

# Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa

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## Abstract

*This article traces the roots of aggression, anger and violence in South Africa and the rest of the world. The paper is divided into four parts: Aggression, Anger, Catharsis and Violence. As a result of violence against other human beings, especially women and children, a profound respect for human dignity has been lost. People have become extremely aggressive. The last few decades have created a culture of violence because of the suppression or oppression of feelings. The article argues that frustration yields anger that leads to violent acts. The root cause of violence is frustration, which finally (if not attended to) produces anger, anxiety, conflict and the eruption of violence. Suicide bombers in Palestine and other parts of the world demonstrate this type of aggression, anger and violence. Anger, on the one hand, is a good defense mechanism. It helps people cope with frustration. Violence, on the other hand, is used as a means of dominance, especially against women and children. In a political situation it is used as a means of changing social structures.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that aggression and violence are true realities that are experienced by South Africans and the rest of the world. Palestine, Turkey and South Africa will be used as examples of violence. I will cite an incident that took place during November 2003: a young mother took an eight months old baby and smashed her head on the wall at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. The baby girl died (Radio 702, November 20, 2003, 7:00 news). She was angry because she fought with her boyfriend, and when asked, she responded by saying that she was trying to hurt the boyfriend by hurting the baby that he loved so dearly. The question to ask is, was the young mother not affected by the cry of the baby? Violence has become part and parcel of our daily life.

### ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

The above incident reminds me of the book of Isaiah: “See, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the earth a desolation, and to destroy its sinners from it ... Whoever is found will be thrust through, and whoever is caught will fall by the sword. Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered, and their wives ravished. See, I am stirring up the Medes against them” (Is 13:9, 15-17). The sentence that attracted me is “their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes.” Is this mother who dashed her baby, fulfilling the prophecy? The next sentence is plundering of houses, Palestine coming to mind; which is on the news nearly every day. Violence, destruction, anger and aggression are the order of the day. Palestine is affected from the West Bank, right up to Gaza.

A lot of young people kill themselves and others commit violent murder through suicide bombing. This kind of violence is a result of a strategic process embarked upon by weak and desperate people who are oppressed. It is a brutal kind of violence expressed by one individual, who will aim at a bus, and die with lots of people. The question to ask, again, is: why? Pallmeyer (2003:22) address this kind of violence as dysfunctional deflective violence. He says: “dysfunctional deflective violence increases as poverty and exclusion feed despair, and as communities break down.” A contemporary example is the wall that is being built by Israel, which exclude the Palestinians and leave them poor. Hence, a high incidence of murder and crime that characterizes their life-style. Let us now analyze another country that was peaceful, but is now experiencing violence.

Jews of Turkey see 500 years of peace shattered. People in Turkey are becoming used to the sound of broken glass (Metin Munir editor of the *Financial Times*, news paper). Shards, splinters and dust are the sparkling remnants of the day that terror shattered not only their business, but also the harmony of their daily lives. The *Financial Times* reported a sad story of Jews in Turkey. Metin responded after a bomb blast with these words:

A deep trough outside the streets of Synagogue – one of 17 synagogues in Istanbul – marks the place where a car bomb tore through shop fronts, cars and passers-by. The November 15 bombing on Nakiye Elgun, and the near simultaneous bombing of another synagogue a mile away, left 23 dead and 303 wounded. People no longer respect life.

(*Financial Times*, 2 Dec 2003).

The above incidents indicate to us how Turkey is also suffering from dysfunctional violence. This kind of violence shifts people's anger away from individuals or institutions that exercise power within unjust systems and onto others. In short, violence thrives in an environment in which people internalize the worldview of the oppressive system. Jews are now being attacked in Turkey. The question to ask is why this kind of violence?

Respect for humanity has changed drastically. There is so much aggression, anger, rage and violence that surround people all over the world. Some children grow up not even understanding the word peace. Looking back at our South African life, one can understand the reason why we are experiencing violence today. The history of oppression forced those of us who were oppressed to react to constitutional or structural violence, with violence. As a result of the above, a culture of violent crime began to develop and finally became a norm. During the apartheid era, retaliatory violence was regarded as part of the liberation strategies that helped the oppressed to regain their freedom. Violence was justified, nurtured, even at the expense of those who suffered from it. Human dignity and respect of other human beings was lost. A new culture was created; this new culture and its values are affecting our new democracy. South Africans entered into freedom with the above concept as a new value. We are now reaping the fruits of violence, which are aggression, road rage, murder, anger, impatience, carnage, rape et cetera. According to the African way of living, we needed to cleanse the nation with a ceremony where people would have participated in order to heal the nation.

