The Monument Fellowship

CURING VIOLENCE

How we can become a less violent society

Edited by Phil Bowen and Stephen Whitehead

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Contents

Foreword

VICKY FOXCROFT MP
Member of Parliament for Lewisham Deptford and
Chair of the Cross-Party Youth Violence Commission

Tackling violence was not an issue that I ever imagined I would take on when I was first elected in 2015 as Member of Parliament for Lewisham Deptford. As a new MP, I was not prepared for the loss after loss of young lives on the streets of my constituency. Within a year, Lewisham Deptford had lost seven young men to violent deaths. Each of those boys was a part of our community. Each of them left behind loved ones that will never fully recover from their loss. Most tragically of all, each of their deaths should have been preventable.

Violence is not something that happens by chance. It is not a coincidence that emergency hospital admission rates for violence are around five times higher in the most deprived communities than in the most affluent.[1] It is also no coincidence that trauma in childhood can increase the likelihood of an individual becoming either a victim or perpetrator of violence in later life.[2] So how do we become a less violent society? This is a question which

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[1] Mark A Bellis, Karen Hughes, Clare Perkins and Andrew Bennett (2012) *Protecting People Promoting Health: A Public Health Approach to violence prevention for England* (London: Department of Health).

[2] Dr Mark Bush (Ed.) (2018) *Addressing Adversity: Prioritising adversity and trauma-informed care for children and young people in England* (London: Young Minds).

is both immediately daunting and increasingly urgent. Politicians are forever attempting to find the answer – funding is moved from project to project, schemes are started and quickly dropped. Too often strategies change with every Government; each new leader determined to make their mark on tackling violent crime before the next election. But there are no quick fixes to reducing violence. It is a societal problem which deserves the attention of politicians with their minds on the long-term future, on genuinely tackling the root causes and on keeping future generations safe.

I am pleased to introduce this book, which is an important contribution to a conversation society must urgently address. With a question so complex, it can be easy to become disheartened and it can sometimes feel like violence will always be part of the fabric of our society. This book is a timely reminder not only of what can be successfully achieved in violence reduction, but also why it is so important that we never stop striving towards a society where violence is not normal. We owe this to every person who has lost their life to violence, to every grieving family, and to every community still traumatised by violence. The many voices and case studies in this collection are an important contribution to this discussion and – I hope – a step on our journey towards a less violent society.

Contributors

Tammy Banks

Tammy Banks is CEO of sexual harm awareness, prevention and education charity re:shape and Director of Taye Training, which offers a tailored approach to all aspects of safeguarding, specialising in culture change and emotional learning. She sits on the House of Commons Standards Committee and assisted the National Institute of Clinical Excellence Advisory Committee to develop the guideline 'Children & Young People Displaying Sexually Harmful Behaviour'.

Tammy has a long history of studying and working with complex groups. She has delivered group interventions in prison, managed homeless hostels and children's homes and been a Regional Safeguarding Manager for the NSPCC/Children England. Her personal history, academic achievements and work experience have driven her to champion the importance of effective, achievable solutions to prevent abuse.

Chief Constable Michael Barton

Michael Barton is chief constable of Durham Constabulary. He leads a force that is recognised as a leading force in tackling serious and organised crime as well as managing offenders. A glance at the most recent HMIC PEEL inspection will show a police force at the top of its game with an

enviable slew of outstanding grades. He attributes this to inspired and positive staff that have their feet on the ground and a burning desire to look after victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

He has long been a keen exponent of problem-orientated policing and integrated offender management, including restorative justice, and has successfully embedded these concepts in his Force.

Michael is the National Policing Lead for Crime and intends to use this position to ensure British Policing is in the vanguard of tackling crime on the internet.

Phil Bowen

As Director of the Centre for Justice Innovation, Phil Bowen sets and leads the work and overall strategy of the organisation. Prior to being Director, Phil spent the majority of his career in the British civil service. He worked for the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, before working at HM Treasury and Cabinet Office as a delivery adviser to the Prime Minister on criminal justice reform. During his time in the civil service, he spent 14 months on secondment to the Center for Court Innovation in New York, working at Bronx Community Solutions.

Elena Campbell

Elena Campbell is the Associate Director of Research, Advocacy and Policy at the Centre for Innovative Justice at Australia's RMIT University. She is a lawyer, speechwriter and former political staffer who has worked in legal and social policy for nearly 20 years. Elena's expertise includes therapeutic justice, equal opportunity and human rights, as well as the prevention and elimination of violence against women. At the CIJ Elena oversees a program of research which predominantly focuses on family violence. Previously Elena worked as a legal adviser and staffer in the Victorian Government for over a decade. Elena has also been employed as a consultant for a range of social policy and justice organisations, including the Australian Human Rights Commission, focusing on gender discrimination.

Marina Cantacuzino

Marina Cantacuzino is the Founder of The Forgiveness Project, a secular organisation which collects and shares stories from individuals who have rebuilt their lives following hurt and trauma. They provide resources and experiences to examine peaceful solutions to conflict and to help people overcome their own unresolved grievances.

Deborah Coles

Deborah Coles is the Director of INQUEST, an independent charity providing expertise on state-related deaths and their investigation to bereaved people, lawyers, the media and parliamentarians. Its specialist casework includes deaths in police and prison custody, immigration detention, mental health settings and deaths involving multi-agency failings such as the Hillsborough football disaster and the Grenfell Tower fire.

Jessica Collier

Jessica Collier is an art psychotherapist and clinical supervisor. She worked with female offenders at HMP Holloway until its closure and continues to work with women in the female prison estate. Jessica also works in a medium secure therapeutic community for men with personality disorders. She is a visiting lecturer on the Art Psychotherapy Masters programme at the University of Hertfordshire. She has lectured widely on forensic art psychotherapy and her published work focuses on trauma and unconscious re-enactment. Jessica is the co-convenor of the Forensic Arts Therapies Advisory Group.

Alison Cope

Alison Cope is the mother of Joshua Ribera who was murdered in 2013. Since Joshua's death Alison has worked tirelessly to share her son's life.

With her and Josh's compelling story coupled with her unique ability to connect with young people she regularly visits schools, prisons and

alternative education provisions nationally, reaching 1000's of young people and changing lives.

Alison has worked with West Midlands Police, Staffordshire Police, Hertfordshire Police and Crimestoppers along with keynote speaking and lecturing at Birmingham and Nottingham universities.

Abigail Darton

Abigail Darton is a Quaker peaceworker at Leap Confronting Conflict where she conducts research for new conflict management programmes with young people. She also project manages programmes in prisons and young offender institutions. The chapter in this book comes from conversations she has had with young people who have attended Leap's courses and adults who work or volunteer with the organisation. Therefore it includes the voices of a wide range of people including youth workers, office workers, those who have experienced violence in their own lives and those who work within and/or have experience of the criminal justice system.

Delia El-Hosayny

Delia El-Hosayny became Britain's first female bouncer aged 18 and worked in security for 30 years. She has been stabbed, shot, and once delivered a baby in a nightclub toilet.

Vicky Foxcroft MP

Vicky Foxcroft was first elected as the MP for Lewisham Deptford in 2015. Following the deaths of five young people from the constituency shortly after she was elected and the rise of knife crime in the area, she arranged for a parliamentary debate on youth violence to take place. That debate called for the establishment of the Youth Violence Commission, which she now chairs.

Prior to her election as an MP, she served as a local councillor in Brockley and was chair of the Lewisham Council Labour group. She also worked with a trade union for 13 years, leading campaigns against low pay, the exploitation of agency workers and the use of zero hour contracts.

Rebecca Friel

Rebecca Friel co-founded the applied theatre organisation Odd Arts in 2004. Rebecca has a keen interest in using interactive and participant lead theatre performances to tackle radicalisation, youth violence and aggressive behaviour. Odd Arts works across the criminal justice sector using applied theatre and film to increase opportunities and skills, overcome barriers, and reduce risk.

Margaret Gardiner

Margaret Gardiner is deputy manager of Diagrama Fostering and has a wealth of experience as a foster carer in her own right since 2003. She began her child care experience in 1991 managing a residential family centre and, after qualifying as a social worker, has worked in a variety of roles within IFAs from Learning and Development Manager to Head of Service/Registered Manager.

Sally Green

Sally Green lives and breathes the ancient profession of True Welfare, bringing the truth about people to the fore at work and in her community. Based in Perth Australia, she works in the social and community services sector managing a team that works within the reintegration space across multiple male and female prisons. In her spare time she is a business partner, co-author of Bridging Foods, wife, mother and a woman who is comfortable in her own skin.

Iman Haji

Iman Haji is Khulisa's Research and Programme Coordinator. She leads on building Khulisa's research agenda and her work focuses on the importance of trauma-informed practice and the development of social and emotional well-being as the foundation to reducing social exclusion and (re)offending. Iman has a legal background with both undergraduate (LLB) and post-graduate (LLM) law degrees and before joining Khulisa, practised law as a Criminal Appeals paralegal as well as an Immigration Caseworker dealing with sensitive cases involving trafficking and asylum claims.

Rob Hulls

Rob Hulls is the Director of the Centre for Innovative Justice at Australia's RMIT University. Rob served as the Attorney-General and Deputy Premier of Victoria Government from 1999 to 2010. As Attorney-General, Rob instigated significant and lasting changes to Victoria's legal system. This included establishing Australia's first Charter of Human Rights for Victoria, and setting up specialist courts including for Victoria's indigenous community, for people with mental health issues, for people with drug addiction and for victims of family violence, as well as the country's first and only Neighbourhood Justice Centre. In October 2012, Rob returned to his alma mater, RMIT University, to set up the Centre for Innovative Justice as a place to develop, drive, and expand the capacity of the justice system to meet and adapt to the needs of its diverse users.

Whitney Iles

Whitney Iles is the CEO of Project 507 Ltd, a social enterprise that was established to change systemic conditions that generate violence by developing innovative solutions to create positive peace. She has over 16 years' experience as a frontline practitioner in the serious youth violence sector and works from a trauma-informed perspective.

Lucy Jaffé

Lucy Jaffé is the Director of Why me? Victims for Restorative Justice. In her seven years there she has developed the Restorative Justice Service, the Policy Programme and contributed to the organisation's achievements in raising the profile of restorative justice in England and Wales. Previously she was the Director for a niche software company supplying services to the Lloyd's of London market and large insurers. Her experience of running social justice campaigns stems from her pivotal role in establishing Reunite International for victims of international parental child abduction.

"John"

John is a 27-year-old plasterer from Darlington. He is happily married with two young children and is enjoying a busy family life, on the right side of the tracks, after turning his life around from a misspent youth.

The staff and residents of Katherine Price Hughes House Approved Premises

Katherine Price Hughes House is part of the West London Mission, situated in North London. It is a 20-bed approved premise for male high-risk offenders just released from custody. As well as managing risk and ensuring residents conform to their licence conditions it also provides a safe place to live while supporting residents through the transition from custody back into the community by providing advice and guidance on courses, training and finding employment.

Sara Kirkpatrick

Sara Kirkpatrick is Services Development Manager at Respect, the UK membership organisation for work with domestic violence perpetrators, male victims and young people. She is an Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) domestic abuse specialist who has worked in criminal justice and community settings for over 25 years. Starting her career providing support

in a women's refuge she has worked with a range of client groups including male victims, children impacted by domestic abuse, women remaining in abusive relationships and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Sara has contributed to a number of frontline innovative projects with perpetrators of IPV including co-authoring and delivering the award-winning CARA conditional caution project with the Hampton Trust, contributing to development of DRIVE on behalf of Respect. Her current innovation activities include Change that Lasts perpetrator strand in partnership with Welsh Women's Aid and the ADVANCE research project with King's College London and serving as a national trainer for Respect and a Visiting Lecturer at Winchester University.

Paul Kohler

Paul Kohler is an academic who lives in London with his family. One night in August 2014, he opened his front door and four men rushed in and attacked him, held his wife hostage, and only left when his terrified daughter, who was hiding under the bed, telephoned the police. He went on to meet one of the attackers in a restorative justice meeting two years later. Paul was pleased to get questions answered and for his daughter to see the attacker as more than a monster.

Gerard Lemos CMG

Gerard Lemos was described by Community Care magazine as 'one of the U.K.'s leading thinkers on social policy'. His books include *The Good Prison: conscience, crime and punishment*; *The End of the Chinese Dream: Why Chinese people fear the future* (published by Yale University Press) and *The Communities We Have Lost and Can Regain*, co-authored with the late Lord Michael Young. He has held many public appointments including as a non-executive director of the Crown Prosecution Service and chair of the council of the University of York.

Marian Liebmann

Marian became interested in anger after working with offenders in a probation setting. Marian later developed the art therapy groups to combine with verbal methods, as art is a powerful means of communication, especially for those who struggle to communicate verbally. Marian spent several years as an art therapist working with individuals and groups in a Community Mental Health Team and has been asked to run similar groups in African countries in the aftermath of war and violence.

Claire Lillis

Claire Lillis is the CEO of Attwood schools and has been the headteacher of Ian Mikardo School since 2002. She is an experienced leader of education in mainstream, custodial and special schools who passionately believes that there is a different, more inclusive and creative way to educate our children.

Will Linden

Will Linden is the Co-Deputy Director of Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit. He has been with Police Scotland for more than 13 years. Since being appointed to the Violence Reduction Unit in March 2005 he has been involved in a number of projects including the development of the Homicide/Deaths Database and CIRV (Community Initiative to Reduce Violence), Injury Surveillance, Mentors in Violence Prevention, Employability/Desistence programmes and has provided much of the research and strategy development in support of the Violence Reduction Strategy for Scotland.

Will specialises in behavioural and geographic analysis of violence and received a number of awards from the Association for Geographic Information (AGI) and the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), for his work. Will previously served as acting director of the unit for 18 months.

Harriet Madeley

Harriet Madeley is a writer, actor and theatre producer. She runs Crowded Room with Mark Knightley: they create theatre built on personal testimony and produce it with the aim of bringing diverse audiences together.

Richard Mills

Richard Mills is a learning and development manager in a social care company in the UK who enjoys 'squeezing the juice' out of every opportunity to evolve and grow. He is committed to finding and expressing truth in all areas of life. Richard loves teaching, singing in groups, writing, philosophy and working with self-expression.

Jane Mulcahy

Jane Mulcahy is a PhD candidate in Law at University College Cork in Ireland, researching post-release supervision of long sentence male prisoners. She is an Irish Research Council scholar under the employment based PhD scheme, co-funded by the Probation Service. Jane has worked as a researcher in the area of criminal justice, penal policy and social justice since 2005. She began hosting a radio show/podcast in conjunction with the Law Department and UCC 98.3FM called 'Law and Justice' in September 2017. Many recent features have addressed the subject of Adverse Childhood Experiences and the devastating lifelong impact on individuals and society.

Beth Murray

Beth Murray is Director of Communications and Engagement at Catch22, the nationwide social business and charity working with young people and families, across justice, education and into employment in 128 communities in the UK. She is Vice Chair of the Social Tech Trust, the social technology funder, and a 2018 Churchill Fellow, researching the intersection between technology and charities. She was previously at Only Connect, the criminal justice charity.

Hilary Peters

Hilary Peters was brought up rich, gave away her money, became a gardener, started a city farm, lived on a boat, then in a van. Currently, she is a hermit.

John Poyton

John Poyton has been CEO of Redthread since 2008, having founded the pilot of the Well Centre in 2002 and the UK's first hospital-based youth violence intervention programme in 2006. John is as passionate today about the strategic opportunities for innovative health partnerships to improve the health inequalities of young people, as he was when he started his career as a youth work practitioner. John believes meeting young people in 'the teachable moment' is crucial in supporting vulnerable young people to live healthy, safe and happy lives.

Ariana Ray

Ariana Ray works in the areas of child protection and the support and safeguarding of children and families. Her work recognises that we all have it within us to parent our children in a way that releases the potential all children have to grow into the deeply sensitive, tender and caring men and women we innately are.

Inspired by the works of Serge Benhayon and Universal Medicine, her work in social care is based on the standard and foundation of true welfare. She has a passion for working with people of all ages to support them to connect and develop their own learning and evolution, based on a deep recognition that we are all far more than we think we are, that there is a grandness we can all equally step into that is already ours; it awaits our connection.

Lisa Rowles

Lisa Rowles is Khulisa's Director of Innovation and Evidence. She has been with Khulisa since its inception in the UK and leads on the design and development of Khulisa's programmes. Evaluation, measurement and

research also sits within Lisa's remit. She is responsible for the recruitment, training and quality assurance of all Khulisa facilitators, as well as safeguarding protocols and procedures. Lisa has a range of qualifications in coaching and mentoring (OCM), psychology (OU), neuro-linguistic programming (MBNLP), dramatherapy (Worcs Uni), psychotherapeutic counselling (Chrysalis) and is currently completing a Certificate in Supervision (CSTD). She is a member of BADTh (British Association of Dramatherapists) and NCS (National Counselling Society).

Jillian Shagan

Jillian Shagan is the Director of Community Health and Safety Strategies for the Center for Court Innovation, where she oversees community violence prevention efforts – managing a portfolio of community violence prevention programs, strengthening organisational understanding of the roots and impact of violence, and planning and implementing new approaches to building safer and healthier communities. She has led a number of court and community-based initiatives for the Center for Court Innovation, including the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center and the Harlem Community Justice Center. Before joining the Center, Ms Shagan directed the legal division of Lutheran Family and Community Services where she managed three church-based community immigration clinics. She received her BA from Oberlin College and her law degree from the New York University School of Law.

Major General (Retd) Andrew Sharpe

During 34 years of military service, and nine operational tours, Andrew Sharpe commanded on operations in all ranks from second-lieutenant to brigadier. He was the Deputy Commandant of the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College and the Director of the UK Higher Command and Staff Course. He left the British Army as a Major General, completing his military career as the Director of the UK MoD's independent think-tank: the DCDC. For three years he ran the UK Chief of Defence Staff's Strategic Advisory Panel.

Doctor Sharpe is the Director of the British Army's Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research and a Senior Mentor on the British Army's generalship programme. In addition, as an independent consultant, and, with companies such as Sovereign Global, The DRPM Group, HRobotics, Beechwood International and NSC, he has partnered with governments, international organisations and businesses to provide strategic, operational and leadership advice, support and mentoring.

Professor Jonathan Shepherd

Jonathan Shepherd is Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Cardiff University. His Violence Research Group won a 2009 Queen's Prize in Higher Education. He is Emeritus Director of the University's Crime and Security Research Institute. His research on clinical decisions, community violence and the evidence ecosystem has made many contributions to clinical and public policy and to legislation. His innovations include the Universities' Police Science Institute in Wales, the 'Cardiff Model' for violence prevention which was adopted in the 2008 UK alcohol strategy, by the Coalition Government in 2010 and by the present UK Government in its 2018 serious violence strategy, and a comprehensive care pathway for people harmed by violence. He is a member of the Cabinet Office What Works Council, and the Home Office Science Advisory Council.

Paul Smyth

Paul Smyth's activist life began in his early teens when he joined the 'Peace People' movement in the midst of Northern Ireland's sectarian conflict. His four-decade career as a youth worker began there – first as a volunteer, then as head of youth programmes. From there he went to the University of Ulster to work on a collaborative project with Channel 4 helping teachers and youth workers to address controversial issues in the classroom. After four years with the Youth Council for Northern Ireland he took up a role as director of Public Achievement – a multi-award winning NGO working with young people from tougher social realities. Throughout his career he has worked in conflicted and post-conflict societies around the world.

Since early 2016 he has been a freelance youth engagement specialist. He has been working for many years to highlight the impact of ongoing violent paramilitary activity on young people and their communities. You can find out more about his work on his website wiseabap.com

Tim Snowdon FRSA

Tim Snowdon runs the charity Sixty-One and has 30 years' experience in the charitable sector. Prior to Sixty-One he was the CEO of Changing Tunes for 10 years. He's passionate about 'relational' work that treats people on the margins as people, and not problems to be fixed. In his spare time, he's a keen photographer and makes custom titanium road bikes.

Crispian Strachan CBE QPM

Crispian Strachan is a Non-Executive Director of Restorative Solutions CIC where he uses his police and third sector experience and skills to boost the development of restorative practice in Britain. He served in the Metropolitan, Strathclyde and Northumbria police forces from 1972 until 2005, including authorising restorative justice research in Northumbria from 2003 which was one of the most successful research projects of its kind in the UK. After retirement from the police he has been interested in a variety of charities and is a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of Criminology in Cambridge, for police students.

Khamran Uddin

Khamran Uddin is an ex-criminal, now working for the Probation Service. Having traversed through several walks in life, his 'before and after' story has been very moving and captivating. One particularly notable experience, was participating in a restorative justice programme which led to him becoming friends with his victim.

If you would like to know more about how he changed his life or keep up to date with the progress of his book; 'The Battle of the Minds', please feel free to visit his website at KhamranUddin.com.

Trevor Urch

Trevor Urch is the Recovery and Service user involvement lead in HMP Birmingham for Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust. He undertakes all aspects of this role for Offender Health services at the prison. He has a broad range of experience of working across secure and non-secure mental health services. He is proud of the peer-led involvement and co-design of healthcare services within the prison. Prime examples of this work include the facilitation of Mental Health First Aid programmes for offenders and staff and the development of a mental health out-of-hours telephone support line designed 'by prisoners for prisoners' (facilitated by Mental Health Matters).

Stephen Whitehead

Stephen Whitehead is Head of Policy for the Centre for Justice Innovation, leading their work on court and community sentence reform. He has worked to develop new models of problem solving courts such as Family Drug and Alcohol Courts or the Aberdeen Problem Solving Approach. In his previous role, he established the New Economics Foundation's criminal justice reform programme which explored the role that diversion and specialist courts could play in the UK. He is a trained facilitator with experience in citizen engagement and education policymaking.

Peter Woolf

Peter Woolf is a motivational speaker and course leader for restorative justice. He committed criminal acts from a young age and spent 18 years in and out of prison. In 2002 he was caught burgling Will Riley's house, whom he attacked repeatedly in a bid to escape. That same year he met Will and several other victims of his crimes in a restorative justice meeting and he has not committed another crime since.

Gary Younge

Gary Younge is an author, broadcaster and editor-at-large for *The Guardian*, based in London. He also writes a monthly column, 'Beneath the Radar', for *The Nation* magazine and is the Alfred Knobler Fellow for The Nation Institute. He has written five books: *Another Day in the Death of America, A Chronicle of Ten Short Lives*; *The Speech, The Story Behind Martin Luther King's Dream; Who Are We?, And Should it Matter in the 21st century*; *Stranger in a Strange Land, Travels in the Disunited States* and *No Place Like Home, A Black Briton's Journey Through the Deep South*. He has made several radio and television documentaries on subjects ranging from gay marriage to Brexit.

About the Monument Fellowship

When Simon Sainsbury and Stewart Grimshaw established The Monument Trust in 1965, among their objectives from the outset was 'social renewal', alongside their concerns for promoting good enterprise skills, health, the arts and heritage. The first grant gave the Trust its name – the restoration of a Capability Brown landscape in the hands of the National Trust viewed from Simon's home, The Monument, in Petworth Park. At the same time began the Trust's work for those without homes at all, in precarious tenancies or living on the streets. Soon it was seen how much of the challenges and problems faced by homeless people and young people at risk overlapped with the justice system and, in particular, prison.

When the prison population started steadily to rise in the early part of the 1990s, in the wake of the ill-conceived 'prison works' policy intended to cut crime by taking offenders off the streets and putting them inside, Monument realised that the fix was only temporary. There was little to address the underlying problems of growing numbers of young people and others in prisons, and not enough capacity in the system to support lasting resettlement in the positive environments of home, family, or motivating work. Once imprisoned, offenders were not only more likely to reoffend, but also at a more serious level. The prison population has been rising ever since, even when crime has fallen.

This resolved Monument upon a quarter of a century's sustained grant programmes aimed "to keep young people out of prison and, if they do err, to ensure they never go back". The work has ranged from pioneering resettlement services in Young Offender Institutions originally by Nacro, and now widely extended by Khulisa UK, to the spectacular reduction of child arrests in England and Wales by two-thirds in seven years, thus keeping them out of the justice system and crime, thanks to partnership between the police and the Howard League for Penal Reform. We have also supported a major experiment in policing and arrest, based on triage of offenders according to the severity of the crime, and thus reliably informing a judgement on balancing the risk of referral for prosecution and custody versus the right out-of-court disposals. This is being taken up by more and more police forces, since early results showed the social and economic harm caused by crime fall in the test area by over a third, as satisfaction in justice delivered rose by the same proportion, and the costs to the public purse fell even further.

With 2018. Monument has reached the end of its work. The Trustees wished to leave a lasting legacy in the field of social development, not only in innovation in health, and the arts and heritage. The Monument Fellowship thus represents the distillation of the Trust's ambition to help people to steer away from prison, never to return. The eight member organisations represent the concerted efforts of the essential approaches and interventions at each stage on the journey of an offender that we have come to rely on towards the end of the Trust's lifetime. In 2016 they set out our Manifesto for the Fellowship's legacy, and their first annual question – "What do those at risk of offending, prisoners and ex-offenders need to learn?" – resulted in a book of more than 50 essays containing the answers of so many more that the Monument has worked with, from charities to offenders themselves. At the end of The Monument Fellowship's five years, we can look forward to five collections of thoughtful reflection, arising from direct experience and challenging wisdom.

With this second volume, we congratulate the Fellows and our many other friends who have contributed their responses to the second question – "How can we be a less violent society?" The cumulative insight that will be gathering ahead ensures that we will know ever more clearly how to keep people out of crime and prison, and keep them from going back.

Mark Woodruff
The Monument Trust 2000-2018

Violence in society

46% decrease in violent incidents over 15 years

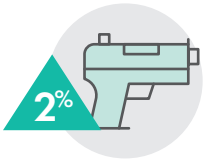
Over the past 15 years, there has been a **46% decrease in the number of violent incidents**

64% of the public perceive an increase in violence

In March 2018, **64% of the public believed that violence has gone up**

In 2017/18, there has been a

16% increase in police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument



2% increase in police recorded offences involving firearms

12% rise in police recorded homicides

Of the violent incidents last year,

53% resulted in no injury

23% resulted in minor injury

24% resulted in serious wounding

Sources (top left to bottom): The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), 2003-2017. YouGov/Centre for Justice Innovation Survey Results, March 2018 n: 1658 adults. Police recorded crime, 2017/18. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

Introduction

Violence in our society

PHIL BOWEN

According to the 2018 Global Peace Index, the United Kingdom is the 28th safest society in the world (when compared to 163 other countries) and sits in the safest continent in the world.[3] And yet concerns about the levels of violence in our society continue to not only make headlines but, more importantly, blight the lives of our citizens and our communities.

Our ability to quantify how much violence there is in our society and the nature of that violence is probably better now than it has ever been. And while that data can tell us only so much, the trends are revealing. At its most abstract, we can look at overall levels of violence in society, through the use of large public surveys. These tell us that overall violence is down. In England and Wales, there has been a 46% decrease in the number of violent incidents over the past 15 years.[4] Latest data from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey reported a 41% decrease in violent incidents since 1998.[5] In Northern Ireland, there has been a 61% reduction in the

[3] Institute for Economics and Peace (2018) The Global Peace Index. Available at: http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/06/Global-Peace-Index-2018-2.pdf

[4] ONS (2018) Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018

number of households reporting being a victim of violent crime since 1998.[6]

However, focusing on positive overall trends can be a misplaced sedative. It is sobering that an estimated 1.9 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the last year[7] and that there are an estimated 3.4 million female victims and 631,000 male victims of sexual assault in England and Wales.[8] While only 2.6% of adult Scots were a victim of violent crime last year, far fewer than 20 years ago, that still represents nearly 14,000 individuals whose lives were affected by violence towards them.[9]

Moreover, data about recent changes in specific categories of violent behaviour offers real cause for concern. In England and Wales, there has been a 16% increase in police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in the last year.[10] In Scotland, police recorded crime data for 2016-17 suggests an increase in murder and robbery.[11] While we should be glad that there has been a 99% reduction in the number of deaths connected to the security situation in Northern Ireland since its peak in

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[5] Scottish Government (2018) 2016-17 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey

[6] Department of Justice (2018) Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2016/17 Northern Ireland Crime Survey. Available at: https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/research-and-statistical-bulletin-92018-experience-crime-findings-201617-northern-ireland-crime

[7] ONS (2017) Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017

[8] ONS (2018) Sexual offences in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/sexualoffencesinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017

[9] Scottish Government (2018) 2016-17 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey

[10] ONS (2018) Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018

[11] Scottish Government (2018) 2016-17 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey

1972, there were still 101 paramilitary style assaults in 2017, a rise of 19% on 2016.[12] When set in that context, it is perhaps not surprising that 64% of the public believe that violence has gone up over the past year.[13]

Data also tells us that violence is not one thing — it does not have a single cause, a single character, or a single impact, and the burden of violence falls particularly heavily on some groups in our society. Across the UK, as in the rest of the world, that, those individuals living in our more deprived communities suffer from violence more than the rest of us.[14] Latest data from Scotland, which accords with data across the developed world, shows that 79% of all incidents of domestic abuse in 2016-17 had a female victim and a male accused, with 88% of the violence occurring in the victim's own home.[15] Young people in England and Wales aged 16-24 are the most likely group in the population to be victims of violent crime and around three quarters of the perpetrators of violence are male.[16] Scottish data estimates that over half of violent crime (54%) was alcohol related in 2014-15.[17] There is a tragic diversity in the violence that harms our children, our livelihoods, our communities and our society.

The purpose of this book

Even though we are getting less violent overall, it is not good enough in a civilised society to accept the level of violence present in our society nor how unequally that violence impacts on our citizens. It is not helpful to be alarmist about violence but neither should we be complacent. Not one of

[12] PSNI (2018) Security Situation Statistics. Available at: https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/security-situation-statistics/

[13] YouGov/Centre for Justice Innovation Survey Results, March 2018 n: 1658 adults

[14] See, for example, ONS (2018) The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/thenatureofviolentcrimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017

[15] Scottish Government (2017) Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland, 2016-17. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/10/3700/346362

[16] Ibid.

[17] Scottish Government (March 2016) Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2014/15: Main Findings. Available at http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/5269

us — no matter where we live or what we do — can be certain who will suffer from the next act of violence. The victims are black and white, rich and poor, young and old, famous and unknown. They are, most important of all, human beings whom other human beings love and need.

The essays in this book represent varied insights into violence and the many varied solutions to it. But the views contained herein are not arbitrarily selected. We have explicitly curated these voices because they exemplify four themes.

First, the voices in this book seek to solve problems. The essays and contributions start where too many books on crime and wider social policy end — at the point where they recognise the urgency of tackling a problem without being clear about what we can constructively do about it. The point of this book is not to describe the problem of violence in our society — the point is to help solve it. Therefore, the essays contained here represent prescriptions as well as diagnoses. We hope this book can contribute to nourishing and spreading effective approaches and building and sustaining communities of good practice that can contribute to the work of reducing violence in our society.

Second, the voices in this book do not shy away from the complexity of violence in our society nor the complexity of what we can do to prevent it. We believe people can choose to do right and they can choose to do wrong but that these choices are heavily shaped by and reflect wider social and political choices that we make as a society. As this book of essays shows, violence can occur among the unequal relationships we have with each other, in our homes, on our streets and in our communities. Violence can occur when the legitimacy of our political and social settlements break down. Any reader seeking a simple solution to all violence in our society will be disappointed and we make no apology for that.

Third, the voices in here are inherently optimistic. They believe in people's capacity to accept responsibility and to change for the better. They believe in communities' capacity to confront violence. They are all unified by what Dr Martin Luther King called the "fierce urgency of now". They believe we can reconcile and rehabilitate those who have done wrong, that our

communities can grow better at preventing violence and become better places for us all to live our lives peacefully.

Four, the voices are diverse. We didn't want to simply provide a new platform for the usual talking heads. We have sought out contributors with something new to add to the debate, whether it comes from working on the frontline, the lived experience of being a victim or a perpetrator (or, as is often the case, both) or simply those with a radical new idea. In the end, violence touches and concerns everyone in society and we have aimed to find voices that can speak to the joyous diversity of our society.

We hope this book of essays convinces the reader that we can reduce violence in our society: that by developing a rich understanding of violence and how to tackle its many root causes, we can make a real difference. Reducing violence is a responsibility for everyone — for those in power, in both government and in the formal criminal justice system, but also for all of us — in our schools and our hospitals, in the arts and in our civic society, on our streets, and in our homes.

If this small book in some way can help lead to a change in how we consider violence and the ways we can tackle it, if it can help us all reduce the violence in our society, then it will have achieved much.

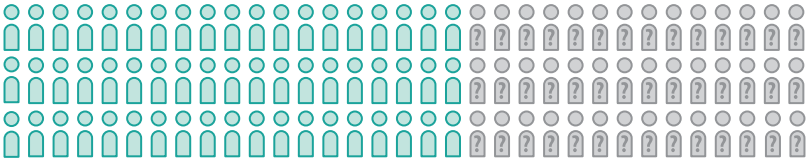
Acknowledgements

Our special thanks goes to everyone who submitted a contribution, all those who endured our editing and all those who agreed for their pieces to be published. We extend our deep thanks to them for their commitment and enthusiasm.

We are very grateful to the Trustees of The Monument Trust for the faith and support they have invested in the organisations of the Fellowship. We also are indebted in particular to Mark Woodruff of The Monument Trust for his wise counsel, good humour and patience.

Phil Bowen & Stephen Whitehead
September 2018

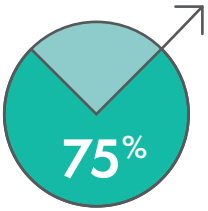
Understanding Violence



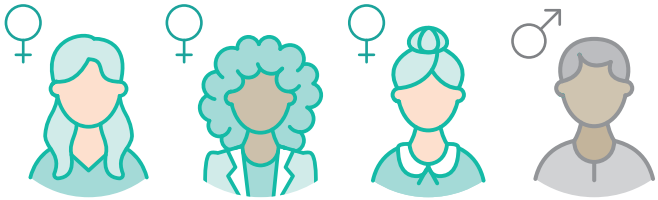
In 2017/18, **57% of victims of violent crime knew their offender.**

16-24

Young people aged between 16-24 are the most likely group in the population to be victims of violent crime.



