

## Partners in Faith

partnersinfaith@uum.org

*A collaboration of Renewal House, the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry, Boston area service providers and people of faith*

### **Domestic Violence and Islam**

*Imam Yahya Hendi* is the Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University, he also serves as a member of the Islamic Jurisprudence Council of North America.

*Islam stands clear on issues of Violence against women: No beating of wives and no abuse of women*

“...According to the Qur'an the relationship between the husband and wife should be based on mutual love and kindness. Allah says: 'And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.' (Ar-Rum: 21)”

“...First of all, I would like to state that it is not allowed for the husband to physically abuse his wife in the first place. The verse in surat An-Nisaa' has been greatly misunderstood and there are many authentic hadiths prohibiting physical abuse in unequivocal terms. Therefore, beating is not an option in the first place.

Secondly, the right to defend oneself is a legitimate right in Islam. It is to be used at any time a person knows he or she is in danger or that his or her life is in jeopardy. Therefore, if an abusive husband attacks his wife, first she should ask for help from anyone she thinks can rescue her, such as neighbors or those in authority. If that is not feasible, and she thinks her life is in danger, then she can definitely defend herself.

Also prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, made it very clear that the beating of the wife is harmful and prohibited.

'Do not beat the female servants of Allah';

'Some (women) visited my family complaining about their husbands (beating them). These (husbands) are not the best of you...'

Having said that, I must state that Islam offers us many solutions to resolve family conflicts so that we do not have to resort to barbaric means that involve physical abuse. These solutions include, but are not limited to, reconciliation and arbitration. If these peaceful means are exhausted and there is no harmony in the family, we must know that Islam allows divorce. This is because peaceful separation is better in the eyes of Islam than a dysfunctional marriage.”

### **Domestic Violence and Judaism**

*From the Faith Trust Institute -*

“Jewish tradition is very clear: it is forbidden for one person to harm another. This includes physical abuse: the Talmud states that it is forbidden to even raise a hand against another; sexual abuse: Jewish law recognized the unacceptability of marital rape more than 2,000 years ago; emotional abuse: Jewish law prohibits humiliating or belittling another person through word and deed; and economic abuse: the Talmud states that a husband must generously provide for his family (in today's society this responsibility is often shared by both partners).”

*According to the Talmud -*

"Men should be careful lest they cause women to weep, for God counts their tears.

"In cases of charity, where both men and women claim relief, the latter should be first assisted. If there should not be enough for both, the men should cheerfully relinquish their claims.

"A woman's death is felt by nobody as by her husband.

"Tears are shed on God's altar for the one who forsakes his first love.

"He who loves his wife as himself, and honors her more than himself, will train his children properly; he will meet, too, the fulfillment of the verse, 'And thou shalt know that there is peace in thy tent, and thou wilt look over thy habitation and shall miss nothing'" (Job 5: 24).



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Rabbi David Rose of the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse wrote, “Domestic violence happens precisely because people are silent. Only when we break through the silence, can we end the abuse and violence that continues to occur in our community.”

Psalms 55 (three verses below)

12 It is not enemies who taunt me-- I could bear that; it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me-- I could hide from them. 13 But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, 14 with whom I kept pleasant company; we walked in the house of God with the throng.

### **Domestic Violence and Christianity**

*Scripture passages collected by Hidden Hurt, a British Christian domestic violence survivor support organization -*

James 1:19,20 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

“Transformation is the means by which, refusing to accept injustice and refusing to assist its victims to endure suffering any longer, people act. We celebrate small victories, we chip away at oppressive attitudes cast in concrete, we say no in unexpected places, we speak boldly of things deemed secret and unmentionable, we stand with those who are trapped in victimization to support their journeys to safety and healing, and we break the cycle of violence we may have known in our own lives. By refusing to endure evil and by seeking to transform suffering, we are about God's work of making justice and healing brokenness.” - Marie M. Fortune “Transformation of Suffering. Violence in the Family”

### **Domestic Violence and the Ocha faith**

*Reflections from Javier Montañez, a member of Partners in Faith*

“... Odu Ose-Otura illustrates the Pataki of when Ochun descended from Otonowa (the heavenly realm) with the 16 Meyi Irunmole (the primordial spirits sent to earth to complete the original tasks). It was on Aye (earth) that she was denied her position and her importance by them. She was subjected to gender inequality and expected to perform “womanly duties”. It could be viewed that Irunmole culture depicted that “duties” become denoted at birth issued by gender. It is in the Odu Ose-Otura that we see the Orisha Ochun denied her equality because she was a female. She eventually became exhausted, weary and infuriated by this form of abuse she was forced to endure and eventually ascended to Otonowa. It was with her departure that she extracted her Ashe (essence) from the world. All broke out in chaos and decay. Nothing flourished, nothing birthed, nothing connected, mated nor duplicated. For at her core, the Orisha Ochun represents the libido that leads all living things to come together in a manner the world depends on. The Irunmole were forced to redeem themselves and reevaluate “gender inequality” and petition Ochun back to the world as none of them possessed the Ache she embodied. Odu Ose-Otura moves to provide us the following:

“In anything we do, if we do not guarantee the place of women, that thing will not succeed. We should acknowledge the power of women, if we acknowledge the power of women, the world will be peaceful.” - Odu Ose-Otura

\*\*\* We are aware that these scriptural resources are all explicitly about opposite sex relationships. We know that partner abuse impacts everyone, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities. Please be sure to take a moment when you are preparing your words to acknowledge that domestic violence/intimate partner abuse crosses all types of relationships. Thank you for reading and sharing these resources \*\*\*