In this new democracy, those who are angry, unemployed find it difficult to relate to others who violated their human rights. The above issues are of concern in pastoral care. With this concept in mind, let us now analyze the issue of aggression.

## **2. AGGRESSION**

There are three major types of theories of aggression that are current: theories which assert that aggression is the inevitable result of frustration or conflict; theories which affirm that aggression arises out of an inborn instinct toward destructiveness; and theories which maintain that aggression arises out of social disorganization. This last type of theory affects South African people today.

The frustration-aggression theory of aggression asserts that aggression is always an inevitable result of frustration. It assumed that: "The occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression" (Dollard 1939:1).

### ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

Miller (1941:337-453), on the other hand, revised the above concept by saying that: "Frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is an instigation to some form of aggression."

This revision arose from the realization that the original hypothesis was an over-generalization, and that it did not make sufficient allowance for the possibility of dominance over aggression by other responses, even when the motivation to aggressive behavior is present. Given the South African situation, I realize that Miller's hypothesis is an over-generalization, because the theory assumes that the instigation of some form of aggression is an invariant response to frustration, though other motivations may prove to be stronger and result in non-aggressive behavior. In South Africa, Soweto's 1976 outburst was the result of the extreme frustration caused by structural violence that killed so many. As youth reflected on aggression and violence, they realized that non-aggressive tactics would not bring change. It is clear, according to Buss (1958:55) that "Every frustration leads to aggression."

Having lived in Soweto and experienced aggression and violence, I agree with the above statement. I hated violence, but I found myself agreeing with the strategies that young boys and girls applied by responding to violence on June 16, 1976. Looking back to those days, I now realize that deprivation may lead to constructive, goal-oriented behaviour, rather than to aggression "against" a personal history of living in violent South Africa, especially of those who were frustrated, reacting with the deep passion of anger that leads to aggression. Hence a new culture of violence developed. In other words, the cultural norms of a society and the values of those frustrated resulted from frustration that produced conflict, anger, anxiety and, finally, violence. This resulted because of suppressed anger that was kept under for years by oppressive structures of our society. The restrictions that were experienced, combined with Christian values of no revenge, produced feelings of guilt and anxiety, which led to restitution behavior rather than aggression. Therefore, the formulations of the frustration-aggression hypothesis fail to consider some factors important in determining when frustrations lead to aggression.

The spiral of aggression and violence experienced in Soweto challenged people's faith. Religion often bolsters the power of economic elites, and sanctions the repression of the state. Liberation streams within Judaism, Christianity, and even Islam insists that structural injustices be addressed. This participation in actions that address aggression and violence in an effort to overcome the systemic causes of hunger, poverty, aggression and oppression. It also requires an honest assessment of whether theology, dogma and "sacred" texts encourage liberation or injustice; or whether they encourage violent or non-violent means in pursuit of justice. At the same time,

religious institutions and individual believers must sever their political ties to elites and discredit the aggression and the repressive violence of the state.

The above experiences remind me of Freud, who developed a theory of aggression which asserted that aggression arose when the ego-instincts, or the ego's struggle for self-preservation, are impeded. He said: "The ego hates, abhors and pursues with the intent to destroy all objects which is a source of pain" (Freud 1915:82).

In other words, aggression in this above quotation is non-biological and arises in defense of the ego. People will react to anything that violates their dignity to the extent of defending that dignity through violent means. During World War I, with lots of destruction surrounding people, they had to react to the destructive element, turning them outwards as aggression towards external objects. In Soweto of 1976, the youth destroyed all beer halls, which were owned by the government. They saw these structures affecting people's drinking as a way of escaping the frustration. Lorenz is helpful in explaining the deep wounds that causes aggression among animals that kill other species for food. He says: "The fighting instinct in beast and man (*sic*) which is directed against members of the same species" (Lorenz 1966:ix).

He points out that all carnivores, mammals that kill other species for food, have innate inhibitions against killing members of the same species. He points out an interesting concept of behavior among animal life. "An animal with potentially lethal equipment will automatically stop fighting a member of his own species at the sign of submission by the lose" (Lorenz 1966:10).