Three quarters of recorded violent incidents are perpetrated by men



Women are the victims of three quarters of domestic violence incidents recorded by police

Sources: The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).
ONS Statistic release: Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017

SECTION ONE
Understanding violence

PHIL BOWEN

Before we can prevent and respond to the violence we see in our society, we first need to understand it. In this section, we have gathered together essays with the potential to broaden and deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of violence.

We begin with an essay which has the power to help us understand the personal impact which violence can have in its most extreme forms. In perhaps the most painful and moving piece in the book, Ali Cope's opening essay on the murder of her son, Josh, explores how to come to terms with the violence, to understand it and to find ways of responding to it.

From there, our essays seek to understand how violence is exhibited and understood in our society. Major General (Retd) Andrew Sharpe offers a fascinating insight into societies in conflict, and, echoing Hobbes,[18] why our politics and the rule of law need to preserve order while allowing legitimate avenues for airing and redressing grievances. Whitney Iles looks at how the social context can give rise to violence. Beth Murray looks at the potential for social media to exacerbate already existing

[18] Hobbes, Thomas *Leviathan*.

violent behaviour. Elena Campbell and Rob Hulls offer a view on family violence in the context of Australian society while a joint piece by social workers Richard Mills, Ariana Ray and Sally Green considers love and violence in society.

Deborah Coles offers a challenging view of the often too neglected issue of the violence committed by the state towards its citizens, and Jess Collier, through her powerful photos and essay, highlights the indifference and neglect society too often shows to those who have offended but who have also experienced violence themselves. Finally, Gerard Lemos explores how the public dialogue about crime and violence frames how we describe, codify and respond to violence in the contested area of hate crime.

Together, these essays offer a rounded and complex picture of the nature of violence. But, in keeping with the mission of this volume, these contributions don't simply seek to understand violence but also illuminate the paths that we can take to begin to reduce it.

Josh

ALISON COPE

My definition of love is also a four-letter word: that word is Josh. To many that is a well-known boys' name. To me 'Josh' is my only son.

Of course, we love our children, they come into our worlds and change us forever. Josh came into my world when I was 21 years of age. At 21 I was a very damaged, hurt and sad young woman. I had lived through traumas, sadness and depression and this deeply affected my ability to be the mother my children deserved. When Josh was just a few months old my relationship with his dad started to break down. I began feeling this overwhelming sense of panic – waves of self-doubt and fear. I felt that I couldn't look after him. I desperately looked for support, and attended every group and appointment thrown at me but all I kept hearing was "post-natal depression". I was offered tablets, even electric shock therapy (which I politely declined), but I needed help and I needed it urgently, I felt I could not look after this small baby who deserved everything. Help came but it wasn't the help I wanted: I wanted support, I wanted to have people around me helping me to be a good mum, not to leave me alone at home feeling fear, panic and worthlessness.

You might be thinking social services came. But it wasn't social services, it was my parents. You might be relieved to hear that, you might think how wonderful. Yes, they were wonderful, too wonderful in fact: the amazing

house, the strength of a couple, financially stable, the ability to do all the amazing activities your children deserve – picnics in the park, horse riding, holidays at the seaside, swimming, baking cakes, reading bedtime stories…

I had pleaded with my parents to come and help me at home, to support me through the panic attacks and depression because I did not want to lose my baby, my Josh, I wanted to feel 'better' so I could cope. My relationship with my parents was very difficult. As a family we had been through so much together, although there was a lot of love in our hearts it was a very dysfunctional family. This meant that coming to me and supporting me wasn't an option as they had rebuilt their lives and that was what they needed to focus on. They wanted to help me, and they thought the only way to offer help was to have Josh. How I wish I had felt strong enough at that point to say no. When you are overwhelmed with panic and a genuine feeling you are not good enough to look after your own child the sense of relief you feel when people you know come with open arms, offering to look after your child until you feel better, is such a relief.

I remember thinking how lucky Josh was, in my mind at that time they were much better than me, and he deserved care and love, my heart hurts writing this.

I watched this unfold in front of me, one night with Grandad and Grandma, then two nights, two nights that eventually led to six years…

SIX YEARS!

During those six years I visited Josh almost daily. I did what I could to show him I loved him and that I was his mum. I attended all of his school plays, doctors' appointments and parent's evenings. I coped well with short periods of time but when he came to stay over at mine I was again gripped with panic and found every minute difficult. When it came to dropping him back I was so relieved yet sad. I would then go home to my lonely existence and sleep my life away. The longer Josh was with my parents the more it reconfirmed I was not good enough, I saw them coping so well and Josh appeared very happy. It was so hard to see yet in my mind I had no right to deny him of all these experiences, security and love.

I remember they were all going to the seaside for a 'family holiday' and I wanted to go with them, I thought if we were all there together I wouldn't panic. I asked my mum if I could come with them, my parents thought about it but came back to me saying no, as it might upset Josh. I felt so rejected, and so angry, inside I was screaming, "please please help me be his mum!" But again I just went home telling myself, "it is probably for the best – I am not good enough".

When Joshua was seven years old his behaviour started to deteriorate. He was becoming aggressive and hyperactive: punching, kicking and swearing to express his pain. Josh eventually was diagnosed with ADHD. I started to see the strain on my parents: they were getting older and his physical aggression was becoming too difficult for them to manage. My mum kept ringing me telling me how his behaviour was getting too much for them. I felt such helplessness, what could I do? How could I make it better? I loved Josh so much but I didn't know what to do. I also felt such anger towards my parents: in my mind I was thinking, "how dare you need me now! I wasn't good enough to be involved for the last seven years but now you want me!" Josh began to express daily that he just wanted to live with me. His pain was becoming very apparent: he cried a lot, and expressed his pain through anger. This was so hard for me to see, and part of my brain hoped it would just go away and everything would be okay. I felt such guilt but also so much confusion. "If only I had been supported in the beginning" I thought "perhaps this wouldn't be happening."

Over a two-year period, there were many appointments and many challenges. Myself and my parents attended all the appointments together. We argued over many things but we all knew this wasn't about us, we all had the same goal, Joshua's happiness. Eventually Josh attended a special education school called Springfield House and this was the beginning of a new chapter…

As Joshua was in a special educational school all decisions that were made about his care needed to come through me because I was his mum and legally responsible for him. It makes sense to me now but back then I was blown away by the feeling I got in my heart. I was important in Joshua's life, I could

make a difference. I was being asked to attend his plays, special groups during the day looking at his maths projects, his art work. I WAS HIS MUM!

I remember him saying to me, mum can I stay at yours, I said yes and he did. That might seem like such a small thing but guess what, one night became two, two nights became three, then all of a sudden three nights became forever. We were back together. I write this with tears streaming down my face – every moment I still needed to double check I didn't feel panic, I needed to check that I could cope. Joshua was living with me 100% of the time and this became the start of something magical…

When young people are hurt they react, I had hurt my son, not intentionally, but because of my own pain. My parents had done what they thought was for the best, but on reflection we had all made mistakes. This now wasn't about me or my parents it was all about one person: Joshua. What did he need? What would heal his pain? How could I heal him?

I could write an entire book about the following years…

From the age of nine until he was 15 Joshua needed to heal. He had felt rejected by me so he did everything he could to test my love for him. He did this by screaming at me, swearing daily, threatening violence, challenging whether I even loved him. It was so hard, but one thing meant I had to keep going: my son had a beautiful heart and soul and I owed it to him to try. There was only one person and one thing that would heal the break and confusion in his heart and mind: me and love.

His behaviour was relentless. Every single day he would be abusive and challenging. But then I would see the hurt little boy's eyes look at me with such longing and guilt for his behaviour. He often wiped tears from his eyes after an outburst. My job was to love him through this pain, I had sheer determination that this would work.

Joshua struggled in so many areas of his life that his behaviour started to spill out publicly. He was arrested on numerous occasions and received many criminal convictions. My life revolved around challenges: police stations, court dates, accident and emergency departments. It was exhausting but again the love I had for Josh kept me going, he was worth every moment of effort.

When Josh was 15 something happened that would change his life forever. Joshua was falsely convicted of an assault and sentenced to two years in a young offenders' prison. At the time it was the worst thing that could have happened, my son needed me, we needed to be together my work wasn't completed, how could I love him when he was in prison?

Knowing my son had been falsely convicted didn't destroy me, it enraged me, and every bit of strength and determination came to together and I became a force to be reckoned with. Six weeks later the case went to appeal. Three new judges relooked at the case and realised very quickly a mistake had been made. The conviction was overturned, and Josh was allowed to come home.

Joshua took one look at me and cried. He said, "mum, I am never doing anything that means I am taken from you again". He never got into trouble again.

He came home and the dark clouds of pain that followed him around cleared. We had been through so much together, but he knew the one thing I needed him to know, that he was loved. The pain in my son's heart had been healed, he knew I loved him, he knew his grandparents and family loved him. All the anger, confusion, pain and doubt disappeared. I had done it.

Over the next two years Josh achieved everything. He showed love, he knew love, he showed respect, and his heart was filled with happiness. What more could a parent ask for?

Having the stability he always deserved enabled Josh to focus on his future. He put his heart and soul into becoming a grime MC. Within 18 months Joshua had a number one album, millions of views on YouTube and thousands of followers. He was incredibly well known and successful. And as long as he was happy, I was happy.

On the 20th of September 2013 Joshua went to an event to perform one of his tracks. He left our home, hugging me and telling me he loved me. This was to be the night that changed Joshua's life and mine forever. Joshua got involved in a disagreement over a girl. Within an hour he was fighting for his life at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham.

An 18-year-old boy was angry with Josh and made a decision that would change everything. He stabbed Joshua once in the heart. Joshua fought for seven hours to stay alive, he had multiple heart attacks and blood transfusions. I believe every time his heart stopped he fought back because he didn't want to be without me. On the 21st September 2013 Joshua took his last breath and died.

Josh wasn't just my son he was my saviour, the person that made me and gave me strength. He taught me that when you live in pain you must try to keep going, because one day the clouds might clear. I don't think my clouds will ever clear or the break in my heart ever heal but I live with such comfort knowing that when my son left me he knew he was loved, he knew security and he was happy.

I am so proud that together we achieved the most important thing in the world … Love.

My love for Josh is the thing that enables me to wake up every day. I can't really put it into words, but I have such a strong belief that people need to hear my son's story, to know his pain and to see how pain in the heart can be healed with love, guidance and unconditional support. We need to help people heal internally before we pressurise them to succeed externally. It was only when Josh healed in his heart that he was able to focus on his future, to achieve and succeed.

As a society we are constantly telling young people that success is measured by qualifications, money and status, I want people to hear that I see success as emotional security, happiness, kindness and the ability to love. Without these internal qualities we can never reach our full potential.

When Joshua died I became very aware of just how many young people were struggling with emotional pain. I had thousands of young people turning to me, desperate, hurt and angry. I quickly realised that if I used the same skills my beautiful Josh had taught me then I could help them, one by one. I hugged them, supported them, understood them and most importantly respected how they felt. I did everything I could to make them see that even when we are in pain we must try and see happiness even in

the smallest doses. Within a few months of his death I organised days out, football tournaments, and even a ball in Josh's memory.

Approximately six months after Joshua died I began talking in schools, colleges and prisons sharing my experiences and the story of Joshua's life: the pain, the choices, the love and achievements. And the real, devastating consequences of knife crime. I have now reached over 250,000 people across the UK and I intend to reach many more and tell them all about my Joshy.

I look back over the last five years with such pride. All those young people, all that pain and potential for self-destruction. But I did what was right – saw the pain, not the reaction. With the love for Josh in my heart and the knowledge that love has power they all came through that horrendous time.

This year I organised The Joshua Ribera Achievement Awards. The idea came while visiting schools for excluded children. I found out that the majority were not allowed to attend their end-of-year prom, work experience or end-of-year day trips because of their previous behaviour. I understood this, but what I found hard to accept was that, even when their behaviour had improved, they were still not allowed. So I thought ,"You know what? I will give them their prom. And not just any prom – the most amazing evening ever." And I did. Twenty young people from the West Midlands were invited to a red-carpet event along with their parents and carers. They were the VIPs for the evening and to see their faces light up and be recognised was truly amazing. 2019 will see the second Joshua Ribera Awards evening and more young people will be shown that they are truly special.

When young people make wrong choices we need to support, guide and help them believe they still have a future. I can't show my son how much I loved him anymore but what I can do is sprinkle a small amount of that magic on others.

The credit for my work, my passion and determination is because of one person. A person who will never be forgotten, my little boy, my Josh. xx

Safety valves and rules

MAJOR GENERAL (RETD) ANDREW SHARPE

In the mid-1990s, in the midst of a very unpleasant civil war, I served with the UN Protection Force in Bosnia. This was a European society at its most violent. Unimaginably violent. The level of wickedness between erstwhile neighbours is hard to describe and even harder to understand. This intense experience afforded me, on later reflection, two very useful insights into a cause of, and perhaps a step towards remedying, chaos and violence within what had previously been a seemingly relatively harmonious society.

Yugoslavia, under Tito, had had its divisions, ethnic and otherwise, but, by and large, had been a successful amalgamation of Slavs and Europeans, Catholic and Orthodox Christianity and Turkish Islam. Bosnia, the meeting point and melting pot of those societies, had prospered under Yugoslav unity, and, where tensions did exist, the lid was kept tightly on them by a robust Party and a strong sense of wider nationhood and civic responsibility. But once these unifying forces disappeared after the death of Tito, those ethnic and religious differences boiled over and the previously functional society rapidly descended into chaos and the most extreme violence.

By chance, on a mid-tour break from the Balkans back in the UK, I had a discussion with a Cypriot doctor who had fled to London 20 years earlier as a result of the 1974 Cypriot civil war. Disturbed by the most extreme violence and unpleasantness that I had witnessed I asked him how, when

friends and neighbours had cohabited peacefully for so long, those same people could suddenly inflict such unimaginable suffering upon each other. His reply surprised me: it was precisely *because* of that closeness, he said, that, once society broke down, the level of violence was inevitably going to be so extreme. I did not follow his logic.

His analogy, to help me to understand, was simple. Imagine, he said, a seemingly happy and pleasant woman, married for 40 years to an equally seemingly happy and pleasant man, who suddenly boils over and plunges her breakfast knife into him because she has, for all those years, hated the noise that he makes when he eats toast. His toast-eating noise is a small matter, and she has (largely) ignored it all this time (although it nags her). And she really loves her husband. But there have been other things too that nag at her. And she doesn't bring them up, because they don't really matter. But they nag at her. The marriage is outwardly very happy, but the couple achieve this outward happiness by avoiding conflict and confrontation – they don't talk about the little things that bug each other, they just let them go. But those things build up if they are not talked about. And the pressure builds up upon the lid that needs to be, over the years, more tightly held down to keep that pressure under control. And, because the couple love each other, the level of pressure that they can endure is much higher than it would be between more casual acquaintances or in the presence of a less strong affection. So when the lid blows off, it does so with a dramatic overaction.

In the doctor's words: "to hurt someone that you love, you have to be so cross that when you *do* act you hurt them badly. Professional soldiers do not care for their opponents, so they tend to treat them with much less passion when they confront them." Although seemingly contradictive, actually his logic made perfect sense. He then explained how this had affected his friends and neighbours in Cyprus and, with an impressive knowledge of conflict and military history, compared it with the conduct of people in countless civil wars, from the English to the American to the Angolan. And, we decided, once the cycle of illogical violence starts it tends to cycle upwards, as 'justice' turns into retribution and revenge. The solution, he said, is simple. As in any human relationship, whether between individuals, or neighbours, or villages, or cultures, or countries, the key is

to allow (and encourage) a regular venting of the pressure valve. In the interests of Yugoslav harmony, Tito had not allowed the petty nags of daily interaction to be vented. The pot boiled away under a tightly closed lid. Thus when the lid came off it came off with a horrible force.

So – route one to a less violent society is to allow views, nags, prejudices, opinions and irritations to be vented. Opinions should not be put off-limits. A world in which "you simply cannot say that – it's an unacceptable view" is a world in which the view, unsaid, will fester, not a world in which the view will go away. Let the steam out, don't clamp the steam in.

About halfway through that Bosnian experience (shortly before I met the aforementioned doctor), I nearly lost my life. I was with a small group of soldiers, working behind the front lines just outside Sarajevo, when, in a cloud of summer dust, a large black shiny hardtop jeep pulled up. The occupants climbed out and we noticed, too late, that the jeep was festooned with the grisly mementos of atrocities. Their leader was a small thin man, bearded, long-haired and with hooded eyes. In jeans and a black T-shirt he walked straight across to me and pressed his rifle into my face. He explained that he was going to kill me. Our job was to negotiate ceasefires and to use, and show, the minimum of force. His, clearly, was the opposite. The details of the resolution of the incident do not matter, but suffice is to say that we eventually, after an uncomfortable 20 minutes or so, took action that enabled us to disarm the individual and his backup. Once disarmed we sent them on their way: the jeep with its gory decoration pulled off at speed with shouts of recrimination coming from the open windows. (And we left pretty hastily ourselves too before he could return with a much larger group of his closest friends.) Incident closed. We later found out that the individual concerned was a notorious and deeply evil character who inflicted untold suffering on those that he captured, be they combatant, non-combatant or civilian, man or woman, adult or child.

About ten years later I was walking along a corridor in Saddam Hussein's erstwhile palace in central Baghdad, shortly after the end of the invasion of Iraq, and a lean and wiry individual walked past me, wearing the T-shirt and cargo pants of a security professional. He stopped in his tracks.

"Boss?" he asked. I did not recognise him behind his beard (now grey) and sunglasses. It was the sergeant-major who had been my right-hand man in the incident from ten years previously. We repaired to a quiet and shady corner for a beer and a catch up. Inevitably we talked about what had happened in Bosnia. He confessed that of all the things that he had been required to do (in 22 years as a soldier, 18 of which had been in the special forces, and eight further years in the security business) he had only one regret. And that regret was palpable, visceral and very obviously deeply held. He was really bothered by it. "What we did that day was wrong." "Why? How so?" I asked. "We should not have let that bastard go. He had threatened to kill us, the rules of engagement allowed us to protect ourselves, and we could see from what he had on his jeep that he was a seriously bad bastard. I don't regret anything I *have* done, including killing people that I have needed to; but I do regret *not* killing him. We now know what he had done, and we know what he went on to do after we let him go – we could have stopped all that harm if we'd just finished him off there and then. Some of that suffering is down to us."

Instinctively, although I felt that I disagreed with him, I took some of that guilt on board. I completely understood what he was saying and what he felt. So we talked about it, for some time, as the Baghdad heat faded and the shadows lengthened. We came to the conclusion that his feeling of regret was understandable – but not his feeling of blame. First, the only person to blame for his wickedness was the wicked individual in question, not us. Second, and more fundamentally, it was not, and could not have been (indeed, *must* not have been) our responsibility to judge, on circumstantial appearance, and to exact retribution. Third, there is no place for 'preventative justice': you can't conduct a self-appointed function of assessing what people are likely to do in the future and punishing them for it in speculative advance. And fourth, there was no place in our Rules of Engagement for anything other than 'the minimum force required to resolve the situation' (which we had patently fulfilled), and certainly no place in our UN mandate to use the death penalty. I think (and hope) that he was to a large measure reassured by this. But the thought clearly still nagged him (and, if I'm to be honest, still nags me a bit too).

So what's the point of this war story? Simple. If you are responsible for trying to enforce the law then everything, and that means *everything*, that you do must be within that law. The situation in Bosnia had been chaotic: Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* revisited. If we were to have any chance of imposing some measure of order on that chaos then we had to act in an exemplary manner. Sure, removing that one wicked perpetrator may have saved lives and suffering; but it would also have demonstrated to other perpetrators (and, importantly, to us) that there were acceptable alternatives to the law, and that individuals were at liberty to decide when to follow the rules, and when to exercise rules of their own. I said 'simple', but, of course, it never is, and the greyer the area and more fuzzy the line the more important it is for the upholders of the law to stay the correct side of that line. This doesn't mean that they cannot be robust. But they must be the bringers of agreed order to the disorder, because it is in disorder that violence can thrive.

In summary then: two routes to a less violent society can be found in the stories related above. First, the permissive provision of safety valves and outlets for all sources of irritation or grievance is essential. And this is not just about being anti-authoritarian; it's also about the other end of the permissive scale as well, where societal norms (and perhaps even 'political correctness') decide which views are acceptable to air and which are not. When you make any views 'unairable' you tighten the lid.

Second, regardless of the seeming 'rightness' of a course of action, those who seek to bring order from chaotic situations must stick rigidly to the rules, and be seen so to do. To do otherwise is to fuel the chaos, in which violence can thrive, not to reduce it.

The social context of violence

WHITNEY ILES

> *"the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation"*
>
> World Health Organisation definition of violence, 2002.

The UK has a violent history, a violent present and what is looking like a violent future. For all that we talk about change, very little seems to be happening. Conversations around the prison reform agenda have stopped, youth centres are closing at a rapid rate, housing is getting more and more like a dream of the past, violence against the person and hate crime are on the rise.

So this poses the question: how do we become a less violent society?

Well, to me that has always been an easy question to answer. We have to *want* to become a less violent society. To really want to. I think part of the problem is there are very few of us that actually want this, and even less that are willing to do the work needed in order to create change.

The lack of commitment to change has come about for different reasons. We either cannot afford to think about society as a whole, because we are struggling to survive in the face of the violence of poverty and oppression. Or we are the people who benefit from the violence and enjoy the comfort that it brings. It is easy to turn a blind eye when you are living comfortably. Yes, there's a whole lot of grey area between this very black-and-white conclusion. But from my experience it has been those on the polar opposite ends of the spectrum that can tip the scale in whether or not change is manifested.

In my experience physical violence stems from a wider systemic context. For example a person with schizophrenia may walk down the street and stab someone in what is seen as a random act of violence. However, their local context may be that they may live in a community that does not have the mental health facilities needed to identify and support a potentially dangerous person. This is in the context of a society that might prioritise funding for tourism, in order to make more money rather than focus on the development of the infrastructure of society.

Or take something we've seen a lot more of recently: one young person stabbing another to death in a street fight. Here, it can be argued that this particular young person does have some agency over his or her actions (although that in itself is a point that can be challenged). But we also need to take into consideration the social context of the incident and young person.

It is for these reasons, that if we wish to create a less violent society, we must focus on structural and cultural violence rather than on (or at least not solely on) direct, physical violence. For it is the violence in our thinking and in our infrastructure that can be the most violent of them all.

This means that to create a society that is less violent, we must aim to create a society that is more self-aware and to increase our ability as citizens to critically think about the issues that cause us harm.

For example, I read a lot of comments on social media aimed at young people who stab and murder other young people. Too many times I hear

the call for the death penalty or harsher prisoner sentences, despite research telling us that these things do not work, not to mention the moral implications of living in the world of 'an eye for an eye' or even 'a life for a life'. We have to ask ourselves, what do we want more: justice for those killed or a society where murders do not happen, or at least happen at a far lower rate?

When we as society talk about violence we are constantly focusing on those who commit the act of violence and looking for solutions in the form of personal intervention. But there has to be a collective response to every type of violence from the physical to the societal.

For society to get a better handle on violence, we each have to become more open and curious to what violence really is, and the part we play in it – because we all play some part whether we like it or not. Violence is all of our problem and we need to face it rather than hide from it.

We have a personal responsibility to become more active in our struggle for peace, but this is done by working on our self. Now that might seem simple, a bit 'away with the fairies', but the reality of it is, work on self is hard work. Our mind is a complete mystery to most of us, our programming deep and complex – how many of us can truthfully say we have explored the deepest darkest parts of our mind, understood and transcended them. It is the things that we don't know about ourselves that drive the majority of our actions.

It can be argued that the problem with a lot of the training around violence, is that it is focused on a very surface-level understanding of violence. It gives rise to strategies focused very much on creating a mere negative peace. Take the prison estate, for example. A solution-focused strategy to combat violence within our prisons would need to focus on developing peace. This means a change of culture and systemic processes, where those working and living in prisons are allowed to develop their internal, deeper, more complex selves. A complete overhaul is arguably the only thing that will work at this stage but for that to happen the wider society needs to call for it.

This goes back to my original point: we as the wider society need to be more proactive in asking the difficult questions which can develop our knowledge and understanding of self. Why we think the way we do? Where do our thinking processes come from? Why do we believe what we do? Why do we take part in a society that is harmful? In what ways are our actions harmful? The problem is, too many of us get overwhelmed by this. We do not wish to be responsible for the harm we do. We want an easy life: we are tired from work, from school, from being parents, we are tired from life. Could we argue that society has been set up, so we do not get a chance to be truly proactive in our lives?

Is there an argument to be had that technology could play a major part in handing over more power to the people? What would happen if I had an app on my phone where I could vote each month, quarter or year on what my borough spends its council tax on? How, if anything, would the system change? Would this also mean that there would be more responsibility placed on the individual to understand more thoroughly their own role in society? Would this then have a knock-on effect to revamp an outdated schooling system, so our following generations are taught to be more politically aware from a younger age?

We might ask ourselves, "Why have our school lessons not changed in the last however many years?" "Why are our children not taught about critical thinking skills, economics, morality, politics, financial skills?" etc. etc. If the majority of our violence is systemic, then why are we not laying the foundations of system change: putting resource into those who will be responsible for being part of that system in the future? In other words, why do we not teach our children how to create peace and create a peaceful society for themselves?

Blame society, not Snapchat

BETH MURRAY
Director of Communications and Engagement, Catch22

It's the fault of social media, they say. The popularity of drill music, imported from Chicago. It's the clips of violence shared across Instagram, across Snapchat. It's the threats broadcast on YouTube, it's the responsibility of grime artists.

Two thousand and eighteen has seen a huge rise in the number of young people affected by violence. The first four months saw 1,296 stabbings in London, with a similar number in other towns and cities across England and Wales.[19] Fatalities are at a 13-year high. Commentators are scrambling for reasons; looking past housing shortages, systemic inequalities, the complex economics of the drugs market, they've settled responsibility on social media.

And the impact of social media is worth exploring. Catch22 works with thousands of young people all over the country, in our schools, in the youth

[19] Statistics from the Metropolitan Police. Reported at https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/schools-to-teach-lessons-on-knife-crime-amid-surge-in-violent-attacks-a3888751.html and https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/county-lines-drug-gangs-spread-knife-crime-epidemic-to-shires-3zg2v9tlj

justice system, in prisons, in need of help with employment. Every day we see the impact of the changing ways that young people communicate with each other online. We see a small minority of young people groomed, provoked and exploited online. We see incidents of violence getting broadcast, intensifying postcode rivalries and exacerbating existing local tensions.

Our experience emphasising the impact of young people's online lives is backed by research that we commissioned last year. Dr Kier Irwin Rogers of The Open University, together with Craig Pinkney of University College Birmingham, analysed key platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram and Periscope, interviewed young people and stakeholders, and undertook a literature review.

The researchers found that a virtual free-for-all space has emerged online. Young people – by virtue of being young people – are one step ahead of adults, creating hidden communities where a minority share material that displays and incites serious violence. They upload photos and videos of individuals and groups trespassing into areas associated with rival groups, and share serious incidents of theft and violence. Young women are used as weapons, either as 'honey traps' to lure a young person to a particular location to be attacked, or sexually attacked themselves.

Social media hasn't created this issue. There have always been fights among young people and there have always been very small numbers of young people who live extremely violent lives. But social media does act as a megaphone, amplifying the impact of violence and driving retaliation. Whereas previously violent incidents might have remained local, now they are filmed, shared and re-shared over multiple platforms. A young person's reputation and 'status' is undermined. Thousands of viewers – from other towns, from other countries – comment, encouraging a response. Postcode wars and local 'beef' are exacerbated by online viewers with no real stake in the outcome.

Tackling the violence at source

We know that social media plays only a small part in what drives youth violence. At its heart, youth violence is a public health issue. We'll tackle it by replicating the Glasgow approach;[20] police, educators, healthcare professionals, charities, community leads, youth workers, local authorities working together systemically to change behaviour and culture.

While social media is a symptom, not a cause for youth violence, it still must be tackled. Debate rages on about how to do this, the newspapers full of declarations that social media companies must 'do something': ban drill music, take down videos, be held accountable for the rising violence.

While online platforms do play a role, no change in social media policy will drive down youth violence overnight. Young people are enterprising, entrepreneurial and creative. They will find a way around any new rules. It's down to the frontline experts, those of us with trusted relationships with young people, to make the difference.

What can we do?

First, we need to end any false dichotomy between 'online' and 'offline'. A 16-year-old today won't remember a world without the internet. Online life is life.

Second, we should recognise that social media can be a force for good. It connects. It widens horizons. It transports young people to worlds beyond their estate and their town. It has given urban and marginalised young people the voice that they have never had, and a direct way to share their talent with the wider world. YouTube and Instagram have given young people a platform historically denied to them, bypassing establishment gatekeepers to go directly to fans. For those fans, it has given them role models that look and sound like them. The national (and international) rise of grime over the last three years would not have been possible without social media.

[20] For more on the Glasgow approach see the essay by Will Linden of the Violence Reduction Unit elsewhere in this book.

Third, as practitioners we have a responsibility to know a young person's online world. Successful relationships rely on a shared situational understanding. A good youth worker will know a young person's world; their streets, their friends, their lives. If you don't understand the spaces where young people hang out, the content that they see and the pressures they face, you are missing half the picture.

Fourth, we should consider a trauma-informed approach to young people who have engaged with violent content online. Watching extreme violence online, seeing your friends or family attacked, feeling 24-hour pressure on your social accounts; these can all have a significant and traumatic impact on the mental health of a young person.

Fifth, we should recognise that young people are often victims before they become perpetrators. We see many of the same factors driving child sexual exploitation online services as we do driving child criminal exploitation: it's simply adults grooming vulnerable children online. When it comes to gangs, we see adults promoting their lifestyle (glamour, money, status) online, to recruit young people to work for them.

Society has become far better at recognising the victims of child sexual exploitation as just that – victims. When it comes to youth violence, we're still not treating young people as victims. We criminalise those involved, take them into custody and onto short-term sentences. At no point do we treat the trauma that they may have incurred due to events they've experienced on or offline. Tackle this trauma, and we'll reduce the chance of retaliation.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, we must remember that we already know the answer to tackling youth violence. At Catch22, we believe that everyone needs the same three things to live a good life (our '3Ps'). You need a purpose – something to do. For young people, that's school, college, belief that you can get a job when you are older. You need a good place to live, in a community where you feel safe and wanted. You need good people around you, strong relationships that help you make positive choices.

Social media's link to youth violence is turning heads and creating headlines. But the underlying issues haven't changed, and the underlying solutions aren't new. To tackle youth violence, we need systemic reform and to build strong relationships with the young people who need us. In the age of the robots, we need to be more human.

A LOVING SOCIETY?

RICHARD MILLS, ARIANA RAY AND SALLY GREEN

What have we been accepting?

"How do we become a less violent society?" We ask ourselves the question, because we know that violence goes against something innate within us. We are aware that to abuse another human being, either physically or psychologically is somehow a violation of the way we naturally are. If it were not so, would we even ask the question in the first place? Surely, if we did not have this internal barometer, we would simply accept violence as 'part of life', 'the way we are'. But we don't. We know in our hearts that it is not acceptable and is an assault on a precious fellow human being.

If we listen to this 'inner knowing', we might actually pose the question in this way: "How do we become a **non**-violent society?" or, maybe we could even ask ourselves: "How do we become a loving society?"

The fact that we are limiting ourselves by asking how we become "less violent" is a concern. It suggests that we believe that some level of violence is acceptable. If we believe it is desirable to reduce our level of violence, then why not be absolute about it, why not say no to violence completely?

How do we all contribute to violence?

Are the vast majority of people innocent bystanders in the creation of this violence within society? Or can we consider ourselves to be integral architects of the violent society we live in?

Taking the view that we are not inherently violent beings, we must then consider the possibility that we all, as a society, have played a role in the creation of violence. An exploration of this role might help us to understand what we can do differently in order to reduce violence, or even eliminate it completely. For example, a baby is not born violent, but is in fact innately sensitive, delicate and tender. Something happens to 'make babies into' abusive, violent or even murderous human beings. Can we reflect on what that is?

A young boy is naturally sensitive. He cries readily at any harshness around him because he feels it so very intensely. As he grows he is commonly encouraged to 'toughen up' or become 'hard' because the world is not a nice place to live in. If he remains sensitive he runs the risk of being mocked, bullied, or hurt by his parents, carers, siblings, peers or teachers. So the boys play the tough games and learn to not show and even deny how they are feeling. They desensitise, burying their feelings deep inside.

A young girl is equally sensitive and just as distressed by any lack of tenderness. But that sensitivity is all too often crushed or abandoned as female children develop with the role models around them showing 'how life should be' and the games women play as they make their way through a life that is in direct opposition to who they naturally are and born to be. For example, we live in a world where sexting, cutting, bulimia, overeating and self-harm are 'common', if not 'normal'. Is this not abuse? What hope do girls and young women have of retaining their natural sensitivity in the face of accepted processes of hardening to life?

What is involved in this 'hardening' and 'toughening' process? What about the Victorian era directive that 'children should be seen and not heard'? Or the well-meaning father who withholds his own tenderness from his son in order to present the role model of the 'strong and silent type'. And

for girls, the reflection of mothers who give their all to their family whilst neglecting their own needs. The impact of peer pressure can also not be ignored, from those who have already become 'hardened' and 'desensitised' and who verbally attack each other in merciless ways, especially those who show any sign of 'weakness'.

On a more subtle level, abuse is normalised by simply ignoring the feelings of the young person, or belittling a child's sensitivity and tenderness by putting them down.

