

## FOR ADVOCATES AGAINST BULLYING AND VIOLENCE

Modern society needs more people who have the courage to speak out against bullying and violence and to stand alongside those who are vulnerable to both. If you're inclined to do that, I'd like to talk with you because I want to encourage your inclination in that direction and validate you as a person for joining the anti-bullying/anti-violence movement. Whether your heart draws you to help address private forms of violence like domestic violence or human trafficking or to address more public forms of violence like gunfire on the streets, playground bullying or military reactions to international strife, there are common themes worth talking about.

Because I honor you for joining the anti-bullying/anti-violence movement, I want to help you to achieve your dreams in self-nurturing ways that take into account your sensitive, compassionate and empathetic nature. Our heart-to-heart conversations will help you to feel the empowering flow of synergy in your life simply because you and I already share a heartfelt bond or link woven of three strong strands – courage, compassion and commitment. Unless you experience adequate emotional support, compassion fatigue from being empathetic can rob you of your life satisfaction and leave you feeling drained of enthusiasm about your own life. Unlike most prescription medications that come with warnings about their adverse side effects, society's admiration for your heroic twin commitments to academic/career success and social justice fails to warn about the potential for adverse consequences. Society's typical efforts to address bullying and violence tend to address symptoms without focusing on root causes, encouraging us to waste our energy investing ourselves in shallow, pseudo-solutions. I'd like to talk with you about the difference between band aid approaches and approaches that address root causes so that you can spot the difference and focus your social justice activities with a sense of increased effectiveness, less futility and greater utility.

I also want to talk to you about how to avoid unintentionally letting yourself be harmed. You want to be helpful. Understandably you want to have confidence that your activities are making a significant, lasting difference. If you want to maintain your focus and stamina as a student/professional while also contributing to the welfare of others (as a paid service provider, volunteer or both), it's important to be aware of how to take care of your own well-being while exposed to others who are struggling to survive amidst bullying and violence. The emotional turmoil of violence in any form takes its toll, not only upon those who directly receive the brunt of violence but also upon those who step up to help bring an end to it and to promote healing and recovery from its traumatic impact. The adverse effects of secondary trauma can be discouraging as you may strive to help others feel protected. It's wise to protect yourself from emotional harm as you protect others from harm.

Let's talk about the steps you can take to prevent secondary trauma and how I can help you move forward in pursuit of your goals while you also help others move forward in the pursuit of theirs. I can help you achieve and maintain greater clarity as well as emotional well-being within the field of social justice. If you want to design a life for yourself that does not merely repeat the past that you and others have endured but instead incorporates the relief of the best you hope to experience of an improved future (for yourself and others), I am available to listen and talk as much as you feel the need and desire to share your heart and mind. Let me know if being less alone in making and carrying out your decisions interests you. Within our heart-to-heart conversations you will experience the flow of synergy that lifts all of humanity as we discover how much we truly are kindred spirits.