One needs to remind the reader that Lorenz says that there are a few exceptions: rats and men. With human beings, he says, this distinctive characteristic arises out of the evolutionary lack of lethal fighting equipment. At the same time, the lack of innate inhibitions against killing makes man a lethal danger to himself, particularly in an age of split-second atomic weapons (Lorenz 1966:43).

This is who we are, and the only way out for human beings to handle this is by the development of rituals of control and sublimation. Reading his theory, Lorenz assumes that violence and war are inevitable, and it can be used to rationalize away responsibility for human violence. We need to ask ourselves this question from a cultural level. It seems that, at a cultural level there are aggressive cultures, which develop an enjoyment of killing and hurting. There are peaceful societies, in which the penchant towards physical aggression is completely absent. Thus, in terms of cultural formation, a peaceful society is theoretically possible, whether one assumes that this demonstrates the absence of a destructive instinct, or that these societies are effective in providing controls over the aggressive instinct. Killing, aggression,

### ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

anger, rage et cetera are part of human society. With Hollywood producing and rewarding violent movies, the situation has worsened. One cannot conclude through animal life that human beings ought to be that way – the killing instinct. Scott is helpful in disagreeing with Lorenz. He says:

It can no longer be concluded that it is man's "animal nature", which is responsible for human violence, in analogue with some of the more aggressive animals, such as wolves, because the main source of violence between animals of the same species, as well as in humans, is social disorganization.

(Scott, 1968:69)

For example, the disorganization that took place in South Africa, through methods of oppression, became a fertile ground for aggression, which finally demonstrated itself through violent actions. I agree with Scott, because a pack of wolves, normally viewed as bloodthirsty animals, engages in very peaceful domestic relationships. Normally, well-organized troops of baboons in their natural habitat exhibit almost no fighting, except against intruders. But under conditions of social disorganization, extreme violent behavior among them may develop.

Now, why are we experiencing violence in the twenty-first century? Newspapers as well as television report the escalation of violence around the world. Theology may share some light on this topic, as we seek to address violent reaction among human beings.

### **3. THE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON AGGRESSION**

Theology may shed some light on the area of violence, especially that which is experienced by women and children. We are now dealing with the issue of sin. The nature of humankind is a mixture or dialectic of constructiveness and destructiveness. Freud's concept of the defensive and destructive aspects of human nature is helpful up to a point. It sheds light to what we are grappling with. Maslow, on the other hand, has grasped the potentially good, creative, and healthy aspects of human nature. Both these views of human nature are one-sided, if taken in isolation from each other. In spite of Freud's later pessimism, it should be recognized that he understood the dialectic between constructiveness and destructiveness better than contemporary self-actualizing psychologists.

One needs to note that creative potential, and the capacity to love are intrinsic to human life, and are not mere sublimations. Human nature is more malleable and has more potential for health and creativity than Freud had

realized. Allport is very helpful in shedding light on this matter. He maintains that an individual at the beginning of his/her life is governed by a dependent, affiliative relationship with his or her mother. He asserts: "There is little evidence of destructive instincts in early life, and that it is characterized by positive social relationships" (Freud 1954:365).

In my estimation, however, one cannot infer from this that positive or negative aggression arises only when life has turned sour. It is argued here that the capacity for positive and for negative aggression is very basic to the functioning of the human organism. Particularly, forms of anger and aggression are determined by cultural learning, but the neuropsychological capacity, which makes anger and aggression possible, is innate. One cannot love, one cannot affirm, one cannot initiate without the capacity for positive aggression. One cannot ward off powers that threaten integrity, knock down barriers to healing, or destroy the demonic without the capacity for negative aggression.

Scholars argue that positive and negative aggression is built into the destruction of human existence. They are basic to what it means to be a person. In other words, there is a structural polarity between positive and negative aggression, between constructive aggressiveness and defensive aggression, which is intrinsic to human nature. In short, this polarity is not ethical in character but is woven into the structure of humanness. When the constructive function of either assertiveness or of aggressive defense against threat is denied, then it is subverted, driven underground, and its forces emerge in abortive rather than adaptive ways. This can be dangerous, because violence erupts without warning. Hence, suicide bombers have emerged in recent Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Aggression participates in the goodness of creation. The theological affirmation of the goodness of creation is an assertion of the goodness of God's intent in creating human beings and of the good possibility available to persons for the actualization of their potential. This doctrine also affirms the fact that there is nothing intrinsically evil about being finite or embodied in fleshly existence. Hiltner reminds us that: "Creatureliness has intrinsic and potentially good possibilities in accord with God's intention in creating, though the authentic essence of creatureliness can also be distorted and become sinful."