Understanding the impact of our actions

Newborn babies feel everything around them. They are acutely sensitive and highly delicate, open and full of vulnerability. We treat them with reverence, holding them tenderly and embracing them gently. But why do we stop?

At what point is it ok to start treating babies less lovingly, to wipe their faces or bodies harshly, to have thoughts and words that express that we 'wish they had never been born', to smack them, or to shout at them because we are tired or angry? What do they learn from such things? Is it – 'don't expect love; brace when someone talks to you, picks you up or changes you'; or even, 'expect a degree of assault whenever there is an interaction with another'; and above all, 'do not feel the truth of your essence'? What is the impact on the development of this once delicate, precious and tender child? Is it any wonder they turn to a means of 'protection and defence' to make their way through life, disconnecting from who they naturally are in the process?

In relation to the delicate nature of young people, it is a propagation of normalised abuse. Can we consider it possible that we introduce levels of accepted violence and abuse to our children in the 'preparation' for life? Why then are we surprised by the prevalence of violence in our society?

Can we then consider that maybe we are not such 'innocent bystanders'? The concerns mentioned here are not uncommon and many would relate to them. We may not like to admit it, but perhaps we are simply another

human being contributing to the 'ocean of harshness' that manipulates a sensitive child into a violent and abusive adult in our global society.

The desensitisation of our species

Are we willing to consider that how we live impacts on others? Not just in the obvious examples of violence but also in more subtle ways where we are controlling, manipulative and abusive in our behaviour towards each other and all the while this comes under the acceptable heading of 'family life' and 'good' standards. Is this too uncomfortable for us to consider? Or would we rather remain unaware of the impact we certainly have?

Do we think that our lives are ok because they are not so obviously violent by our own 'normalised' personal standards and definition, which makes it appear that we all is 'well' and 'good'?

If we had been nurtured in our own sensitivity through life rather than becoming hardened and defensive, how different might our lives be today? How different would our world be? And what would our tolerance to violence be? To become aware of the accepted and normal 'hardness' and 'toughness' can be challenging for anyone, as these behaviour patterns are so familiar that we don't question them, we don't see what the impact is because we choose to 'turn a blind eye' to it.

A loving society

If we honour, nurture and appreciate the qualities of tenderness, delicateness and self-appreciation and see them as strengths within ourselves and others, we would see a very different impact on children as they grow and develop. In doing so we nurture a natural capacity for love, self-care and self-value, in us and in our children. Then, harshness would no longer hold sway, it would fall away unwanted. Instead we can have a high value for sensitivity that is not buried, ridiculed or denied, but celebrated. How then would men and women grow into violent adults if their standards and values are based on such qualities?

When one human being hurts another, something deep inside us all is violated. It must be, or we would simply ignore it and we would not be asking ourselves questions such as these.

When we witness violence, there is a 'call' from within that asks us to deeply consider what has happened that we can behave in such a way towards another. It asks us to consider that in truth we are all the sensitive, precious and delicate beings we were born as. With this awareness, violence makes no sense in the world. Perhaps it is time to listen to that 'call' rather than be another member of humanity who plays along with the desensitisation of our species.

Instead we could accept the responsibility that is our role in life, to nurture sensitivity, delicateness and tenderness in our young and support the world these precious beings make. We would then be taking responsibility for the future, eradicating the violent society we currently accept as normal.

Reducing family violence by bringing it into view

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Four years ago, a homicide committed on a cricket pitch in an outer suburban area of Victoria changed the policy landscape in Australia forever. While at least one woman or child is murdered every week in Australia as a result of family violence and abuse, this particular homicide caught national attention. It did so in part because it was committed in broad daylight in a public space by a father against his son. More than anything, it caught the national eye because the mother of the murdered child – a courageous woman called Rosie Batty – proceeded to speak out directly, not only about the tragedy, but about the violence and abuse she had been experiencing for years, and which had been inadequately recognised by the system.

Rosie continued to speak – daily, weekly, she continued her campaign to raise awareness; to make sense of what had happened; to explain to others that things needed to change. Her story was the subject of extensive media coverage and, ultimately, sparked a Royal Commission into the service and legal system that had let her – and her murdered son Luke – so badly down.

Rosie's story, as well as the Coronial Inquiry into Luke's death, highlighted many glaring gaps in protections for victims of family violence. Just as

vitally, however, it highlighted the gaps in the system that had failed to keep her former partner – the man who had murdered his own child, ostensibly to punish his partner – within view.

The flipside of Rosie's story, therefore, was a man who was growing increasingly dangerous but who continually avoided the system's radar – a man whose individual aberrations were not considered high risk in isolation, but whose thinking was becoming more and more distorted by the day; a man who bounced from one anonymous interaction with the legal and social service systems to another. Meanwhile, each part of these systems held different pieces of information about him, but no one joined the dots to identify the risk he posed, nor closed the loops to contain it.

Four years on, and the dots are finally starting to be joined. Building, of course, on many decades of advocacy by services – and after countless homicides of women and children that are less well known but just as tragic – our 'system' is starting to recognise family violence for the policy and political imperative it is. It is also starting to recognise that, although victims of family and domestic abuse must always remain our priority, they will also remain *at risk* unless we step back and widen our gaze.

In other words, unless we adjust the lens and bring those wielding violence and coercion into view – until we intervene at the source of the problem – the failure of one generation will be visited upon the next. Victims of family and domestic violence will continue to be created and the intergenerational patterns of abuse will be repeated.

Part of preventing this violence – of becoming a less violent society – therefore involves coming to terms with it; recognising it; and intervening with those who use it. This includes those who may have experienced it and are now replaying it; those who are teaching their children to do the same.

Most of all, it is about recognising that – despite its epidemic proportions and despite the value of public health analogies – interpersonal violence does not sweep invisibly through communities, leaving victims inexplicably

in its wake.[21] Instead, it consists of controlling, coercive and abusive behaviour used by identifiable individuals – ones with whom we can actually intervene, albeit with care.

The challenge here, of course, lies in the extent – the pervasiveness – of the problem. It is easier to acknowledge violence committed by aberrant individuals. Certainly, violent crimes committed against everyday people in everyday places have generally been the subject of greater public outcry than the murder of women and children in their homes every week. Even Rosie Batty ruefully suggests that, if her son had been murdered in his home – rather than in public and doing something as ordinary as practising cricket – his story may not have generated as much public sympathy and interest.

In the cases of these public and 'stranger' crimes we can 'other' the offender – identifying the reasons why they may have offended, certainly; reacting with punitive and/or rehabilitative responses, but then pushing them out of sight. Having finally acknowledged the scale and breadth of those experiencing family and domestic violence, however – a figure which we know is still underreported – the deeply uncomfortable task that accompanies this is to acknowledge the scale and the breadth of those *using* it.

If this kind of violence, or coercive and controlling behaviour, is so widespread and so diversely experienced, we cannot explain those who use it away as just an aberrant group; nor can we just push perpetrators out of sight as if they do not represent us as a whole.

Far from it, the behaviour of perpetrators of family violence and abuse holds a mirror to a society which has defined so much of its self-worth through the power we have over others; through the gendered structures to which we cling; through our prioritisation of public resources. What's more, we are learning that those who commit the more public, aberrant behaviour that we find easier to acknowledge, started using violence on

[21] Centre for Innovative Justice (2015) *Opportunities for early intervention: bringing perpetrators of family violence into view* (RMIT University, Melbourne). Available at: http://mams.rmit.edu.au/r3qx75qh2913.pdf

those they claim to love; and are also highly likely to have experienced it themselves as a child.[22]

This means that we cannot ignore the problem or push it to one side. We cannot jail our way out of it. Nor can we expect that a small handful of community-based programs which run for twelve, twenty or even fifty weeks should bear the burden of dislodging behaviour and attitudes that are entrenched over lifetimes; and which are reinforced in the community every day.

Rather, these programs should form just one part of a system-wide response which recognises that 'perpetrator accountability' is not just about individual responsibility, but equally about our collective capacity to identify patterns (not just incidents) of perpetration; to share information; to assess, manage and respond to risk; and to keep perpetrators of family violence firmly within view.

As evidence and knowledge grows, it is also about our responsibility to grapple with and understand the complexity involved in both the use of, and desistance from, violent behaviour.[23] This includes the myriad controlling tactics used by some highly sophisticated perpetrators who 'play the system' to reinforce a message to their victim that the system will neither help nor believe them. These individuals may even appear to be 'low risk' to social services – either because they have no prior criminal history or because they appear to have some stake in conformity. As we have seen from many homicides, however, this does not mean that they pose any less risk to their families.[24]

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[22] Jane Mayer 'The Link Between Domestic Violence and Mass Shootings' (4 June 2017) *The New Yorker* file://ntapprdfs01n02.rmit.internal/eh5/e07975/The%20Link%20Between%20Domestic%20Violence%20and%20Mass%20Shootings%20%20The%20New%20Yorker.pdf; Centre for Innovative Justice (December 2017) *Integrating the Indefensible: What Role Should the Community Play?* (RMIT University, Melbourne). Available at: https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/college-of-business/graduate-school-of-business-and-law/integrating-the-indefensible-cij.pdf

[23] Centre for Innovative Justice (November 2016) *Pathways towards accountability: mapping the pathways of perpetrators of family violence* (RMIT University, Melbourne). Available at: https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/college-of-business/graduate-school-of-business-and-law/Pathways-towards-accountability_CIJ.pdf

Meanwhile, this understanding must also include following the chaotic patterns of more generally violent offenders – those who use violence outside and inside their home environments; many of whom may never have been connected with a stable family environment; many of whom have experienced violence, abuse or neglect in their own lives. In these cases we are learning about the high numbers of victims that these perpetrators may create – moving from one family to the next, leaving huge damage in their wake.[25]

These two extremes – plus the diversity of behaviour in between that sees ordinary, everyday people from all backgrounds using abuse against those they claim to love – signal that we must address the failures of the past, as well as the present, if we are to move towards a less violent society in the future. In other words, we must acknowledge that societal acceptance of violence within families over generations has left contemporary populations with a huge bill to pay. Recognising and *addressing* this cost – including the trauma experienced in childhood now playing itself out in myriad ways – may finally start to mean that subsequent generations do not find themselves servicing this debt as well.

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[24] Dr Debbie Kirkwood *Just Say Goodbye: parents who kill their children in the context of separation*. Discussion Paper No 8 2012, Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Melbourne. Available at: https://www.dvrcv.org.au/sites/default/files/%E2%80%98Just%20Say%20Goodbye%E2%80%99%20(January%202013%20online%20edition).pdf

[25] Dr Amanda Robinson & Anna Clancy (2015) *Development of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT) for Domestic Abuse*, Final Report. (Cardiff University). Available at: http://orca.cf.ac.uk/75006/1/Robinson%20%26%20Clancy%20%282015%29%20Development%20of%20the%20Priority%20Perpetrator%20Identification%20Tool%20%28PPIT%29%20for%20Domestic%20Abuse.pdf

THE VIOLENCE OF THE STATE: THE WORK OF INQUEST

DEBORAH COLES
Director of INQUEST

Any discussion of how to understand and reduce levels of violence in society cannot ignore the often-overlooked issue of state violence. Since 1981, INQUEST's monitoring of state-related deaths has revealed a serious lack of legal and democratic accountability and has led us to develop a critical analysis of deaths in custody, detention and involving multi-agency failings. The experiences of bereaved families after these deaths are particularly important for understanding the state's use of violence and the lack of accountability governing the actions of its servants at an individual and senior management level.

In the context of INQUEST's work, our analysis has uncovered a pattern of deaths which evidence that state violence, ill treatment, neglect, indifference and impunity are systemic problems. An aspiration that unites all the families we work with, is the prevention of further deaths. The historical trend in ignoring official, life-saving recommendations reveals the indifference of the state towards human life, part of a continuum of state violence.

A statistical snapshot of deaths in police and prison custody provides a disturbing picture. Between 2000 and 2017, 4,600 men, women and

children have died in prison and police custody. Of these, 1,014 died following contact with the police; 3,586 people died in prison including 40 homicides, 1,415 self-inflicted deaths and 4 restraint-related deaths. Between 2012/13 and 2016/17, 1,213 people died in mental health settings whilst being detained under the Mental Health Act.

Deaths in custody and detention cannot be considered in isolation from wider structural contexts of poverty, inequality and marginalisation. They are impacted by policies on public health, mental health and addictions, welfare benefits, housing and homelessness. INQUEST's integration of evidence-based casework and policy analysis has enabled us to take a thematic view of cases and identify emerging patterns which highlight recurring issues. Many raise human rights violations and dangerous and harmful practices.

For example, our casework reveals that black and minority ethnic groups, and those with mental ill-health, are significantly overrepresented in deaths following the use of fatal force by the police and in particular excessive use of restraint and restraint equipment. Many of the cases INQUEST has worked on present a disturbing picture of violence, racism and inhumane treatment towards people in distress. This points to serious problems of racial stereotyping and negative imagery of people experiencing mental ill-health where the focus becomes the risk posed by the individual to the exclusion of consideration for their welfare and safety. These perceptions of 'dangerousness' can create situations where the person being restrained is dehumanised. This is encapsulated in the tragic and brutal death of Olaseni Lewis, a 23-year-old man in mental health crisis in a health setting who was restrained by 11 police officers shackled with his hands in two sets of handcuffs and his legs in two sets of restraint whilst medical staff stood by. The disquiet over his death has led to a Parliamentary Bill to enact legislation to reduce the high levels of restraint in mental health settings and increase oversight and monitoring of its use.

INQUEST's monitoring and research has also exposed dangerous and inadequate systems of care in mental health settings. In particular, we have become deeply concerned about the failure to properly manage the risks

to women, children and young people and the high use of restraint in what are supposed to be therapeutic settings.

Working with families

Supporting families and enabling their involvement in the investigation and inquest process, has been central to ensuring a more challenging series of questions have been raised about deaths in state institutions, shining a light on the closed world of custody and detention.

Misinformation or 'spin' has been a prominent feature of many of these deaths, with attempts by the authorities to tarnish the reputation of the deceased to create an 'undeserving' victim. This creates a blame culture that aims to shift attention away from those responsible and from important structural issues. Additionally, it pathologises people from black and minority ethnic communities, the poor and disadvantaged, women, children, those experiencing poor mental health, and migrants. This takes place in the context of a prison population already stereotyped and stigmatised. Many media commentators and politicians perpetuate these narratives, thereby obscuring and deflecting the violent role of the state and its agents, its policies and practices and surrounding social structure.

The struggles of families to achieve truth, justice and accountability after state-related deaths takes a terrible toll physically, emotionally and financially. This harm can be understood as a form of state-inflicted violence with multiple direct, and indirect, victims.

Prison deaths

In our decades of work on prison deaths we have seen a catalogue of failings in the treatment, care and protection of detained people and the fear, despair and trauma of imprisonment that makes *all* prisoners vulnerable to self-harm and to self-inflicted and non-self-inflicted deaths.

Deaths in prison are at the sharp end of a continuum of neglect, inadequate mental health support and systemic failures in healthcare, experienced by

people with complex social, health and economic needs. Prisoners often face existing physical and mental ill-health and social inequalities that are further compounded by the prison environment. INQUEST's monitoring, casework and evidence from inquests and official reports also suggests that many people are dying prematurely and unnecessarily.

Deaths in prison are the fatal consequences of criminal justice policies that imprison men, women and children in impoverished, dehumanising, punitive regimes that are ill-equipped and ill-resourced to keep them safe. Recent inquest conclusions have revealed evidence of systemic neglect and repeated serious failings by prison and healthcare staff and managers, including failing to implement suicide and self-harm monitoring policies designed to care for at-risk detainees. Inquests have also found that violence and bullying, and a background of fear, have contributed to self-inflicted deaths.

Our casework also reveals an inadequate standard of healthcare in prisons which is not in line with provision in the community. These include the failure to provide basic medical care, to assess, monitor and review existing health conditions, insufficient health screenings and incomplete care plans, cancelled and delayed appointments.

The recent annual report from the Chief Inspector of Prisons lays bare deplorable prison conditions and highlights the 'totally inadequate' response of prisons to consider inspection recommendations, which are intended to 'help save lives'.[26] There has been a failure of leadership at local, regional and national levels. This is also not surprising given that there have been six Ministers of Justice in the last four years.

This systemic and routine neglect in prisons must be understood as violence. It raises questions about the excessive and inappropriate use of custody, and the violence of detention that provides the context in which people are dying premature and preventable deaths.

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[26] INQUEST (May 2018) *Still Dying on the Inside: Examining deaths in women's prisons*. Available at: www.inquest.org.uk/still-dying-on-the-inside-report

Women in prison

Nowhere is this continuum of violence starker than when we consider deaths of women in prison. INQUEST's 2018 report, *Still Dying on the Inside,*[27] shares the stories of some of the women who have died in prison through the harms caused by the overuse of imprisonment and calls for urgent action to save lives. Our research identifies serious safety failures inside prisons around self-harm and suicide management and inadequate healthcare provision. The report also highlights the scandalous lack of action on recommendations arising from post-death investigations and inquests.

Ninety-six women have died in prison since the publication of Baroness Jean Corston's review in 2007 that offered a blueprint for change. The review recommended the dismantling of the women's prison estate, an expansion of gender-specific support through a network of women's centres and small custodial units for the small number of women who needed containment. It is with anger and frustration that INQUEST has seen almost no progress on the necessary systemic and structural change needed.

Emily Hartley, aged 21, was the youngest of 22 women to die in prison in 2016, the deadliest year on record. Emily was imprisoned for arson, having set fire to herself, her bed and curtains. She had a history of serious mental ill-health including self-harm, suicide attempts and drug addiction. This was Emily's first time in prison. The system could not keep her safe. It was a prison sentence that cost Emily her life.

In February 2018, the inquest investigating Emily's self-inflicted death concluded with highly critical findings about her care and the failure to transfer her to a therapeutic setting. What made her premature and preventable death all the more shocking is that ten years to the day since Emily's inquest concluded, the same coroner had dealt with a strikingly similar death, that of Petra Blanksby.

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[27] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (July 2018) Annual report 2017-18. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/annual-report-2017-18/

Nineteen-year-old Petra was imprisoned for an arson offence, having set fire to her bedroom in an attempt to take her own life. Petra too had a history of mental ill-health and suicide attempts. Two women, ten years apart, both of whom had inflicted serious violence and harm on themselves and were criminalised and disciplined for being mentally unwell. At the end of Petra's inquest in 2008, the coroner recommended to the Prison Service and Department of Health that they should deal with the lack of secure therapeutic facilities outside prison. At the conclusion of Emily's inquest, the same coroner, David Hinchliffe, repeated this recommendation, demanding "the provision of suitable, secure, therapeutic environments in order to treat those with mental health problems".

The needless deaths of two women, Emily and Petra, provide a graphic example of the violence of incarceration and the failure of the state to learn and enact structural change.

Women in prison are among the most powerless, marginalised and disadvantaged women in society. Many have experienced sexual and physical abuse, domestic violence, exploitation, homelessness, trafficking, racism, addictions, mental ill-health and trauma underpinned by poverty and inequality. Many have been failed by multiple agencies. There is no clear demarcating line between women as defendants and women as victims or complainants. Within this framework, INQUEST perceives imprisonment as a form of state-sanctioned violence against women. It is part of a continuum of coercion, control and violence inflicted against women in the home, community and inside prisons.

Austerity measures are impacting disproportionately on women, including cuts to legal advice, housing and welfare benefits, services for mental ill-health and addictions and for victims of domestic violence. This is most sharply felt across the intersections of race, gender, disability and class. Diversion schemes, and existing women's centres and projects, are under critical threat because of a lack of sustainable funding.

In reconceptualising imprisonment as a form of structural violence against women we regard violence against women and girls as a human rights issue and as a cause and consequence of gender inequality. Violence can be

reduced if we adopt a social justice approach. In particular, reallocating resources from policing, courts and prisons towards refuges, rape crisis centres, drug and alcohol services, gender appropriate community-based schemes and therapeutic centres will materially improve the lives of women in conflict with the law and, INQUEST believes, prevent deaths.

Conclusion

In looking at violence in society we have to look beyond the individual to consider critically the issue of state violence and the democratic control and accountability of state institutions. The abject failure to implement coronial, inspection and investigation recommendations designed to save lives or to bring state servants to account points to a culture of impunity within which they operate.

It is families, human rights lawyers and NGOs who have begun to mould an alternative narrative to the state's official version of events. The struggles and campaigns of bereaved families provide a counterweight to state secrecy and the lack of formal accountability, particularly where people die in closed institutions. They have played a critical role in challenging inequality, discrimination and unacceptable practices. Without this ongoing critical oversight from below, the abuses of power and neglect uncovered at many of these inquests would remain unchallenged and hidden from public view. Too often the role of the powerful state and corporate bodies at inquests with their unlimited resources is to try and restrict the ambit of the inquest, manage their reputations, defend their policies and practices to try and avoid critical outcomes, rather than assisting in the learning process.

The impact of austerity and the cuts to welfare benefits and front-line services like mental health provision or youth services means it is more likely people will enter the criminal justice system because of poverty and inequality. They will enter a system that is not fit for the purpose of caring for them.

Deaths in custody and detention are not rare or isolated incidents. They are all too frequent and often preventable. It is essential to situate them

within their broader social and political context. Deaths in state custody, and beyond, are *not* the 'fault' of the individuals involved. They arise from systemic failings in state policies and practices as well as the moral and political failure to treat those who are supposedly in the care of the state as human beings who need support rather than punishment.

Thinking about, and responding to, crime as a public health issue, and developing what Angela Davis has called, 'a continuum of alternatives' to prisons, would be an important first step towards reducing violence inside and outside of state institutions. These are moral, as well as political questions, where leadership from successive governments has been severely lacking. Unless these questions are addressed, and structures of democratic control and accountability are embedded within and without the criminal justice system, then it is highly unlikely that the violence of state institutions, and within wider society, will be diminished.

Bedding in

JESSICA COLLIER
Art Psychotherapist, HMP Downview

> "*Photography is a tool for dealing with things everybody knows but isn't attending to.*"
>
> Emmet Gowin[28]

For most of us, violence is something that happens to others. We lock our doors and go to our beds free of fear that we will be assaulted by strangers, spat at, set fire to, despised.

But in our society it is often those with direct experience of violence who face the harshest treatment. People with trans-generational family histories of abuse and violence are regarded as deserving of punishment, not support, when they break the law. They become the vessels for our own shadows, locked away, out of sight. The indifference and neglect we show for those who cause pain and distress in response to their own suffering is unquestioned.

I took the images shown here in the final days before the closure of HMP Holloway; the only female prison in London, and on the streets in the following months and years. The cells were photographed in the moments

[28] Quoted in Sontag, S. (1990) *On Photography* (Picador USA).

after the women had been moved out of the building. Many were sent to other establishments, away from the city. Others were released with nothing for them in the community; the safety and containment afforded them by the prison no longer an option unless they reoffended, the violence of austerity having cut housing opportunities previously available. One woman who had spent much of her life incarcerated told me she would be dead if she had not come to prison. "Where will we go?" she asked.

In 2017 a House of Commons briefing paper stated that housing options available to prisoners on release were inadequate.[29] In its defence the government argued, without irony, that the reforms needed time to "bed in". During this time women being released from prison were given sleeping bags and tents; the authorities fully cognisant that they would be homeless.[30]

When a bed in prison becomes the least bad option for keeping safe and remaining alive; when committing a violent act becomes a method of survival; we must ask where the violence in society really lies.

In the nineteenth century the writer and journalist Fyodor Dostoevsky famously stated that "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons."[31]

Today we need just look around us. To become a less violent society, we must do this with our eyes open.

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[29] Wilson, W. (2017) *Housing support for ex-offenders*. House of Commons Library Number 2989. Available at: https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN02989

[30] Pells, R. (2016) 'HMP Bronzefield: Women given tents instead of accommodation when leaving London prison, inspection reveals'. *The Independent*. Available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/hmp-bronzefield-women-given-tents-instead-of-accommodation-when-leaving-london-prison-inspection-a6981926.html

[31] Dostoevsky, F. (1862) *The House of the Dead; or, Prison Life in Siberia* (Everyman's Library. London: J.M. Dent & Sons) (published 1911).


NO
WE ARE


Sainsbury's Bank
Free cash withdrawals
CCTV


Service information
Date
Time
Polished?
Book manis and pedis shaped to your budget
treatwell
the beauty booking app
treatwell.co.uk

HATE CRIMES ARE NOT JUST ABOUT RACE AND NOT JUST ABOUT HATE

25 years of public debate and professional reflection on the causes and responses to crimes of intolerance

GERARD LEMOS CMG

The emergence of 'hate crime'

In 1993, the public's attention was conclusively drawn to racially motivated hate crimes by the death of Stephen Lawrence, a black teenager out for the evening with his friend Duwayne Brooks, who was stabbed and killed by a group of white young men. Largely through the determined and persistent campaigning of Stephen's parents, Doreen and Neville Lawrence, and their supporters, the case and the inadequate police response, which failed for many years to bring anyone to trial (only two of the alleged perpetrators were convicted many years after the murder), became a cause celebre.

Following the murder, a much wider public debate took flight about the state of race relations in the UK and, in particular, the behaviour and attitudes of the Metropolitan Police to crimes when the victim was black and the perpetrators were white. Eventually, a public inquiry was launched

chaired by Sir William Macpherson who confirmed, among many other findings, that the police were in his view "institutionally racist".[32] This term was championed by campaigners to describe the wider interaction of prejudice and discrimination in organisations which in the case of the police led them to take crimes committed against black people less than seriously, while they were all too ready to suspect black people of crimes, often with little justification.

But the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence was certainly not the first high profile racially motivated crime. Nor was it the first time that officialdom, in particular the police and the prosecuting authorities, had been enjoined to take crimes motivated by prejudice and discrimination more seriously, to recognise the nature of the motive and to seek sentences for conviction which gave weight to the added importance of the racist motive, in order to both set an example to others as well as to draw the attention of the perpetrator to the additional seriousness of their crime.

Violent crimes were also not the only cause of concern. Neighbour disputes, which were tremendously intimidating for the victims for example, or the persistent shouting of intimidating and racist verbal abuse at Asian mothers as they took their children to local schools, or at the other extreme, harassment and attacks by neo-fascist groups (such as the now largely defunct British National Party and National Front), also served to reduce the lives of some black and minority ethnic people, families and communities to intolerable levels of fear and stress.

These other incidents, which did not fall so squarely into the definitions of crimes to be investigated and prosecuted by the police, often went unaddressed by the authorities, not just the police and the prosecutors, but also social landlords. The British Crime Survey since the 1980s has persistently found that some individuals and groups experienced attacks and harassment at levels of frequency which were way in excess of any

[32] Macpherson, W. (1999) *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* Report of an Inquiry (United Kingdom: The Stationery Office). Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130814142233/http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm42/4262/4262.htm

serious attempts to deal with these incidents, much less to put a lasting end to the harassment, abuse and attacks.

The evolution of 'hate crime'

As time has gone on, it has also become clear that black and minority ethnic people are not the only people to be targeted for violent crimes for reasons of intolerance. Lesbians and gay men have also been targets, notably in the nail bomb attack on the Admiral Duncan pub in Soho in 1999. Transgender people and people with physical and learning disabilities are all victims of crimes motivated by prejudice, intolerance, the perception of a particular group as inferior, weak and therefore deserving of denigration and exploitation in some cases. Religion can also be a motivator of intolerance and aggression, now commonly characterised by the term 'Islamophobia' (though it is hard to see these incidents as a 'phobia' in any traditional meaning of the word). The 2017 attack on the Finsbury Park Mosque by a man driving into a group of worshippers serves as a case in point.

Understanding 'hate crime'

Whether 'hate' is an accurate description of the variety of motives in these cases is debatable. Without doubt, however, intolerance, prejudice and discrimination were important features both of the manner and the matter of the crime. How do we then derive a more nuanced set of interpretations of these types of violent incidents in ways that will help us both to prevent incidents occurring in the first place and responding effectively when incidents are committed? Researchers (such as Levin and McDevitt of Northeastern University) have sought to derive meaningful typologies to help understand motivation and its relation to different types of incidents.

Mission offenders are those motivated by prejudices so strong that they feel themselves to be on a 'crusade'. These are extreme emotions that appear to justify extreme actions in the minds of their promoters. Terrorism can be

seen as this most extreme form of hate crime. Fortunately, it is also the rarest.

Thrill-seekers are often immature and motivated by a warped sense of what will bring excitement and drama to their lives, of which the complaint is often that they are 'boring'. Prejudice does not necessarily run very deep in this group, but the willingness to act on impulse and take risks without regard to consequences often amplifies their latent prejudices into acts of aggression, frequently perpetrated under the influence of alcohol and in groups, egged on and congratulated by one another.

Defensive attackers are people who feel that there is something that they need to protect – the traditional (and perhaps excluding) lifestyle and culture of their neighbourhood or removing a (usually erroneously) perceived danger to their children's safety. They tend to persist in the belief that their actions are justified even when challenged by the authorities and assert that many others in similar situations would do the same did they but have the courage of their convictions.

Responding to 'hate crime'

The salience of this typology is not just for the purposes of academic tidying up. Which type of offence is being committed speaks strongly to what would be the most effective official response.

The increasing recognition of racially motivated and other hate crimes in the 1980s and 1990s led to an acceptance by legislators and courts that an intolerant motive aggravated the crime and therefore attracted a higher tariff. This was intended to be both penal and exemplary. While that was an understandable response to campaigning pressure, it did not really answer the post-conviction question of who should do what to seek to make a lasting beneficial change to offenders' behaviour.

Important work in this regard was done by Liz Dixon at the London Probation Service and Andy Stelman, then part of Merseyside Probation Service, to address explicitly and constructively the motives, attitudes, behaviour and consequences of racist offending. They focused on strengthening feelings of positive identity and self-esteem such that others

were not seen either as a threat or so weak (even weaker than your own secret self) that they could be attacked with impunity. They also focused on positive association, good friends and engaging social lives and only lastly on the further risks and consequences up to and including imprisonment for further trouble with the law. Perhaps most importantly they placed considerable emphasis on inculcating empathy for the victims.

In my own work on attacks on people with learning disabilities, I have noted both common characteristics among those likely to be the victims and the perpetrators as well as trends in the nature of the crimes. Financial and sexual exploitation appear to come high on the list of perpetrators' intentions and actions. Cruelty and exploitation is therefore perhaps a more accurate description of what is going on than hate crimes. The vulnerability of the victims appears to stem from their loneliness and sense of exclusion from an unwelcoming and intolerant wider society. Indifference seems to prevail even among those who are not themselves actively cruel or exploitative. Remedies for that exclusion lie in civil society and, in our work, we have focused on the opportunities offered by the arts and faith communities, as well as the importance of financial capability as an enabler of safe independence.

One could also focus on sport, rambling, cycling clubs or any number of other social groupings which speak to the quieter aspects of British civic life which repeatedly proves itself more durable than more high profile but evanescent activities driven by politics, celebrity and media. These everyday, person-to-person activities are also less susceptible to the undoubted dangers which sit alongside the undoubted benefits offered by online experience. Notwithstanding the huge benefits of the newer technologies, they are also a recent and rapidly amplifying zone of vocal intolerance and hostility, notably for example in relation to anti-Semitism.

Rethinking 'hate crime'

One recognises the value of a term such as 'hate crimes' as a tool for campaigning. Sometimes there is a need for strong language to overcome official indifference or intransigence, but the term hate crimes does not work as a policy framework beyond the recognition of the need for a higher tariff by the courts.

The broad front of civil society as well as criminal justice responses I have articulated will in the end have more lasting benefit. These engage criminal justice actors, in particular probation officers, but even more so voluntary groups and the wider community. The meta-goal here is that prosecution and punishment are only an educative starting point for policy intention. Victims and members of vulnerable communities will feel infinitely more satisfied with a convincing assurance that the hostile, aggressive or intolerant behaviour can be prevented, stopped and will not recur. That is always more effective in bringing closure and a lasting feeling of security than the simple sight of an offender being locked up.

PREVENTING VIOLENCE

People who have experienced adverse childhood experiences like domestic violence or parental substance misuse are:

14 times more likely to be a VICTIM OF VIOLENCE

15 times more likely to COMMIT VIOLENCE

What PREDICTS youth violence?

- Substance misuse
- Poor family supervision
- Delinquent peers
- Running away and truancy

What PROTECTS against youth violence?

- Positive or pro-social attitudes
- Stable family structure
- High academic achievement
- Low economic deprivation

Sources: Public Health Wales (2015) Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population. Early Intervention Foundation (2015) Preventing Gang and Youth Violence: A review of risk and protective factors

SECTION TWO
Preventing violence

STEPHEN WHITEHEAD

Over the past two decades we have seen a growing focus on systematic strategies to preventing violence. Often gathered under the term 'public health approaches' these models move away from a traditional focus on policing and prosecution in favour of mapping and addressing the underlying causes of violence. However, the term 'public health approach' can refer to a wide range of activities, from design innovations like redesigning public space, through targeted policing, early interventions with vulnerable young people and even broader efforts to build communities that are resistant to violence.

In this part of the book we present a set of essays which illuminate how governments, charities and individuals can prevent violence. In our opening essay, Professor Jonathan Shepherd lays out a model of a public health approach to violence prevention where healthcare data can guide a multi-agency strategy. Then we have a series of essays exploring how prevention has been informed by the specific places in which it is occurring. Will Linden of Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit sets out how this kind of public health approach is spreading across Scotland. Then Gary Younge argues that London's distinctive culture demands a unique approach to

preventing serious youth violence. Jillian Shagan sets out innovative projects which have taken root in New York while Paul Smyth describes his work to combat punishment attacks in Northern Ireland and John Poyton describes how Redthread is tackling violence in London with their work inside A&E departments. Finally Chief Constable Michael Barton shows how police in Durham are embracing prevention from the top down.

Our next set of essays explores how working with young people in particular can prevent violence. To begin with, Jane Mulcahy explores the relationship between childhood trauma and violence, before foster carer Margaret Gardiner shares a very personal story of caring for a traumatised young person. Then we have three essays from Abigail Darton, Claire Lillis and finally Iman Haji and Lisa Rowles, which each describe how they work with vulnerable young people.

