



Sim Gopalan is an IT professional living in the Bay Area for more than 20 years. Sim is actively involved with multiple nonprofit organizations volunteering for causes involving cancer, stem cell drives, serving food for the unhoused, education for underprivileged children, human trafficking, mental illness to name a few. He strongly believes men have a greater role to play in addressing domestic abuse.

Role of men

The COVID pandemic has taught several lessons, one of them is the importance of bonding with the family. This is an opportunity to come closer to our loved ones and develop healthy communication. Unfortunately, in some cases this period has led to unhealthy communication leading to disturbance within the family.

Reports of domestic abuse seem to have increased during this period. As is, it is a challenge the world was struggling with, only to see it worsen now.

What can we do about it?

What can I do about it?

What can I as a man do about it?

Even though in a relationship both men and women can undergo abuse, women seem to suffer the consequences more than men. There are more women seeking help after being abused physically and emotionally. While Organizations like Maitri try and help as many women as possible, as men, it is our responsibility to step up and help find a resolution. It's not just a women's issue, it is everybody's issue, in fact more of a man's problem than a woman's. I believe we men should come forward to work towards the cause.

We all know that domestic abuse can occur at all rungs of society— privileged, underprivileged, educated, uneducated, affluent, deprived— it does not matter. We can't use these statuses in society to shy away from responsibility. Let us, as men figure out how we can contribute towards reducing toxic relationships leading to domestic violence. Let us all speak out and address the issue.

Healthy communication is a good start. Let us figure out what hurdles get in between, and resolve it as a team. Expectation, ego, and anger are usual culprits that hamper an otherwise healthy communication. When any of these seep in, focus on eliminating them. It does not matter who is right, there should be no room for these. In a relationship there are bound to be differences, it's obvious because there are two different humans with a mind of their own. Let's strive to work as a single entity to resolve those differences. Always ask what 'I' can do to rather than what the 'other' person can do to resolve a situation. We should get ourselves educated on all the issues women go through and participate in women-related causes. As men, we would be able to bring a different perspective to address the issue.

We should be able to identify a situation that is escalating towards abuse and be able to remedy it early on. If we are prone to anger and irritation, please seek professional help to address it. It's painfully surprising that, even in this age, women are being physically abused. We all know it is not acceptable. Only when more men get involved in the cause, will we be able to contain these issues. It's imperative that we identify the cause of domestic disturbances and act on those. The underlying issues men face could be anger, irritation, substance abuse like alcohol, display of power, or misogynistic thoughts. When any of these are a factor, it's vital we seek professional help. All that I'm highlighting is what men can address, not what we expect from the women in our lives. Expectations will not resolve issues. Once we take responsibility and establish a healthy communication, most issues can be addressed.

We should remind ourselves that the most important person in our life is our spouse and to convey this to the spouse as frequent as possible.

Let us all join hands to make relationships thrive peacefully. We can do it!
