



## Introduction to Domestic Violence

1

## Introduction to Domestic Violence

### Purpose

This module will highlight the complicated dynamics of domestic violence. Participants will learn the function of domestic violence and the many types of abuse suffered by victims. Additionally, participants will discover domestic violence is a learned behavior and it is not as easy as one might think for a victim to leave an abusive relationship.

### Learning Objectives

*By the end of this training module, participants will be able to:*

1. Define domestic violence and its purpose.
2. Recognize types of abusive behavior.
3. Understand how domestic violence may be learned.
4. Understand why some victims remain in abusive relationships.
5. Discuss the dynamics of abusive relationships.
6. Recognize some of the myths surrounding domestic violence.

2

## Behavioral Definitions

- Domestic violence refers to a wide variety of behaviors used by individuals, to exert power and control over their intimate partners or former partners. Victims can be male or female and perpetrators can be of either sex as well.\* Domestic violence includes physical and sexual assault, behaviors which are criminal and can be reported to police and prosecuted in the courts.
- But not all abuse is physical. Abuse also includes psychological abuse, emotional abuse, economic/financial abuse, legal abuse, threats to and about children, using "male privilege," intimidation, isolation, coercion, financial control, and many other behaviors which, while not criminal acts, do reinforce control over the victim.
- While many of the actions described above are also committed by strangers, domestic violence is distinguished from battering by strangers in that the abuse is a pattern of conduct, as opposed to isolated events, and abusers are family members or intimate friends.

\* Although women may abuse their partners, it is estimated by FBI reports that between 90-95% of victims of domestic violence are women. Same sex domestic violence in lesbian and gay couples is also a recognized problem. For the purpose of this manual, however, we will define perpetrators as men and victims as women.

3

## Montana Annotated Code

45-5-206. Partner or family member assault -- penalty.

(1) A person commits the offense of partner or family member assault if the person:

- (a) purposely or knowingly causes bodily injury to a partner or family member;
- (b) negligently causes bodily injury to a partner or family member with a weapon; or
- (c) purposely or knowingly causes reasonable apprehension of bodily injury in a partner or family member.

(2) For the purposes of Title 40, chapter 15, [45-5-231](#) through [45-5-234](#), [46-6-311](#), and this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Family member" means mothers, fathers, children, brothers, sisters, and other past or present family members of a household. These relationships include relationships created by adoption and remarriage, including stepchildren, stepparents, in-laws, and adoptive children and parents. These relationships continue regardless of the ages of the parties and whether the parties reside in the same household.

(b) "Partners" means spouses, former spouses, persons who have a child in common, and persons who have been or are currently in a dating or ongoing intimate relationship.

(3) (a) (i) An offender convicted of partner or family member assault shall be fined an amount not less than \$100 or more than \$1,000 and be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 1 year or not less than 24 hours for a first offense.

(ii) An offender convicted of a second offense under this section shall be fined not less than \$300 or more than \$1,000 and be imprisoned in the county jail not less than 72 hours or more than 1 year.

(iii) Upon a first or second conviction, the offender may be ordered into misdemeanor probation as provided in [46-23-1005](#).

(iv) On a third or subsequent conviction for partner or family member assault, the offender shall be fined not less than \$500 and not more than \$50,000 and be imprisoned for a term not less than 30 days and not more than 5 years. If the term of imprisonment does not exceed 1 year, the person shall be imprisoned in the county jail. If the term of imprisonment exceeds 1 year, the person shall be imprisoned in the state prison.

(v) If the offense was committed within the vision or hearing of a minor, the judge shall consider the minor's presence as a factor at the time of sentencing.