In the final part of this section, we have two essays which explore how we can prevent violence from a personal perspective. Delia El-Hosayny shares her experiences as the UK's first female bouncer before, in our final essay, former service user Khamran Uddin sets out his vision for more empathetic and connected communities.

Clearly, prevention is at the heart of how we become a less violent society. These essays offer real insights into how that prevention can be undertaken.

Data on violence: from diagnosis to cure

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR JONATHAN SHEPHERD
Cardiff University

What made you first become interested in the question of violence?

There were three things that made me interested in the question of violence. First of all, I'm a maxillofacial surgeon, which means that I, and my colleagues in hospitals across the country, are treating many people who have been injured in violence.

Second, when training in Leeds in the 1980s, I began to see the patterns of violence from this injury perspective. I was startled when one of my colleagues said, "We see more people injured in violence when there's a miners' strike." And I noticed that a few licensed premises were the site of a large proportion of violent injuries.

Because of this, when I was in Bristol looking for a PhD topic, violence from a health standpoint was very attractive. The third reason for my continued interest in violence are the discoveries in this PhD research. For instance, I was surprised to discover – and this finding has since been replicated many times – that half of violence that results in hospital

treatment is never reported to the police. This has real implications for the importance of health data in tracking violence – there are so many holes in police data.

You have been involved in Cardiff's pioneering work around violence reduction for more than 20 years. Tell us about that.

Cardiff's violence prevention work has been led by two bodies which I founded in 1996 and then chaired for 20 years. The first, the Cardiff Violence Prevention Board, is composed of practitioners and executives who are in a position to implement interventions to prevent violence. This is highlighted in the Crime and Disorder Act as an example of good multi-agency partnership. It also provides a testbed for new ideas emerging from the second body, Cardiff University's Violence Research Group: a cross-disciplinary alliance of researchers from across the University.

The Board developed a systematic approach to using anonymised data collected in hospital emergency departments on violence locations, weapons and assailants. These 'Cardiff Model' data, when combined with police data, provide a far more complete picture of violence than police data alone, enabling a more targeted response, for example deployment of police and CCTV cameras to violence hotspots. Published evaluations show that this approach brings about violence reductions of over 40% and substantial cost savings relative to cities where this approach is not implemented.

We also use these data to identify victims of domestic violence. As a result, hospitals can more frequently trigger a multi-agency domestic violence risk assessment and support strategy which help victims escape violent relationships.

The research group also uses data about violence to find new preventive measures. For example, we found that a lot of violence is spontaneous and triggered by the most trivial incident, like intoxicated people bumping into each other. This led the Board, through the local authority, to pedestrianise streets in the city's entertainment district to decrease the risk of confrontation.

Another example is our work on glass. Our research showed that glasses and bottles had been used as weapons in ten per cent of the violent incidents which led to hospital attendance. Ten per cent may not sound like a lot, but across the UK that's tens of thousands of violent acts. After lab testing of pint glasses we did a randomised trial of toughened glass in bars across West Midlands and South Wales and found that it was associated with significantly fewer glass breakages and injuries.

This kind of quantitative evaluation is a core part of our work. We had some evidence that suggests CCTV might be effective, but it was only when we did a controlled study comparing cities that had CCTV with cities that didn't (back when some cities still didn't have CCTV) that we concluded that it improved police awareness of violence and cut violence-related A&E attendance.

A lack of controlled studies like this is a real drawback in policing. Without real evidence from well-designed experiments, how can we know what works?

People talk about your work as a 'public health approach' to violence. But what does that mean?

The broad answer to that is that it is now well-recognised that the NHS has unique contributions to make in terms of violence prevention. We mustn't leave violence prevention to the police and the criminal justice system alone. A public health approach means multi-agency working where agencies which have unique interventions to offer contribute to violence reduction, including the NHS with its distinctive and evidence-based approach. It's not about finding a biological agent which causes violence. It's about seeing, understanding and working to prevent the health harms that violence produces. That's not just the physical injuries, it's also the mental health harms: the trauma for victims, families and communities.

Early intervention is part of a public health approach. When health visitors work with young single mums in deprived areas for example, an approach known as nurse-family partnership, randomised trials show that violence,

bullying, truancy, anti-social behaviour and drug taking can be reduced over many years as the children develop. Overall, a public health approach means three layers of violence prevention:

- Primary prevention: stopping violence from happening in the first place. This includes early intervention, the deterrent effect of the criminal justice system, and design solutions to reduce violence.
- Secondary prevention: stopping violence happening again once it's happened the first time. This includes preventing re-victimisation through protecting people injured in domestic violence, and tackling risk factors like alcohol intoxication.
- Tertiary prevention: reducing the impact of violence once it's happened. Examples of this are trauma centres in the United States which demonstrably save lives, and psychological treatment which nips post-traumatic stress disorder in the bud.

The 'Cardiff Model' incorporates these three strategies and is an example of an integrated public health approach.

What would you add to current debates on violence in the media?

A public health approach which measures violence reliably should reassure, and hopefully is reassuring, the public and professionals alike. Injury data across England and Wales tell us that violence levels in 2017 were unchanged from 2016, and that, as the authoritative Crime Survey also shows, levels of violence have fallen steadily and substantially since 2000. But concern now is rightly focused on knife and gun violence which, though numbers are much smaller than less serious violence, has recently risen in some cities, especially in London, according to hospital and police data.

Overall though, police data are a poor measure of violence. For example, a change in reporting rules means that tens of thousands of offences which would once have been categorised as public order are now classified as violent offences. And the definition of actual bodily harm has been changed to cover any violence which leaves a visible mark. This increases the number of offences recorded, but doesn't, of course, make us a more

violent society. Journalists who use these data to generate sensational media stories whip up fear unnecessarily and harmfully and should be ashamed of themselves.

Under Boris Johnson, and now Sadiq Khan, Cardiff Model data are collected and shared by all London's 29 A&E departments, analysed and used – for example by the integrated gang unit in Hackney. Not surprisingly, gang members don't report injuries sustained in violence or associated with drug trafficking to the police and will often use A&Es far away from the scene of assaults. The Cardiff Model, by focusing on injury and numbers of assailants, identifies such violence so that it can be targeted. More than one assailant is a good indicator of gang activity; this information is now being used by the Met and other police forces.

What's the one lesson that other cities should learn from Cardiff's approach to violence reduction?

The Cardiff Model is widely recognised now, including in the United States and Australia. Many cities have adopted this approach. But sharing data collected in emergency departments isn't going to prevent anything if it's not used. Astonishingly, this is the part of the Model which is most often neglected. Every city should have a violence prevention board, like Cardiff's, where, based firmly on good data, the local authority, police and health come together to understand and prevent violence. Agencies working together in that way is the key to reducing violence.

We can make Scotland the safest country in the world

WILL LINDEN
Co-Deputy Director, Violence Reduction Unit

On January 2 the phones at the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in Glasgow started ringing. London brought in Hogmanay with four fatal stabbings. The capital has been grappling with an increase in knife violence. Amid awful headlines of young lives lost, Glasgow's story surfaced. Once one of the most violent cities in the world, it has seen a dramatic drop in homicides. It's not just Glasgow: across Scotland in 2016-17 not one single young person under the age of 20 was fatally stabbed. Over the last decade we've seen the number of homicides drop by 47%. The media, politicians and communities wanted to know how we did it.

I believe we'd just had enough of our young people dying. It took everyone from the police and health to education, the third sector and, crucially, communities working together to change things. There is no one service that was responsible; it was a collective effort.

However, the reductions in violence in Scotland haven't been equal. Some of our most deprived communities are still disproportionately affected, with the risk of becoming a victim still depressingly high in some of our poorest areas. Just 0.8% of our population fell victim to 57% of all

violence in 2016/17. Such inequality cannot and must not be accepted. We should all have the right to live in safety, irrespective of our postcode.

Tackling the scourge of violence in these areas will be tough but we can do it. We know the communities, families and individuals infected with violence. The cure requires us to target our resources and collective will in working at a local level, almost on a case-by-case basis, pulling one person out of the cycle of violence at a time if that's what it takes.

While the symptoms of violence can't be ignored, we won't cure the disease unless we target the causes. Violence will spread throughout a community and be passed down through the generations unless we interrupt the cycle. We must inoculate both people and places.

Key to success is understanding the long-term effects of early years trauma. If you experience more than four adverse childhood experiences (Aces) we know you're more at risk of everything from addiction to cancer and becoming the victim of violence or the perpetrator of it. There's a movement across Scotland to tackle Aces and slowly we're becoming a 'trauma-informed' country. Whilst this will help our children to have happier, more stable environments in which they can grow into healthy adults, we cannot ever be tempted to write off the generation of people that came before because, as adults, they are now in the 'too-difficult-to-solve' category. They were children once and often we as a society failed to keep them safe. I believe no child is born bad.

There should always be consequences for violent behaviour but, if we want penalties not just to punish but also to help prevent violent acts, we need to be smart. It's not about hard or soft justice; it's about following the evidence for what works to prevent offending. Scotland has one of the highest incarceration rates in Western Europe and we need to ask ourselves if this is really helping to keep us safe.

Ultimately, policing is a human service dealing with the complex nature of vulnerability, trauma and loss. If we are to continue to see reductions in violence then we must keep people at the centre of everything we do. The job isn't done. Violence still infects our communities, workplaces, homes

and relationships. But we know now that violence can be prevented, so there's no reason to accept Scotland being anything less than the safest country in the world.

The knife crime crisis is national. The solutions must be local

GARY YOUNGE

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Black male life expectancy in Washington DC[33] is lower than male life expectancy in Gaza:[34] black infant mortality in America's capital[35] is worse than in Libya.[36] When Americans complain about the Washington elites they are not referring to the people who live in DC (who are among the poorest in the country and of whom we hear precious little) but the concentration of wealth and influence in that city.

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[33] Bharmal, N. , Tseng, C. , Kaplan, R. and Wong, M. D. (2012) State-Level Variations in Racial Disparities in Life Expectancy. Health Serv Res, 47: 544-555. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6773.2011.01345.x

[34] CIA World Factbook. Available online at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html

[35] United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Division of Vital Statistics (DVS). Linked Birth / Infant Death Records 2007-2015, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, on CDC WONDER online database. Accessed at: http://wonder.cdc.gov/lbd-current.html on 22 May 2018.

[36] Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division) accessed via the World Bank website at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.IMRT.IN

Similarly, when it comes to London bias, accusations of elitism refer (or should refer) to the capital's economic, political and cultural domination, not its inhabitants. When it comes to the media the central problem is not that they cover the capital too much (though that can be a problem) but that they mistake London for the rest of Britain.

The past week illustrates just how particular London can be and how the lens of those who live there can distort our view of the national landscape. Last April the Office for National Statistics released figures for England and Wales reporting a general rise in crime, prompted by changes in recording procedures, and a "small but genuine increase in high-harm but small-volume violent crime", including knife crime.[37]

That very day a man was found in Dulwich Park, in south-east London, in the early afternoon with stab wounds to his head after he tried to stop a robber from stealing a woman's purse. He is now in a critical condition. Six people were stabbed to death in the capital that week,[38] leaving Londoners with the impression that they were in the midst of a brutal crime wave and searching for answers.

"The demographic of patients is changing from a night-time activity involving drugs and a dark alley to attacks in broad daylight. It's no longer unusual to go to stabbings of schoolchildren outside of their schools in daylight hours," Dr Gareth Davies, London Air Ambulance medical director, told the London Evening Standard.[39] "It's a sad fact that five years ago a child being stabbed in the playground would be a real point of discussion for all of our staff. Now it's part of the workload."

London accounts for roughly 15% of the population of England and

[37] Office of National Statistics (2017) *Statistical bulletin: Crime in England and Wales: year ending Dec 2016*.

[38] ()Nadia Khomaini 'Peckham stabbing is sixth knife crime death in London in a week'. Accessed at https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/apr/28/man-found-fatally-stabbed-on-london-bus-marylebone

[39] *Evening Standard* (27 April 2017) Ross Lydale and Martin Bentham 'Air Ambulance medics: stabbings of children in London now "part of the workload"'. Accessed at: https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/air-ambulance-medics-stabbings-of-children-in-london-now-part-of-the-workload-a3525201.html

Wales, but for 28% of the latest rise in knife crime, and more than a third of all the children and teens killed by knives that we tracked in 2017.[40] There are no publicly available figures that break down knife crime fatalities by age, but while this most recent rash of deaths feels like a wave, the rate of teenage deaths (which is what we at *The Guardian* tracked) seemed to be consistent with 2015. This may be because the medical services in London have become more adept at keeping those who are stabbed alive.

The profile of the young people killed in London last year, however, was very different from those who have died elsewhere in the country. Fourteen children and teens were killed by knives across Britain in the first four months of 2017. Of those, five were in London, including one of the six who died in that week in April; the rest were all in England in places ranging from small villages to major cities. The average age of the children killed outside London was 12; a third of them were girls; eight were white and one was Asian. The average age of those killed in London was 18; they were all boys and they were all black.

This in part explains why, even though most of the young people killed by knives that year were white, the term 'knife crime' is only used in the national press when referring to the deaths of black youth: the national press is based in London, where the victims are more likely to be black.[41] (The regional press, conversely, often refers to 'knife crime' with non-black victims.)

Either way, this raises a series of important questions. To what extent, when it comes to knife crime, should we be having at least two conversations – one about the capital and one about elsewhere? Given that only about 57% of the country's black population lives in London, is there something about how race, class, crime and masculinity play out in London that

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[40] For more on the 'beyond the blade' project see: https://www.theguardian.com/membership/series/beyond-the-blade

[41] *The Guardian* (10 December 2015) 'Teenage victims of knife crime in London this year: their stories'. Accessed at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/ng-interactive/2015/dec/10/londons-murdered-teenagers-knife-crime

makes black kids more vulnerable there than elsewhere? And so long as what should be a national conversation focuses on race and culture, too few are talking about white youth at risk in the country as a whole or looking to learn from the rest of the UK.

This is not a London problem or a black problem, even if it is a problem in which London is disproportionately affected and black kids in London appear particularly vulnerable.

Much can change. But right now, when one looks at the statistics, reads the local papers and immerses oneself in the conversation in the capital, it feels like London could be another country. It's not. But it's not a proxy for the whole country either. Britain needs a more informed conversation about this issue; London, it appears, needs a specific one.

Building safer communities in New York City

JILLIAN SHAGAN
Director of Community Health and Safety Strategies, Center for Court Innovation

There is a growing understanding among criminal justice practitioners and policy makers that you can't enforce, or adjudicate, or incarcerate your way into a safer society. People sent to prison come back, courts struggle with effective ways to respond to violent crime, and enforcement practices can alienate neighbourhoods and citizens from the very government trying to help. In his article 'Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effect of Local Non-profits on Violent Crime', New York University sociologist Patrick Sharkey speaks of a paradigm shift from viewing violent crime reduction solely as policies to be imposed on communities, to focusing on the role that communities can play in "responding to the challenge of violence through the development of local efforts and local organizations".

At the Center for Court Innovation, we are dedicated to creating a more effective and humane approach to justice and safety and we have learned that a critical component for ending violence is the creation of strong ties and trusting relationships between individuals living and working in crime-plagued neighbourhoods, as well as between citizens and their government.

While much has been said about New York City's astonishing reduction in crime over the past two decades, many pockets of crime and violence

still exist, particularly in low-income communities of colour. The Center's Save Our Streets (S.O.S.) programs work in disadvantaged communities like Crown Heights in Brooklyn and Mott Haven in the Bronx to change the behaviour of individuals who are most at risk of being the perpetrator or victim of a shooting. Trained staff, many of whom have their own histories of involvement in gangs or guns, are on the streets day and night to prevent violence – one person, one conversation at a time. The work is deceptively simple: hang out where shootings occur and become familiar with the people most likely to carry a gun. After a while, translate that familiarity into trust, and eventually into behavioural change.

S.O.S. is based on the Cure Violence model of gun violence prevention developed in Chicago Illinois. It takes a public health approach to violence, re-imagining gun violence as an epidemic that can spread from person to person, but where transmission can be interrupted and risky behaviour can be changed. This approach works because gun violence isn't random; it spreads within discrete social groups. Researchers like Andrew Papachristos at Yale University have found that a high percentage of shootings in urban areas involve a very small percentage of the population, and that both perpetrators and victims often come from the same narrow social networks.

S.O.S. outreach workers attempt to change people's mind-sets about committing violent acts. Erik Farmer, who works for S.O.S. in the Bronx, reflected on an interaction with an armed participant:

> "I met with him, and he changed his whole demeanour, his whole attitude, everything. That comes from the friendship, the relationship. He never would have done that a year or two ago. I said to him … 'Don't do it, this isn't that serious, let's take time to figure it out.' He took the gun upstairs, put it away. That's from a relationship. He's not afraid of me, he trusts me, you know?"

As Erik's story indicates, building trust can take significant time. This basic theme of changing behaviour by building trust is seen in many successful crime and violence prevention programs in New York City. The ARCHES Transitional Mentoring Program operated by the New York City

Department of Probation, which also uses credible messengers to promote behavioural change, has been found to reduce the likelihood of felony reconviction while improving behaviour and self-regulation. And the Brownsville Community Justice Center in Brooklyn creates safe spaces for young people to feel trusted and empowered while they work together for the improvement of their neighbourhood. One Brownsville participant spoke of how the Justice Center "treated him like family" before he was convicted of a crime and did time in prison; then when he returned "they *still* treated me like family", an important factor in changing his life.

According to Jaime Rivera of S.O.S. Bronx:

> "What's most effective is building the relationships in good times, showing you care beyond what they know is your job. The real work starts when we walk out of the office. If I bump into the kid at 1am, they know I'm not going to say, 'no I'm not working right now'. A lot of us lived it when we were on the other side. Someone did it for me; I have to do it now."

Jaime, who has a history of involvement in street organisations, exemplifies the ideal trajectory of this work – relationships change people, who in turn plant the seeds of change in others, creating a chain of caring relationships that helps produce an environment of community cohesion and mutual support.

* * *

According to sociologist Patrick Sharkey, "Organizations within a community are embedded within larger networks of public and private agencies and organizations extending across a city's neighbourhoods and beyond the city limits. These extra-local networks connect communities to external sources of influence, resources, and political power, all of which strengthen the capacity to achieve common goals and values … Communities with stronger internal and external ties, higher levels of social cohesion, and greater informal social control are more likely to be able to regulate activity in public spaces and control the threat of violence."

In some ways, it seems self-explanatory that a strong network of relationships and resources can help communities to be safer and healthier.

In New York City, as in many urban areas, the neighbourhoods that have high crime rates are often the same neighbourhoods that have low performing schools, high rates of unemployment, high rates of chronic diseases like asthma, and other markers of disadvantage. Addressing violence goes hand in hand with finding the resources to address the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to instability and reduced safety.

Again, time is crucial. Just as building individual relationships can take years, so can institutional relationships. Unfortunately, there is a long history of transitory investment in low income and minority communities, which undermines trust and promotes violence. According to Erik Farmer of S.O.S. Bronx:

> "There are a lot of people trying to help, but they're around for two or three years and then fade away. But consistency is the biggest thing to the kids. You tell them something and then a couple years later they can't find you … that hurts the kids worse I think."

This is often reflected in the historical interactions between community and government. Ife Charles, Director of Anti-Violence Programs at the Center for Court Innovation, says, "Our communities don't trust government, because government hasn't been consistently kind to these communities. When the end goal of government is met … government steps away, and the community doesn't seem to keep government's long-term interest… Government has to work in collaboration with community organizations that are staying the course and can help reverse the distrust." In other words, community organisations can spur public trust by playing a connective role in communities where confidence in government is poor.

If a key component to fostering a less violent society is to build trusting relationships and community networks and sustain them over time, then all too often we are doing it wrong. There's insufficient investment in the kinds of steady, sustainable community institutions neighbourhoods need. Too many community programs are tied to short-term government funding cycles that can lead to constant programmatic changes, or even programs opening and closing within years. Individuals get jobs and stay for a few

years, and then move to the next thing. It leads to assumptions that all community institutions are fly-by-night, and makes it harder for residents to trust those organisations that really are in it for the long haul. But some programs are putting in the work to build that trust.

Lessons about building safer communities are increasingly being embraced by the justice system. In New York City, for example, a new paradigm is taking hold in the New York Police Department called 'Neighborhood Policing'. Neighborhood coordination officers or NCOs are tasked with serving as liaisons between the police and community; forming relationships with residents, merchants, and community-based organisations; acting as community problem-solvers; and fostering a culture of communication and trust between residents and law enforcement. And the Red Hook Community Justice Center, a multi-jurisdictional community court in Brooklyn that integrates community engagement and procedural justice principles into its practices, was found to reduce recidivism and increase trust in the justice system. In fact, an independent evaluation found that neighbourhood residents perceive the Justice Center "not as an outpost of city government, but as a home-grown community institution". These are all examples of justice system players investing in long-term, sustainable ties in communities that are used to more transitory attention.

The New York experience suggests that there are no simple or easy solutions to addressing violent crime. It can take years to develop, preserve, and revitalise trust and communication in crime-plagued neighbourhoods. But we are finding that there are significant rewards to putting in this effort. A recipe for effective community crime prevention is perhaps starting to emerge: invest in neighbourhood-based institutions; give them the space and time to earn the trust of local residents, including those most at risk of violence; and engage these residents in positive, pro-social activities while encouraging cooperation between neighbours. These modest but far-reaching actions should be an integral part of creating safer communities.

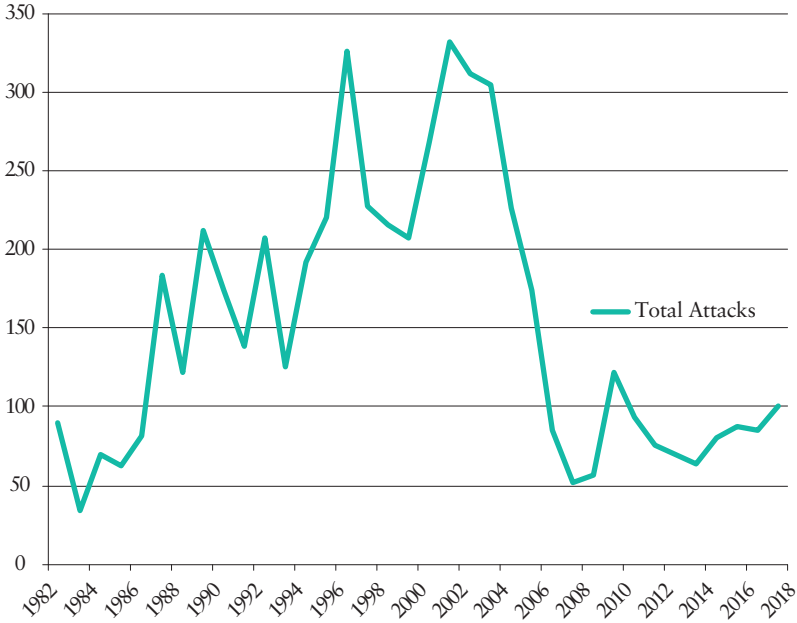
Ending paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland: a challenge for the moral imagination

PAUL SMYTH

> "*Violence is the behaviour of someone incapable of imagining other solutions to the problem at hand*"[42]

In 2017, there were over 100 violent paramilitary attacks in Northern Ireland. These assaults known locally as 'Punishment Attacks', 'Punishment Shootings' or 'Punishment Victims' began during the former conflict as a way of 'dealing' with criminality or 'anti-social behaviour' in contexts where it was argued there was no effective or acceptable policing available from the State. In Republican neighbourhoods, the attacks are almost always shootings to the joints (knees, ankles and sometimes elbows or wrists). In Loyalist communities, they are usually beatings carried out by a group of assailants wielding a variety of cudgels.

[42] This quote is Fisas paraphrasing philosopher Bruno Bettleheim and is taken from John Paul Lederach (2015) *The Moral Imagination – the Art and Soul of Peace Building* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).



Around half of the victims are young people under 25 years of age and several of the victims have been children. There is often tacit or even overt approval of the attacks in the local communities, and the victims will often turn up for 'appointments' with their assailants and even on occasion will be brought to the appointments by a parent. Alongside the shots into limbs or vicious beatings with iron bars, baseball bats and other implements of torture, is the relative inaction of the State in acknowledging, let alone systematically tackling, this human rights abuse.

For many years now, I have been disturbed by this ongoing scourge in our communities. I am a youth worker and so my concern comes from my sense of vocation. In my teens and early adult life, my values were very heavily influenced by my involvement in the 'Peace People', an ongoing movement that sought to deal with the root causes of conflict, and campaigning for nonviolence, justice, and equality. It's why in 2017, I looked deeper into the problem – interviewing a number of young victims

of these assaults as well as local youth workers who were often the only adults who appeared to care for the young people who had been attacked or were under threat.[43]

The common characteristic among most of the victims was that they were already broken before the groups brutalised them. This was a result of repeated adverse experiences in childhood, living in dysfunctional family situations and often both mental health and substance abuse problems. More often than not these went hand-in-hand. The attacks make unstable lives even more so – and when the attacks happen there is a widespread collective shrug across our society – and the victims spiral further out of control. Many have gone on to take their own lives.

The police here seem powerless to do anything about these attacks – their own 'Clearance Rate' for these crimes is under 3%.[44] They cite the complete unwillingness of victims to give information on their assailants (most appear to know clearly who did this to them) – for fear of further and most likely fatal consequences. Likewise, investigations in the communities are fruitless and the perpetrators are usually careful to leave as little forensic evidence as possible.

Moreover, in spite of the significant reforms to policing in Northern Ireland, confidence in the police in the communities where these groups are active remains low. There is multi-generational mistrust of the police – some of it founded on significant biographical experience. Neighbours often feel that the justice system is ineffective and unresponsive (and it doesn't help that the Policing Board established to hold the police to account is effectively neutered due to the absence of political nominees).[45]

This is perhaps best demonstrated in the urban myths that abound about police use of informants and the '£10 Tout'– a belief that the police are

[43] Smyth op. cit.

[44] Source: Police Service of Northern Ireland following Freedom of Information Request 2017.

[45] Political members of the Northern Ireland Policing Board are appointed by the Assembly. As it is not sitting the members have not been appointed and Policing Board currently has a largely symbolic role.

giving small amounts of money to young people and vulnerable adults in communities to give low-level intelligence. There is little evidence to substantiate this belief, but it is nonetheless a widespread assertion. 'Touting' (passing information to the police) is usually seen as an offence against the community – rather than the act of a responsible citizen seeking to uphold the rule of law.

Many also seem to prefer the 'instant justice' of these assaults to the slow-moving justice system. There is no evidence that the attacks work – but many are satisfied that something has been done and that there are consequences for actions. Dig deeper and you start to realise that these attacks are the key mechanism of control for these groups. Though all of them argue political justification for their existence, most are primarily organised-crime gangs. They extort money from local businesses, run loan-sharking organisations, either trade drugs or 'tax' local drug-dealers and even run people-trafficking and prostitution operations. On the 'Republican' side, many of these groups have stepped into a perceived vacuum left by the Provisional IRA – offering the community a 'service' to deal with local crime. On the 'Loyalist' side, these are groups who signed up to the Good Friday Agreement conditions so that their prisoners could be released – but have been able to carry on with these assaults with relative impunity. There has been very little in the way of political leadership around this and the current lack of a functioning Assembly seems to serve their interests.

At the same time as I was conducting the research, a number of people suggested that we create a group to raise awareness of the issue and to campaign for an end to the attacks. We created an informal group we call the 'Stop Attacks Forum' – and began using social media to try to communicate the horror and brutality of these attacks.

One early win was through a discussion with senior staff in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). When the attacks happened (on average there are around two per week), the PSNI press office used to issue a very short statement. It usually gave a location of the attack, described it as a 'Paramilitary Style Assault' and added the line "the injuries are not

life-threatening". We had noticed that the media were largely ignoring the issue and at best they were simply reproducing the PSNI statement word for word, hidden away in a newspaper or on a news website.

Following our discussions with them, the PSNI agreed to make their statements more detailed and explicit. An officer who had visited the scene would give a description of the horror and brutality. This had an almost immediate effect on the media coverage, and longer pieces started to appear in papers and online and then the broadcast media (both at local and national levels) started showing an interest. More and more people started sharing our content online using the *#StopAttacks* hashtag. Even the international media have shown an interest (with Dutch and German television recently doing pieces) – linking the issue to the twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement (and the referendum anniversary), and the absence of any local government to address these and other issues.

A further positive development is that the policy that emerged from the November 2015 'Fresh Start Agreement'[46] – forged between the parties here under intense pressure from the UK, Irish, US and EU Governments – is being implemented by the Civil Service (in the absence of a functioning Assembly). This policy is aiming to bring an end to paramilitary activity and to help build the resilience of communities. This context has helped to give our campaign some traction and also means that our group (made up of youth workers, academics, church members, clergy and other activists) is invited into key conversations about the way forward.

Yet tackling this issue remains complex, and needs to happen with communities. It requires a range of public agencies stepping up to address community concerns and the needs of the victims of these attacks and the threats that proceed them. It needs a new kind of civic courage – what John Paul Lederach has called the "moral imagination".[47] Lederach, a lifelong

[46] You can view the action plan that emerged from this agreement at: https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/executive-programme-tackling-paramilitary-activity-and-organised-crime

[47] Lederach (2015) ibid.

international peace activist and academic, argues that this concept revolves around the:

> "…potential to find a way to transcend, to move beyond what exists while still living in it … the moral imagination rises with the capacity to imagine ourselves in relationship, the willingness to embrace complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity, the belief in the creative act and acceptance of the inherent risk required to break violence and to venture on unknown paths that build constructive change. …the turning points must find a way to transcend the cycles of destructive violence while living with and being relevant to the context that produces those cycles."

Addressing this issue requires new kinds of leadership (particularly in the absence of political decision-making) and civic courage. It also requires creativity and coming up with new ways of doing things.

Of course the attacks are wrong and should end immediately. However, there is also a need for forms of justice that work more quickly and that communities have faith in – better still if they can have involvement in them.

We have some excellent 'restorative justice' approaches here[48] that came out of the peace process with former combatants and ex-prisoners training to help mediate solutions to local crime with both victims and offenders. However, we need more innovations in locally based justice systems which involve the neighbourhoods – including young people in the neighbourhoods. We also need the different parts of the State (policing, health, social workers etc.) to work better together to keep those threatened or brutalised by these organisations safe and able to re-engage with our society.

I firmly believe that making progress on consigning this activity to history has more to do with moral imagination and civic courage than with budgets and resources. To fail to address it is simply not acceptable and will tighten the grip of these groups on our most vulnerable communities.

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[48] Most notably the work of 'Northern Ireland Alternatives' in the Loyalist community and 'Community Restorative Justice Ireland' in the Republican one.

THE TEACHABLE MOMENT

Embedding youth workers in A&E to help young people break cycles of violence

JOHN POYTON
CEO, Redthread

Jordan[49] attended a London A&E department having been assaulted with a bat and a scaffolding pole. He suffered a broken arm and leg and was in hospital for several days. As Jordan was unable to move around he was incredibly frustrated and this resulted in him being aggressive towards hospital staff. He lacked empathy to understand other people's emotional states and being bed-bound only added to his feeling of hopelessness.

Jordan had been to prison previously and was on probation. He lived in an area where there is high social economic deprivation and had witnessed violence in his community throughout his life.

Every year, thousands of young people like Jordan find themselves in hospital following a serious assault or incident of exploitation. Violence, trauma and the overwhelming nature of the situation can affect the way a young person acts when at hospital. They might be aggressive or rude to

[49] Name and identifiable features have been changed.

staff, react with suspicion to treatment or reject offers of help. Some will minimise the incident – appearing blasé about the traumatic event they have experienced, while others will display withdrawn behaviour, hyper-vigilance or paranoia. These behaviours can be difficult for medical staff to deal with, but it is important to be aware that this moment is likely to be a terrifying experience for a young person and that this negative or abusive behaviour is often a consequence of trauma.

Violence can often lead to psychological as well as physical wounds and, while in the hospital, victims find themselves confronted with the effects of their choices and behaviour.

Many young people feel as though they are facing an unprecedented and life-changing decision which may involve retaliation: to change their way of life or to carry on as normal. Some could be discharged back into the hostile environments in which they were hurt which can have devastating effects, with many re-attending with worse or even fatal injuries. In most cases, busy clinicians are simply unable to offer support beyond medical treatment, however much they can see the need for more.

Redthread's Youth Violence Intervention Programme (YVIP) embeds specialist youth workers in Major Trauma Centres and local Trauma Units, aiming to reduce serious youth violence and transform the support available to young people.

The teams meet the young patients as soon as they can: in the A&E waiting room, on the ward, or even in the resuscitation bay. Redthread believes that this moment of intense crisis, when the young person is nursing a serious injury in the daunting environment of a busy hospital, often alone, can be a catalyst for self-reflection and pursuing positive change – a 'teachable moment'.

Being embedded in the hospital means youth workers are on hand to offer support at a moment's notice. Redthread aims to bridge between the young people and the hospital staff, helping young people to understand what is happening to them, or helping them to navigate an environment that initially provokes hostility in them. As outlined in Jordan's story, support

from a youth worker can also help to calm a young person, allowing medical teams to prioritise medical treatment.

The Redthread youth worker met Jordan when he arrived into Resus, and when Jordan was able to talk, they introduced the service and discussed confidentiality. Because of the severity of his injuries, Jordan was transferred to a ward where these conversations were able to progress further. It took a number of ward visits for Jordan to trust the youth worker as a "non-judgmental person". Jordan had low self-esteem, difficulties managing anger and conflict and found it hard to communicate effectively how he was feeling.

The youth worker and Jordan made an agreement that they would show each other the same respect that they would want for themselves. They used a vision board to help Jordan think about what he wanted his life to look like and how he might achieve his own goals. They used a role model of Malcolm X and spent time exploring his journey. Jordan found strength and meaning in this statement, "a man who stands for nothing will fall at anything".

