

Domestic Violence & Religions Committee
 Domestic Violence Council
 Los Angeles, CA

**Religion and DV Committee
 Reflections and Envisioning The Future
 Together**

Co-Chairs

Bernita Walker, CEO, Project Peacemakers, INC.
Cecelia Walker, Coordinator, Angel Step Inn
Varsha N., JD, Int'l Speaker, Founder ROAR Training & Consulting, LLC

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Who We Are


 Bernita Walker





 Cecelia Walker


 Varsha N., JD

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Varsha: Colors?



“Why Care About Religions and Interfaith Practices?”

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Varsha: How Many Religions/Faiths Are You Familiar With



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Varsha: Visit With Your 'Neighbor'

- Faith/Belief System You Practice, If Any?
- Reason/s?
- Barriers?
- Stereotypes/Judgment?



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Which of the Following Describes Zion or Zionism?

*Which of the Following **DOES NOT** Describe Swastika?*

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Varsha: Survivor




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Bernita: History of the DV & Religions Committee

- Committee began as a "TASK FORCE" around 2001
- During the 5 years we had participated in 4 DV Conferences that were hosted by the DVC
- On April 13, 2006, fulfilling the requirement for "a committee" of the DVC, committee request letter was submitted.



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Bernita: Need For Establishing Committee

- In 2004-5 Task force members participated in the 'Train the Trainer' project through the California State Department of Health Services Faith Leaders and Domestic Violence Advocate Project.
- Teams were formed throughout California to address the gap in the service to survivors and their Faith/Worship institutions.

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Bernita: Past Activities

- Each year until 2017, a 10 hour training was held by the committee with the out come to tighten the relationship with places of Faith and the issues of DV.
- In 2018, We became apart of the United Faith Network, birthed through Jenesse Center, as the concept was to move forward with larger places of Worship with the same idea in mind. Covid interrupted the progress.

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Cecelia: Survivor Needs

- Tradition, sacred texts, doctrines, teachings, and cultural values will be either a roadblock, or a resource, to ending violence against all people. (Domestic Violence and Faith (October, 2018), retrieved from https://nnedv.org/latest_update/domestic-violence-faith/ on March 10, 2022.
- Clients identified their faith as a source of support but expressed feeling unsupported, confused, retraumatized after they approached faith leader regarding DV.
- The work & mission of the Committee is focused on bridging the gap in services by partnering with faith leaders

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Cecelia: Client Stories Impacting Mission of Committee

- “Sabotaging and Retraumatizing with Good Intentions”
- “Morning Meditation”



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Some Quotes by Attendees

"The DV & Religion Committee is important because it provides a space for **love, acceptance, and understanding** to share intimate experiences. It has given me a space to talk about issues that have negatively impacted my life and heal from those traumas."

"The DV & Religion committee raises awareness, as to biggest barriers when leaving an abusive relationship: **the faith community**. Understanding different faiths can assist providers to address such barriers"

"..Some religious institutions do not have DV discussions/trainings...I find engaging with this forum is an **excellent opportunity** to involve South Asian religious bodies- Hindu mandirs, Sikh gurudwaras, Jain derasars and Buddhist temples to have the knowledge of how to assist community members approaching them regarding domestic violence in a trauma-informed [and help]...survivors"

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Closing Comments

- DV & Religion Mtg, 4th Tuesday, at 1:00pm
- Ideas for Interfaith Guest Speakers?
- DV & Religion Co-Chairs as a Resource

Bernita Walker, bernita@ppmnc.org
Cecelia Walker, cwalker@scadpinc.org
Varsha N., JD, varsha@roartc.com

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