4

## Montana Annotated Code (continued)

- (b) For the purpose of determining the number of convictions under this section, a conviction means:
- (i) a conviction, as defined in [45-2-101](#), under this section;
  - (ii) a conviction for domestic abuse under this section;
  - (iii) a conviction for a violation of a statute similar to this section in another state;
  - (iv) if the offender was a partner or family member of the victim, a conviction for aggravated assault under [45-5-202](#) or assault with a weapon under [45-5-213](#);
  - (v) a conviction for strangulation of a partner or family member under [45-5-215](#);
  - (vi) a conviction in another state for an offense related to domestic violence between partners or family members, as those terms are defined in this section, regardless of what the offense is named or whether it is misdemeanor or felony, if the offense involves conduct similar to conduct that is prohibited under [45-5-202](#), [45-5-213](#), or this section; or
  - (vii) a forfeiture of bail or collateral deposited to secure the defendant's appearance in court in this state or in another state for a violation of a statute similar to this section, which forfeiture has not been vacated.
- (4) (a) An offender convicted of partner or family member assault is required to pay for and complete a counseling assessment with a focus on violence, controlling behavior, dangerousness, and chemical dependency. An investigative criminal justice report, as defined in [45-5-231](#), must be copied and sent to the offender intervention program, as defined in [45-5-231](#), to assist the counseling provider in properly assessing the offender's need for counseling and treatment. Counseling providers shall take all required precautions to ensure the confidentiality of the report. If the report contains confidential information relating to the victim's location or not related to the charged offense, that information must be deleted from the report prior to being sent to the offender intervention program.

5

## Montana Annotated Code (continued)

- (b) The offender shall complete all recommendations for counseling, referrals, attendance at psychoeducational groups, or treatment, including any indicated chemical dependency treatment, made by the counseling provider. The counseling provider must be approved by the court. The counseling must include a preliminary assessment for counseling, as defined in [45-5-231](#). The offender shall complete a minimum of 40 hours of counseling. The counseling may include attendance at psychoeducational groups, as defined in [45-5-231](#), in addition to the assessment. The preliminary assessment and counseling that holds the offender accountable for the offender's violent or controlling behavior must meet the standards established pursuant to [44-7-210](#) and be:
- (i) with a person licensed under Title 37, chapter 17, 22, or 23;
  - (ii) with a professional person as defined in [53-21-102](#); or
  - (iii) in a specialized domestic violence intervention program.
- (c) The minimum counseling and attendance at psychoeducational groups provided in subsection (4)(b) must be directed to the violent or controlling conduct of the offender. Other issues indicated by the assessment may be addressed in additional counseling beyond the minimum 40 hours. Subsection (4)(b) does not prohibit the placement of the offender in other appropriate treatment if the court determines that there is no available treatment program directed to the violent or controlling conduct of the offender.
- (5) In addition to any sentence imposed under subsections (3) and (4), after determining the financial resources and future ability of the offender to pay restitution as provided for in [46-18-242](#), the court shall require the offender, if able, to pay the victim's reasonable actual medical, housing, wage loss, and counseling costs.
- (6) In addition to the requirements of subsection (5), if financially able, the offender must be ordered to pay for the costs of the offender's probation, if probation is ordered by the court.
- (7) The court may prohibit an offender convicted under this section from possession or use of the firearm used in the assault. The court may enforce [45-8-323](#) if a firearm was used in the assault.
- (8) The court shall provide an offender with a written copy of the offender's sentence at the time of sentencing or within 2 weeks of sentencing if the copy is sent electronically or by mail.

6

## Function of Domestic Violence: A Pattern of Control

- Domestic violence is *not* simply two people who physically hurt one another because they cannot control their tempers during an argument. Certainly, violence in this form is devastating and should be stopped. But, the core issue of domestic violence is much more insidious.
- Battering or abuse is a pattern of behavior which seeks to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation. Batterers believe they are entitled to control their victims. They believe threats and violence are acceptable and will produce the desired results. Therefore, domestic violence is purposeful and instrumental behavior.
- The perpetrator's pattern of abusive acts is used to gain compliance from or control over the victim. It is directed at restricting independent thought and action so the victim will become devoted to fulfilling the needs of the perpetrator. The pattern is not impulsive or 'out of control' behavior. Tactics that work to control the victim are selectively chosen by the perpetrator. This achievement is unfulfilling however, because the perpetrator can *never get enough* control to make him/her feel comfortable. It is impossible, despite the victim's attempts to comply.