They spent the best part of seven weeks having phone calls and home visits; during this time the youth worker was constantly reinforcing the principles of timekeeping, with Jordan agreeing to communicate if running late, out of respect. The Redthread youth worker worked alongside Jordan's probation officer and through intensive work and therapeutic conversations, Jordan started to believe in himself. Jordan began to make his appointments on time and he started to communicate more effectively with the professionals in his life.

Redthread teams build rapport with the young people and support them to make long-term positive plans to break away from cycles of violence and offending. A typical intervention lasts eight weeks so the success of the programme lies with Redthread's strong partnership working with the local community, groups and organisations.

To ensure long-term work and change is possible for each young person, it is essential for youth workers to make well-judged referrals on their

behalf and accompany them to initial meetings to ensure transition is smooth. The intervention work in A&E provides a platform to link disengaged young people back into the great work already taking place in their communities. Between ourselves and our partners, we are able to disrupt the cycle of violence for young people.

After assessing a young person's needs in hospital, and arranging a plan for their next steps together, we are able to provide support with issues such as housing, counselling, education and training.

The youth worker supported Jordan to access counselling services to help him address some of the trauma he experienced growing up. They worked together to make Jordan feel able to attend a job interview and Jordan is now in full-time employment. He said to the Redthread youth worker, "Love and respect for the support and positivity … I've started work … I never saw this coming all them months ago…".

Redthread looks at Jordan's story and sees the violence he experienced as a health issue, rather than a criminal justice issue. It is clear that being involved in and witnessing violence negatively affects a person's physical and mental health, but further research by Dr Gary Slutkin, founder of US-based Cure Violence,[50] identifies that violence behaves much like tuberculosis, cholera and other epidemics. Exposure to violence is the greatest cause of further violence; it transmits like a contagious disease. We believe that changing the way we all understand violence is crucial to effectively treating it; we need to analyse the causes, diagnose the problem, look at what works to treat the symptoms and develop solutions.

This is certainly something we see in our work. Clinicians tell us that they often treat the same young person again and again, and so many of the young people we work with tell us that they have been exposed to violence throughout their life: at home and in the community. This cycle of violence and trauma is one that, without support, is very hard to break away from. Our programme aims to support young people to do exactly this, by being there in the 'teachable moment' and interrupting violence at the point of

[50] http://cureviolence.org

transmission. We know that treating violence in this way works; in 2017/2018 only 4% of the young people we worked with re-attended hospital for violence in the following 12 months. Fifty-seven per cent of young people reduced their participation in violence. Fifty-seven per cent of young people reduced their involvement in crime.

It is clear that rising youth violence is a public health crisis. Our work in A&E is a health approach to tackling violence and makes up one part of the wider public health model. We all have a responsibility and opportunity to collaborate around a solution-focused approach to tackling youth violence. Great work is already being done by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Knife Crime, the Youth Violence Commission and within the voluntary sector. More collaboration between health, education, the police and the community could help stop the spread of violence that can too easily lead to devastated communities and an exhausted healthcare and criminal justice system.

Checking violence in Durham

CHIEF CONSTABLE MICHAEL BARTON
Durham Constabulary

From my vantage point in the Chief Constable's office in Durham, I suppose the good news is that we are becoming a less violent society. Not too many years ago police houses were built with small barricaded windows and corporal, as well as capital punishment, was how society dealt with violent offences. The building I am in has curtain walls of glass and here in Durham we are reducing the number of police cells we use.

This is not to ignore spikes in crime involving robberies from scooters, and acid attacks. But the understandable headlines of these phenomena belie what I believe is the underlying trend of a safer society. Crime figures are at an all-time high but over 70% of my violent crimes involve no violence or injury. They are crimes of harassment and disorder not serious assaults.

They say that "society gets the police force it deserves". But society also gets the society it deserves. We cannot expect higher standards of behaviour than we ourselves exhibit. If children are brought up in violent households, in violent communities, in a society harbouring violent values we should not be surprised when those children then become violent.

Legislators are prone to legislate. Ministers and politicians over the last 15 or so years always ask the same question of the police, which roughly goes along the lines of, "What legislation do you need to do your job better?" I

do not want new legislation. New laws rarely help. The drive to legislate for zombie knives ignored the fact that they were already illegal: there is sufficient legislation already on the statute book to restrict the length of knife blades. In the 1960s as a 12-year-old scout I was proud of my sheath knife. I can no longer legally carry it.

England and Wales have a common law system of justice based on precedent. This means the law gradually changes as judges interpret statute and previous cases. The police can never be sure when an Act of Parliament is enacted how the judiciary will interpret it, and refinement of how to use the law effectively to influence the behaviour of people in public places takes many years, not the days the newspapers. egged on by impatient politicians, expect and demand.

The police need a long time to work out how to best use new laws. In 1980 when I first patrolled the promenade in Blackpool the legislation I used most was the Public Order Act of 1936. This allowed me to arrest people who were threatening others, whether drunk or sober. But that particular piece of legislation, the Public Order Act 1936, was designed to deal with Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts.

Society's retributive and punitive tendencies are not helpful in creating less violent environments. The Government's recent Serious Violence Strategy contains some interesting ideas, some preventative, some involving enforcement. Although it contains the thought that we will not solve violent crime through enforcement alone, it falls short of nailing its colours to the mast of advocating a public health approach to tackling violent crime, as first described in Glasgow over a decade ago.[51] This public health approach has got to be the answer; the flagship slogan around which we can agree and coalesce.

This means that we must look at the problem of violence end to end. The best way to stop people offending is for them never to start. If we prevent young people committing crime by the age of 15 then the likelihood is they will never commit crime.

[51] For more on the Glasgow model see the essay by Will Linden of Glasgow's Violence Reduction Unit elsewhere in this book.

The Durham Agency Against Crime is an arm's length charity from Durham Constabulary which focuses on crime prevention. The agency has a long successful history of encouraging young people not to commit crime. Its EDDY (Engage Divert Develop Young People) programme tackles young people who have been cautioned and committed minor offences. Over time it was clear that pretty much all of the young people on the EDDY programme exhibited a combination of factors including: low self-esteem, low aspiration, high absenteeism from school, lived in high-impact households, came from single parent families, or had no parents or unemployed parents. Children from these families have an 80% higher chance of being victims or perpetrators of crime.

We thought about this and realised, if we went to schools in years 7 and 8 before the peak offending ages of 14/15 and asked the schools to identify young people who could be loosely categorised as falling into a combination of these categories, then we could actually work with those children without them ever having to accumulate a caution or conviction. That's what the HAGGRID (Horticulture AGGRiculture Improvement and Development) Project now seeks to do. We also have created the Mini Police Programme for years 5 and 6 across the county which encourages junior schools to have a Mini Police force, encouraging a range of children to join, but ensuring that the children from higher risk groups are actively recruited. Educating those children and increasing their understanding of what crime and anti-social behaviour is and how they can combat it allows them to become an agent for positive change within their school, community and family.

We also actively pursue problem-oriented solutions to all crimes, but especially violent crime in Durham. Most violent crime, it is fair to say, involves people drinking alcohol to excess. It involves 'hot spots' and 'frequent flyers': i.e. the same places and the same people crop up time and time again. Sometimes the most effective way of reducing the propensity of people to engage in violent crime is to dissuade them from drinking to excess.

Sending people to prison for less than 12 months does not assist in our fight to reduce crime. The revolving doors of the criminal justice system

welcome them back all too swiftly and all too often. Durham's Checkpoint programme seeks to find a longer-term solution to offending by encouraging people to agree to change their lives. Offenders sign a contract with the Constabulary not to commit crime and to actively work on the issues in their life which are leading them to offend. They are supported by a navigator employed by the Constabulary who support the Checkpoint client to change their patterns of behaviour and thinking.

Alcohol is no doubt a significant factor. So people on the Checkpoint programme for drink-related offences are asked to volunteer to fit an 'alcolock' in their cars, even if their offence did not involve driving. Once the device is fitted they have to blow a negative sample prior to turning on the ignition. This plays on the nudge theory of behavioural change. The person with a problematic relationship with alcohol is reminded of this every time they try to start their car. It will be interesting to see how this plays out.

The second compulsory contractual element of Checkpoint (after promising not to commit crime) is that the offender will cooperate in a restorative meeting with the victim should that be the victim's wish. This puts restorative justice at the heart of reducing reoffending and central to improving the confidence of victims.

People who assault Police Officers are eligible for the programme. My research, based on those arrested in December 2016, showed that the average punishment for assaulting a Police Officer was for the offender to be fined £15. This convinced the Police Federation that it was a smart idea to consider these people for an out-of-court outcome. All our officers use body-worn video, and of the drunken offenders who assault Police Officers who are shown the video footage of their arrest 100% of them asked to apologise to the arresting officer. When I arrested violent drunken people in 1980, generally, when I next saw them it was round two and they had their friends with them. The Checkpoint programme does seem to offer a smarter way of reducing violence.

While we have conducted extensive public consultation on the wider Checkpoint programme we felt it perhaps a step too far including emotive crimes such as domestic violence and hate crime. Recently I was both

pleased and surprised that focus groups in the county asked for us to consider the inclusion of these crimes as part of Checkpoint as long as there were no ongoing threats of violence or coercive control.

The Criminal Justice System has a key role in creating a less violent society. Prison has a part to play, keeping people behind bars who are a danger to others. But arresting, prosecuting, convicting and imprisoning violent offenders is not the complete answer even if some journalists and newspapers would have us believe it so. Victims must be protected and in the immediate aftermath of an assault it's usually preferable for the offender to be arrested. However, what follows is crucial and we believe that challenging those violent people to change their behaviour and thinking is a much smarter way of reducing violence in the future rather than simply resorting to punishment.

HURTING CHILDREN

The role of childhood trauma in causing violence

JANE MULCAHY

In imagining what a world without violence might look like – a planet where brute force and aggression are not ever-present human realities, where streets in certain neighbourhoods no longer have the terrifying, unpredictable quality of battlefields during wartime – I think we first have to take a long, hard look at the private sphere – our homes – where far too many of us taste terror before we can walk, or talk.

Our homes are intimate spaces into which we are born and reared behind closed doors. For lucky people raised in comparative safety, the word *home* is synonymous with comfort, security, refuge – and family. For those not so fortunate, however, the family home is the site of so much silent suffering.

Domestic violence and coercive control destroys lives and blocks human potential. It deforms personality, fragments memory, severely impedes neural development in children and is at the root of many relational difficulties and personal challenges, including addictions and psychosocial disabilities in adults.

Domestic violence is not exclusively a problem of the poor, nor is it confined to the uneducated. It does not discriminate in terms of ethnicity, class or earning power. Wealthy people are capable of being both perpetrators and victims of this pernicious hidden harm.

Child sex abuse is an all too common experience; similarly, blind to race, class and creed. While public perception dictates that children must be constantly alert to 'stranger danger', the people children should be most wary of, and protected from, are the predators among their inner circle – many of whom are family friends, relatives, or worse; their fathers.

Judith Herman and Bessel Van der Kolk, both eminent psychiatrists who have worked for decades with people subjected to unspeakable childhood trauma, have documented how exposure to persistent violence and/or sexual abuse – especially incest – devastates a child's development. Traumatised children acquire unhealthy coping strategies that damage the capacity to build healthy, reciprocal relationships. Their ability to trust others disintegrates, and their capacity to learn, use imagination and take initiative is degraded.

Undigested trauma causes the stress response system to become dysregulated. This dysregulation makes itself viscerally and painfully felt in the body, and leads to illness, addiction, self-harm, and often emotional or physical violence.

Recent developments in neuroscience and the ground-breaking research on the damaging impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) by Felitti, Anda and colleagues since 1998,[52] constitute a dire warning that societies must act urgently to mitigate the intergenerational harm caused by childhood trauma.

Adverse Childhood Experiences cause the production of toxic stress or cortisol in children, which activates the 'fight/flight/freeze' stress response system; this stunts the development of normal neural pathways. Over time

[52] Felitti VJ, Anda RF, Nordenberg D, Williamson DF, Spitz AM, Edwards V, Koss MP, et al. *The relationship of adult health status to childhood abuse and household dysfunction.* American Journal of Preventive Medicine 1998; 14:245-258.

the traumatised person's 'window of tolerance' shrinks, causing them to either remain constantly on high alert for danger, responding with anger, violence, impulsivity or defensiveness (hyperarousal) or by shutting down/disconnecting (hypoarousal) when emotionally overwhelmed or triggered.

The more ACEs a child experiences, the greater the risk of compromised health, mental illness, poor interpersonal relationships and negative social outcomes over their lifetime. ACEs are divided into three groups: physical and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; and household challenges (where there is parental separation, or where family member is mentally ill, a substance misuser or in prison). The core finding of the ACEs research is that the greater the dose ratio of childhood trauma, the more detrimental the impact on a person across their lifetime. ACEs are also inter-related or co-occur. If a child grew up with an alcoholic in the household, for example, he or she would be more likely to be physically beaten, emotionally abused or neglected, and exposed to maternal domestic violence.

The 2015 Welsh ACEs study[53] revealed that when compared to individuals with no experience of ACEs, those who had four+ ACEs were:

- 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence over the last 12 months
- 15 times more likely to have committed violence against another person in the last 12 months
- 16 times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin
- 20 times more likely to have been incarcerated at any point in their lifetime.

According to Lambert and Gill-Emerson's recent investigation into the prevalence of ACEs among Cork Simon Community homeless service-

[53] Public Health Wales (2015) *Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population.*

users,[54] 77% had four or more ACEs, while 8% had 10 ACEs. More than I in 3 were sexually abused as children, over 70% lived with someone with an alcohol or drug addiction, and almost half witnessed their mother being subjected to domestic violence. Moreover, of the 50 people surveyed, 71.4% had a history of suicidal thoughts and 44.8% had self-harmed in the past.

There is ample medical, psychiatric and correctional evidence that ACEs are the most urgent public health issue facing global society. According to Van der Kolk, the ACEs research has shown that "child abuse and neglect is the single most preventable cause of mental illness, the single most common cause of drug and alcohol abuse, and a significant contributor to leading causes of death such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stroke and suicide".[55] Nonetheless, mainstream society is completely blinkered to the huge cost of ACEs, and "too embarrassed or discouraged to mount a massive effort to help children and adults to deal with the fear, rage, and collapse, the predictable consequences of having been traumatized".

Nadine Burke-Harris, founder of the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco, is a passionate ACEs campaigner. She has called for universal screening for ACEs in paediatric settings, adopting a team-based care approach in which doctors, social workers, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, nurse practitioners and wellness co-ordinators (Burke Harris, 2018: p.140) work together for better health outcomes for their young patients.[56]

Universal screening for ACEs by all GPs would help them understand the underlying reasons for the dysregulated stress response in the child and the

[54] Dr Sharon Lambert & Graham Gill-Emerson (2017) ACEs at Cork Simon: Exploring the connection between

early trauma and later negative life events among Cork Simon service users (Cork: Cork Simon Community).

[55] Bessel van der Kolk (2014) *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (London: Penguin).

[56] Nadine Burke Harris (2018) *The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin) p. 140.

"neurologic, endocrine and immune disruptions that ensued",[57] including physical symptoms such as recurrent ear infections, asthma, obesity, or disrupted growth, or in their impulsive, aggressive/oppositional behaviour (often leading to an ADHD diagnosis and a Ritalin prescription). Ideally, doctors would then treat the outward symptoms of toxic stress in a holistic, trauma-informed way as part of a multi-disciplinary health team, incorporating strategies to support the primary care-giver to become a 'buffering adult' capable of adequately mitigating the impact of the stressors in the child's life.[58]

Burke Harris maintains that the ACEs framework is powerful because it opens "a dialogue about topics that feel largely taboo in our society".[59] She argues persuasively that by keeping our heads in the sand about ACEs, or pretending that they *only* occur in poor, urban households (and primarily among "black or brown" people in multi-cultural societies like the USA and the UK), we entirely miss the point that "toxic stress is about basic human biology and that adversity happens everywhere, among all races and geographic areas".[60] However, in communities that are extremely deprived, where there are low levels of resources at the individual and collective level, trauma is "endemic", meaning that "it isn't just handed down from parent to child and encoded in the epigenome; it is passed from person to person, becoming embedded in the DNA of society".[61]

All social and public services need to become informed about trauma, and responsive to it without further delay. Becoming trauma-informed means learning about ACEs and their devastating impact on human lives. It means instead of asking a distressed child or adult "what's wrong with you?" we instead dare to ask "what happened to you?" If schools, healthcare providers and correctional services do not adopt a trauma-responsive approach, they are missing out on opportunities to better understand and

[57] Burke Harris op. cit. p. 115.

[58] Ibid. p. 85.

[59] Burke Harris op. cit. p. 170.

[60] Ibid. p. 158.

[61] Ibid. pp. 132-3.

interact more meaningfully with the "unrecovered trauma survivors"[62] in their care.

The goal of the 70/30 campaign is to achieve a 70% reduction in child abuse and neglect by 2030. The campaign states that trauma-informed care requires "holistic, multi-agency, non-stigmatizing, information-sharing among all professionals". Vulnerable children become vulnerable adults, with expensive health complaints and problematic relational and social behaviours. Their potential to flourish is crushed underneath the weight of dark family secrets.

The fight/fright/freeze response that is triggered in stressful situations, if understood properly by teachers, doctors, A&E staff, police, lawyers, judges, probation officers and multi-disciplinary prison teams, should lead to superior strategies for interacting with unrecovered trauma survivors, particularly those who are hardest to reach and demonstrate oppositional or aggressive behaviours when fearful.

Burke Harris claims that resistance to universal screening for ACEs in the health system is born essentially of ignorance and fear on the part of mainstream medical practitioners who would prefer that certain harms remain behind the dark, despotic private walls of the home.[63] In upper income circles familial realities like domestic violence, addiction, mental illness and incest "just aren't talked about".[64] We can no longer afford to keep up this pretence. The individual and social costs are too high.

To achieve a world without violence – a bold ambition – we must concentrate on what goes on 'at home'. We must strive to create the social conditions for all children to flourish. They cannot actualise their natural potential without a sense of safety, love and belonging.

We must try to eradicate childhood trauma. It is no easy task, but by

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[62] Charles M. Whitfield MD (1998) Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma in *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14(4).

[63] Hannah Arendt (1958) *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

[64] Burke Harris op. cit. p. 171.

neglecting this origin of ill-health, relational disconnection and criminality we end up spending money on the wrong things – on damage control, on picking up the pieces in terms of astronomical healthcare costs, squandering fortunes on imprisonment. Instead we should be investing in early intervention and prevention, programmes such as Nurse Family Partnership, parent-child mental health initiatives and Highscope Perry type preschools.

I once heard Albie Sachs, a former judge of the South African Constitutional Court, tell an audience, that all children should have a "right to play". Of course, they should. To any *good enough* parent this is obvious. Childhood is synonymous with play and exploration. All small children should be carefree, able to see magic wherever they look – in bubbles, balloons, cloud formations and the dawn of each new day. Their minds should be safe and free to marvel at the world's wonders, not fighting for existential survival.

Unless and until we take meaningful steps to ensure that growing up can be experienced without an overdose of adversity and trauma – without domestic violence, sexual exploitation and other unconscionable horrors – society will remain every bit as dysfunctional and violent as it is now.

The F-word

How fostering can support traumatised young people

MARGARET GARDINER

The week between Christmas and New Year, another year drawing to a close. The teenager who has been in our care for the past two years has had his ups and downs and we deal with daily challenges of his mercurial behaviour. His birthday celebrated the week before Christmas was the start of the build-up of tension and frustration we see every year at this time. His behaviour deteriorates just at the time when we are tired and stressed. Along with countless other families, we strive to replicate the perfect Christmas, which we desperately want him to experience, to make up in some small way for the Christmas's of his past – for him to feel and experience the Christmas magic that our children and grandchildren have had throughout their lives.

Happy families are portrayed laughing and enjoying one another's company in immaculate houses on every TV programme and every advert that we seem to watch. Each and every one a painful reminder of what he hasn't had. So many different houses, foster carers, traditions and expectations over the past eight years – but never the ones that he really wants. He thought he had found a forever home where he could settle and

be happy, but they too rejected him, as they couldn't cope with his aggressive outbursts. He had tried so hard to keep his feelings in check, smiling trying to look happy, doing what he felt they wanted, but the anger and aggression were just under the surface ready to erupt, a tidal wave of offensive language, aggressive behaviour and broken objects.

On good days, he would interact with us and appear to enjoy living with us. He would acknowledge that he has had stable routines, plentiful food and a warm house and fashionable clothing since he has been in care and he knows that he is safe. But he would give this up in a heartbeat to be with his own family.

Our daughter and her family have come to stay, along with our young grandchild, and the routine of the household is disrupted even more than it has been. The teenager is usually ok with us and our family and we try our best to include him in conversations, activities and plans for the day. However, we are not and never will be the boy's family and he knows this, but at times he desperately wants to belong, to know that he is accepted for himself and wanted.

Now he is sitting in his bedroom, new presents around him, mess all over the floor which reflects the chaos of his mind and thoughts. He can't be bothered to tidy up as he doesn't know where to start and it takes just too much effort. He knows that he will be spoken to about the state of the room and the expectations of keeping it clean. Muttering to himself, he surveys the mess.

> *"It will be their fault if I get angry, they should stop nagging, it's my room and I will do what I want with it!"*

Music is blaring from the speakers in the corners of the room, as he tries to cover up the thoughts in his mind as well as the noise from our family below. He can hear us all down there, chatting and laughing together, the baby cries out and is comforted, then shouts out with glee as someone tickles it. More talking, he can't quite catch the words our family are saying but is sure we are talking about him. Everyone always talks about him. His behaviour, what he is wearing, his language, the problems he has, what

happened when he was living at home, his mum not being able to care for him … "it's all her fault".

"What are they saying? I can't hear them, but I know they are talking about me … . Fuck them! I don't care, they can go and do one!"

Anger begins to build.

"How dare they! Who do they think they are? I will show them!"

Then more laughter and then the sound of footsteps on the stairs …

"Who is it?"

He strains to listen, but doesn't want to turn his music off. Doesn't want to give everyone the satisfaction of thinking he is scared of them. Can he tell from the tread on the stairs?

"Where are they going?"

To the carer's bedroom, to the top of the house or will they stop at his room? He doesn't realise it but he holds his breath as he strains his ears to make out who it is and if they are going to stop …

"Are they walking on? No they have stopped … Now what do they want! Can't they leave me alone?"

A voice calls out his name. Pretending not to hear over the music, he keeps quiet. Then the voice comes again, a bit louder this time and a knock at the door. The door begins to open as the voice calls his name for a third time.

It begins to build. Waves of hot molten lava come crashing up and through his body into his mind until all rational thought is gone. Before he can stop himself or even become aware of what he is doing, it bursts through his mouth screaming at me – every obscenity he knows – repeatedly screamed at me. He lunges forward and looks to threaten me then reaches round to grab the nearest object off the side.

He desperately wants these feelings of his to go away, for me to feel as bad as he feels, for me to know what it is like to hurt as much as he hurts. If

the only way that this can happen is for him to threaten me with a knife, then so be it.

He doesn't want me to be nice to him, to smile and care for him. To do those things his mum should be doing for him … not me. It is so much easier for him to let out all the pent-up emotions, to shout and swear, to threaten and to reject us before we can reject him – before he hears that yet again he will be packing his things, pasting his smile on his face and moving to the next people that tell him that this is his home.

I see the look on his face as he waits for me to tell him that he is not right for our family, that we have other people to consider and that of course we really like him but … not enough.

In that moment, I realise that I find the F-word an offensive swear word with connotations of aggression and violence. However, for the frightened, scared and fearful child in front of me, the F-word that triggers his violent thoughts and outbursts is Family. Something that I can never be for him and never replace. All I can do is try and understand his world and continue to reach out to him.

"I've made tea … do you want one? There's cake!"

I smile at him, and he shrugs, mutters under his breath …

"I suppose so."

Another day, another crisis averted, I breathe a sigh of relief … until the next time when we will reinforce again that we care, that we mean it about staying and being part of our family.

We will continue talking about his F-word and acknowledge that we know and understand we are not family and that he doesn't choose to live here – but we are so glad that he does.

Slowly, he begins to understand. Slowly he starts to hope and believe he can belong, and that we are not competing with his family. That he does not have to choose between his family and us – he can have both.

As he begins to hope and believe, his anger, frustration, aggression and violence begins to dissipate and we see more of the man he will become. However, those scars of his early years, the neglect, different foster homes, rejections and loss have a long-lasting impact and when stressed or out of control his anger can still spill into aggression. But never as bad as that Christmas.

Dangerous conversations in safe spaces

The Leap approach to confronting conflict

ABIGAIL DARTON

Leap Confronting Conflict is a national charity that gives young people the skills to manage conflict in their own lives, reduce violence in their communities and help lead our society. We provide conflict management programmes for young people and the professionals who work with them, in the care system, prisons and the secure estate, alternative education institutions and the community.

Young people and a commitment to building community are at the heart of everything we do. So it logically followed that when faced with the question, "how can we be a less violent society?", we opened it up to the whole Leap community, including young participants and graduates of our programmes, staff, freelance trainers and trustees.

The question led to powerful and insightful discussions across these different groups. What quickly became apparent however, was that the word 'violence' means something different to everyone.

These words, which people across our community associate with violence, seem to give an image of violence as something deep and confusing, a mess of feelings, structures and physical actions. However, the five most common words to occur – anger, pain, fear, power and weapons – highlight three distinct aspects of violence which are the most prevalent to people at Leap. Therefore it is important to understand these aspects before addressing how we can be a less violent society.

Weapons

With the recent rise in knife and gun crime across London and the tragic loss of young lives as a result, it is no surprise that the physical violence of weapons was a central point of many of our conversations. As one young graduate put it, "when I think of violence I think of fighting … Pain … Blood … Stabbing". This overwhelming presence of physical violence in young people's lives is a motivating force for the work we carry out at Leap. However, in order to address this form of violence we must understand the invisible structures and feelings that support it.

Power

The term 'power' frequently came up in conversations but was used to relate to violence in a number of different ways. Often people saw acts of physical violence as an attempt to gain, assert or reclaim power in situations where people feel powerless. However, it was also stated that a precursor to this, the way in which some members of society are made to feel powerless, is an act of violence in itself. Sometimes called structural violence, this imbalance of power means that the basic rights of some individuals are restricted, often as a result of institutionalised racism, sexism, classism etc. Just like the use of weapons, this structural violence can cause physical and emotional harm to those victimised by it. In this way, we see the relationship between states of power and powerlessness as both a cause of violence and an act of violence in itself. An all-encompassing to-ing and fro-ing which sits both within and around all acts of violence.

Anger, pain and fear

When thinking of violence, the emotion which first comes to most people's minds is anger. Something which bubbles up until an individual 'snaps' and lashes out destructively. However, a central starting point of all our work at Leap is acknowledging that not only does anger present in a number of different ways (a harsh stare or cold shoulder for example), but that it also masks other emotions that lie deep within and are sometimes not even visible to those experiencing them. These are often emotions of hurt and pain, stemming from unmet needs and fears. Therefore another way to understand violence could be as a misplaced expression of these important feelings.

So if these are the ways in which we see and understand violence in our society, how do we think we can become less violent?

"Everyone learning to be less violent in ourselves, by managing our emotions" (Trustee)

As we believe that violence often stems from unmet needs and fears, we see a need to equip more people with the skills and language necessary to identify and manage these feelings in less destructive ways.

> "If we're seeing the anger, people need to acknowledge that there's more than anger, so they can put the anger to the side and realise that there are feelings underneath that will help them to solve the problem." (Young graduate)

In Leap workshops, we begin this process by encouraging people to identify their own triggers or 'red flags' which spark conflict and maybe even violence in their lives. This enables people to identify patterns in their lives and explore the needs and fears which lie beneath their actions. From here, skills to express these needs and emotions in more transformative ways can be developed.

People from across our community stressed a need for these conflict management tools to be "taught routinely across schools" and to "younger years". Equipping new generations with the ability to self-reflect and manage their own emotions in these ways can prevent conflict from spiralling into destructive behaviours and therefore could be the first stepping stone to a less violent society.

However, simply equipping young people with these skills is not enough, we must show them that they matter.

"Youth provisions that empower young people to have a say and take action" (Staff Member)

As a youth charity, it is not surprising that many responses to the question of how we can be a less violent society focused on increasing the amount of opportunities available to young people. What is important, however, is the specific type of opportunities that were cited.

> "We need more things where you're learning to change, you're learning to develop yourself and others instead of just sitting around and chilling." (Young graduate)

Young people and adults alike spoke of providing opportunities for young people to "unleash their talent", "fulfill their potential" and be leaders in their own lives and communities. This means going beyond tokenism and including young people in all decisions and projects that impact on their lives. This could range from decisions around an individual's education to policy decisions which affect their local policing or housing conditions. In order to do this, meaningful relationships should be developed in which young people are asked, "What do you want to do? How can we support you from here?" instead of simply just, "'Don't do this. Do that."

These genuine conversations can help reduce violence in two distinct ways. They can provide a non-violent way for a young person to feel empowered and gain a sense of purpose and responsibility for their communities, reducing the likelihood of them wanting to cause harm within them. They can also ensure that the policies being created to address the needs of young people and their communities are genuinely relevant, innovative and impactful, as the young people themselves are the experts in their own experiences.

"Less inequality in terms of wealth and opportunity" (Staff Member)

As the tension between power and powerlessness was so inherent to our understanding of violence, it naturally follows that creating a more equal society was commonly suggested as a way to reduce violence.

> "We will become a less violent society when more people pay attention to and work to address the imbalance of power and resources through peaceful, direct social action." (Trustee)

There are many ways to reduce inequality and redistribute power within our society. Those suggested in our conversations included a wider availability of feasible, legitimate jobs for *all* young people including those

with criminal records; more diversity of all kinds in policy influencing and political roles; and campaigning for universal access to basic human rights. A more equal society created by these opportunities would not only reduce the amount of structural violence in our society but could also reduce the temptation to resort to physical violence as a vehicle to power, wealth and opportunity.

"Communication. Empathy by experiencing other's perspectives" (Staff Member)

One of the fears most often masked by anger and violence is fear of the unknown, of anything or anyone that appears different. Considering this, it is not surprising that one of the most common suggestions for reducing violence was to bring people together and open up conversations between those perceived as different from one another.

> "It comes from ignorance. If you don't know what you're talking about, if you don't know what's going on in the world, that's where all the issues come from." (Young graduate)

At Leap, we often speak of going "beyond zero tolerance" and having "dangerous conversations in safe spaces". This means allowing people to express their fears and concerns, which may be taboo within their communities or society as a whole, in order to explore why they feel that way and consider their experiences from another perspective. Whether it's prisoners and officers or Muslims and people who hold far-right beliefs, bringing people together from seemingly opposing sides to discuss their needs is an opportunity for issues to become humanised and empathy to be developed. Therefore in order to be a less violent society, we need more safely held spaces for these conversations to happen across different ages, religions, ethnicities and experiences of all kind. Or as one young person put it, we should all "drink more tea … . You calm down, sit down and talk to others."

Final thoughts

Violence comes in many shapes and forms and means different things to different people. However, looking beneath the outward acts of violence, be it physical or structural, we found common themes and experiences across our community.

Our four key ways to become a less violent society seem at once incredibly simple and yet hard to reach. They require the creation of many more opportunities across our society as well as a rethink of what is important in education, and work with young people.

The importance of being able to recognise and understand our own emotions and those of others has shone through, as has the need to see the potential of all members of our society and remove the barriers preventing that potential from being fulfilled.

We hope that in hearing the insightful, articulate and important responses of young people throughout this writing, we have demonstrated the fact that young people should be seen as part of the solution, not just part of the cause, of violence in our society. Their passion, intellect and commitment to their communities is a driving force of inspiration at Leap, and listening to their responses alongside those of the rest of our community gives hope that with the right support and resistance we will one day achieve our aims to become a less violent society.

What role can a school play?

Ian Mikardo High School as a model for a less violent society

CLAIRE LILLIS
Headteacher

It is my strong belief that schools can play a crucial role in creating a kinder society. But in order to achieve this we need to be bold and review the purpose of education. I fear failure to do so may further alienate our youth and in turn create a more violent society.

What are our values and how are they communicated to children in our schools?

In the more than 25 years I've spent working in mainstream, custodial and special educational settings I have seen a wide change of policy and approach that has had a profound impact on the profession and in turn our children and their view of the world. I may be biased but, alongside the home, I believe schools shape the future of society and have a major impact on the type of citizens we become.

I was educated in the late 70s at a time when pastoral care was as important – if not more important – than academic results. There were, of

course, major areas for improvement in the system but I do wonder if we need to redress the balance so that teachers can be more creative again and so they can foster a sense of play and enjoyment, rather than be brow beaten to ensure students pass exams.

Schools should give young people a sense of purpose, hope and opportunity. Without this they may channel their aggression, anger, rage and/or frustration at external targets instead of using this energy in a constructive way; towards their own development and growth. Children will suffer when the system encourages children to reach for an elusive ideal instead of focusing, for example, on tolerating conflicting feelings e.g. being angry at and loving the same object.

My latest education experience is as Head Teacher of Ian Mikardo High School in East London. This is a tough school. It was the subject of a Channel 5 Documentary called *Too Tough to Teach* in 2014 due to its profound and unique way of working with some of the country's most hard-to-reach children and its outstanding outcomes.

The school serves boys aged 10-19 who come from various boroughs across London. All arrive with a history of not attending school and school exclusion. They have social, emotional and mental health issues; they have profound difficulties forming relationships which often results in violent behaviour. Many come to us as traumatised children and who have been further traumatised by how their 'bad behaviour' has been managed in school – often through the use of physical restraint.

We work with our boys using a model based on Bowlby's theories of attachment. The school provides a safe haven and secure base for children to form multiple attachments. This model helps repair the damage from early attachments and enables children to relearn how they relate to others and gain a sense of self. They develop communication skills and empathy; and this in turn reduces violence both within and outside of school.

