



Ethiopian Historic Conservation Council የኢትዮጵያ ታሪካዊ ቅርሳ-ቅርስ ማሕበር (ኢ.ታ.ቅ.ቅ.ማ)

ሓቁ ተመርምሮ ቢነገር እውነቱ ባንል፣ ልማድ ቀርቶ፣ ታሪክ ከተረሳ
ታሪክ አይደለም ወይ ለሰው ሰውነቱ ተቆፍሮ ወጥቶ ታድሶ እንዲነሳ

በመጨረሻው ትውልድ ዳግም እንዲወሳ
ሀ! ብሎ መጀመር ወይ ያለው አበሳ...

Crying in Silence

During the last 35 years more than half a million Ethiopians have settled in Western Europe, North America, and Australia. Many Ethiopians in the Diaspora have been uprooted and exposed to various challenging social adjustments which are emotionally taxing starting from the very start of the flight and all the way to the safe haven that the West represented. Life as an immigrant in the West is never easy but comes with many daily challenges and existential insecurity.

Migration brings with it both opportunities and challenges and it is not only Geographical dislocation but also an emotional dislocation into the realm of the unknown world filled with uncertainties, with sudden and violent cultural shock at the contact with the unfamiliar new world. The emotional dislocation entails leaving ones dear family members behind, a familiar culture, and many social mores that one grew up in, and values and traditional customs. All these are points of emotional attachment.

As much as moving into a new country and society can be a source of new opportunities, it can be also be a source of new challenge and difficulties that stretch ones emotional resources to the extreme. According to some experts this can then evolve to become one's emotional strength and human resilience, but to some, it is overwhelming, and the individual can become desperate and even suicidal, an act that proves very tragic.

Especially many young Ethiopians are crying in silence and they suffer and bear unimaginable pain. The continuous pain which many Ethiopian have to bear in the course of four decades of continuing social disruption is expressing itself here in Southern California and all around the Western world where Ethiopians reside in the form of homicide, murder, suicide, and murder / suicide. Despite the increasing suffering Ethiopians have to contend with and the alarmingly increasing suicide trends within the Ethiopian Diaspora, hardly any attempt has been made to come together for a common reflection as a community and to find solution.



Ethiopian Historic Conservation Council

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Recently a 19 year old Ethiopian young man hanged himself in the alley in Little Ethiopia, in Los Angeles. Could this tragedy have been prevented if there was a well organized community? Perhaps! There are many good Ethiopians who tried to help this particular person, but his problem was too severe for the lay person, and for the minor help that individuals could afford to give him every now and then. This young man probably needed professional help.

Who is to blame for this? The suicide of a 19 year old young man is an indictment on the Ethiopian community at large. All of us bear some responsibility of one form or another. Cain asked, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” And so, we all have a moral responsibility on the sad end of this young man. The churches are also responsible and are obligated to address the seriousness of this problem. This issue is not going to disappear unless it is addressed head on, and there could be more young men and women that will follow him.

What can we do? We need to unite and create community support organizations. This article is an invitation to all the mothers and fathers who are first generation Ethiopians, to young men and woman, professionals and non professionals, to start a dialogue and to create some type of support system. This call is also to all those who are crying in silence and bearing unimaginable pain alone. We all need to come together in our churches or in our coffee rooms and create a forum that offers sympathy and understanding, love and compassion, and a listening ear. If we put our minds together, we may come up with a solution to this problem. If you are one of those crying in silence, I want to let you know that you are not alone. Let us not start with criticism or judgment on the forum. Let us just be positive and look for solutions to help one another.

G. D. Emmanuel

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