

My Submission to the Royal Commission

I grew up witnessing horrific domestic violence and occasionally being subjected to DV myself - (throughout the eighties and early nineties). I have four suggestions

1. I can say that - within the intergenerational context - healing and recovery *is* prevention. We therefore need much better informed mental health models and interventions for survivors of DFV. Over the years, I encountered an abysmally deficient level of insight amongst the psychologists and the psychiatrist I consulted for my PTSD. My mental health in fact deteriorated under their care. These so-called helpers possessed no growth mindset whatsoever. - I was simply informed that my life will always be stressful and put on a disability pension. Yet I was a proactive, disciplined, well educated (albeit highly anxious) young person at the time. - How is it that these mental health professionals learn about attachment theory, for example, and yet fail to use it in a meaningful, rigorous way - providing hope for those with violent childhoods? These mental health professionals need to be carefully supervised and required to submit regular evidence that they are using genuine recovery models, not just dilly-dallying or exploiting their traumatised in order to stay in work.

We also need new recovery models that are informed by those with lived experience of DFV. Please fund projects that invite DFV survivors to co-design such models.

2. The broader public needs to be given more information about how to respond, to not be bystanders. Campaigns to not only increase awareness but educate people on specific and helpful responses when they suspect or detect DV would be ideal.
3. Respectful male behaviour (especially from those in leadership) must be better and more frequently modelled and celebrated. – In particular, such modelling must be provided for perpetrators of DV.
4. I have read (in “See What You Made Me Do” by Jess Hill) that aboriginal women who have called the police for protection from DV have had their homes attended only to then receive fines for having an unregistered dog. - Please train police to prioritise human lives over punishments for petty administrative breaches.