The above quotation simply means that aggression is a basic dimension of creatureliness. A human being has aggression by virtue of being a creature, not because he or she is sinful. A distinction should be made between humankind, finiteness, and his or her sinfulness. As Hiltner (1953:19) points out: "Man both has finite limitations because he is part of nature and he

### ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

has a degree of self-transcending freedom that extends beyond that of any other creature.”

In other words, a person’s aggression is intrinsic to his/her finiteness. If every possibility emerged smoothly for human beings, without resistance or recalcitrance, then positive aggression would not be a necessary ingredient for finite creatures. If persons could continuously stand above threat and vulnerability, then negative aggression would not be a constructive imperative for human beings.

Human aggression also participates in persons or people self-transcending characteristics, both in its creative potential and its destructive possibility. Humankind has made unbelievable technological strides and has conquered many threats posed earlier by nature. Science has advanced in such a way that human beings have the capacity to project themselves into the future, and to have a history makes it possible for us to attack symbolic targets, and to be cruel, and sadistic to a degree unimaginable for animals.

The same finite capacities for aggression that are intrinsic to humankind’s constructive possibilities can also be distorted, and can become destructive. In other words, positive aggression can be transformed into “power over or affirmation at the expense of.” Constructive self-affirmation can be transformed into neurotic self-assertiveness. The capacity for anger and hostility can be transmuted into hatred, and healthy autonomy into defensive hostility. A classic case is seen in Palestine, the United States of America and Iraq.

One of the dominant features of the Protestant Reformed understanding of sin, is its emphasis on the aggressive, “masculine”, and acting-out forms of human distortion, and its failure to reckon with the passive, dependent, and covert forms of human distortion. The major developmental paradigm for understanding human sinfulness is the rebellious adolescent who is overtly aggressive and hostile, and acts out his/her rebellion. The Uganda and Rwanda situation of brutal murders during genocide by young soldiers is a classic case of rebelliousness. This leads to a failure to emphasize both the constructive functions of aggression and anger, and the passive forms of human brokenness. Neither Tillich or Niebuhr, nor other contemporary theologians, with the exception of Hiltner, analyze the dynamics of passivity as basic to their typology of sin. Therefore, in summing up the issue of aggression, it should be understood theologically as intrinsic to the structure of human finiteness, participating in the goodness of creation, with its original intent capable of being distorted, and therefore existing under the condition of sin. The doctrine of sin should be tempered by a recognition of the constructive functions of aggression, as well as of the passive forms of



human sinfulness. This concept will help us to understand the sinful nature of anger, which affects our situation.

#### **4. ANGER**

One could ask a simple question as to how anger connects to aggression, which finally leads to violence. Anger manifests itself through facial frown, the clenched jaw, the narrowing of the eyes, and facial reddening. In other words, the facial expression communicates anger to others in a social setting, the clenched jaw indicates that the person is ready to attack, while the narrowing of eyes prepares one to focus in on the target of anger, and reddening of the face is a by-product of the elevation of blood pressure, which on its part is a function of the organism marshalling its resources for attack. Goodenough explains anger in the following way: “as an affect, characterized by a relatively rapid onset and attenuation” (Goodenough 1931:29).

Anger is an important part of our lives, it helps us to cope with a given frustrating situation. At times it is a good defense mechanism that protects our inner emotions. It has several functions in the life of individuals. Tomkins is right when he says: “The general biological function of anger is to prime aggressive behavior in defense of the life of the individual when this is at stake .... (A)nd to protest a variety of non-optional states” (Tomkins 1962:3).

The reader needs to be aware that anger is not the only effect that primes aggressive behavior. In certain circumstances (especially in therapy), aggression can occur without the accompaniment of any emotions, but nevertheless this is one of the major functions of anger. South African road rage is a deep expression of suppressed anger in the lives of our people. It helps those who are experiencing deep frustration – giving vent to that which seeks to destroy their inner life.