7

## Case Study

Polly is 20 years old. She met her boyfriend, Roy, through an ad in the newspaper. They dated for a few months and then decided to move in together. Only a week into this arrangement, however, Polly saw another side of Roy. He became controlling and physically abusive. He was paranoid anyone she spoke to might take her away from him. Polly has tried to reassure him and does all she can to prevent his temper from flaring.

Recently, Polly discovered she was pregnant. After telling Roy, he confided he had been in prison in California for murdering two teenagers who had been "drag racing" with his wife. His wife and child died in the auto accident caused by the teenage boys. Roy says he's not ready for another family yet and demands Polly get an abortion. Polly wants to keep the baby. After an argument, during which Roy threatened to "knock the baby out of her" himself, Polly came to the shelter.

She is confused and doesn't know what to do. She says she loves Roy, and she knows he is a good, caring man - he's just in a lot of pain over the death of his wife and child. With her love and persistence, she thinks he might be able to get through his troubles and change. Polly is considering going home and trying to work things out with Roy.

8

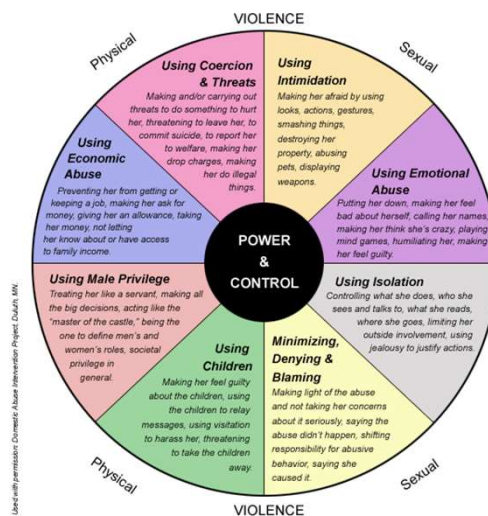
## Relating the Information: Consider the Polly and Roy Case Study

- Is there a pattern of behavior with Roy identified in the case study?
- Does Roy utilize fear and intimidation?
- Does Polly fulfill the role of the victim by attempting to meet the needs of the perpetrator?
- Would the underlying threat Roy being capable of murder influence decisions Polly is making?

9

## The Power and Control Wheel

Developed by the *Domestic Abuse Intervention Project* in Duluth, Minnesota, the Power and Control Wheel illustrates the tactics an abuser uses on his victim. Constantly surrounded by threats and/or actual physical and sexual abuse, the victim is subjected to the various tactics listed in the spokes as the abuser attempts to exert complete power and control over her.



10

## Physical Abuse

- Spitting
- Scratching, pinching, biting
- Grabbing, shaking
- Shoving, pushing
- Restraining, twisting
- Throwing, pulling hair
- Slapping, punching
- Choking, burning
- Using weapons against the victim.

Some assaults result in physical injury and some do not. Note bruises sometimes take days to show up. Some physical abuse may be as subtle as a purposeful overdose of anti-diarrheal medication.

11

## Sexual Abuse

- Coerced sex by manipulation or threat of physical force
- Violent sex
- A kind of sex victim does not want
- Sex at a time victim does not want it, drugging the victim
- Forcing to watch pornography

Sometimes a victim's resistance will be punished while other victims comply, hoping the sexual abuse will end quickly. Some battered women are unclear whether this sexual abuse is really abuse, believing it to be her duty as a wife.

12

## Psychological Abuse

### **Threats through words:**

- "If I can't have you no one will."
- "Your mother is going to pay."
- "If you do, you'll be sorry."

### **Actions:**

- Stalking
- Brandishing weapons
- Standing over victim in a threatening manner
- Suicide attempts

### **Intimidation:**

- Yelling and screaming in victim's face
- Standing over a victim during a fight
- Reckless driving while victim, children or grandchildren are in the car

Perpetrators will use varying combinations of psychological abuse depending on what works on their victims. The perpetrator's threats of harm may be against the victim, others important to the victim, or they may be threats of suicide. Perpetrators psychologically abuse their victims through attacks on their property or pets, and other acts of intimidation. Attacks on property or pets are **not random outbursts of uncontrolled anger** - they are part of the perpetrator's attempts to control the victim. It is the wall the victim is standing near that the abuser hits or the victim's favorite china getting smashed. The covert message to the victim is "You can be next."

