



Through this social media campaign Maitri is starting a dialogue with men in our community to identify and eliminate the root cause of gender based violence and partner violence.

Thank you Rittie for joining us in this meaningful discussion.

1. What do you think the root cause of intimate partner violence is?

What I understand is that "intimate partner violence" means when one partner hurts, or attempts or threatens to hurt, the other partner in a harmful, non-consensual way. My first reaction is I really have no idea what the root cause is. Perhaps it is caused by a combination of having seen examples of this type of violence in a context where the behavior seemed normal or acceptable; and conditions of extreme stress in one's own life.

2. Define toxic masculinity and how does it impact intimate partner relationships?

I would define toxic masculinity as an irrational need to appear as the winner in a vast range of everyday situations regardless of whether that is justified by merit. Demonstrating that irrational need may not be limited to an intimate partner in a relationship, but the intimate partner would be subject to it on a consistent basis.

3. Why is it so important to model healthy relationships for future generations?

Future generations, especially in the case of one's own children, will learn a lot from role models they respect and love. This includes learning the unwritten rules and norms of acceptable behavior. Modeling

healthy relationships would instill confidence into future generations that healthy relationships can be achieved and also demonstrate behavioral aspects consistent with achieving healthy relationships. In the absence of having clear, consistent role models for healthy behavior, the future generations may look to non-healthy relationships as a basis for role-modeling.

4. What is men's responsibility in building healthy partner relationships?

It is the responsibility of men and their partners in a partner relationship to listen, learn, contribute, make each other stronger, and make the relationship stronger. I am trying to think of what would be unique to men in the set of responsibilities, but nothing comes to mind.

5. How has awareness and public opinion changed concerning domestic/dating violence in your lifetime?

I have not personally seen a lot of domestic violence. However, the awareness of domestic/dating violence, and acknowledgement of how widespread the problem is and the importance of recognizing and addressing it, has definitely increased in my lifetime. From a public opinion standpoint, I think domestic/dating violence has always been unacceptable, but in the past it was treated as a private matter between the parties involved. Now it is somewhat expected for outside parties to engage those involved if violence is suspected, and if discovered, take measures to mitigate the violence or ensure that it does not continue.

About the author: Rittie is a retired high tech professional with a background in business management and computer science. He lives with his wife and three children.