Conversation 8
Violence against women and children

[Introduction]
Gender-based violence involves acts of violence committed against women, men, boys or girls. That is, it is violence against another person because of their gender. The violence may take the form of physical, sexual, emotional or economic abuse. It usually has a severe emotional and mental impact on a victim, an impact that may last for years.

In South Africa today women are more harmed than anyone else by gender-based violence. We know from research that women are harmed more by people they know than by strangers. We know also that a lot of gender-based violence (including femicide) takes place in the home.

In 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa described gender-based violence as a "parallel pandemic" next to Covid-19.

- What do you know about the problem of GBV in this country?
- How would you describe: 1. Physical abuse? 2. Sexual abuse? 3. Emotional abuse? and 4. Economic abuse?

In pairs
Share with your partner, if you like:
[It is not compulsory to share your story. What is important is that you read the questions. What is each question trying to achieve?]

- Have you ever known somebody who has been abused in these ways? Share the story, if you like.
- Have you ever been abused in these ways? Share the story, if you like.
- Have you (or someone you know) ever treated a woman/man/child/animal violently? Would you like to share a story?
- What kind of help does the victim/survivor or survivor's family need?
- Do you need help?

[Conclusion]
Sharing stories about abuse can be a tough thing, especially if you are a victim or are close to the victim.

We have learnt that talking about the problem is vitally important. At the end of this booklet, is a list of help-line numbers you can use if you need help and support.

Before the next session …
Do something

Share with someone who is close to you about what happened in the session today.
Tell them about the questions that were asked.
Ask them how they would answer them.
Listen and love.