13

## Emotional Abuse

### **Common Tactics:**

- Criticize the victim
- Threaten children, pets
- Mock her religious beliefs, appearance
- Call her names
- Challenge the victim's sense of reality

### **Isolation:**

- Moving the victim far away or cutting the victim off from supportive friends or family members.
- Claiming the victim's friends or family are "interfering"
- Not allowing the victim to use the telephone or monitoring her calls
- Not allowing the victim access to the car
- Not allowing the victim to retrieve the mail or answer the door without permission
- Not allowing the victim to socialize or meet neighbors

### **Misinformation:**

- Giving contradictory information to the victim
- Lying to the victim
- Gaslighting

### **Withholding information from the victim about:**

- Resources
- Assistance
- Phone calls from friends and family

Emotional abuse is a tactic of control consisting of a variety of verbal attacks and humiliations aimed at the victim's sense of self.

Verbal attacks usually focus on the victim's vulnerabilities, which are well known to the abuser.

The emotional abuse in domestic violence cases is not merely a matter of someone getting angry and calling their partner a few nasty names. Not all verbal attacks between intimates are classified as domestic violence. In order for a verbal assault to be considered domestic violence, it must be part of a pattern of coercive behaviors.

Abusers try to control their victims' time, activities and contact with others. Control over the victim is gained through a combination of isolating and misinformation tactics.

Misinformation tactics are used by the abuser to distort what is real or the truth.

If a victim is isolated she will believe whatever the abuser tells her, since she has no other sources of information.

14

## Economic Abuse

*Controlling victim's access to the family's resources such as:*

- Time
- Food, clothing, shelter
- Money
- Not allowing the victim to work
- Not listing the victim as an owner on a home, cars, insurance policies, etc.
- Ruining the victim's credit
- Working "off the books" or for cash so no or very little income is reported which the victim may be awarded
- Threatening to take her off his medical insurance
- Transportation

It does not matter who is the primary financial provider or if both contribute - the abuser controls how the finances are spent. Victims are put in the position of having to ask permission to spend money on basic family needs. The abuser may purposely prevent her from becoming financially self-sufficient in order to maintain his power and control over her - as long as she is financially dependent upon the abuser, she may be forced to remain with him.

15

## Legal Abuse

- Threatening to have victim declared incompetent
- Falsely reporting victim to law enforcement
- Threatening deportation
- Threatening to report drug use
- Threatening reports to social service agencies who might cut benefits
- Filing orders of protection against the victim, making the victim look like the violent one
- Instituting legal procedures the victim cannot afford to fight

The abuser will often use the legal system to manipulate the victim. If filed first, the victim is reduced to defending instead of protecting against the abuser.

16



## Why Psychological Tactics Work

- Psychological control of the victim through intermittent use of physical assault along with psychological abuse is typical of domestic violence. These tactics are similar to those used against prisoners of war or hostages and they are done for the same purpose: to gain and maintain power and control over the victim.
- It is the abuser's use of physical force, or the threat of physical force, that gives power to their psychologically abusive acts.
- Psychological abuse becomes an effective weapon in controlling victims because they know through experience that abusers can and will at times back up their threats with physical assaults. Sometimes the abuser is violent only once, but it is the threat that they will be again that keeps the victim fearful and under control. The violence may not be directed towards the victim, but at an inanimate object, however, the underlying message is, "It can be you."
- Perpetrators will use whatever combination of tactics they find most successful with their victim. The tactics used are not random - they are carefully planned and each is used at a time when the perpetrator knows it will be most effective.

17

## Myth Buster

### **Myth:**

Abuse is caused by alcohol or drugs.