Our latest referral, with significant special educational needs, was restrained by four adults in his last school. He stopped attending. We will admit him but we will not restrain him. We will seek to understand him;

through the development of healthy relationships and an engaging curriculum he will start to understand himself and manage his own behaviour.

Managing risk appropriately is key to our success.

With children coming with gang connections and from all across London we have a dynamic risk assessment. We do not routinely or actively search, use wands or knife arches but rely on the relationships we build and a sense of trust. In order for our youth to grow into less violent adults they need to experience adults as nurturing role models with clear boundaries. As a result, violent incidents are rare.

But if we research the Government guidance to schools on how to manage behaviour, words such as 'punish', 'discipline', 'exclude', 'reasonable force', 'search', 'penalties', 'seclusion' and 'isolation rooms' are commonplace. The 2016 guidance enables teachers to use 'reasonable force' to maintain behaviour. Teachers can use this force to search children for a range of items – from chewing gum to knives. Is this really how we want our teachers to be teaching? It is commonplace for schools to train teachers in the use of physical control. Can and does this lead to more violence beyond the school gates?

Schools are under immense pressure to perform academically. Alongside these demands are the cuts in public services with a shift in responsibility from social care to schools. Cases that would have been classed as Child Protection in the past – and supported by social services – are now managed in schools as Child in Need (CIN). These children can be seen as a drain on resources in a mainstream provision and are often excluded from school. Other strategies include labelling and medication. These carry their own risks that may ultimately lead to more problems than solutions.

Rather than 'reasonable force', exclusion, medication and/or a label, what may be required is a change of ethos and management. An education system that embraces difference and recognises the unique qualities of every child and what they can contribute to society. An education system

that values teachers as professionals and trusts their judgement so that they in turn can respect and trust their students.

At Ian Mikardo in 2002 the prognosis for 100% of the children was custody – now 98% go on to college or employment. Their future is brighter.

KHULISA

A well-being-led model of violence reduction

IMAN HAJI AND LISA ROWLES
Khulisa UK

> *"And when the self is not loved, by itself or by another, it dies, just as surely as the body dies without oxygen."*
>
> James Gilligan, *Shame, Guilt and Violence*

There are a range of factors that impact human behaviour and result in violence from an individual, relational, community and societal perspective. With 20 years' experience working in some of the most volatile environments in both South Africa and the UK, we acknowledge that societal factors are critical to our capacity to overcome adversity. In so many deprived communities where emotional and financial poverty are commonplace, individuals and families are in a constant state of 'survival' and violence plays a significant part in that survival. Current statistics demonstrate this – while crime continues to fall in London and the UK,[65] we are experiencing a significant increase in violent crime – 22% increase

[65] Barr, C., Kommenda, N., Voce, A., and Ibbetson, C. 'Why is violent crime on the rise – and who is most at risk?' (April 2018) *The Guardian* https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/apr/27/why-are-knife-and-gun-offences-on-the-rise-and-who-is-most-at-risk [Accessed 11 May 2018].

in knife crime, 11% increase in gun crime and similar increases in homicides, car thefts and burglaries.[66]

In this chapter, we focus on the individual and relational aspects of violence – how we develop self-awareness, relate and empathise with others and build capacity to regulate our emotions and responses to the world around us. We believe that a compassionate lens that recognises the impact of traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is a fundamental factor in a less violent society that recognises we all have a responsibility to support the more vulnerable and socially excluded in our communities.

This premise is based on our experience delivering psycho-education programmes, underpinned by a therapeutic process that create an opportunity for young people to understand themselves better and develop non-violent coping skills.

About Khulisa

Our sister charity Khulisa SA,[67] established in 1997, began life in the post-apartheid era, focusing on reducing violence, crime and victimisation in areas like Cape Town – a place where "the chance of death by violence is higher than in some of the planet's most volatile warzones [and] statistics trump hyperbole [with a violent crime rate of] 1 in 74".[68] Their approach was effective. In 2006, Khulisa SA were awarded "best-practice model [of] transformational social impact" by the UN Office of Drugs and Crime Award. In 2007, our founder, visiting the UK, discovered high levels of violence in prison and high reoffending rates – alarmingly just as prevalent in the UK as South Africa. And so, Khulisa UK was born. Initial pilots, funded by the Home Office, enabled us to test our intensive psycho-educational programme. The programme is designed to help participants

[66] See: BBC News, 'Knife crime up 22% in England and Wales' (April 2018) *BBC News* http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43905407 [Accessed 11 May 2018].

[67] See: http://www.khulisa.org.za/

[68] Pinnock, D. 'Cape Town Gangs: The Other Side of Paradise' (2014) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312003589_Cape_Town_Gangs [Accessed 14 May 2018] page 1.

acknowledge behavioural challenges (such as violence, abusive relationships and inappropriate coping skills) whilst enabling better emotional self-regulation by providing tools that help develop emotional literacy and foster emotional resilience.

During the past 10 years we have tailored and evaluated our methodology in the UK and found it effective in violence reduction across differing contexts. A 20-month study in 2015 (commissioned by the Cabinet Office) suggested that participants attending our programme were four times less likely to reoffend. Consistent evaluation over time reports a 40% reduction in violent tendencies and a 37% increase in positive coping skills across our clients. We focus interventions on the most high-risk transition points for young people – facing exclusion from school, entering the prison system and upon release as they begin the process of (re)integrating into their community.

Our approach defines violence more broadly than physical harm, taking account of psychological, emotional and financial effects[69]. Empathy for victims of violence is an important facet; encouraging us to "empathise with other human beings, imagine ourselves in their place, be aware of their feelings [with the assumption that in doing so], we will be inhibited from doing violence to them".[70] At Khulisa, we take this approach a step further: by helping people identify what drives this violent response (physiologically, psycho-socially and contextually), so they might make a different, healthier choice.

What we've learnt about *why* people turn to violence

From a theoretical standpoint, the Good Lives Model suggests people turn to (violent) crime because they cannot reach valued outcomes (i.e. personal well-being, relationships, enjoyable work, creative pursuits) in socially

[69] See the Introduction Chapter to Bessell, R., *Violence: A Modern Obsession* (London: Simon & Schuster Publishing, 2015).

[70] Ibid., page x.

acceptable ways.[71] Our experience in schools, prisons and communities wholeheartedly supports this. Participants consistently voice the critical importance of power and respect and the need to achieve these outcomes by any means necessary.[72]

This core driver impacts our state and subsequently our psyche. Gilligan, reflecting on his own 30+ years research into prisons (*Shame, Guilt and Violence),*[73] perceives many prisoners he encountered as victims of "the death of the self".[74] He argues that these men have suffered overwhelming humiliation as children, through physical and sexual abuse, neglect and trauma. Lacking love from the very people expected to keep them safe and build their capacity for emotional regulation – primary caregivers like parents or carers[75] – they develop purely primary survival strategies (i.e. violence) as their basis for communication with others. At a practical level, in our work, we often see this in action. Essentially, the 18-year-old before us continues to display the emotional response of a 3-year-old, almost powerless to understand how or why this happens. His or her shame at their inability to control their responses only exacerbates the problem.

Developing young people's ability to regulate emotions is key to reducing violence. Missing out on this key neurodevelopmental phase and still carrying mental scars of neglect and abuse compounds social exclusion: "the basic psychological motive, or cause, of violent behaviour is the wish to ward off or eliminate the feeling of shame and humiliation".[76]

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[71] Whitehead, P.R., Ward, T., and Collie, R.M. *Time for a Change: Applying the Good Lives Model of Rehabilitation to a High-Risk Violent Offender* (2007) Vol.51 (5) International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology p. 580.

[72] For more on how prevalent statements like these are in prisons, see Gilligan, J. 'Shame, Guilt and Violence' (2009) http://internationalpsychoanalysis.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/shamegilligan.pdf [Accessed 14 May 2018].

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid. p. 3.

[75] See: Skuse, T., and Matthew, J. 'The Trauma Recovery Model: Sequencing Youth Justice Interventions For Young People With Complex Needs' (2015) Prison Service Journal.

[76] Ibid., p. 4.

Our participants experience complex and multiple disadvantage – poverty, fractured relationships at home/in care, untreated (often undiagnosed) mental health issues and early childhood relational trauma (neglect, abuse, violence etc.). If left unattended and unmanaged, these experiences, often the cause of destructive behaviours, deepen and entrench their capacity for social exclusion. Current statistics confirm the scale of the problem:

- Looked after children make up 30% of those in custody[77]
- Over 25% of young people in the youth justice system have a learning disability;[78] a further 60% of boys have specific difficulties in relation to speech, language or communication[79]
- 65% of children in custody are reported to have suffered traumatic brain injury.[80]

What we've learnt about '*what works*' in violence reduction

Our approach is informed by the Good Lives Model. We've learnt that an asset-based approach works. Sustainable positive changes in behaviour are possible when we explore and promote the valued outcomes offenders seek by equipping them with internal (i.e. attitudes and values) and external (i.e. skills, resources and opportunities) conditions needed to live a positive life.[81] Our experience working with over 3,500 young people (UK/SA) strongly emphasises the critical importance of developing young people's emotional well-being in the context of reducing violence.

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[77] Lennox, C., and Khan, L. 'Youth justice' in 'Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012, Our Children Deserve Better: Prevention Pays' (2012). https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/252662/33571_2901304_CMO_Chapter_12.pdf [Accessed 3 October 2017] p. 2.

[78] Howard League and T2A Transition to Adulthood 'Judging Maturity: Exploring the Role of Maturity in the Sentencing of Young Adults' (London, Howard League, 2017) at p. 6.

[79] See Lennox Note 13, at p. 2.

[80] Hughes, N., Williams, H., Chitabesan, P., Davies R., and Mounce, L. 'Nobody Made The Connection: The Prevalence of Neurodisability in Young People who Offend' (London, Children's Commissioner for England 2012) p. 10.

[81] Whitehead et al. note 9 at p. 581.

Of course, this is only possible if we are able to help them to regulate their emotions and their behaviour, by relating effectively with them so that they trust us to help them to develop their cognitive capacity to express themselves in new ways.

The idea that by empathising with others (victims) we are less likely to commit violent acts is grounded in the presumption of our own emotional literacy and executive functioning skills (decision-making, planning, paying attention, working memory, etc.) which are so critical to our ability to think consequentially. Since our participants missed out on this, they are stuck in an early stage of emotional and cognitive development, as a result.[82] Our executive functioning skills remain under-developed until we are in our twenties.[83] For our participants, who live in a constant state of survival, violence becomes an automatic response – both from a physiological perspective and as a result of learnt behaviour (i.e. neglect, abuse, ACEs).

It's widely known that this 'amygdala hijack' is common amongst traumatised young people. Enabling young people to self-regulate requires a phased approach and so, we have developed our programmes to take account of a neuro-sequential model.[84] The premise of this model is that, without regulation, young people can't relate to others or engage in higher levels of cognitive ability, key to reasoning and consequential thinking. Our programmes enable co-regulation of emotions through:

- Physically and emotionally settling participants
- Providing a safe space to feel calm (an environment to foster positive change)

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[82] See: BPS, *Position Paper: Children and Young People with Neuro-Disabilities in the Criminal Justice System* (Leicester. British Psychological Society 2015) for more on the increasing rates of neuro-disability in young people in prison.

[83] See: Lamb, M.E. & Sim, M.P.Y. 'Developmental Factors Affecting Children in Legal Contexts' (2013) *Youth Justice* Vol.13(2), 131-144.

[84] See: Perry, B. Applying Principles of Neurodevelopment to Clinical Work with Maltreated and Traumatised Children: Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics in N. B. Webb (eds.), Working with Traumatized Youth in child welfare (New York, The Guildford Press 2006) pp. 27- 52 for more information on the utility of adopting a neurosequential model of therapeutics.

- Art, storytelling and drama (to explore emotions, the impact of challenge and violence and their 'ideal self')
- A restorative group environment, listening appreciatively and non-judgementally
- Dialogue that helps establish positive appropriate attachment – encouraging re-patterning of beliefs about adults, authority, social engagement and their own sense of self-worth
- An emergent facilitation style that meets participants at their point of need

Taking a trauma-informed lens, as facilitators, we can subtly improve how young people manage their emotions, explain feelings and needs and thereby enhance emotional resilience. This makes alternative coping strategies more appealing, as they realise their own capacity to engage effectively with others and meet their own needs in prosocial ways. This method of building confidence and self-worth before attempting to actively change behaviour offers greater sustainability, since the individual has greater self-belief in their capability.

We also know that sustainable change is critically connected to systemic support – their community. Unless teachers, carers, parents, prison officers and other support workers understand how trauma impacts young people, they may struggle to manage behaviour effectively. So we also offer training and reflective practice for staff within the system, so as to support them in managing the change in young people, as well as helping them avoid compassion fatigue and stress-related illnesses that come with working in such pressurised environments. Understanding the dynamics of socio-emotional development – and responding appropriately – is key to building the capacity of young people and to the improvement of everyone's relational capacity.

Over the years, we have gathered evidence to support our model:

- reduced levels of violence in a partner prison by 90%[85]
- 98% of participants report a positive impact on behaviour
- 79% report developing stronger social connections and
- only 7% of our participants reoffend.[86]

Our sister organisation in South Africa has achieved similar results, although not directly comparable due to culturally and social-economically different environments[87].

Conclusion

Societally, too often, in tackling violence (and other inappropriate behaviours), we tend to treat symptoms rather than root causes. Our experience has taught us that to become a less violent society we must meet people at the level of their emotional and development maturity and prioritise their social and emotional well-being. By helping them to address their own needs, their need for a violent response is reduced. When individuals are able to communicate and manage conflict more calmly, their propensity to engage with others and sustain employment and education in our society improves significantly. With a trauma-informed multi-agency approach, the cycle of violence is finally broken.

[85] Through our work at HMP Forest Bank.

[86] See: Gavrielides, T., Ntziadima, A., Goueti, I. 'Evaluating Social Action for Rehabilitation: Khulisa Rehabilitation Social Programmes' (2015) Restorative Justice for All http://www.khulisa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/images/RJ4All-Cabinet-Office-RSAF-Evaluation-Exec-Summary-2015.pdf

[87] Mapham, A., and Hefferon, K '"I used to be an Offender – Now I'm a Defender": Positive Psychology Approaches in the Facilitation of Posttraumatic Growth in Offenders' Vol.51 (2012) *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* p. 407.

"I HAVE SERVED MY COMMUNITY"

AN INTERVIEW WITH DELIA EL-HOSAYNY
one of the UK's first female bouncers

In the early 1980s, there were no female door staff. The stereotype that all bouncers were male gorillas was not completely fair … but it wasn't too far from the truth! I thought about the job and just thought I would go and see if I could do it.

At the start, there were quite a few guys who didn't like the idea of females in that job amongst fellow security staff. When I was a manager of security teams, there were a lot of men who refused to work with me because I am a woman. It was a totally male culture. So I just had to get on with it. As long as name calling does not bother you, from clients and from other door staff, you just have a job to do and you get on and do it. I never asked door staff who worked for me to do something I wouldn't do. And if you are standing at the end of the day, if you can shake off that fist in the face, gradually you earn their respect.

It's also true that female door staff do it differently. Blokes go in head, often fist, first. The female version of the job is different. It's calmer. You speak to them. You problem-solve. You talk to them and move whoever is threatening to kick off from A to B so by the time they realise what's happened, you have already got them outside the premises.

I did 30 years on the job. I think some things really changed about the job and others were the same. Back in the day, it seems to me there was still a culture where, if someone was being a bit naughty, you could threaten them with being barred and people shook hands at the end of the night. It seemed no one had a weapon. Fights were with fists. Now it seems to me things are more aggressive. Now people are bringing in knives and even guns. Now there are more drugs.

There has also been a change to the drinking culture. People used to come in around 7pm or 8pm, start drinking then. Now people are often pre-loading so by the time they come into my places, they can already be off their face. As for the women, they are often the people who start the arguments. It's the men who end up finishing them.

The Security Industry Authority regulations have not, in my view, made much of a difference. Ok, it got rid of some of the gorillas. Now you get training for crowd control, health and safety and you pay your money for the badge. But the fact is a fight in the 2010s isn't much different from a fight in the 1940s.

As for what we need to reduce violence, I think the big issue in the night-time economy is inconsistency. Inconsistency in the pub trade. We all know there are some premises which, when the till is down, they will offer cheap deals, let in under-agers. We are not all on the same page, not on the same page with the police. I think we need to get back to a culture where there is more respect between those going out for a drink and those trying to keep them safe. It feels like we used to have that and we have lost it.

Looking back, I am really proud of what I have done. I have been a mentor for other women getting into the industry. Women have said to me that I was an inspiration to them. Other women would not have had the guts to do the job without seeing me do it first. I even had a lady from the USA say that my story inspired her to get into the profession. So, yes, I am pleased with myself. I have served my community, I have done my bit and I am glad others have been inspired by it.

Education for empathy

KHAMRAN UDDIN

How do we become a less violent society? My personal answer is educating our youth, communities, prisons, employers and criminal justice system about *empathy*. As an ex-offender, I will be the first to admit that during the time of committing an offence, I would only view things from my own perspective. I believe this education needs to take place in four areas: local communities, prisons, the criminal justice system and employers. And how would we do that?

Local communities

Most of us live in communities lacking communication, interaction and an understanding of one another. If there was an annual community event/'fun day' it would break that ice. A common ground where every person is valued as human, and where we emphasise the same rights for all. There could be face painting for the kids, food and drink stalls, small affordable activities and a stage managed by time slots; for singing, ex-service user rehabilitation stories, motivational talks, community updates and individual appraisals.

People in general are quite curious. If I walked past my local park with a 'gang of lads' and saw such activity, we would be intrigued and would inevitably go inside. Locals would happily volunteer. There are always

people willing to participate and help out. When people see a familiar face, it helps them feel more comfortable and perhaps even get involved. Bringing people together from all backgrounds whether from a religious, ethnic background, criminal background or law-abiding citizens, breaks invisible barriers. People should be given the chance to interact, communicate and, more importantly, understand one another, empathetically.

Of course, everything comes at a cost. Therefore, with the support of many, applying for a grant off our government, would be my suggestion. However, if not successful, then fundraising through local charities and inviting local businesses to participate, is another option.

Prisons and prisoners

Thinking back to the nights I spent in custody, I recall prisoners taking every opportunity to get out of their cell. There are many academic courses you can do in prison, and every inmate has an individual sentence plan. Using that to our advantage, we should design a short course purely based on empathy and make it mandatory for every prisoner. Not every prisoner will intentionally want to get involved; therefore, it should be a legal obligation on every inmate's sentence plan.

Group sessions will cause many distractions but one-to-one, with their personal or offender manager, would be ideal. As an ex-offender, living a life without empathy was one of the main reasons I never considered my consequences, repercussions and the feelings of other people. It is only after I found empathy, I decided that I no longer wanted to live a life of violence or crime. So, ask yourself, if offenders had empathy on their conscience would they want to commit crime?

Criminal justice system

Including offenders, most of the public have become afraid of our police forces. Many individuals in our communities have little respect for the police, making their jobs extremely difficult to do. Police officers are faced with abuse and threatening situations every day. It is unfair and unjust,

they are only doing their job and trying to keep our societies safe. On the other hand, excluding the small handful of amazing officers, there are several others who abuse their power by intimidating people. Some police officers are quite rude and inconsiderate, failing to listen to people's concerns with understanding. They must view people for people first rather than viewing everybody as a 'potential suspect'.

Both sides have forgotten that the police are *public servants*, designated to protect and serve the public. Bringing these two sides together at our annual community events, a common ground, will encourage them to speak *and listen*, as ordinary citizens. Understanding one another would help visualise things from an outside perspective, instead of viewing everything personally. This indirectly opens a door for empathy, helping build mutual respect and appreciation towards each other.

Leaving sentencing the way it is, in regard to legislations; I would recommend drafting a bill for discussion in relation to fair employment opportunities for ex-offenders. As a result of my criminal record, from my own experience, confidently I can say that I have been rejected over 100 times for jobs that I am more than qualified and capable of doing. If employers are not willing to give someone a chance based on their background, is that not discriminating? Furthermore, not giving ex-offenders the same employment opportunities will not help with their rehabilitation. No rehabilitation and no income are highly more likely to lead individuals back towards violence and reoffending.

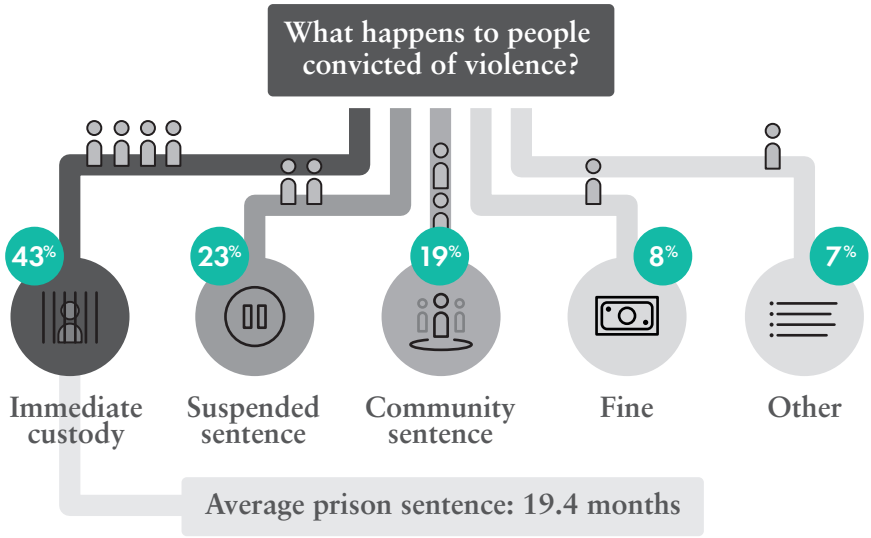
Employers

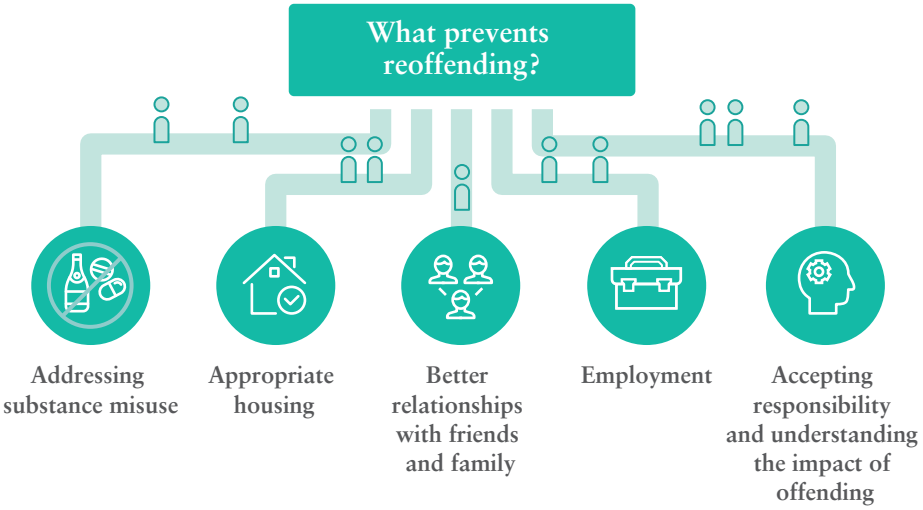
Last but not least, employers from private, public and government sectors need to be addressed about opportunities for ex-offenders. Previously mentioned in my last point, if they are not given chance to work and earn money, how else are they supposed to make a living without temptations of going back to crime? Violence being associated with crime, personally, I don't believe we would want to raise a family or children in a violent society, right? If an employer puts him/herself into the shoes of an ex-offender, they would have the ability to understand the struggles

concerning finances and employment. Everybody should be given a fair chance, include ex-service users.

In conclusion, I would like to add that being violent does not necessarily mean you have to be an ex-offender. Anybody can be violent at any time. When a person continuously presses your buttons, trying to provoke you, it is possible to be violent. You might be thinking "What difference does one person make?" Well, we all do. Every single person represents the community they live in. The impression that they give is a small cog in a bigger picture. Conversations and the impressions that we give as individuals to other people are all forms of networking and breaking down social stigma. Only with empathy, do we really stand a chance of making our communities less violent. So, I will end on this one question; "Would we want ourselves, our families or our loved ones to be subject to the violence we hear about or see on the news?" Just ask yourself.

How do we respond to violence?





Source: Figures are for 12 months ending March 2018 in England and Wales. Taken from Ministry of Justice Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly, table 5.13. Scottish Government (2015) What Works to Reduce Reoffending: A Summary of the Evidence

SECTION THREE
Responding to violence

STEPHEN WHITEHEAD

Of all the questions we encounter when we consider how to become a less violent society, perhaps the most contested is how we should respond to the perpetrators of violence. On the one hand, the understandable desire for the criminal justice system to respond meaningfully and proportionately to acts of violence can become the driving force for a populist call for 'tough' policing and punitive sentences. However, we can also take a compassionate perspective, recognising the history of trauma which often lies behind violence. Or we can respond to evidence, which points to the potential for prison and the stigma of a criminal past to impede the life changes like finding a job or forming healthy relationships which might help people move away from crime. But even when we focus on supporting perpetrators to change their behaviour, there are further questions about what actually works.

The essays in this section, sadly, do not contain any easy answers. But taken together, they at least offer insights that might shape the direction of our questioning. Our contributors have a diverse set of backgrounds – they are practitioners, artists, thinkers, and those with first-hand experience of violence – but they share a desire to tackle the problem of

violence in our society by addressing the experiences of people who perpetrate it.

Our opening essays tackle work with people who have committed, or are at risk of committing, some of the most complex and harmful forms of violence. Sara Kirkpatrick reflects on her career working on the issue of domestic abuse, and offers some insights into how we can help those who perpetrate such abuse change their behaviour. Then Tammy Banks lays out how the charity she leads, re:shape, has learned from its work with people at risk of committing sexual harm to develop a strategy for reducing the risk of harm across society.

Our next set of essays explore the practice of restorative justice (RJ) which brings offenders and victims together to explore the roots – and impacts – of crimes. Firstly, Crispian Strachan sets out the power of RJ, then Harriet Madeley shares the lessons she learned translating RJ into theatre. Finally Lucy Jaffé brings together the perspectives of two people who have taken part in RJ – one as a perpetrator, one as a victim – to explore how we can address the problem of violence.

The next pair of contributions look at society's ultimate sanction for people who commit violence: imprisonment. Marina Cantacuzino recounts work to help prisoners share and understand their stories while Trevor Urch describes how HMP Birmingham has sought to achieve a less violent environment by training prisoners to provide mental health care to their fellow inmates.

Next we discuss the role of the arts. Marian Liebmann shares her experiences with former child conscripts in Uganda, while Rebecca Friel talks about working with theatre to tackle violence in Manchester. Finally, the staff and residents of Katherine Price Hughes House Approved Premises share their artistic interpretations of the path to a less violent society.

Our last three essays offer three very different personal perspectives on how we move away from violence. First Hilary Peters and then Tim Snowdon share their understandings of how we can overcome the violence in ourselves. And then in our final piece, "John" shares his powerful

account of how he came to be caught up in violence, and his pathway out again – a route that took him through the prison systems of two countries.

As we formulate our responses to violence, and to the people who perpetrate it, we must not only consider what is effective, we must ask ourselves what we are seeking to achieve. Is it justice? Is it forgiveness? Is it change? The contributions we present here seem to suggest that we must begin by seeking some measure of understanding and then follow where that leads us.

THE SAFEST PLACE FOR PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE THE SCARIEST PLACE

INTERVIEW WITH SARA KIRKPATRICK
RESPECT, Services and Development Manager

As a young woman, I naively believed that if I joined 'the system' I could make it a better place. I had a fairly privileged and glossy perspective of how much change I could bring about in the world, just by being 'lovely'. I worked at the Benefits Agency for two years and I saw people dealing with a system that was hideous — people in distress put through an impersonal, hard to navigate, stressful process. In order to do that job, you couldn't just go to work and have your heart open to every client every day. So you have to harden or get out. Working there nearly broke me.

While working at the Benefits Agency, I was also a single parent. Life for me was somewhat easier than for others in that situation because of excellent parental support and at that time I really didn't have much awareness of domestic violence and abuse as a social issue. But I would watch my friends as well as people coming through the Agency, many of them teenage mums. A good number of them were in extremely abusive relationships and they were often left quite literally holding the baby. At the time, I don't think I drew the dots between them: they were isolated, individual cases, and did not seem to add up to a bigger picture.

Then, through luck and fortune, I started working at a woman's refuge. The refuge was populated by women who were doing the best that they could but they were being demonised for it. At the time, being a single mum in the 1980s, we were front page news, we were the scourge of the earth. It was only then that I started to recognise that these people I knew and saw at work weren't just individual cases but also represented a wider pattern, of people whose lives were being shaped and thwarted by a narrative that branded them as undeserving scum who aren't trying hard enough. And these brave, resilient women were not only being demeaned but left responsible, while the people who were acting wholly inappropriately toward them were receiving absolutely no commentary on their lives. I saw then, and still see, not nearly enough effort being put into challenging men to become accountable responsible men, to see that being good fathers and gender equality are not only entirely compatible but reinforce each other.

As I moved to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse and violence, my goal became to challenge and change the choice to use abusive behaviour. Having seen the influence of a negative, twisted narrative around single mums, I saw how it reflected and transmitted a worldview but also shaped societal norms around a particular group. So, having had that experience, I think I was more attuned to the damage done by a similar lazy and dangerous narrative around perpetrators – that is, perpetrators are a small, wicked, 'other' minority.

If you accept that narrative, it leads to a simple view of the world. They are them and we are us. They are bad, unable to change, born that way. This means that we should catch them, convict them and imprison them. It implies we should strive for a system that works with 100% efficiency to identify them all, isolate them all and remove all of them from our society. And, practically, given the scale of domestic abuse in the country, the logical consequence of that narrative means more prisons, longer sentences, more criminal records, more people removed from the labour market, less economic growth.

That is one way to look at it. But I don't believe that view of the world is right. I believe that view is not only simplistic but profoundly wrong. I

don't believe in its moral pessimism about people's ability to change. Perhaps most importantly, a narrative which treats a small section of people as 'other' than 'us' is cowardly. Cowardly because it helps people avoid the harder reality we have to face up to, which is that perpetrator behaviour is the consequence of certain contradictory factors in our society.

For example, I don't believe that people obey the law merely for fear of a sanction. I believe we obey the law primarily because we believe in the legitimacy of those boundaries and believe we are bound by a common set of beliefs about what is the right way to behave. When people use violence in a relationship, it's not because they don't fear getting caught and 'breaking the law'. Indeed many of those who use abuse in their relationships will never be identified, brought before the criminal justice system. Violence is a single symptom of what is often a pattern of a wider range of behaviours many of which are less easily recognised and most of which are less stigmatised and sanctioned. It's because of the legitimised gendered roles and identities that individuals are expected to play, plus the narrow but comfortable view that presents perpetrators the small evil minority mentioned previously. In particular, oppressive behaviour is supported and accepted from the patriarchal, hierarchical privilege laden culture we currently live within.

All of which is a fancy way of saying that the violent and abusive behaviour does not happen because some people are born wicked, and violent behaviour does not happen in a single social stratum, but because of complex factors that could in theory, and do in reality, act and operate on many people in our society. The truth of this view is totally the opposite of that 'othering' narrative. Perpetrators are people like us.

Once you accept that hard truth, I believe that morality requires us to take responsibility for building stronger families, in all their many shapes, in our society. I mean real moral responsibility, rather than mouthing the words of moral outrage. It means abandoning the media and politicians' fairy tale idea that there are perfect innocent victims on one side and evil and wicked perpetrators on the other. It means actually working with the realities we encounter on the street to make families in this country

stronger and not just pretend that we care about doing that for the sake of an attractive slogan. It means abusive and oppressive behaviour should be identified wherever is exists and seen as the fundamental problem of which physical violence itself is a single symptom. But it must also mean challenging abusive and oppressive social narratives as well as individuals within the society.

Fundamentally, families and homes should be the safest place in society but, for many people, they are a war zone. My job is to ensure that what should be the safest place for people, their homes, is not the scariest place they know. In order to make our families stronger, the work I do (both inside and outside of the criminal justice system) with those who do use violence and abuse in their relationships means challenging their behaviour and helping them realise that they have the capacity to act and behave differently, for themselves, for their families and for the good of society. That does not mean that sometimes, the best thing for the victim, for their family and for society isn't that some people go to prison. The state needs to rightly make clear that violence is not ok. Sometimes that has to mean prison. But even then, the state is hypocritical if, in applying its legitimate authority, it indulges in violence itself, prizing punishment over rehabilitation.

In doing my work, my aim is to ensure that families are made stronger, that families are little units where people are raised happily, where people feel safe, families that are equal and blended, and in which abuse, oppression and violence play no role. If we can do that, those stronger families, one by one, can send ripples out into society, helping build a more egalitarian and less violent society for all.

No more victims

AN INTERVIEW WITH TAMMY BANKS
CEO of re:shape

How did you come to work on the issue of sexual harm? Tell me your background.

I came to re:shape four and a half years ago but I've always worked with marginalised people. Their experiences are personal to me – I experienced a variety of abuse in my childhood. I don't have early qualifications as I left school at 15, and was living on the streets. But with the help of an amazingly kind and supportive college teacher, I returned to education, and even managed to secure a place at university to study psychology though I had no GCSEs. I supported myself through my studies by working with young people in residential care.

From there, I went on to working in a secure unit and then a prison, while I studied for a postgraduate course in forensic psychology. My experiences left me passionate about three issues: homelessness, young people and sexual abuse. Working at re:shape, I touch on all of those things.

Tell me about the problems that re:shape is seeking to solve.

re:shape's mission is simple: "no more victims". That means we're dedicated to preventing sexual abuse in any way that we can. We work with people who have caused harm in the past, people who are at risk of causing harm, and the wider community.

