

CORONA PROTECTED, VIOLENCE....CAN'T SAY!

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Under the greenwood tree
 Who loves to spy on me,
 And turn his scary note
 Unto my sweet throat,
 Come hither, come hither, come hither:
 Here shall I see No enemy
 But him and rough weather

..... It's a lot like Corona virus- except the source dates back to my home.

A home plays a vital role in any human life where we keep our families feel safe and sound, complete freedom rest assured. Quoting down a few impression of the word 'Home' stated by philosophers around the globe like Kathleen Norris (Norris, n.d.) - "Peace that was the other name for home" to William J. Bennett (Bennett., n.d.) stating "Home is a shelter from storms- all sorts of storms"

Surely 'Home' is where 'Heart' is. Or 'Hurt' is?

Shouldn't our houses be the safest place to be in right now amid the corona pandemic? While many of us are trying to find a string of positivity in this whole thing which is to be spending increased home time, getting to bond with our loved ones, it was quite difficult for me to even imagine the other side- dark lane, one with monsters in it. Something positive about this pandemic is that it accentuates the flaws of the social, economic, and political systems we live in and presents an opportunity to act on improving the systems. Hidden in the deluge of Covid-19 is a story that's not quite strange, new to many.

Social distancing can cause stress and change in everyone's behaviour. However, there is never an excuse for sexual abuse, no matter what the circumstances are. Abuse is always wrong and should always be reported. So what is the difference between assault, rape, and incest? Assault is attacking someone, Rape is sexually assaulting someone without their consent and incest is

having sexual intercourse with a closely related person. Regardless, all are a crime. Sexual assault is a blanket term that covers all non-consensual sexual acts from an unwarranted pat on the bum rights up to full-on rape (vaginal or anal penetration). Thus by making someone feel obligated, pressured, or forced into doing something of a sexual nature they don't want to be is sexual coercion. This includes persistent attempts at sexual contact when the person has already refused you (Yamanouchi,2015).

Mark Twain (a literary genius) once said: “There are lies, damned lies, and statistics.” But in case of domestic violence no matter how rich, famous, or successful one is, you’ll still know somebody who’s been affected by sexual violence. That’s a fact. And this number has been soaring all-time highs amid pandemic. The only distinguishing color of sexual violence is black- and-blue.

No matter how much I tried to justify myself was doing any good. I didn't know what was happening inside me at all, so how could I describe it to them? (Sierra D. Waters, n.d.)

Are you familiar with all the ways you can kill a girl? Lord, there are so many- (Summers, 2015)

It stays in front of me, behind me, next to me, every single day inside of me. My routine is determined by it, so does my habits, my music (Whitney, 2010)

I wore a pair of vintage, fading jeans, and a simple grey baggy shirt today. I didn't take a shower at all, and I didn't put on an ounce of lipstick. Even if it's warm outside, I took a worn-out black oversized jacket to cover myself. Lately, I have made deliberate decisions to look less like what I thought a male would want to see. I would like to vanish- (Sierra D. Waters, n.d.).

These were some of the few shocking statements, I came across from the sexually violated victims amid lockdown. So if it makes you any better, from Angelina Jolie to Lady Gaga, present being Amber Heard case- All opened up publically regarding their sexual assault and had much to say. They didn't care about the culture's wrath then what's keeping you quiet? Imagine the abuser like the Titanic. That ship is a huge deal. But when it strikes an iceberg, it had to break down. All it takes is just that little push, for your freedom.

Rape is a horrendous crime which in my view should warrant the death sentence going as per

Indian 'Dharma Shastra'. But perspective is required and we should avoid all false vendettas, of course. Standing behind predators makes a prey of us all. Assault survivors respond differently. After being physically, mentally, and/or sexually abused, there's no right or wrong way to react. Some individuals don't talk about it and prefer to stay numb. Others need their pain, rage, and trauma to be mental. Either way, sexual harassment can be so daunting that you can respond in three ways: battle, flight, or freeze (Arcuri, 2020).