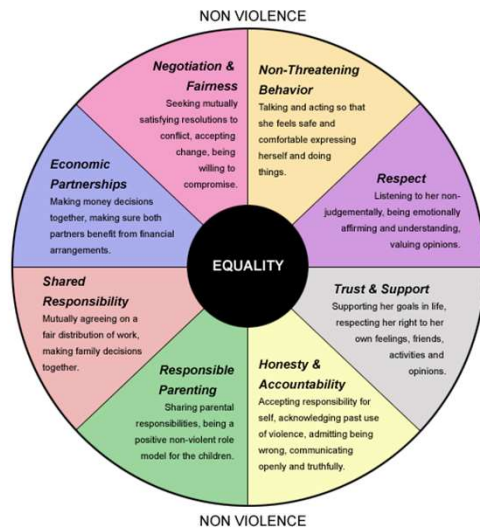
### **Fact:**

Alcohol and drugs do not cause someone to become aggressive. They are, however, used by the batterer as an excuse. There are many users of alcohol and drugs who do not batter and many batterers who do not use alcohol or drugs. There may be a correlation, but causality is not present!

18

## The Equality Wheel

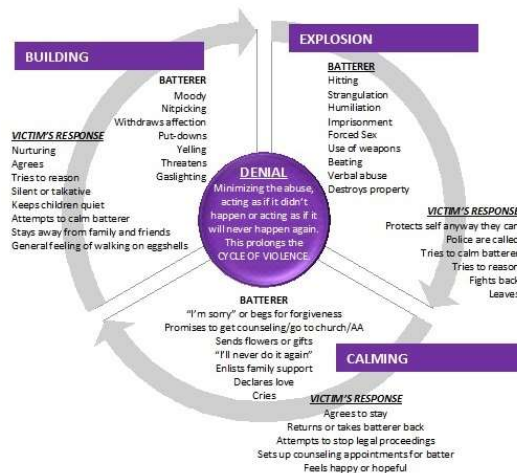
Illustration of healthy intimate relationship based on non-violence and equality.



19

## The Cycle of Violence

The Cycle of Violence depicts a pattern often experienced in abusive relationships. The three phases repeat over and over. Domestic violence is a pattern of abuse in an intimate relationship that escalates over time.



20

## Cycle of Violence

The 3-Phase Cycle of Violence, originally described by Walker (1979, 1984), is used to demonstrate the dynamics of an abusive relationship.

*The 3 phases are:*

1. Building
2. Explosion
3. Calming

Each abusive relationship is different and so not all of them follow this model strictly, but this 3-phase pattern is fairly common. Domestic violence is insidious - it builds slowly, first with minor controlling behaviors, then psychological abuse, and finally physical violence. Particularly in the early stages, the victim may not even realize he/she is in an abusive relationship. By the time the victim does realize it, there are often many barriers to leaving.

21

## The Cycle of Violence

### Phase One: Building

- In this phase there are behaviors such as name-calling, verbal threats, and intimidation. The victim often tries to be nurturing, compliant, and provide whatever the abuser needs in order to avoid triggering his anger. Even the most submissive victim cannot avoid an abuser who will usually find something, often trivial, to become angry about. The victim tries to wait out periods of increased tension, hoping they will pass without an outburst. She may avoid family and friends, keeping those who are trying to be helpful away, which may help the abuser to isolate the victim and make him the only source of affection.
- The abuser may become more and more angry, jealous, and suspicious of the victim. The abuser may try to supervise every aspect of the victim's life in an attempt to control her and ensure that the victim does not leave. As the tension builds, the verbal arguments become increasingly hostile and threatening. The tension finally builds beyond control and severe abuse becomes inevitable.

22

## The Cycle of Violence

### Phase Two: Explosion

- The next phase begins with a severely abusive or violent act against the victim. The batterer can go into an angry rage causing major destruction to the home and injuries to the victim. He may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and use this as an excuse for his behavior. The batterer may have learned from past mistakes to inflict injuries in areas that will be covered by clothing or to be careful not to cause any injuries that would leave marks.
- It should be noted that seemingly random acts of violence reinforce the batterer's power, so there may not be a tension-building phase in some abusive relationships. In some relationships, physical violence fades away over time. The fact the abuser can use it again at any time may be enough to keep the victim under control.