Another function of anger is to prompt the individual who is feeling angry to identify the source of frustration, and to do something about it. These are not necessarily threats to life, but may also be threats to the good life. There are wide ranges of non-optimal states which arouse anger and about which the person should protest and do something about. As human beings develop from childhood to adulthood, they go through a process of experiencing anger. There is a stage where we refer to two year olds as the “terrible twos”. In other words, between one and one and a half and two years of age, the human child develops an intense desire to do things for him or herself. “No! No!” and “Its mine!” are expressions of the child’s sense of individuation. The child becomes angry when others threaten his/her autonomy or individuation. He or she then experiences or verbalize their anger by being aggressive.

## ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

In its most human form, anger is the effect that mobilizes a person to protect himself/herself against threats to his/her selfhood, at all levels, including injustice to or infringements of his/her personal integrity, or that of others, and to fight for causes, whether they be personal, group, or ideological. Therefore, anger is built into the structure of human existence. The capacity for anger enables the human person to face and protest against the threats and vulnerabilities that are intrinsic to the reality of being limited and finite, when he/she chafes under these limitations. Existentially, anger cannot be removed, but it can be confronted in therapy and accepted. If not faced, it will turn into neurotic anger.

Neurotic anger is disproportionate to its source in the real world. Normal anger is appropriate to the situation that arouses it. Neurotic anger has its source in irrational or unconscious intrapsychic conflicts, and thus is not easily changed. For example, a person can become neurotically angry when his/her insatiable desire for unqualified succor and dependent gratification is not immediately met. Later on, anger responses can become dysfunctional for a technocratic person. Many physiological changes occurring as anger prepare an organism for violent activity or attack. These emergency arousal functions had considerable utility for primitive persons who lived as predators. But a modern person uses machines rather than brute force to "attack" his/her environment, and his/her aggression is expressed more verbally and symbolically. Therefore the emergency physiological reactions present in anger, which once had great utility, can now become dysfunctional. The continued use of emergency reactions may lead to irreversible tissue changes. For example, the chronically argumentation person may eventually develop a permanently elevated blood pressure or hypertension.

Thus anger has an important constructive function, but it can become maladaptive, particularly for a technocratic person.

## **5. CATHARSIS**

The frustration-aggression psychology asserted is in accord with the principle of catharsis, namely that the instigation of aggression is decreased when aggression is expressed. In reality, catharsis is an emotional phenomenon, and thus is operative in relation to anger, but not hostility and aggression. Thus catharsis may help in reducing anger, but is not effective in the reduction of readiness for hostility and aggression, except where they are linked very closely, by learning, to the arousal of anger.

I can only suggest briefly some observations on handling anger therapeutically. Many feel that learning to express one's anger is a comprehensive solution. But each personality pattern and neurotic style of

defence has its own distinctive issue in relation to handling anger. Learning to express anger in therapy is a good beginning for inhibited persons and those who turn their anger inward. But this may be no solution or a partial solution for others. For example, the psychopathic person has little difficulty in expressing anger, but his/her insensitivity to its effects on others, his/her need to develop structured controls of its function in masking his/her hurt, do cause him/her difficulty. These will not be resolved by merely encouraging him/her to express his/her anger more freely with the above in mind.

Let us now analyse the violence, by examining its function in our lives.

## **6. THE FUNCTION OF VIOLENCE**

Violence may be used as a means of dominance over women in marriage or in relationships. At times it is used as a means of controlling and governing existing political and social structures and realities, or it may be used to bring about change in existing political and social structures. For example, Palestine is a case in point, where people are using violence as a means of change. Rose shares an interesting concept about violence: "Violent control restrains and regulates, and is a method of social-political control. Violent revolt is dissent and strives to create change" (Rose 1970:26).

It is true that power controllers and norm setters of a given society, through its police forces, control violence as was the case in South Africa and also in the U S A during the early civil rights movement. It usually takes the form of counter-violence in response to violence or threats of violence exhibited by disinherited groups. Groups like those in Palestine are using violence (suicide bombing) as a means of social change that seek to correct the injustices of their situation. In this instance, violence is not directed towards the overthrow of existing political structures, but is aimed at stopping the occupation of Palestinian land. It is also used as a means of an opening up of discussion, or as a political bargaining instrument. During apartheid times, violence was used as a means of overthrowing the powers of oppression. Nieburg (1969:16) was right in saying that: "Violent revolt occurs ordinarily in a milieu of social instability and when the rate of social change is rising rapidly."