When I started in this job, not many people were thinking about sexual crime. Either it was just not spoken about, or people came in with a very straightforward negative viewpoint. If you said you were working with offenders, you'd get a strong negative reaction.

Since then, high profile cases and media coverage have really shone a light on the issue. But there are still stereotypes. Just like before, people still think about an old man with a mac in a bush, but they might also imagine a gang of Asian men, or an older man in a powerful position. We work to help people understand the range of people that might cause sexual harm and ways it might happen. If people in the community know the reality of sexual harm, they have the power to prevent it in many cases.

How has re:shape's work developed?

When I started working at re:shape, it was called Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire Circles of Support and Accountability (YHLCOSA). Circles are a community response to preventing reoffending. A way of providing support and accountability for people at high risk of causing sexual harm. People coming out of prison are given a team of four volunteers who work together to help them reintegrate into the community. There's a lot of evidence that loneliness and isolation increase risk of reoffending. Circles are overseen by Circles UK and there are 16 Circles projects delivering Circles across the UK.

When sexual abuse began to get more media coverage, re:shape (then still known as YHLCOSA) started getting calls from all kinds of people: GPs, teachers, psychologists, parents, even people concerned about their own behaviour. They would come to us and say, "We've got a problem and you're the only organisation in our area that works with these concerning behaviours. Please help!"

But we were only funded to work with the highest risk offenders so we had to turn them away. This concerned me as there was no place to refer the people requesting support. As our mission is "no more victims" I asked Trustees if we could explore further what the community feels would help reduce victims. This was the beginning of re:shape, an organisation with a much broader way of working.

Circles remain the key to our work. They are a key source of learning and an important way to prevent harm. And there's a need for more resources to do that work. But even if I had the resources to set up Circles for a million people, they aren't right for everyone. They are very intensive – they are a way of creating a new support network for the lonely and isolated. Of course, we need more funding for Circles, but we also need other approaches for other kinds of people. So we set out to learn and expand. We looked to the many brilliant organisations working with people with complex needs: providing support like appropriate housing and effective substance misuse treatment which can genuinely reduce the risk of reoffending. We talked to statutory services and the wider community and asked where the gaps are. What services do they need us to be able to provide.

How does re:shape support people at risk of causing sexual harm?

These days re:shape works with anyone who has caused or is at risk of causing sexual harm. The people that we work with – are diverse. Whenever people hear the words 'sex offender' or 'sexual harm', often they have an unconscious bias. That they are all manipulative, sadistic, even psychopathic. But only a tiny minority fit that category. Twenty-seven per cent of sexual crimes in 2017 were perpetrated by children on children! Being at risk of causing sexual harm is often tied up with real, complex needs: people at risk may have learning difficulties, may struggle to form relationships with people their own age, may have experienced adverse childhood experiences. None of this is an excuse, but if we look beyond stereotypes, it does offer a lens which we can use to recognise and address risk.

If someone's asking for support to not cause a victim, we should give it to them. Some will come to us before they cause harm, some will be referred

after they have committed an offence. All the people we work with are motivated NOT to offend.

The secret to our success is no secret at all. Our magic is absolutely the community. It's normal people making the difference. As humans we all want to belong, to be part of something. At re:shape we give our clients the opportunity to do that. We treat absolutely everyone as though they matter. We don't judge people based on the worst thing they've done. Instead, we follow the theory that everyone is seeking good lives and focus on their potential positive future. We recognise that things shape people's lives and that sometimes those shapes can have real negative impacts. But we broaden their horizons, show them that they're worth something. Our volunteers are all 'normal' people helping to make society safer.

What can we do to reduce sexual harm in society?

It's vital that we challenge our misconceptions about who a sexual offender is. I have children, I ask myself, "What am I doing as a parent to build their awareness and skills to make sure they don't become an abuser?" and so they can protect themselves from others, as much as possible. As a mum I also do some basic things to prevent opportunity.

In the four and a half years I've been doing this work, my kids have been growing up. My eldest daughter has been in situations that she's managed to get herself out of because of discussions we've had. Simple, age-appropriate discussions. Now she's challenging things she sees and hears. They have an age-appropriate understanding about what a difficult situation is, they know what's right and wrong, they know where to go. My aim is for my kids to grow up into teenagers and adults who can look after themselves and look after others.

We work with a variety of people; think about a man who has the intellectual ability of an eight-year-old, but has the physical ability and desires of a 40 year old. They can do serious harm from a lack of understanding. These are the stories we don't hear, these are the stories we can change! If people just read the *Daily Mail*, and only hear few

stereotypes of sexual abuse then they can't make informed decisions about how to prevent it.

It's great that people are talking about sexual harm more and more these days. People are having conversations now, inspired by *EastEnders*, by a tweet from a pop star. They're starting to realise that it's not all stranger danger. Those conversations will prevent sexual abuse. But there's still far too many stereotypes and not enough understanding.

So how do we respond to that?

You and I, with and without our work hats on, are the response. We're what will make the difference. It's like the old saying: "it takes a village to raise a child". It takes everyone. Statutory services and charities can't be the only ones to respond to these issues; it's not realistic and won't change the landscape of sexual abuse. For three years re:shape has been working with the business community. We help them to think about their role in preventing abuse, we have developed a toolkit to help organisations recognise and respond effectively to sexual misconduct in the workplace, a confidential reporting line and tools to change the culture and understanding of abuse. This alone will prevent abuse, but in addition all the fees are used to deliver more interventions.

Prevention is the responsibility of all of us all the time. Not just when we are at work.

For instance, on a personal level, I'm a member of so many communities: I'm a brownie leader, a school governor, I'm a mum, I'm on Facebook. The language I use in those communities can change the conversation. So we're asking people to make personal pledges to make a difference. Maybe they will pledge to have a conversation with their children, with their friends. Maybe they will pledge to challenge stereotypes about sexual harm when we see them on social media. We want to encourage conversations, empower people and help them to see that they can make a difference, and prevent sexual harm.

Everybody is passionate about trying to make sure there are no more victims. If we work together, recognise our power as an individual and collectively, we have a real chance of making significant change for the future of our children.

If you are interested in becoming a member of re:shape, interested in volunteering or need help and support please visit www.re-shape.org.uk

The restorative approach to reducing violence and healing victims

CRISPIAN STRACHAN CBE QPM

British crime statistics are always a subject of intense media debate, and this is not helped by the fairly frequent changes of statistical rules at government level as to what is, and is not, a violent crime. Who would guess from the media furore that crimes of 'violence' without injury (including some cases of obstructing the police, and some of harassment of one person by another) are greater in number than those which involve injury? Or that both are at about half the numbers recorded only ten years or so ago?

Nevertheless, violence retains its power to shock, and no one is more shocked than a victim of violence, who may go on to suffer post-traumatic stress or a feeling of self-blame. It is worthy of considerable effort to reduce violence still further, both for those who offend and for their victims. The reporting of violence reflects, apart from media emphasis, the abhorrence in which we all hold uninvited and unwelcome interference with ourselves.

Many people working towards a less violent society have invested considerable effort to adopt a more restorative approach to justice. It has

become evident,[88] that there are many meanings of restorative justice in play today. It can be at a low level, bringing disputants in a community together for a chat; it can be at the slightly more formal level of a caution or warning from a criminal justice agency; or it can be conducted formally, with prior consent from both parties, at a formal meeting which a victim and offender attend with appropriate supporters, and an agreed restorative outcome.

Yet, despite this diversity, which, incidentally, is a strength rather than an issue, the Restorative Justice Council defines restorative approaches as: "… processes which bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward."

This is very much the approach practised by Restorative Solutions CIC, a not-for-profit company which has worked in this field for over ten years. Note the phrase "those harmed by crime or conflict"; we believe that restorative approaches, of which restorative *justice* is a significant part, have the capacity to heal much besides the traditional definition of a crime, offender and victim.

Meticulous academic research has shown, time and again, the benefits of restorative approaches. Professor Lawrence Sherman and Dr Heather Strang of Cambridge University stated in a 2007 paper: "…rigorous tests of RJ (Restorative Justice) in diverse samples have found substantial reductions in repeat offending for both violent and property crime… In general, RJ seems to reduce crime more effectively with more, rather than less, serious crimes. Victims benefit, on average, from face-to-face RJ conferences. …There is far more evidence on RJ, with more positive results, than there has been for most innovations in criminal justice that have ever been rolled out across the country."[89] Their evidence is drawn from studies

[88] See, for example, Joint Criminal Justice Inspectorates (2012) *Facing Up To Offending: Use of restorative justice in the criminal justice system*.

[89] Heather Strang and Lawrence W. Sherman (2007) *Restorative Justice: The Evidence* (London: The Smith Institute).

as far apart as Australia and the USA, as well as London, Thames Valley and Northumbria in the UK. That report is summarised in the Campbell Collaboration, a library of systematic research, and goes on to say: "Compared with standard criminal justice, usually through the courts, face-to-face RJCs (Restorative Justice Conferences) reduce the frequency of subsequent crimes among offenders…The effects of face-to-face RJCs on the frequency of subsequent offending are strongest when these programmes are in addition to conventional justice procedures."[90]

The House of Commons Justice Select Committee looked at RJ in July 2016 and concluded that, whilst its application is patchy at present, there should be increased compliance with its principles, an entitlement under the Victims' Code to an offer of RJ for all victims, and better data sharing to facilitate these.[91] They also expressed interest in RJ being developed for domestic abuse, a thorny subject, and in general being better measured in spending outcomes from Police and Crime Commissioners' victim support services.

All in all, it is obvious that RJ is not an easy or soft option, requiring both the victim and the offender to consent to the process and to face up to their own demons and the impact of crime on others. Victims show greater satisfaction with criminal justice processes after RJ and offenders' future crime is reduced, all in a cost-effective way[92] which can save as much as £8 in criminal justice costs for every £1 expended on RJ procedures. The key is in proper selection of cases, full understanding by the participants, and careful conferencing to achieve the desired ends.

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[90] Strang et al. (2013) Restorative Justice Conferencing (RJC) *Using Face-to-Face Meetings of Offenders and Victims: Effects on Offender Recidivism and Victim Satisfaction. A Systematic Review* (Oslo: The Campbell Collaboration).

[91] House of Commons Justice Committee (2016) *Restorative Justice: Fourth Report of Session 2016–17.*

Their concerns about data sharing could surely be tackled by the better definition and use of sections 17A and 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, sorely neglected since its implementation.

[92] Joanna Shapland et al. (2008) *Does restorative justice affect reconviction? The fourth report from the evaluation of three schemes* (London: Ministry of Justice).

A particular aspect of the restorative approach which is worth looking at as a different and difficult application of skills is the resolution of disputes in prisons, including violence, and addressing issues both with staff and prisoners. This is not an easy area, and one of which most of us know nothing and want to know little more; we rather trust to prisons to lock away offenders. But David Gauke, MP and Secretary of State for Justice, said in a recent major interview in *The Times*: "I believe there is public acceptance that we need to ensure prisons are places where we can turn people's lives around … We need to focus on the corruption, make sure violence is dealt with and disrupt gangs; but prisoners must see there is a purpose for them."

Restorative Solutions CIC has been running restorative approaches in three prisons (two at present) since 2016. HM Inspectorate of Prisons has commented favourably on the work in September 2017 with comments such as: "Hearings were fair, women understood the process and could participate fully. The use of restorative justice approaches in adjudications was positive." An external evaluation by Helen Fair and Jessica Jacobson for the Institute for Criminal Policy Research said: "These prisons have proved that, with commitment, leadership and clear lines of accountability, it is possible to use RA (restorative approaches) to deal, both formally and informally, with a wide variety of conflicts. … The full evaluation report includes a number of case studies, most of which provide vivid examples of situations in which the RA has effectively brought 'harmers' and 'harmed' together, not only to explore how their conflict arose and what impact it had on them and others, but how to live and work together more peaceably in future." Or, as one inmate put it, "I will use restorative approaches in every relationship for the rest of my life."

The approach by Restorative Solutions CIC was set out in prisons as: "… bring people in conflict into a dialogue. Using a skilled and structured process, those who have been harmed have an opportunity to be heard and those that have caused the harm are held to account for what they have done."

This is true of so much that we do and only the context varies. Wider application of restorative approaches can be used to head off violence and

resolve conflicts in housing (neighbour disputes), health, education and even to forestall or simplify complex complaint and dispute procedures. To listen, to talk, to explain, to understand, to apologise and to move on: these are the keys of restorative approaches and the lessening of violence and pain in so many ways. Give it a go; you never know what might happen but it will be good.

The Listening Room

Restorative justice as theatre

HARRIET MADELEY

While researching for *The Listening Room*, our play about restorative justice, I was struck by the way that the process facilitated opportunities for understanding between victims and offenders – and the impact it was therefore capable of having on violence reduction. The process, built as it is on the act of one person speaking about their experience and the other listening in a fixed space, is not dissimilar to theatre: we sit, we listen, and therefore we hope to understand each other better. In theatre there is a mutual appreciation established by the presence of the other side – the fact that they have made the journey to this space says, 'I believe I can understand better than I do, and I would like to'. Of course people choose to participate in restorative justice for many different reasons: some may purely wish to express their pain or to look the other person in the eye; regardless, the decision to participate in the process points to a belief in the power of human contact and communication. In order to become a less violent society, it goes without saying that we need to understand each other better, and I believe theatre and restorative justice can both play powerful roles in this process.

I was immediately excited by the fusion of the two processes, although I didn't know much about restorative justice and I imagined I'd speak to

people who had found it helpful to varying degrees. Part of me wanted to find cases that had gone 'badly' and juxtapose these with stories that had gone 'well', therein finding complexity. The reality was I didn't speak to anybody who had had a negative experience and by the end I didn't feel I'd needed to, because (as should perhaps have been obvious) the 'success stories' were hardly fairy tales. Ray and Vi Donovan will continue to live the pain of the loss of their son every day of their lives, regardless of the solace they are able to find in communication with the offenders: Ray insists that while the process helps, "we all get angry. It's just hard work sometimes". And although Jacob Dunne has transformed his life largely as a consequence of meeting his victim's parents, he is now all the more keenly aware of the destructive impact of his actions: speaking of his victim, he says, "When he becomes real – it kind of – has a weird effect on you. His name was James. He was a trainee paramedic and he was like – a good person."

But the idea that stripping back the distancing processes of the court and prison systems and bringing victim and offender together can have a positive impact on reoffending – and therefore a positive role to play in the formation of a less violent society – remains an extraordinary reality. Many of the victims I interviewed felt sidelined by the court system and unheard; many of the offenders felt dehumanised by the prison system and doubted their victims would want to hear from them. If the process is humanised and people are allowed to speak; if they are brought closer to one another in a trusting environment that facilitates listening, it seems to me that defences lift and the possibility of real change emerges. More often than not we don't harm one another because we hate one another but because the impulse that drives us to inflict harm is stronger than our awareness of the other person's experience. This becomes infinitely more difficult once we're met face to face with that experience.

The Listening Room developed into an in-depth retelling and weaving together of three narratives; one from the perspective of victims of crime Ray and Vi Donovan, one from offender Jacob Dunne and one in which we hear both sides. I should point out that I use 'victim' and 'offender' for the sake of clarifying the structure: this is certainly no longer how these

people would define themselves. The play is entirely interview based and the 'characters' speak to the audience directly, moving from descriptions of the crimes and their immediate impact into their decisions to meet the person on the other side of their crime, and culminating in accounts of the meetings themselves. Each interviewee has come to watch the piece in its various iterations and continued to be closely involved in it, which has infinitely enhanced its impact.

The story told from both sides was Khamran and Tim's. They both attended and spoke at the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance conference where we performed the piece in December 2017, and through this process I've got to know them both well. They have a clear fondness for each other: Tim is keen for Khamran to be seen as more than an offender who is defined by a single action; Khamran clearly sees Tim as more than a person he harmed and as a real source of inspiration. Although Khamran made the decision to atone for his actions and reassess his life while in prison, it was Tim's openness and generosity towards him in their restorative justice meeting that enabled him to shift his perspective. In his interview he says: "If I hadn't met Tim … my life wouldn't be going the way it is now." Of course this relationship may not have been possible if the impact had been greater – for Jacob, his crime weighs infinitely heavier because someone lost their life.

The theatre I make with Crowded Room always develops from personal testimony and we find that drawing attention to the real sources of words that are spoken enriches their power: when an audience is aware of the reality of what they're watching, they seem to pay attention in a different way. Here Mark Knightley and I worked closely with director Max Barton to build transparency into the design and execution of the piece using a process called recorded delivery, in which actors listen to headphones throughout the performance and repeat what they hear. The play began with random casting: the audience would hand out envelopes to actors that would dictate who they played that night. Once actors had been assigned a character, they would take a pair of headphones and begin listening to their interview, turning the play into an authentic live listening experience in which the common humanity – and potential for

understanding – between actors, audience and interviewees was acknowledged.

The potential for theatre to play an active role in improving society is only fully reached when theatre moves beyond its usual audiences. After its first run at the Islington theatre the Old Red Lion we moved the play to Stratford and made great efforts to engage young local audiences, and we have since taken it to prisons, psychiatric hospitals and youth offending institutions across the South of England. In these settings we have often facilitated workshops prior to the show in which participants listen to the stories through headphones and repeat them. The process is designed to give people a more intimate and embodied experience of the narratives and an opportunity for expression through performance. We also run a lot of post-show discussions and we see these as an integral part of our work, enabling the audience to ask questions and offer their own perspectives, creating the genuine dialogue that the action of the play itself depends upon.

The power of theatre depends upon the human ability to empathise. When we listen to people in the theatre, we live through them; putting ourselves in their shoes, feeling their pain, their frustration, their love, their joy, their sadness. Restorative justice puts faith in the ability for empathy within the context of some of the most violent pain and discord imaginable, and when we see how it can work, we understand what human beings are capable of when they communicate effectively. This leads me to believe that careful facilitation of communication between affected communities is a vital element in our movement towards a less violent society.

Restorative justice

Addressing violence in society

BY PETER WOOLF AND PAUL KOHLER
INTRODUCED AND EDITED BY LUCY JAFFÉ
Director of Why me? Victims for Restorative Justice

This chapter brings the views of a victim of crime and a perpetrator together in one place. Peter committed criminal acts from a young age and spent 18 years in and out of prison. In 2014 Paul's home was attacked by four men who held his wife hostage and only left when his terrified daughter, who was hiding under the bed, telephoned the police. What binds them together, are their individual and transformative experiences of restorative justice. They reflect on their life experiences and consider how restorative justice offers an insight into how to make society less violent.

Restorative justice (RJ) is a voluntary process of communication involving the person who has suffered harm and the person who has caused harm. Trained facilitators work with victims and offenders to support them to talk about what happened, who was affected and how, and what can be done to help repair the harm.

Peter's view

As a child growing up in what, today, would be described as a dysfunctional family, I would often witness acts of cowardly violence toward the women of the family; it was normal. The violence was not confined to the `home', it seemed that certain areas built entire reputations purely on savagery and unprovoked act of violence. Historically, there have always been the so-called 'underworld' of civilised societies. In years gone by, the urban myth was that the violence these folk delivered was confined to 'their own type of people', which somehow seemed to justify the barbarity.

As gun and knife crime rises, life, it seems, has become less valuable. What has happened to change the way our society works? The answer probably lies at the doorstep of the breakdown of the family unit. At a recent prison workshop I facilitated involving both staff and residents, I was shocked at the social divide. An exercise designed to encourage reflection highlighted a gulf between residents (inmates) and staff: 100% of the residents came from a home where no father had been available, whereas, 100% of the staff came from the conventional two parent family. Eighty per cent of the inmates attending the workshop had witnessed or experienced violence from their mother's new 'partners'. Furthermore, 100% of the residents felt that violence was an acceptable action in their daily lives.

So, how can we initiate change?

For me, change was initiated with my introduction to the restorative justice process. Until that time I had been one of the people that felt violence or harm of any kind – physical, emotional or psychological – was just part of life. I had grown up in an environment where to show any weakness was to show vulnerability.

I was deemed a no-hoper. I had been entrenched in crime, drugs and alcohol for over 30 years, 18 of which I spent actually locked up in prisons and institutions. I had registered 27 pages of A4 of previous convictions. I myself thought I would probably die in gaol. After all, I was a `Bad man'. I had always been told I was bad, so, I always acted bad. Had I been a dog, or another animal, I would have been put down.

Random acts of kindness, a sudden show of compassion, being listened to, were all the ingredients that made up that 90-minute restorative justice meeting. The support and guidance that followed, along with a new-found passion for education are what has steered me clear of crime, enabled me to remain drug and alcohol-free for the past 16 years. Good support has been absolutely necessary in my recovery.

* * *

I have worked with some very damaged men over the last decade, all of whom have needed real core issues addressed. I was very successful in working restoratively with a group in Thames Valley who were labelled prolific, priority offenders (PPOs). After 12 months the reoffending rate had dropped by 48% because they started to realise the harm they had caused their victims – direct and indirect. Similar results were achieved when working with similar PPO groups in London. Both projects ended when their funding was discontinued.

My workshops and 1-2-1 work were a direct result of the restorative studies I have undertaken since the restorative justice meeting I had in 2002 with Mr Will Riley and other victims. My thinking is that as the process had impacted on me so greatly, why wouldn't it do the same with other people?

I believe that going into our schools would be an excellent starting point to address violence in society. I'm not talking about delivering the occasional workshop or talk, I'm talking some real intense work, work with continuity, work delivered by people that have experience in the damage that is done by violence and crime.

Prisons are the obvious place one would think for beginning the journey in making our society a less violent place, but it goes deeper than that, violence has embedded itself into our society. Families are the place to look, schools are the place to look, colleges and universities.

I did not care about myself when I walked into that restorative justice meeting 16 years ago. However, I left that meeting feeling that someone cared for me! Since then, all those involved have continued to care about each other, and it has been my journey ever since to pass this message on.

Paul's view

How can we make our society less violent? It's a simple enough question but one without an easy answer. All I know for certain is that it feels like our society is becoming increasingly violent.

There are so many forms of violence, of course, and each will have a different angle from which we need to approach it. However, ultimately violence is harm, harm is conflict, and conflict can be resolved via dialogue.

For me, a restorative approach has a big, largely untapped, role to play in facilitating such a discourse. From personal experience I know that the use of restorative justice is, in most cases, a very positive experience. But at whom should it be aimed?

The victim and the perpetrator of any act of violence would seem the obvious starting point, but that's far too simplistic. An act of violence, whether physical, emotional or psychological usually affects more people than just the direct victim and harmer. Usually there are other indirect victims, such as neighbours, or the wider community. The effect of a crime goes beyond the immediate victims; it also has an impact on family members, friends, colleagues and communities. Relatives and friends often find it difficult to cope with the aftermath of the incident, as they are worried about the victim's safety and feel more vulnerable themselves.[93] A face-to-face meeting involving harmed and harmer, victim and offender, will meet the needs of the directly affected individuals: but what about the nameless, faceless victims? In our society it seems that indirect victimhood is often overlooked.

I believe that for us to have any impact, to find a solution to create a less violent society we need to involve whole communities; after all it is the community that suffers the pain. It consequently seems obvious to me that communities should have an input into how we resolve the issues that underpin violence.

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[93] Joanna Shapland and Matthew Hall (2007) 'What Do We Know About the Effects of Crime on Victims?' in *International Review of Victimology* 14(2).

Violence is a form of negative communication, so, if we can engage in positive dialogue, involving not only harmed and harmer but the wider community as well, there would be a far better chance of better resolving the conflict that caused the violence.

So, how can we make our society less violent? Probably through education, definitely through care and understanding, and, most critically, with love. I don't have all the answers; however, I feel it is a shared problem that needs a shared set of answers. Answers like strength in numbers, community involvement, reintegration, and more cooperation from all of those involved, ranging from police, public, agencies and most of all, the communities of which every one of them, and us, is a part.

Much more information about restorative justice, how it works and the landscape in which it is being delivered can be found on the Why me? Victims for Restorative Justice website: www.why-me.org.

The poison and the antidote

MARINA CANTACUZINO
Founder of The Forgiveness Project

There is an expression "the poison and the antidote is brewed in the same vat". It is an analogy that perfectly sums up the ethos behind The Forgiveness Project's work in prisons. We start from the premise that violent offenders who have successfully rejected violence are those most likely to help others do the same. No amount of top-down instruction from professional trainers has the same impact as hearing real, lived experience told with authenticity and vulnerability, and without judgement. The way in which a story is told is key. If you include too many motivational techniques, or tones of rebuke, contempt or even self-pity you will create resistance and opposition rather than engagement. Similarly, tell a story which glorifies hate and violence and it will only amplify hate and violence.

The Forgiveness Project's prison programme is called RESTORE. It works with what we call reconciling stories or *restorative narratives*: stories which help shift the narrative from despair to finding meaning, from demonisation to understanding, or from violence to peacebuilding. These are stories that are rooted in enquiry rather than argument, that don't necessarily end happily but touch on themes of survival, hope and recovery; stories that show how individuals and communities can rebuild and recover after periods of violence and disruption; that showcase content that acts as a force for good in society.

RESTORE is an intensive group-based process which The Forgiveness Project has been delivering in prisons in England and Wales since 2008. It is co-facilitated by both a victim of crime and an ex-offender. Using the power of their own personal stories to encourage hope, responsibility and agency, these storyteller facilitators help prisoners change the narrative of their lives.

Prisoners can often be an angry group of people – angry at society, angry at authority, angry at the people who have hurt them in their childhood, and even angry at their victims who some perceive as being to blame for putting them in prison in the first place. We work with this anger by first and foremost asking prisoners to listen to the stories of a victim/survivor and then an ex-offender. Both are role models for change.

These stories, told live, provide the opportunity for prisoners to address the harm they have caused to others, as well as exploring the relationship between themselves as victims and the victims of their crimes. Encouraged by hearing victims' stories, prisoners become invested in someone else's life and are encouraged to share their own narratives. In a place of brokenness, real connections are made and fixed beliefs start to shift.

One reason why reoffending rates remain persistently high, and the nature of reoffending doesn't change all that much, is because often offenders have little comprehension of the impact of their actions on others. Once prisoners are able to understand the harm they have done, it becomes much more difficult to continue hurting others. Thus, considering the narratives of both is the first step in building empathy and responsible thinking.

The Forgiveness Project storytellers share their stories not only in prisons but through our education resources, in our F Word exhibition (seen in 14 countries to 70,000 people round the world), in publications, and at events, conferences and community initiatives. Bearing witness to such stories can change perspectives, while telling your story to help others can put meaning back into the lives of both victims and former perpetrators. One of our storytellers Assaad Chaftari[94] who was formerly a commander in the

[94] The Forgiveness Project (2018) https://www.theforgivenessproject.com/assaad-emile-

Christian militia during the Lebanese civil war (responsible for deciding which prisoners should live and which should die) says: "I would venture into the jaws of hell if my story could shift just one person's mind and move them away from violence."

The brother of David Haines, the British aid worker who was beheaded by ISIS in 2014, has since travelled the world spreading a message of unity, tolerance and understanding. Mike Haines'[95] message is unwavering: "I now spend my time going to schools, mosques and churches telling my story and talking about fighting the forces of hate, whether from Islamic fundamentalists or right-wing extremists. I'm not talking about fighting with weapons. This has got to be an ethical and moral fight."

How can modelling change through a single personal narrative change lives and move someone away from violence? We believe it's because storytelling is a powerful tool for which the human brain is hardwired. Stories stick whereas facts fade. Personal narratives awaken the imagination, allowing us to step out of our own shoes and see things from the point of view of others. As Yuval Harari spells out in his best-selling book *Sapiens*[96] – it isn't the size of our brains that has allowed humans to dominate the earth but our ability to tell stories.

The stories we tell today help create the world we live in tomorrow. So The Forgiveness Project's core purpose is to influence the dominant narrative of our times, nudging it away from focusing on violence, division and demonisation towards humanising stories of empathy, reconciliation and peace-building. The healing process is to pass from the narration of an offence as hurt feelings to the narration of an offence as an experience of significance.

Stories can reach across the divides of gender, race, creed, even the rifts of enemies. This in turn builds collaboration and connection, and helps us

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chaftari [Accessed on 8 August 2018].

[95] The Forgiveness Project (2018) https://www.theforgivenessproject.com/mike-haines [Accessed on 8 August 2018].

[96] Harari, Yuval N. (2015) *Sapiens: a brief history of humankind* (New York: Harper).

overcome differences or defences. Indeed storytelling is an extraordinary tool to open the heart and help individuals move away from violence. It can also be applied in reconciling hostile communities because sharing stories of harm allows people from opposite sides to understand that pain is the same whoever and wherever you are.

The question remains – how do we reach black-and-white thinkers intent on causing violence to those who don't share the same views or values? In 2011, at a Google Ideas summit in Dublin set up to look at ways of countering violent extremism and gang culture, some of our storytellers went along to share their stories. In the room was a potent blend of former jihadists, former inner-city gang members and former right-wing extremists, together with a number of survivors from international terrorist attacks. The question everyone was asking was, would this gathering be an inflammatory device likely to push people further apart, or would it create a melting pot of shared ideals?

The goal was to look for commonality – not in ideology but in raw human experience expressed through storytelling. It emerged that what many of the 'formers' shared was a history of emotional abuse leading to emotional detachment, the search for identity within the group, followed by the ruthless pursuit of power through violence. Arno Michaelis,[97] once deeply embedded in the white power movement in America, succinctly summed up what others recognised: "the more violence and hatred I put into the world, the more the world gave it back to me, which of course only further validated all my paranoia and conspiracy theories."

The same was true for the former Islamic extremists, though most cited a single political event that had moved their lives towards violence. The route out of violence for many 'formers' also revealed patterns, with most eventually feeling dehumanised by their actions. Often the enemy came more from within their own groups, born out of jealousies and the fight for position, than from those who held opposing views, or belonged to rival gangs. Many told how they eventually slid quietly over time out of

[97] The Forgiveness Project (2018) https://www.theforgivenessproject.com/arno-michaelis [Accessed on 8 August 2018].

their movements, moving neighborhoods, sometimes countries; while others said they left the movement overnight in one bold and risky gesture.

Today this network of individuals operating together, separately or through organisations like The Forgiveness Project, still tirelessly work to counter violent extremism, armed not with guns or bombs, but with knowledge, respect and their own personal stories. Ultimately they recognise that those who once embraced violence as a means to an end are undoubtedly the best people to defeat it.

Marina Cantacuzino is the Founder of The Forgiveness Project, a secular organisation which collects and shares stories from individuals who have rebuilt their lives following hurt and trauma. They provide resources and experiences to examine peaceful solutions to conflict and to help people overcome their own unresolved grievances.

Service user innovation to build a less violent prison system

TREVOR URCH

In my work as a recovery and service user involvement manager at HMP Birmingham, I have seen really practical ways by which we can make our prisons less violent.

The population of HMP Birmingham, a Category B prison at full capacity, can number up to 1,450 individuals. As many people know, the nature and needs of a local remand prison is almost unique in its complexity. The transient nature of the population compounds difficulties in delivering continuity of care from a healthcare perspective. Inmates regularly stress that they see evidence of peer vulnerability and isolation on a daily basis in the prison. These concerns are compounded by the grip new psychoactive substances have taken within prisons, as the use of synthetic substances exacerbate pre-existing mental health symptoms.

In response to that nest of issues, a range of peer support workers and mentors often ask themselves the following question: "How do we become less violent?" Inmates were the driving force behind proposing and implementing the two separate interventions in the prison. These were the introduction of the Mental Health First Aid two-day adult training course and the imminent introduction of a mental health specific out-of-hours telephone support line.

Why, you may ask, these two interventions? Take the first, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). Typical everyday mental health crises within prison walls include suicidal thoughts and behaviour, panic attacks and self-harm, often caused by (possibly psychotic) effects from substance abuse, aggressive behaviour, and reactions to witnessing traumatic events. Yet, often prisoners are reluctant to declare their temporary loss of mental clarity, the stigma around mental health hinders sufferers from discussing their problems, and therefore seeking adequate treatment and much needed support.

Amongst other elements, MHFA teaches attendees how to offer and provide initial help, to a person experiencing a mental health issue, and guide them towards appropriate support. MHFA sees trained prisoners steer their peers towards help and develop coping strategies that lead to a reduction in impaired short-term judgement and impulsive actions. By spotting the warning signs and intervening earlier, everybody within our already challenging environment benefits. Being mindful enough to listen non-judgementally can help de-stress someone who may otherwise be bottling up tension. Mental health first aiders provide that moment of calm in the eye of the storm so badly needed by prisoners suffering with inner turmoil that inhibits their ability to function normally.

Or consider the second, the introduction of an out-of-hours mental health telephone support line. Inmates regularly highlight being banged up behind 'your door' in the evening as an especially vulnerable time. A time for dark thoughts to surface as people ruminate on a host of issues or concerns. This feedback, gathered from inmates, helped illustrate a gap in service provision, and was one that inmates proposed should be filled by the introduction of an out-of-hours mental health telephone support line.

The mental health support line and aftercare (to be implemented) will differ from the well-established and successful Listener/Samaritan service readily available in prisons, as there is a 'duty of care' in terms of responding to stated and presenting risks. The telephone helpline will be available for inmates and professionals for mental health support outside of normal business hours in the prison for 42 hours per week. The phone

line will be facilitated by a service provider. Individuals will be able to contact this service via a free phone number placed on their pin card. The service will operate between the hours of 6pm and 12am, 365 days a year. Individuals will gain a better insight into their mental health in terms of managing times of crisis and obtaining and maintaining good mental health. The service will provide advice on how individuals can take small steps in this restricted environment to help themselves and others on their personal recovery journeys.

These simple steps aim to provide advice and guidance on the signs and symptoms of mental health illness, equipping individuals with new coping strategies to alleviate stress and anxiety. The hope is this will lead to crisis de-escalation, working with people in direct crisis to minimise incidents of self-harm and suicide ideation. More than that, we hope it will increase signposting and brokerage, linking callers to a range of prison supports and local services prior to release.