23

## The Cycle of Violence

### Phase Three: Calming

In the apology or "Calming" phase, the abuser will beg for forgiveness. He may follow with seemingly sincere, tearful apologies, promises to end the violence, stop drinking, etc. Gifts and displays of affection often give the victim false hope the violence will end. The victim wants to believe the abuser even though suspicious the promises will not be kept.

This phase is usually seen early in the abusive relationship. Eventually, many abusers skip this phase altogether, finding they do not need to apologize in order to make the victim stay. In those cases, victims suffer through tension-building and violent outbursts with no remorse from the abuser.

24

## Profile of Abusers

Abusers do not differ from non-abusers in race, religion, or economic status. Abusers come from every profession, every level of education, every income level, every ethnic group, and every location. While batterers have proven to be a highly varied group and difficult to characterize, it has been noted in general, batterers:

- Have low self-esteem.
- Believe in a traditional family with a dominant male as head of the household.
- Blame others for their actions.
- Are pathologically jealous.
- Believe their violent behavior is justified and should not be punished.
- Have a high need for control.
- Fear being alone.
- Lack guilt, shame, and remorse over their actions.
- Deny allegations of abuse or become hostile when confronted with them.

25

## Profile of Abusers (continued)

Abusers are also great manipulators. They can be charming, witty, attractive, and intelligent. They tend to hide their violent side from those outside the family and often appear normal and likable to others. Even when confronted with their actions by police, counselors, or in court, they can appear to be much more calm and rational than the victim. Yet, in their private lives they seem to have a dual personality – a personality that seeks to dominate others, to punish and control them through emotional and physical abuse, then transforms into a seemingly caring and emotionally independent individual when those they abuse are most likely to take flight.

These same likable characteristics are used against the victim in the Calming Phase sometimes occurs after violent outbursts. Seeing the kinder side of the batterer's character often gives the victim hope that change is possible, which leads him/her to stay. *Most victims want the abuse to end, but the relationship to continue.*

26

## Impact of Domestic Violence

- Domestic violence can result in serious injury or death as well as in chronic health problems.
- Domestic Violence can affect the mental health status of victims.
- Domestic Violence frequently results in isolation which causes damage to family and friends surrounding the victim.
- Children exposed to domestic violence experience a myriad of different physical reactions, including washes of chemicals over the brain occur when the child goes into fight or flight mode.
- Domestic violence can affect the mental health of children and threatens their stability.
- Domestic violence frequently effects the ability of the victim to retain gainful employment.

Without intervention, the overall pattern of domestic violence continues. Sometimes physical abuse decreases with age, but there is no evidence the abuser's cruel behavior will simply stop on its own. Even with intervention, many abusers continue to abuse and there is evidence over time, the damage to victims worsens.

27

## Understanding Domestic Violence: A Learned Behavior

Domestic violence is not simply human nature - it is a learned behavior. *Abusers have learned violence is an appropriate way to control others through:*

- Family experiences,
- External victimization,
- Various media, and
- Societal acceptance.

28

## Understanding Domestic Violence: Families

*Sometimes domestic violence is learned through experiences within the family unit:*

- Children may witness violence between their parents and assume it is an acceptable way to resolve differences.
- If individuals are abused themselves, they may learn violence is one way to win obedience from another person.
- Individuals who are abused by siblings or extended family members may also come to believe because it worked against them, violence will also work for them if used against others.

29

## Understanding Domestic Violence: External Victimization

People who have suffered violence at the hands of a stranger or acquaintance may come to believe violence is a viable way of exerting control over others. Feeling victimized, through abuse or other trauma, they may eventually use domestic violence to victimize others.

