

If I believe in something,
I don't give up.

ROSEMARY



I was in an abusive relationship in Kenya. When I came to Australia in 1999, I had to leave my two sons behind. They came four and six years later. At first, I was very, very lonely. A lady at the airport took me in. Later, I stayed at emergency accommodation and then in a block of fifteen units in Randwick. No-one there talked to me, and I was wondering: 'What is wrong with these people? Why don't they talk to me?'

One Christmas I put a Christmas card under everyone's door: My name is Rosemary Kariuki. I am wishing you a Happy Christmas, and could you please be talking to me. This is my number.'

From then on it was magic. Everyone talked to me. We visited each other, invited each other in. Wow!

I also worked at a retirement village. I talked to lonely people. I had the ones who were dying. I am now multi-cultural community liaison officer with Parramatta Police. I help people, many women. Ones who have been abused and are lonely. Loneliness and isolation are very hard. This year I won the Australian Local Hero of The Year.

Everyone can do something, and this world can be a different place.

ROSEMARY



Scan here to listen to a full interview with Rosemary Kariuki



The Mt Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA) is an independent community based organisation dedicated to informing, linking and empowering people from culturally diverse backgrounds to enhance a culturally rich and diverse Australia.

www.meca.org.au



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