These interventions are intrinsically linked to enable people to connect with each other, explore problems, develop ways of coping and plan for an individual's safety. More consideration for those with poor mental health will be a positive step in fixing the prison community, and building a more mentally healthy and less violent society overall.

Working with anger using art

MARIAN LIEBMANN

Anger is not the same as violence, but is often confused with it or is a precursor to violence. For 'violent people', there may be habits built up over years to cope with emotional stress. When we think of violence, we are usually thinking of physical harm perpetrated by one person on another. But there are many other kinds of violence – self-harm, injustice, institutional violence, poverty, inequality and many others. Most of these are caused by and result in anger.

Anger is a complex emotion, and therefore needs a complex response. It involves the mind, the body and behaviour. To be successful, anger management programmes need to include these three elements. First, the mind – helping people to identify the perceptions and interpretations that generate anger. Second, the body – teaching relaxation and cooling-down techniques to help people to calm down so that they can think about things (when people are at the height of their anger, they are so aroused that they cannot think at all). Third, behaviour – teaching new skills, e.g. assertiveness.

I started working on anger by co-facilitating groups for violent offenders on probation (run along cognitive behavioural lines). I also worked with individuals to explore their violent behaviour, what led up to it and how to develop alternative strategies of dealing with the situation that led up to it.

Later, in a community mental health team, a consultant psychiatrist asked, "Who can help me with all my angry clients?" In response, I developed a themed art therapy group on anger management. I did so because art therapy involves doing, thinking and feeling, as well as talking.

How to use art

In my experience, there are some crucial ways to use art as therapy. For example, at the start of a group, it is essential to ensure a group is introduced to each other and some ground rules are set. People are often frightened of their own and others' anger and possible violence and ground rules help them feel safe. Allowing for participants to introduce themselves using simple art materials, such as pencils, oil pastels and felt-tip pens helps set the right environment.

Or take an exercise we do about expressing what anger looks like. Participants are often amazed at the different forms that anger can take, when they look at others' pictures – it can be portrayed as an explosion, an outburst, a 'shut door', a spider's web, silence, and more. We try and find out what's underneath the anger, focusing on identifying the hurt, unmet needs and fears underlying anger. The exercises I developed provide a way forward in working out how to meet the unmet needs and deal with the fears.

I also use relaxation and guided imagery. For those struggling with anger, relaxation is an important skill to learn, and guided imagery introduces the idea of a mental 'safe place' to imagine in times of stress. This is followed up with a ten-minute relaxation at the end of each subsequent session, to embed the skill and provide a way of debriefing from any upsetting material in the session.

Using art in practice

Over the years, I have worked with people in groups and individually. I have worked in criminal justice and mental health settings, and have worked in Africa in the aftermath of war and violence. Many of those I have worked with find art strategies quite alien to them at first, but came to value them in helping to keep them out of trouble.

A few case studies stand out for me as illustrative of the power of art.

Don was a 16-year-old young man with mild learning disabilities, who had recently left a special-needs school and was attending a youth training scheme. He was often in trouble there, either hitting or threatening others. He was large and frequently asked to be the 'heavy' in other people's conflicts.

Don was fairly inarticulate verbally but enjoyed art, so we worked through his pictures, about 30 over the course of a year. He had a confused view of his violent father, so I suggested he drew a good and bad memory of him. His bad memory (see figure 1) shows his father drinking and beating Don up, with blood pouring out of Don's nose, mouth and chest. His family and school assumed he would grow up to be like his father, so we discussed how he could include the 'good bits' without the 'bad bits'. Three months later he proudly told me he had achieved an incident-free week and had walked away from a potentially violent situation (see figure 2). Doing the picture seemed to consolidate his new belief that he could change.

Figure 1 Bad memory of father

Figure 2 Walking away from violence

Or take Steve. Steve was in his early thirties and suffered from depression, but also had long-standing problems with alcohol and anger. He had served several prison sentences for violence, and was rather skeptical about art therapy, but saw that he needed to do something about his anger. He explained, "I totally overreact and flip most of the time. I'm on my guard all the time. I'd like to be able to put my point across without being aggressive and violent, and handle wrong looks and bad-mouthing with different strategies."

Two of his pictures illustrate this (see figures 3 and 4). Figure 3 shows various implements of violence and figure 4 shows Steve in prison, cut off from his partner and son. Clearly he needed to 'uncouple' anger from violence and crime, if he was going to have a chance of a non-violent and crime-free life. He completed the group, acknowledging that it had (surprisingly) kept him out of trouble.

His picture of 'the real you' (see figure 5: Peace, harmony, happiness) shows him playing with his son, with the anger, stress and hurt lifting off. He arranged to continue the work with his probation officer.

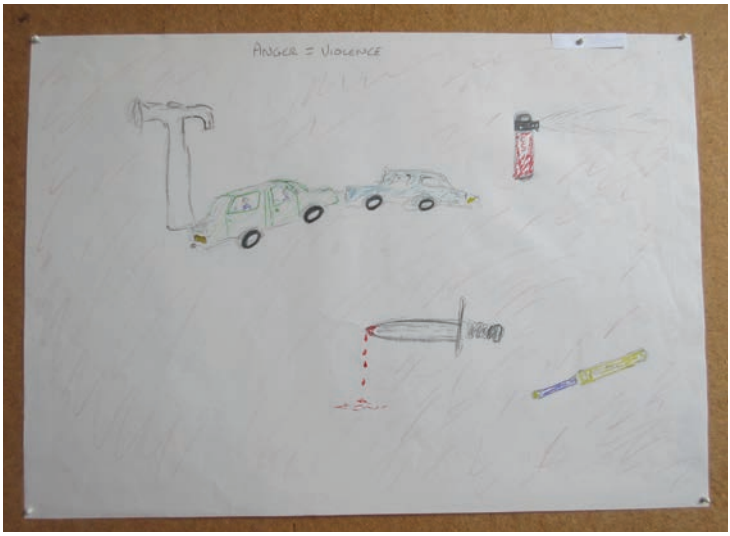

Figure 3 Anger = Violence

Figure 4 Anger = Crime

Figure 5 Peace, harmony, happiness

Or I think about my work in Northern Uganda, working with survivors of the aftermath of Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) abductions. Boys and girls were abducted and recruited into the LRA army and taught how to kill; they suffered beatings and watched brothers and sisters die at the hands of the LRA. If they were able to escape, they returned home only to find that often their parents had been killed by the LRA and their houses burnt down. Girls were also given to adult soldiers to be their 'wives' and bore them several children. If they escaped, they were often widows with young children (many soldiers were killed in battle) and returned home to face rejection of their children as 'rebel children'.

Clearly any short-term workshops could not remove the causes of the huge anger that has built up – this will take many generations. So the focus of this training was to introduce strategies of handling anger in such a way that people do not make things worse for themselves, e.g. by alienating friends and relatives, or committing acts of violence.

My Ugandan colleague visited community and church leaders, and ex-combatant groups, who in turn mobilised their communities to participate. Altogether 68 people took part (28 men and 40 women) in three towns. Evaluations showed that all participants enjoyed the course a lot, especially the artwork, which was new to many of them. Participants found it helpful to express their thoughts and feelings visually, which provided a bridge for painful experiences which were often difficult to put into words.

Pictures depicting violence included setting fire to thatched houses after family difficulties (figure 6), drink and suicidal thoughts (figure 7) and a violent response to animals destroying crops (figure 8). At the end of the course, participants did a guided visualisation of a peaceful place. One of these is shown in figure 9.

Figure 6 Setting fire to a house

Figure 7 Drink and suicidal thoughts

Figure 8 Violent response to piglets destroying crops

Figure 9 Guided visualisation of peaceful place

We held a one-day follow-up workshop a year later. Many participants had made good use of the skills they had learnt and passed them on to family and neighbours. One young man of 15 came to this workshop and said, "I'm sorry my father cannot come today, but he wanted you to know that he turned his whole life around as a result of your workshop. He used to beat us all the time, and we would dread his coming home, but now, if we make a mistake, he talks to us. And he doesn't beat our mother anymore."

The power of art

As I have said, anger is a complex emotion, and therefore needs a complex response. My use of art has taught me much about its power in helping people confront and control anger. Art provides another way to communicate for people who find it hard to articulate verbally why they get angry. The process of doing the artwork slows clients down and helps them to reflect more on what is going on.

Using art provides the possibility of including many thoughts and feelings, often contradictory, on one page, and can be a less threatening way to approach issues. In group work, sharing the artwork helps people realise that they have things in common with each other, thereby overcoming isolation.

Art's expressive power is complemented by its sensibility. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way of doing art. It provides a relief from the pressures of goal-oriented work.

Anger is neither good nor bad in itself – it just 'is'. It is an important emotion that tells us something is wrong and needs attention. The main aim of this work is to see where the anger is coming from and how it can be used constructively to make positive changes, either individually or in society.

Acknowledgements

Figures 1 & 2 have appeared in Art Therapy in Practice (ed Marian Liebmann 1990), Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Figures 3, 4 & 5 have appeared in Art Therapy and Social Action (ed Frances Kaplan 2007), Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Figures 6, 7, 8 & 9 have appeared in Anger Management with Art in Northern Uganda (Marian Liebmann with Grace Kiconco Sirrah).

I have permission from Jessica Kingsley Publishers to use figures 1-5, and 6-9 are my own.

Theatre as a tool to combat violence

REBECCA FRIEL
Director, Odd Arts

We at Odd Arts work with violent individuals by understanding their needs and the cause of their behaviour. We use theatre to explore the issues people find difficult to broach and give them a voice. Stepping back to the moments just before violence is not enough; we must also consider the sometimes lifelong experiences that affect the way we all behave. The more vulnerabilities a person has, the greater the risk of them causing harm to themselves and others. A new sense of belonging, hope, trust, purpose and safety towards themselves and others can be rebuilt through theatre.

A child who understands life to be dangerous and has a constant feeling of insecurity or fear will have a more complicated journey to personal happiness, successful relationships and societal integration. Fear and insecurity may come through a number of vulnerabilities such as emotional or physical neglect, deprivation, instability, or witnessing violence. We always consider this when designing projects focusing on violent behaviour.

For example, a small community we regularly work with in South Manchester recently saw a spike in youth violence, specifically knife crime. It just so happened that this part of the city had been home to the Manchester Arena bomber. Members of the community saw a vast

increase in police raids, often in the middle of the night. Many very young children were witness to these raids (either by witnessing it on their street, or even in their homes) and it left a lasting impact on those children. Within the same community, young people have lost close friends to youth violence (through both prison and death) and carrying a weapon or being victim of knife crime is something affecting wider groups.

These are examples of how indirect violence has the potential to traumatise and instil fear in wide groups of young people. Very few of the young people and children within that community were direct victims or offenders of knife crime or the Arena attack. However, these events leave them feeling vulnerable and sometimes traumatised. These indirect victims are at risk of being forgotten about – their experiences unspoken, their stories unheard. Children and young people are being exposed to violence and fear and by avoiding the subject we are normalising it and allowing it to significantly increase the chances of them becoming physically and mentally unwell, and even violent individuals themselves.

In December 2017 I was lucky enough to take part in a US Embassy Cultural Exchange to Boston, on Countering Violent Extremism. One of the most effective strategies I witnessed was Boston Police Department's approach to gun crime, known widely as the 'Boston Miracle' due to the reduction in gun crime from over 600 fatal shootings per year, to less than 50. The answer has been a commitment to partnership work between the police, social workers and the community voluntary sector. The partnership has focused on offering community-wide support for post-traumatic distress to a community that had seen chronic exposure to multiple forms of violence. This included 'emotional first aid' kits and training for young people and adults in the community, to assist them in looking after their own and others' well-being after and during traumatic events. Our theatre approach is also therapeutic and we partner with psychologists and health practitioners to explore safe and creative exercises that might help to deal with complex psychological issues.

In order to give an understanding of how theatre can change the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of people, let me describe the process that we at

Odd Arts use to help support participants to reduce violent tendencies. Initially we play name games, problem-solving challenges and teamwork exercises. These are used to settle nerves, increase confidence, establish expectations, and most importantly create a safe foundation in which we can encourage more critical thinking, empathy and self-reflection later in the project. Following this 'gamification'[98] we hold open discussions to introduce themes relating to violence, always avoiding blame, judgement or preconceptions. We use physicality as a means of communicating. Where people might lack the confidence to speak out we can still see what they think, for example we might ask: "Arguments are part of a normal relationship? Stand to the right if you agree, to the left if you disagree." No opinion is 'wrong' and must be validated, but can also be challenged.

Validating and listening to people's opinions and experiences is a simple but often underestimated and overlooked skill. People who are compelled to act, whether that action be kind or violent, are responding to strong feelings or urges. Anger, grief, injustice, shame, regret, sadness or hate are often overwhelming emotions that individuals and organisations sometimes try to ignore, gloss over or underplay. However, it is important to remember that people are not necessarily needing an answer, but merely to be heard, and understood. It is important we do not reaffirm feelings of shame or the idea that no one cares. Sometimes people just need their feelings to be acknowledged: "That must be difficult, I can see that would upset you."

Questions we pose in the creation of a theatre performance are designed to spark critical thinking, encouraging the people we work with to analyse and interrogate their own and others' viewpoints: "Violence can be an effective form of communication. Agree or disagree? Stand next to someone who has a different viewpoint to you." Listening, hearing, and communicating feelings is another way theatre can help to reduce the risk of a build-up of unexpressed negative emotions that might lead to violence.

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[98] Dr Richard McHugh and Professor Hannah Smithson (2017) *Applied Performance Arts Interventions within Justice Services: Moving 'Forward' Toward an Integrated Sustainable Evaluative Approach* (Manchester: Manchester Centre for Youth Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University).

We use characters and storytelling to understand the journey that a violent individual might have travelled. Fictional people and stories are based completely on the experiences of the participants we work with, always relatable and authentic; realistic but never 'real'. Participants have the safety of knowing they are not exposed yet still feel "this could be me". The participants act out, talk and even begin thinking as the characters they created. They become part of a fictional story allowing them to replay something similar to their own past or future, where the cause and effect of their own violent behaviour might seem more tangible. To develop the characters into authentic and multi-layered people, participants improvise interactions and scenarios, responding through intuition to decide what they think the character would do. They might brainstorm their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours at different points in the character's life; for example in the months and hours before and after a violent attack. Enabling this greater insight is empowering. It challenges the idea that the character or participant 'just saw red' or 'just flipped', allowing people instead to establish warning signs and triggers, and the link between what they think, how they feel and what they do. We ask participants to create a detailed timeline of the characters to depict the influential and momentous occasions in their life, often revealing real adversity or trauma. This process enables participants to replay and take control and power of situations that in their own life might have left them feeling hopeless, ashamed or out of control. The process is always working with participants to empower them to self-discover, using a restorative approach that asks "how can we learn more about this?" rather than "let me tell you what you did wrong". I believe a punitive approach often pushes people to become defensive or even ashamed, which is likely to further increase the chances of violence or aggression. "It's different from just being told things. The answers come from us and from trying ideas out" (participant, HMP Manchester).

Increasing understanding of what a non-abusive and healthy relationship looks like is key to reducing violence. Sometimes participants are unaware that their actions are abusive, having repeated learned behaviour, or never having a positive role model. Dramatising unhealthy, abusive or even violent relationships provides a visual representation of what this looks

like, and is sometimes enough to make someone see their own behaviour in a different light and lead to change.

Participants eventually undergo a more traditional process of rehearsals leading to a performance. Often we work towards a 'forum theatre' performance, which merges the role of the participants and the actors. The performance ends with an unresolved issue leading to conflict, which is then replayed to the audience who are asked to intervene in the performance to try out different solutions. If the actors believe the alternative solutions are unrealistic then the issue remains unresolved and different attempts are tried until people feel content that they have found an authentic and effective alternative to the conflict. This method enables participants to conduct a "re-evaluation of past failures and future opportunities … [and] share and reflect upon apparently intractable issues that might otherwise have remained unexpressed … [with] a feeling of empowerment and personal authority".[99] Participants usually perform their play to other stakeholders, be it family, friends, staff or peers. This showcase enables the participants to gain a real sense of achievement and even joy, whilst also making a dramatic statement of intent to change in front of an audience. This public display of intent makes it easier for that audience to support them in this quest for change.

"I shall take away the memories of this course, and finally understanding the impact my behaviour has on my family" (participant, HMP Manchester).

Theatre has the power to make people see themselves, their past and their future in a new way. It can re-engage people with emotions and consequences they have previously disconnected with. The experience of performing is inherently powerful in raising self-esteem, confidence, and communication skills, and at its best it is lifechanging.

For Odd Arts, theatre is a tool that gives people a voice, validates feelings and brings new insight to emotions and experiences. Theatre enables people to envisage and rehearse a different way of being and a different way of responding to their past. Theatre is one way to contribute to a less violent society, and a more happy one.

[99] L.Froggett (2018).

A LESS VIOLENT SOCIETY

THE STAFF AND RESIDENTS
Katherine Price Hughes House Approved Premises

The idea of contributing to this book was first raised by one of our residents who had his art work published in last year's Monument Fellowship book. The staff team then introduced the topic in our Residents' House Meeting, where we brought the project to the attention of our residents and discussed the idea of creating our own contributions. We agreed that we would hold an event to discuss the subject of 'A Less Violent Society' and bring the topic to life.

We produced posters to advertise the morning to all residents, encouraging them to take part in the discussion and provided art materials for them to create their own work. We took breakfast orders and invited our West London Mission Chaplain along to facilitate the discussion, alongside the Approved Premises (AP) managers and staff. We also invited residents from other Approved Premises in London, and one attended our event all the way from Tulse Hill AP, as well as an ex-resident who had left us but returned for this occasion.

In total, ten residents attended the morning activity and participated in the discussions. A range of topics were raised that residents felt were significant in the discussion of a less violent society: poverty, religion (both good and bad), not having a job or being given opportunities and not having any

purpose in life were all thought to contribute to violence. One resident suggested that people feel anger at something else and this is then misdirected at someone on the street, causing violence. We spoke about society having unrealistic goals that people struggle to achieve; this creates anger, frustration, inequality and social isolation, where people become marginalised and disaffected.

After our discussion, residents broke away to create their own pieces of artwork that reflected their thoughts and feelings. They chose different materials with which to work, paired up with staff to create one piece and even chose to include a poem.

Every Day

'Nick'

Every day, I wonder why I am here alive on Earth.

Why are we here?

One atom is so small it's impossible to see. 100,000 million atoms in a straight line would reach across your baby fingernail. Width=100,000 million.

Every single thing on this planet is made from atoms.

An atom is made of a nucleus: the centre that can be made of different protons, clumped together and electrons which are going round the nucleus.

The more electrons whizzing around the protons, the heavier the atom. Some atoms have the same amount of protons which make up the nucleus as electrons, the parts orbiting the nucleus. Gold is an Element which has 79 electrons and 79 protons which is why we call Gold Element 79: because of this.

You are made entirely of atoms. Atoms never die. Never. Even your thoughts are made of atoms: the chemical liquids and the electrical charges that make you believe that you are yourself.

Thoughts are happiest when they follow a well-worn path. The more you do something, the easier it becomes. Like moving your hands, walking, talking, eating.

When you establish a thought process that includes anger, or fear or nervousness in others, then the reaction you get energises those thought patterns as they become lazy and you have finished your work.

Television replaces much in the brain in way of work. It supplies the colours, story line, emotion, so your brain does not need to work as hard.

If billions of years ago there was a big explosion and certain rocks and chemicals, water smashed together to form the Earth, that just happens to be the perfect distance from the sun to support life, as it also just happens to have certain air, trees and plants that grew to create a liveable habitat for dinosaurs at rest.

'Violence in a Peaceful Setting' by Imran

"This piece was created to depict how guns and violence can ruin even the most tranquil settings; not only does it affect inner urban communities, but can affect my inner peace and calm, no matter where I am."

'Peace' by Alan

"My painting represents the opposite of what a violent society should be;
if we all saw the world with a peaceful outlook,
it would result in a less violent society."

'Coming out after Fourteen Years' by Paul and Eimear

"Eimear, staff member and I created this piece by using cuttings from today's newspapers about the complexities of society, which you are shielded from in prison. After 14 years I was that figure walking out into an overwhelming society, full of problems."

'The Power of the People' by James

"This represents society's struggle against gun related crime, but that if people tirelessly work together, we can bring it to an end."

'The Angel' by Albert

"This represents a damaged world that needs to be protected, nurtured and reinvigorated by the faceless angel that wraps her wings around us. It means we need to protect and take care of each other."

Looking inwards

HILARY PETERS

How can we become a less violent society? By looking inwards.

We generalise. We persuade ourselves there are groups of people or animals that deserve to be killed: another gang, another race, another species … . They are outsiders, vermin, aliens. This process of inventing a category to destroy is part of a work of creation that goes on all the time inside every one of us. We are all creating a self. When we like it, we are happy. When we don't, we are depressed.

Humans are essentially, but not inevitably, violent. We act out our violence when we are not aware of the fiction we are writing all the time. The more aware we become, the less we need to be violent.

The fiction demands goodies and baddies. We dump all the unacceptable bits of ourselves outside ourselves. We then convince ourselves that our anger is justified. Destroy the baddies and we will be all right. We use our minds to disguise this process from ourselves. It's very hard to see what we are doing when we are doing it.

So we can bemoan violence in society and work to change society and invent theories about society. We may even alter the surface a little. Perhaps if we work hard enough, crime statistics will go down. But until we look inwards and see what is happening beneath the surface of the conscious mind, we will not reach the root of the problem. It's in us.

Struggle

North London Clinic
Rosemary Bartholomew Commended Award for Painting
in the 2018 Koestler Trust Awards.

Love other people as ourselves

TIM SNOWDON
Director of Sixty-One

How can we be a less violent society, in 600 words? What next, world peace in 200?

In trying to answer this question succinctly, and with meaning, we need to move away from 'local solutions', however effective they may be, and look at the root causes. As a result, I might be accused of being radical, religious and offering unworkable solutions. So be it.

Competition is at the heart of most societies, and particularly within western culture. We live not only in a physical world driven by natural selection but our relationships, education, work, opportunities and sometimes even our friends and families are controlled by a ruthless survival of the fittest. And don't fool yourselves that it's not ruthless – look into the heart of a child who has just tried their best only to come last.

Learning that you just aren't very good at something, particularly something that will define many opportunities in life, is the seed of so much wrong in our society. Competition has to have losers.

Hence a competitive culture is a tragically fertile ground for negativity, hatred, self-doubt, depression and loneliness. These problems can quickly turn into the malignant mental health issues that are the foundation of so much violence, both physical and relational.

In an effort to mitigate this blindingly obvious, but very unwelcome truth, society lives a huge, if well-meaning lie – with serious consequences. We tell people we can all follow our dreams, we can all be the next great sportsperson, entrepreneur, celebrity or academic. Yet science has long debunked the notion that a person's opportunities are overwhelmingly governed by nurture. In fact, some studies suggest nurture has less than 20% effect on a person's abilities. You could give me one-to-one maths tuition for a year and I'd still be hopeless, and I tried to learn to play the guitar for over two decades before accepting that I would never be any better than poor – no matter how much I worked.

Yet we keep reinforcing the lie that we can all achieve our dreams. This is cruel when achieving these dreams is based on abilities that are to a very large extent beyond our control.

If we are to build a society where genetic differences are not what define us we need to create an environment where ambitions and rewards are based around things that we can all control. It seems to me that genetic make-up has much less control over things like kindness, mercy, self-control, humility and peacemaking – anyone can do these things. For me living like this is best described by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. No matter what you believe, try reading it and see what I mean.

I've worked in prison for nearly 15 years, and time and again I've come across people whose problems obviously stem from a society in which they, or their parents or family, are just not able to compete. This commonly results in people feeling lost and separated from the world, of having no home or safe place to be. Is it any surprise that they lash out at themselves and the world around them?

These problems often become compounded generation on generation, so communities become trapped in hopelessness. Our response is to help by giving them the ability to compete, yet if we invest in them so they can come first, someone else comes last and the spiral goes on and on.

This is the monumental tragedy of the Fall and why we need to love other people as ourselves. This is how we reduce violence.

LEARNING LIFE LESSONS

"JOHN"

John was 14 when he was arrested and charged with robbery at knifepoint while staying with his mum in Spain.

Having already accumulated a long history of offending, John had been expelled from school, was an occasional drug user and had spent time behind bars on more than one occasion in the UK.

This time he was given a four-year custodial sentence and sent to Els Reiets, a re-education centre for young people in Alicante, run by Diagrama. Diagrama's custodial model is based on love and boundaries – fully involving each young person in their progression and helping them to take responsibility for their own lives.

Now, 13 years on, he has carved out a successful career as a talented plasterer, has a son and daughter and is about to marry his childhood sweetheart. John shares his thoughts on how violence has evolved from being second nature to a relic of his distant past.

Just before I turned 15 I went to Spain with my mum to get away from some trouble I was having back home. But I was already off the rails in England and ended up getting into trouble in Spain. I was sent down for four years for a violent crime.

The Spanish court system was different to anything I'd seen before. You went to court, gave your side of the story – then got taken back to the centre and given your sentence later. It was all a lot more straightforward than in the UK.

The centre in Alicante didn't look like the prison – more like a farm. There were no big buildings, no big bars nor a load of armed guards like I was expecting. Instead they had animals and dogs running around, and chickens – you don't normally see that!

I started in the basic unit which was more like a proper prison. At first I kept being naughty – I couldn't really speak Spanish and didn't realise people were trying to help me.

You are put in the observation unit while they try and figure you out – like a risk assessment to see if you're alright or if you are going to harm yourself or run away. There's only one fence you know, it wouldn't have been hard to run and jump over it – it was probably only 10ft high.

You start with nothing – in this unit you're not allowed a pen or a chair or anything in your room – everything is a privilege to be earned. You weren't allowed to just buy sweets or get a bottle of Coke. Over here in the UK you got £10 a week and could play the system – be good on the Friday and get your tuck shop. The rest of the week play up. It was too easy.

But in Spain there were real incentives that actually worked.

For most people, after two or three weeks, if you're good you move down to the other side. There are five different stages, spread out throughout your sentence and within each stage you get different perks – for example, in stage 2 you might get a telly and stage 3 you could get a stereo and stage 5 possibly a PlayStation. It's not given to you by the prison mind, but by your family.

If some kids in there didn't have family and had moved up a stage the staff would find them a spare telly from somewhere. They wouldn't let them miss out.

Once you had that stuff, you knew you'd worked so hard for it that you didn't want to lose it again.

It took me a lot longer than most to move up from the basic unit – I was used to being in centres in England where staff were always shouting at you. I was used to rebelling against them and raising my arms, fighting, shouting and screaming at them.

After a year one of the managers said: "You've been on here for ages now, you can speak Spanish, you need to be over the other side. If you're good for one week we'll move you and you can see what it's like."

So I was good and they moved me. I didn't expect him to – I just thought they were lying. But I realised I was sick of being naughty and it might be better there.

My sentencing judge would come and visit every six months for a review, to see how my sentence was going and what targets I was trying to meet. In Spain it is the judges who decide if you've been good, if you're allowed to go home for the weekend and what activities you're allowed to do. In the UK you get risk assessed by people who don't even know you – who have never met you. How could they know the risk when they've never met you?

At first it was a bit hard because I didn't understand my judge – my Spanish wasn't great. It was a bit awkward – she was, after all, the person who decides how long I would be there –but, after a while, it was nice. She was happy to see me – well maybe not happy, but in a way she was, because I was doing well. It's better for the judges this way because they know more about what happens to the people they sentence. It's good for them to be able to see the progress – much better than someone just sending you to prison. In the UK, most won't know anything about the people they sentenced when they are eventually released.

I slipped up a couple of times and went back to the basic unit again but learnt that I could be doing things like playing football and doing all the other jobs they have, like bricklaying. I realised what I had and what I'd lost and it made me see it wasn't worth it to lose it all again. And when it

happened, when we slipped up, the staff – educators – taught us how to start again. I realised they were really wanting to help and not just lock me up.

Our educators – screws in the UK – were nice people, they'd try and talk to you. They would know if you were upset and would be trying to find out what was up. They would go out of their way to help – some of them would come in and be smiling and singing – it's nice to hear instead of just keys jingling or doors slamming or people just telling you what to do. They would always try and have a conversation with you, even if it was just something daft about football.

The educators knew everyone and made an effort to get to know you personally – it wasn't just 'he's in there for this and he's that type of person because he's done that' – they made their own minds up and talked to you with respect, like a person, not a number. In the UK we were treated like animals.

Our days were kept very busy – we got up, brushed teeth, had breakfast – the whole unit together – then education, a quick sandwich break, more education, lunch, siesta, more education – this time it was practical work like bricklaying or plastering – all sorts really. We made mosaics out of tiles, made swimming pools, showers, even like a big farm enclosure for the animals.

Then it was shower, tea time, sports and PE and half an hour free time or 'association'. But rather than just leaving us to sit there arguing with each other our educators would join in with us – like have a game of football or sit outside with a guitar and just play music. You always had something to do.

I learnt a lot of life lessons in there. It wasn't just the bricklaying and plastering skills I picked up. I learnt how to live, how to think and behave and how to influence people. I'm a lot calmer now – I learnt how to manage my anger properly. The group sessions helped us to understand the effect of your crime on the victim, your family and the community and basic life lessons were drilled into your head all the time.

I spoke to my dad every night on the phone – contact with family wasn't restricted for us like it is in the UK (one call a week) – family were seen as an important way to help you sort yourself out. My dad would always be telling me to listen to them and behave. When he came to visit, staff would make special arrangements for him to come twice or more a week while he was over – they made a real effort to help accommodate him and showed him round all the facilities. It helped put Dad's mind at rest a bit.

I changed as a person. I'm a lot different than I used to be. When I was younger I didn't really think properly – I just used to go out and do things. It was my normal to get in trouble, get caught, locked up and then out to do it all again – it was what all my mates were doing.

No one on the inside had ever tried to stop me properly before and actually help me.

Before, in the UK, they talked down to us, like they were better than us. They would just be shouting at the kids – which didn't make you learn anything.

In Spain the way they worked helped – it was much easier to learn because they weren't telling us – they were trying to teach us – they were helping us everywhere and in everything we did.

I think it helps that in Spain you have to do your full sentence – you don't just do half. It gives you time to think about things, to learn and change.

I was in Spain for almost four years and was transferred back to the UK for the final few months of my sentence. I'd been waiting so long for the transfer, to be nearer my family but when it came, I almost wish it hadn't.

I went to Feltham and then Glen Parva and seeing them jails just made me realise I didn't want to be going through that any more – I was just wasting my life away. If I hadn't gone to Spain I probably wouldn't have realised there was something else in life and I'm so thankful for that. Otherwise I would have still been on that same track, without a doubt.

Suddenly I was back in a UK jail, surrounded by gangs, beatings and fearing what would happen to me in the showers. All this time, I'd never

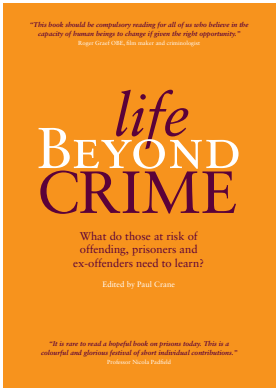
smoked. The first thing I got handed at Feltham? A smoker's pack – I've smoked ever since.

After I got out some of my mates were messing about. I started to try and teach them what I'd been taught and help keep them out of trouble – I couldn't understand why they'd want to waste their life. Now I've got my own children to worry about.

I was kicked out of schools when I was younger and I've got no GCSEs. I'm not thick though because I've learnt so much through Diagrama – for example I can now read and write Spanish fluently. I have had a lot of education but I've no qualifications. In Spain, they taught me how to plaster and when I got out somebody gave me a chance in England – I picked it up straight away and it's what I've done ever since. I'm pretty good at it now – I enjoy it, I like it – it's an easy job for me, to be honest.

How do I see a way to reduce violence in society? For me the answer's clear – it's by the educators believing in me and giving me a chance, helping and encouraging me and teaching me a better way, that I am who I am today.

About this series



This collection of essays is the second in a series of books curated by the Fellowship. The first book, *Life Beyond Crime*, brings together essays offering insight and passionate debate about the fellowship's first annual question: What do those at risk of re-offending, prisoners and ex-offenders need to learn?

For more information on *Life Beyond Crime*, please contact info@justiceinnovation.org or visit the Koestler Trust website to purchase a copy: www.koestlertrust.org.uk

Organisations in the Monument Fellowship

The Centre for Justice Innovation
Clinks
Diagrama Foundation UK
Khulisa UK
The Koestler Trust
Lemos and Crane: *The Good Prison*
The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance
Restorative Solutions CIC

Curing violence: How we can become a less violent society is a collection of essays that seek to not only describe the problem of violence in our society but also to offer solutions. Our contributors make the case that reducing violence is a responsibility for everyone in society: for those in power, in both government and in the formal criminal justice system; but also for all of us in our schools and hospitals, in the arts and in our civic society, on our streets, and in our homes.

The book includes a foreword from Vicky Foxcroft MP, co-chair of the Youth Violence Commission and contributions from award-winning journalist Gary Younge, Chief Constable Michael Barton, Redthread's John Poyton and Will Linden of Glasgow's Violence Reduction Unit amongst many others. It encompasses perspectives on curing violence from across public services and civil society, including insights into tackling paramilitary violence in Northern Ireland, public health approaches pioneered in Cardiff, community-led projects in New York City and the personal experiences of victims and perpetrators of violence.

This collection of essays is the second in a series of books curated by the Monument Fellowship: eight organisations which have been funded by The Monument Trust to work together to make a sustained, cumulative and transformative change to the journey of individuals through our justice system. The members of the fellowship are the Centre for Justice Innovation, Clinks, the Diagrama Foundation UK, Khulisa UK, the Koestler Trust, Lemos and Crane: The Good Prison, the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance and Restorative Solutions CIC.

This book has been compiled and edited by Phil Bowen and Stephen Whitehead of the Centre for Justice Innovation.

Centre for Justice Innovation

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