It also tends to occur when few alternatives are visible to minority or majority (depending on the level of oppression) groups for effecting social change. Further, violence and riots in some instances (especially in South Africa) become the sheer expression of an overwhelming sense of frustration, desperation, and hopelessness. Zimbabwe is moving in this direction. When a nation experiences frustration for a long time, people revolt, and this creates a new culture that believes that violence is acceptable. In other words, violence

### ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

symbolises the credibility that change of the social order can be effected by violent means, and it finally develops a sense of cohesion and organisation among disinherited groups. There are different methods that can bring about social change, for example, peaceful demonstrations, as applied by the Argentinean people, consumer boycotts, demonstrations, et cetera. Some of the above strategies have indeed successfully brought about social change.

In an oppressive situation, at times middle class and rational moralists tend to rule out violence and revolution as permissible instruments of social change. But, as Niebuhr (1932:170) says: "They are wrong in their assumption and that violence is intrinsically immoral."

True violence may tend to perpetuate injustice, even when its aim is justice. For example, during the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa one young girl was set alight with petrol because she was called a "sell out". But there are times when it is possible and necessary to establish justice through violence. With Niebuhr, I believe that there is potentially a greater degree of recalcitrance and egoism present in relationships between groups and nations than in personal relationships. Thus the achievement of harmony and justice in inter-group relations necessitates a measure of coercion. Niebuhr (1932:172) reminds us that: "Once it is admitted that coercion is ethically justified in some situations, an absolute line of demarcation cannot be drawn between violent and non-violent coercion."

In spite of the ambiguities intrinsic to the use of violence, there is an ethical distinction, at least potentially, between violence used by vigorously oppressed or suppressed people, and violent control used by a class or group in power to suppress or oppress dissent and to maintain the status quo. Non-violent coercion is still coercion, and can result in destructiveness, even though it differs in intent from violent coercion. Violent action includes within its intent and consequences the destruction of life and property, whereas non-violence does not.

In any destruction of life, women and children suffer more. It is true that non-violent coercion is not generally as destructive of life as is violence. But it should be noted that non-violent coercion, if enforced massively, destroys property and can destroy life. The economic embargo of a nation is a good example. Non-violent protest has at least two strategic advantages. First, in the words of Niebuhr, "it robs the oppressor of the moral conceit by which he (*sic*) identifies his (*sic*) interests with the peace and order of society" (1932:250). This, for me, is a clear advantage that an entrenched group has over those attacking the status quo. Furthermore, non-violent resistance minimises the risk of counter-violence and escalation and keeps bargaining channels open.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

There are several options of responding to violence. These include suppression, structural and cathartic expressions of violent emotions, bargaining, and attack of the very roots of violence as the removal of social inequities and grievances. Suppression or oppression only deepens rage, while catharsis produces only a temporary abeyance of violence. Bargaining and attack of the underlying roots of violence offer the only viable solutions with any permanency.

The built-in resistance to change that arises out of class and ethnic demarcations and economic self-interest necessitate a continual process of informed analysis of societal inequities, the face-to-face hearing of the aggrieved, and relatively assured means of confronting the power controllers with the necessities for change. Nothing short of confrontation of the intrinsic injustices in a given social system is effective in attacking the roots of violence, and this is not amenable to simple solution. There are two broad options for producing change in an organisation or a society: revolution and planned change.

Revolution attacks the system from outside its structures and overturns the system itself. Revolution has more possibility of producing violence than planned change. In any oppressive situation, planning is important, because planned change provides an option that should be developed with seriousness. It works from within the system to effect change. Planned change involves analysis of the malfunction of an organisation, the development of priorities as well as strategies for specific steps in moving the organisation/society from where it is at present to its projected point of change, and the placing of pressures for change at the points in the system which will produce the desired results, but not inordinate strains resulting in the disintegration in the system.

In an age of democracy, it is important and mandatory that ministers or caregivers obtain a working grasp of the dynamics of planned change. Working within this concept will help reduce stress, frustration, and ultimately will address the issues that trouble people. Aggression, anger and violence can be addressed by ministering to people and their needs. Life with the chronically over-controlled person would be peaceful. We have for many millennia believed that people of good will would finally prevail, and excise this cancerous behaviour of violence from the body of mankind, and we have failed consistently to achieve so lofty a goal. Perhaps we are better advised to look at the many ways in which we reward violence, to cease wondering why it continues unchecked, and devote our energies to realistic attempts to tame the Medusa which has for so long plagued us.

## ***Aggression, anger and violence in South Africa***

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