30

## Understanding Domestic Violence: Media

- Through various forms of media, such as television, movies, magazines, or video games, perpetrators may come to believe domestic violence is a useful method of controlling or defeating others.
- Some magazines portray women as subservient to men and their needs or wishes, leading the perpetrator to believe this is appropriate.
- Characters in many video games must violently attack and defeat others in order to escape or win the game.
- Many movies and television programs contain heroes who use violence to "save the day" or to defeat their enemies.
- It is important to note many people are exposed to violence yet never act out in a violent manner. Children and others who may be negatively influenced must be given direction and provided with perspective in order to understand violence as portrayed in various forms of media is often not realistic, nor does it allow one to accomplish one's goals in a positive, long-lasting way. As it is impossible as well as undesirable to censor all forms of media, it is important children and others who may be negatively influenced be provided with this perspective and an opportunity to understand the negative impact of violent behaviors.

31

## Understanding Domestic Violence: Societal Acceptance

- Domestic violence is condoned as consumers purchase, watch, and play with violent products. Children use toys such as military dolls, fake guns, and futuristic space fighters in games of violence and destruction.
- Power and control have often been romanticized throughout history.
- Children are often taught being the most powerful and being the one in control are the most admirable traits:

\*Being the captain of the football team or the "king of the hill" is considered commendable, especially because they denote strength and power,

As opposed to

\*Being the captain of the debate team or the leader of the charity drive which do not.

- Anger, violence, power, and control are romanticized in movies or books.

32



## Understanding Stereotypes

- Strict male/female role stereotypes are often modeled and expected, which may inadvertently teach children one of the principles of domestic violence - a man should dominate a woman. *Consider these "norms":*
- Masculine means powerful and aggressive - boys are taught aggressive behavior, as opposed to responsible or faithful behavior, earns them respect.
- Feminine is promoted as being passive, submissive, and deferring to the leadership of men.
- Masculine means strong and rugged.
- Feminine means dainty and soft.
- Men are often taught to be the head of the household and to make all the important decisions.
- Women are often taught to comply with their husband's wishes and to support their decisions regarding the family.
- Men are often taught to be strong, independent, and emotionless in difficult times.
- Women are often taught to be dependent, supportive, and the emotional caretakers of the family.
- It must be noted many people live in relationships where masculine and feminine roles are closely followed. Most do so without violence. The problem is not necessarily in the roles, but in the enforcement of them and in the use and misuse of power and privileges by the abuser.

33

## Why Do They Stay?

Choosing to leave or stay with an abusive partner is an individual and personal decision. The decision is based upon many different issues and should never be taken lightly.

Many people, including victims of domestic violence resort to coping mechanisms when faced with difficult situations, which in this case may include:

- *Minimizing* - downplaying the importance or severity of abusive behaviors.
- *Denial* - refusing to admit or pretending the abuse is not happening.
- *Rationalization* - finding reasonable explanations for the abuser's behavior, such as stress at work or lack of sleep.
- *Drug/alcohol use* - turning to drugs and alcohol to numb the physical and emotional pain of abuse.
- *Self-blame* - making excuses for the abuser, such as, "If I hadn't brought up that subject, it never would have happened."

If any of these coping mechanisms are in regular use, the victim will not see leaving as the best solution.

34

## Why Do They Stay?

Many other reasons for staying may be present, including:

### **Fear of what the abuser will do if she leaves:**

*The abuser may:*

- Inflict more abuse or more severe abuse may occur.
- Carry out threats to kill the victim.
- Destroy victim's belongings in the home.
- Affect victim's job or reputation at work, church, etc.
- Have victim arrested or charged with a crime, such as drug use or child abuse.
- Harm children, pets, family or friends.
- Not allow the victim to see children or grandchildren.
- Kill the victim or self.

### **Isolation and lack of resources:**

*The victim may have:*

- No money on hand for rent or deposits for a new home.
- No income.
- No safe place to go.
- Few people to lend solid emotional support.
- No transportation.
- Few or unsafe housing choices.
- Physical inability to leave.

35

## Why Do They Stay?

Many other reasons for staying may be present, including:

### **Lack of support**

*The victim may:*

- Feel there are no friends or family to turn to.
- Be ashamed or embarrassed to turn to friends or family for help.
- Be afraid of being alone and without a partner.
- Fear no one will believe him/her.

