

If We Don't Embrace the Children, They Will Burn the Village Down

from Malidoma Some (Burkina Faso) relating an African proverb ¹

By Dr. Michael Obsatz – August 2025

We created a documentary about mentoring boys called "Journeyman," in 2006, which was viewed by over 3 million people. ² It was about the Boys to Men program in the Twin Cities, and had interviews with Michael Gurian, Barbara Coloroso, and David Walsh among others, as well as telling the story of the lives of two boys. They each were mentored by men, and their lives changed for the better.

This documentary is still available and follows several school shootings including Columbine. In 2004, I went to the White House and met with experts and the President about what can be done about school shootings and the safety our children. They are all suffering, including the shooters.

The White House conference focused on better metal detectors, and including protocols for safety during an actual shooting. Since then, there have been many more mass killings and school shootings done by young, suffering boys and men.

My book, "Raising Nonviolent Children in a Violent World," published by Augsburg Fortress, came out in 1999, winning a Minnesota Book Award and the Catholic Press Association Award. ³

We know what needs to be done. It is a shift from narcissism to compassion, from hierarchy to equality, from wound worship or victim consciousnesses to personal accountability and healthy maturity.

Leadership needs to turn into servant leadership, with respect and support for all beings, and the earth. If we don't do something about the earth, it will also burn the villages down. This shift to Oneness Consciousness is an inside job, involving the whole being — physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual.

So — here we go. Another troubled youth with a gun. We live in Empire Consciousness, with divisions, shaming, blaming, complaining and arrogance. We need to initiate children of every age, and adults into Oneness Consciousness.

Wars, violence, hatred, fear, scarcity thinking, and emphasis on hierarchy, power over, and domination will end when we GROW UP into maturity. We need mentoring programs, spirituality that are wholistic and loving.

Check out www.lifesjourney.us --- we have many writings and videos about how to live in peace and Oneness.

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¹ <https://www.proverbsclub.com/proverbs/1322/> African, Tanzania Proverb, Wisdom, Quote & saying.

² **Journeyman**: <https://www.amazon.com/Journeyman-Passage-Mentoring-Culture-America/dp/B001BSBBYO> - View trailer on IMDb: [Journeyman \(2007\) - IMDb](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0789000/)

³ *Raising Nonviolent Children in a Violent World* by Dr. Michael Obsatz: [Amazon.com : raising non violent children in a violent world - Obsatz](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B001BSBBYO) or at thriftbooks: [Raising Nonviolent Children In A Violent... book by Michael Obsatz](https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/raising-nonviolent-children-in-a-violent-world-by-michael-obsatz/)