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How the Virgin Islands Will Stop the Excessive Violence in its Community

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“Non-violence requires a double faith, a faith in God and also a faith in man.” These sage words voiced by a very peaceful man, Mohandas Gandhi, are truly mind sobering and thought provoking. Living in a world where violence is rampant, no one sees an end in sight. In our community, our consciences have become hardened and even accustomed to its crippling effects. All the while, violence seems to be an endless plague bound to take more lives, cause more suffering, and hamper success. Because of these horrid facts, we are only left to wonder: How will violence be stopped? How can we all contribute to reduce acts of violence? What can be done to prevent it? As mind-boggling as they may seem, the answers and solutions to these queries may rightly provide relief to violence.

Furthermore, although violence is a vicious cycle, it can be broken. For it to be shredded to bits, it is important to recognize and analyze the sources from which it stems. Do violent altercations arise mainly among young adolescents, or older adults? Do they frequently occur within school grounds, the home environment, or on the streets? As current local events illustrate, they are occurring among both age groups and in all of the aforementioned locations. This grim reality reinforces the urgency for discontinuing its spread.

Firstly, it is essential to realize that violent acts are the consequences of unhealthy human interactions. Because emotions spur out of control, simple disagreements quickly develop into heated disputes culminating in bodily harm. To reach the root of this problem, emotional education should be at our community’s disposal. Members in the Virgin Islands society should be educated on how to deal with anger-causing emotions that lead to violence. Therefore, schools, community centers, and charitable organizations, can all do their part by having mentors, peace workers, or even therapists providing emotional assistance for all those who seek it.

Moreover, the vital education disseminated in these establishments can do more than teach alternative ways to dealing with aggression. Community and activity centers should make it their goal to become involved in engaging people to channel their time and energy in constructive pursuits. For instance, neighborhood clean-ups have the power of beautifying the community and promoting a secure environment. Additionally, these locations should be made safe havens. If a child or an adult is feeling threatened or endangered, these places should be readily available to attain help.

To further limit violent acts from increasing among youths, more should be done to meet the demands of community involvement. Adolescents need outlets for self-expression and social interaction. In sight of this, they should be given the opportunity to expend their time and energy in positive ways. Hence, it would be recommendable to form more recreational parks and community projects around our territory for youths to engender a peaceful attitude. The notable lack of these entities has left them to fulfill their social needs in dangerous avenues—through joining gangs, associating with questionable peers, and consuming drugs and alcohol. Instead of vesting their vigor in optimistic channels, they are left to engage in violent behaviors. Thus, since their actions will dictate the future, great focus should be paid to adolescents in our community.

To add on, attention should be given to familial relations. Normally, violent abuse carried out within the home exteriorizes. Children growing up in hostile environments often manifest aggressive tendencies. This aggression then develops into violence among friends, authority figures, and classmates. To curtail this grave problem, support groups should be created for at-risk children struggling with family troubles. On school grounds, children should be discouraged from name-calling and teasing. Without a doubt, these forms of support will illustrate that they are deeply cared for and appreciated.

On the other hand, adults should be encouraged to curb heated discussions and exhibit optimistic behavior. Since their significant role consists of raising children, an adult's example can be the precedent for a child's behavior. The recognition of this vital factor will enable many to deter from hostile and aggressive conduct and to lead a positive lifestyle.

Another preventive measure to consider is enforcing laws concerning firearms. Locally, weapons are easily attainable. Consequently, they are to blame for the excessive shootings and crimes which cause unsafe communal conditions. The presence of weapons not only interferes with the peace of our islands, but takes the lives of many beloved ones. This dreadful fact should drive law enforcement officials to actively stymie their entrance into the community. For example, residents should be provided safe ways to discard unwanted firearms. Surely, this will disable weapons from getting in the wrong hands.

Most importantly, the members of our community need to recognize the weighty influence that they exert as individuals. Everyone needs to reach out and be supportive—it is a joint effort. People of all ages can endeavor to cooperate with police, school officials, civic groups, and others to address larger issues for the community. Mutually, we all have to work together to achieve a violence free environment.

Also, it is critical to maintain non-violent conditions. This implies that all citizens of the Virgin Islands must understand and practice basic self-protection strategies. To thwart violence, we can all help to coordinate groups promoting peace and unity. As families, we can abstain from aggressive behavior. As neighborhoods, we can improve the appearance of our areas and produce serene atmospheres. In essence, we all have a part to fulfill in reducing violence.

We should all regard our territory as a beautiful paradise. As such, we do not need violence to besmirch the reputation of our utopia. It only yields carnage, brutality, and

bloodshed. For these reasons, we should all be determined to stop the excessive violence within our small society. Peace, unity, freedom—these are the qualities that we need to engender. By doing this, we will gain a territory liberated from the fetters of violence.