The Irrationality of the Continuum of Violence

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The article: "Pentagon employee suspected in the killing of rookie officer Ashley Guindon and wife is held without bail" (*http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/98484168-story*) – informs us of another murder of a policeman. Some will be cheering, but the vast majority will again be saddened and with an emotional response that it happened again.

Zimmerman & Posick (2016:178)1, provide the following statement on violence, "*Exposure to violence refers broadly to direct victimization via intentional or threatened physical harm or indirect witnessing of (or hearing about) the victimization of a family member, friend, or neighbor. Exposure to violence may occur in the home, school, or community, and it includes experiencing and witnessing events such as fights, shootings, and threats to injure* (Finkelhor, 2009)2.

We again find ourselves milling about waiting for top levels of government to address this senseless and obvious evil aspect of society and find sustainable solutions. It seems we also learn that some of this (assumed) leadership are not engaged for reasons unknown. In its place, we must determine alternative ways to find sustainable solutions before reactionary forces join the fray and society are lost to disruption of significant proportions.

We can, however, enter into a discussion of violence and examine the most common of causes for what is occurring. The following list provides labels for causes and solutions:

▌Remove Guns
　▌Reduce Criminality
　　▌Treat Mental Illness
　　　▌Eliminate Substance Abuse
　　　　▌Require Police Behavior Change/So too, Society
　　　　　Accountability

Causation factors on the use of a gun to carry out one's personal violence, while primary, become obscure to pontification. It is easy to blame the inert gun (a paper weight until a human hand grasps it); it is harder to ferret out mental illness and other variables without the eruption of emotion, partisanship, prejudicial, and simplistic solutions. Preventing violence 's hard, when it takes place out of sight, results in a 911 call and then due to anger or other unknown factors, results in someone again killing a police officer, who would not be there was the call to emergency services not made.

However, is it not more than those seemingly simple causation factors? What about missing cultural and personal values, anger control, disdain for others, sociopathic view of society and other people, of a lack of knowledge or a "careless" attitude about right and wrong? Certainly, there is the lack of personal responsibility and accountability for the quality-of-life and safety of others? Are we ensuring the proper social skills are taught? If not, why not? Suddenly the culture of violence is accepted by some segments of society, and in that illusion, the level of harm and death has become a significant problem.

The role of personal choice to fulfill one's needs, desires and motivations with no concern for the outcome on people and society; does not appear to enter into the equation? Moreover, then, when events like this happen, it is all too easy to blame the police for their reaction, a one-dimensional or agenda-driven response, an emotional retort; again without any knowledge of the situation, but need to ruminate. If blaming the police were not so serious, it would be ludicrous. I keep looking for sustainable solutions, not vitriolic rhetoric that accomplishes nothing. It seems patience is not enough!

References:

1. Zimmerman, G. & Posick, C. (2016). Risk Factors for and Behavioral Consequences of Direct Versus Indirect Exposure to Violence. American Journal of Public Health, 106 (1), 178-188.

2. Finkelhor D. Children's Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; 2009.

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