### **Feelings and beliefs:**

*The victim may stay due to:*

- Feeling responsible for the abusive partner's feelings, expectations, image, etc.
- Feeling love for the batterer - knowing his/her good, positive, or non-abusive side may give the victim hope that change is near.
- Religious or social beliefs: divorce is wrong.
- Religious or social beliefs: children should have two parents.
- Religious or social belief: women must obey and support men.
- Blaming him/herself for the problems.

36

## Summary

Domestic violence is a widespread societal problem with consequences reaching far beyond the family. It is conduct which has devastating effects for individual victims, their children, grandchildren, family members, friends and their communities. In addition to these immediate effects, there is growing evidence that violence within the family becomes a way of life and is the breeding ground for other social problems, such as substance abuse, juvenile delinquency and violent crimes of all types. Being able to understand the complexities of domestic violence situations is the first step toward assisting the victims.

37

## Myth Buster

**Myth:**

Women are just as likely to be abusers as men.

**Fact:**

Females are 10 times more likely to be victims than men. The US Justice Department estimates 95% of assaults on spouses and ex-spouses are committed by men against women.

38

## Case Study

Tita is an 18-year-old Hispanic woman who has been married to José for two years. They have a 3-month-old named Marco, after José's father. Both Tita and José are illegal immigrants and he works in the local crop fields for less than minimum wage.

According to Tita, José has been emotionally and physically abusive for most of the marriage. He does not allow her to leave home without him or spend time with the other women in the community. She has no family in the area and José does not allow them to have a phone. Tita has to account daily for the little money given to her to run the household and is not allowed to use the car.

Tita was admitted to the shelter after José pushed her out the door of the trailer causing her to break her ankle on the way down the five steps. Marco is malnourished because Tita cannot provide enough food for him under the conditions set up by José.

After a week in the shelter, Marco was doing much better and Tita decided to return home. She thinks José is a good man, but stressed by poverty and his low status in this country. She confided in the staff that José had threatened to take Marco and have her deported as an illegal alien, claiming he would be allowed to stay because he was working. Staff is still in contact with her as she continues to endure abuse and isolation.

39

## Case Study: Relating the Information

- 1. What forms of abuse has Tita endured?**
- 2. What difficulties will Tita face if she tries to leave Jose?**
- 3. Aside from deportation and the loss of Marco, why might Tita choose to stay with Jose?**
- 4. What cultural or familial issues might influence Tita's decision?**

40

## Quiz

- 1) What is the difference between the statutory definition and the behavioral definition of domestic violence?
- 2) What is the true function of domestic violence?
- 3) List the types of abuse associated with domestic violence.
- 4) Discuss the differences between the Power and Control Wheel and the Equality Wheel.
- 5) Name the three phases of the cycle of violence associated with some cases of domestic violence.
- 6) Discuss three ways in which domestic violence can be learned.
- 7) List and discuss three reasons victims stay in domestic violence situations

41

## Quiz Answers

- 1) The statutory definition of domestic violence is comprised of the various illegal actions that may be committed such as battery, assault, rape, and stalking for which one may be arrested. The behavioral definition includes other forms of abuse such as psychological and economic abuse, while not illegal by law, can be just as harmful and an effective means of controlling the victim.
- 2) The true function of domestic violence is to gain power and control over another person.
- 3) Types of abuse associated with domestic violence include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, economic, religious and legal abuse.
- 4) The differences between the Power & Control Wheel and the Equality Wheel are numerous but the most important idea is in a healthy relationship, both partners are equally respected with neither having undue power and control over the other.
- 5) Building, Explosion, Calming are the three phases in the Cycle of Violence
- 6) Domestic violence can be learned through families, external victimization, media and societal acceptance.
- 7) Reasons a victim might stay in an abusive relationship include:
  - Coping mechanisms such as minimization, denial, rationalization, and self-blame
  - Fear of what the abuser will do if she leaves
  - Isolation and lack of resources
  - Lack of support
  - Feelings and beliefs

42

## Congratulations

**You have completed the Domestic Violence portion of the online training for Hi-Lines Help.**

**If this brought up trauma from past abuse or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our office at 406.278.3342.**