Mention to me what great touch is and what is terrible for I am youthful and I have no father" Is this a period of specific worry for youngster sexual maltreatment? It seems to be. Responses to COVID-19 may have inadvertently increased the risk of child sexual abuse in two ways. First, the risk for online offending has increased due to children and adults spending more time online for work, education, and recreation. Second, we believe the risk for offending perpetrated by household members has also increased, as adults and children spend more time confined together due to stay-at-home orders. 'Stop it. Now!' is a prevention organization that has offices across the globe and they offer several online resources for people concerned about their sexual thoughts and behaviors or of others. Between February and April of this year, i.e. pre-COVID and during COVID, the monthly views of some of their web pages increased dramatically. For example, they saw a 41% spike on their page that addresses the question of whether viewing child pornography is a type of child sexual abuse. Viewing child sexual abuse images is one form of child sexual abuse perpetration. Worldwide, approximately 12% of all children are affected by child sexual abuse. We can launch an online prevention curriculum since classes are online these days. It's illogical to wait for children to be sexually abused, and only then intervene. Whether it occurs online or offline, whether it occurs in the context of child welfare cases or more, we need a much broader strategy that emphasizes developing, testing, and disseminating effective perpetration prevention strategies that prevent the onset of sexual offending.

Less than 10 percent of people report sexual violence. They're more worried about sexual violence than corona. During and in the aftermath of the COVID 19 pandemic, women and girls were likely to experience sexual violence, intimate partner violence, exploitation, and abuse forced transactional sex, forced daily marriages, and all subjected to harmful cultural practices. The lockdown process is making it difficult for survivors to access sexual and gender-based violence services within the vital 72-hour time frame to prevent unintended

pregnancy HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. The agents of the COVID 19 pandemic must not detract from the provision of services and safe spaces for survivors. The law- enforcement agencies must convey a strong message that violence will not be tolerated and abusers will be punished.

Every Indian owns a cell phone, even the beggars here have them. Why not use it in an informative way to rescue a sexual victim in your neighborhood? We must incentivize victims to contact the police and educate the police to deal with them. So here are some of the several steps that can be taken starting from higher authorities to the public in general:

1. Prime Minister/ Chief Minister- head of state can appeal media statements to curtail sexual violence and give reassurance of support to sexual victims.
2. Ensure that all local hospitals have protocols in place to assess, treat, and counsel victims than just prioritizing COVID patients.
3. A nation-wide promotion could be run via TV, radio, social media, cell phone caller tune having an easy recall helpline numbers and rhyming jingle, on a regular and repeated basis, for best awareness spread.
4. A notice to be pasted outside chemist and ration shops where the aggrieved could approach as sexual victims. The shopkeepers must be equally supportive to report such a crime.
5. Anganwadi officials should be given training for alertness on cases of child sexual violence by reporting the same to their respective authorities.
6. Public facilities such as malls, corporate offices, colleges, schools, Anganwadi can be used as relocation centers for sexually abused victims during the lockdown days.
7. Courts must speed up their infrastructure online for sexual violence cases to provide an interim relief like passing a restraining order.
8. Authorities must chalk out a plan for the rehabilitation of victims post the lockdown.
9. Report, lend help, and don't shy out.

You are part of the problem if you're not part of the solution! (Peck, 2003)

Nobody should ever feel ashamed of experiencing sexual violence. Angry? Yes. Shy? Fine. Whatever emotion works for the victim, should work for you. Except for guilt. And except for shame. Because no matter the circumstances (lockdown is just a silly reason), no matter if you've said yes before. No matter what had happened prior – Victims are not at fault. It's not their fault. And there's nothing to feel guilty about – or be ashamed for. The shame is on the

aggressor.

Consumed by the fear and anxiety amid pandemic, the issue of sexual violence is a toxic culture in India and overall across the globe. I don't think the issues of misogyny, harassment is going to go anywhere anytime soon. These are the issues that have been woven into the very fabric of our time. But I do think that with the right push to shift course we can ensure at this point, by putting in all of our best efforts to serve our communities, keeping everybody safe and healthy.

I wish to tell all my aggrieved sister, who's possibly being sexually assaulted as I pen down this issue, that she's not dirty and that she should not feel any shame for something that she was not responsible for.

*Trapped inside my home door, sexually forced by this shabby
Ape I can't live with this Carnivore! But who's asking you,
babe?*

Remember:

Nobody owes you sex, ever, No means "NO", Always!

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