

## Domestic Violence Awareness March Around Montebello Lake in Baltimore, MD

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*"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito." — The Dalai Lama*

A few months ago, I participated in a peace road event in Baltimore, Maryland, wanting to support it somehow with a mother's heart. At the time, I offered cool refreshments and introduced WFWP to the participants, including one lady named Sonya Edgington-Chapple, the founder of a local domestic violence awareness organization. We exchanged business cards, and I offered to help or participate in her next event. I myself come from a family with an alcoholic abusive stepfather, and my husband had a violent father as well, so her topic resonated with me.



October is Domestic Violence Awareness month, and on October 10th, I was invited to join a prayer and march around Montebello lake in Baltimore. Marianne Goldberg and Emiko Butler, both long-time WFWP Maryland members, were happy to come and support this initiative as well.

Sonya has been leading such events in Baltimore each October for the past 4 years, under the name of her organization India's Purple Ribbon. It was named in memory of her daughter India, who tragically lost her life to domestic violence in 2014. The color purple is associated with domestic violence and individuals commonly wear purple

ribbons to raise awareness for the cause.

I asked Sonya if she wanted to share a little about why she started this organization, and this is what she said: "After the death of my daughter, I joined an organization of Mothers of Murdered Sons and Daughters (MOMS). As we were invited to speak about our trauma, many times only the sons were mentioned. I decided then that daughters would no longer be left out. Since my daughter's murder was [a result of] domestic violence, I started off by releasing purple balloons. After that I said the balloons were not enough, and I started my group India's Purple Ribbon to bring awareness to domestic violence. Her children can continue the legacy of their mother always."

Despite the serious topic, the atmosphere felt joyful and relaxed on that sunny afternoon, as we marched around the lake and shared personal testimonies. Sonya's grandchildren released purple balloons over the lake at the end of the march. Marianne presented Sonya with purple flowers and we also offered her a copy of Mother Moon's memoir. We plan to keep in touch with her and invite her to future events.