while the act or attitude can have enormous negative effect on someone's physical or mental wellbeing.

Sometimes one partner in a relationship hugely control another partner's finances by depriving the financial needs or restricting access to someone's own income and this form of partner abuse, is a real one. A partner insisting on knowing and approving what friends the other partner can have, whom they choose to socialize with, when and how they do it etc. is another form of control or abuse. It restricts someone's autonomy. Or forcing an intimate partner in unwanted sexual activities or inflicting emotional abuse are abuse too. Many times these forms of domestic abuse are not visible so we don't talk about it. Sometimes even we don't realize that it is abuse because of our cultural conditioning.

We need to understand that abuse doesn't always represent a black eye or broken bones. It can be invisible and unrecognized. Often we, men don't even realize that our action, attitude or words can cause pain. I think men have big responsibility in preventing domestic violence and abuse. Men need to have a deeper understanding whether our actions or words are causing any harm.

*Ask your partner if they've ever been afraid of you. And if they have, then change your attitude and actions.

*Ask yourself if the 'fight' was an equal one, or you always had the physical advantage. If yes, CHANGE!

*Have a healthy communication with your partner, listen to the other side, and change yourself if you ever made your partner scared!