

The Wrong Way to Fix Differences

Juana Rosario

I do not believe that the war on terror is the right way for the U.S. to respond to 9/11. The cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is enormous. Between 100,000 and one million innocent Iraqis and more than 4,000 U.S. soldiers have died. My son was in Iraq as a soldier for one year. It is difficult for him to talk about his experience, but he says the war was terrible, illegal, and full of lies.

The biggest lie may be the one that got us into the war in the first place. The U.S. said that Iraq had Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), and it would be dangerous if terrorists could use them. Now we know that Iraq didn't have WMDs.

The war in Iraq is illegal because international law says you can't attack another country unless that country attacks you first. Iraq did not invade the United States. Iraq is an independent country. The U.S. should not have invaded it and we should not now be occupying it.

The majority of American people do not support the U.S. war in Iraq, but our government continues occupying the country anyway.

My two sons didn't always agree with each other as children. Many times, they had arguments. But I explained to them, "Your brother thinks like that and you think differently. He can go one way and you can go another way."

I think that when people have differences, they can fix them by talking, not by using violence.



Juana and her two sons

I know this from my experience every day. Many people make big arguments for no reason. But even if people are angry, you can talk to them and they can understand.

Sources: <www.pollingreport.com/iraq.htm>, <<http://rt.com/usa/news/real-toll-americas-wars-odyssey-dawn/>>, <www.tni.org/article/understanding-us-iraq-crisis-2>.

Juana Rosario was born in the Dominican Republic and has lived in the U.S. for 24 years. All that time, she wanted to learn English, but she was working a full-time job and had two children to care for so she didn't have time to study. Now that her kids are adults, she has time to dedicate to learning English. She is a student at We Make the Road New York in Jackson Heights, Queens.

For Discussion

In what ways is violence easier than talking through differences?

What is your experience with conflict resolution? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using violence versus talking?

As Juana states, "Iraq didn't have Weapons of Mass Destruction." How can the U.S. ensure that such large mistakes are not made in the future?