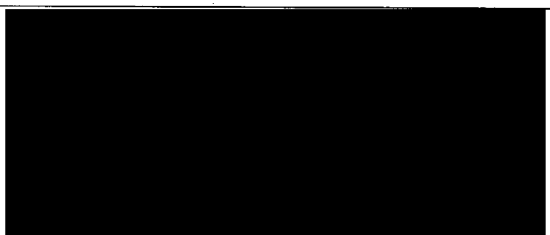


**IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION  
INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**ATTACHMENT JMS-2 TO STATEMENT OF JANICE MARGARET SHUARD**

Date of document: 27 July 2015  
Filed on behalf of: State of Victoria  
Prepared by:  
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This is the attachment marked '**JMS-2**' produced and shown to **JANICE MARGARET SHUARD** at the time of signing her Statement on 27 July 2015.

Before me: ... 



**An Australian Legal Practitioner within  
the meaning of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria)**

Attachment JMS-2

# Session 1

Research on NSW female offenders found that almost 50% reported suffering abuse of any kind.<sup>1</sup>

# SESSION 1

## Requirements

- Facilitator's guide,
- Whiteboard and markers
- Pens
- story cards (cut and laminated if desired)
- document holders for the participants
- Butcher papers with headings of 6 types of domestic abuse on them.

## Introduction

Welcome participants and introduce the facilitators.

Explain the purpose of the group: the Domestic Abuse Program for Women: Out of the Dark. Highlight that this program focuses on learning about domestic abuse in order to make changes in our lives and it isn't designed as a therapy group.

Tell the group: "There are six 2-hour sessions, and during the course of these sessions we have a lot of discussion that can often be about personal experiences. This can help us understand the information we are learning in each session, however, to address any personal history of domestic abuse and to work through these issues, you may need to also seek out counselling. "In this program we will look at what is domestic abuse? Who's involved? How does it happen and what are the effects? We will also investigate relationships, legal actions and some ways in which you can make changes."

## Icebreaker

5 mins

*Aim: To familiarise the group with its members and facilitators.*

Ask the group to state their name and each answer these questions: "What do you think Out of the Dark means? What images does it bring to mind? How might it relate to domestic abuse?" The facilitators should participate and go first. Be sure to use the participants name when possible.

Alternative: You may wish to use Photo Language Cards here. Spread the cards on the ground or table in the centre of the room and ask the participants to pick a photo which represents “Out of the Dark” to them.

### **Personal Reflection**

10 mins

*Aim: For participants to establish personal goals and awareness of their barriers to achieving their goals.*

Ask each participant to complete the Personal Reflection Sheet.

In the first section, participants need to list what they already know about domestic abuse and describe what they hope to gain from attending the program.

In the second section the participants need to write down any personal traits or barriers they believe may stop them from achieving the above goals e.g. lack of concentration, not completing work, fear of making a comment within the group etc.

### **Forming Group Rules**

20 mins

*Aim: To incorporate everyone’s needs into Group Rules and to encourage group ownership of the rules.*

Divide the group into two smaller groups and handout sheet entitled “Group Reflection” to each smaller group

Ask the groups to brainstorm issues that may stop the group as a whole from being effective and stop participants from achieving their goals. Some examples may include: being late to group, disruptiveness etc. Participants to write down all their group’s suggestions on the Group Reflections page provided.

Ask both groups to elect a speaker to present their group’s suggestions to the whole group. Facilitator explains to the participants that their suggestions will be used to form their group rules.

Discuss each suggestion and form each appropriate one into a group rule, which is written on butcher’s paper by a facilitator.

The facilitator should refer to the Expectations checklist during this activity, and suggest any expectations that they think are needed for the following activity that have

been omitted in the forming of these rules. Handout a copy of the Expectations Checklist to all participants.

Facilitator to read the Group OK's list to the group and handout copies to the group. Discuss these by asking: "Do we agree with these? Does anybody want to make a comment on these or add anything to them?"

Explain to the participants that their above suggestions and the Group OK's will form the Group Rules that will apply for all six sessions. Have these rules displayed on butcher's paper at each session

### **Contracts**

5 mins

*Aim: To have a commitment from each participant to the program.*

Read through the Contract. Ask the group about any thoughts on this contract and handout a copy of the Contract and ask them to sign it. Facilitator to take copies of contracts.

## **B R E A K - 1 0 M I N S**

### **Definition of Domestic**

#### **Abuse**

15 mins

*Aim: To establish a definition of domestic abuse.*

Divide the whole group into two smaller groups (different to earlier groups) and supply each group with paper and pens.

Tell groups they have 5 minutes to create their definition of 'What is domestic abuse?' After 5 mins reform the whole group, ask a speaker to read their definition and discuss. Ask: 'Why is this good definition? Should we add anything?'

Present and discuss handouts on definitions of Domestic Abuse. Handout copies to group to be placed in folders.

### **Types of Domestic**

#### **Abuse**

5 mins

*Aim: To establish the six different types of domestic abuse.*

Ask the group: ‘There are six different types of domestic abuse – what are they?’ Write the correct answers on the board as they are called out. These are: Physical, Emotional/Verbal, Sexual, Financial/Economic, Social and Religious.

**Examples of Types  
Of Domestic  
Abuse**

15 mins

*Aim: For participants to accurately identify examples of each type of abuse and to develop awareness of the extent of each category.*

If you have concerns about the literacy levels of some of the participants, place the group in pairs.

Place the butcher’s paper (prepared prior to commencement of session) with the six headings of types of domestic abuse around the room.

Give participants textas. Tell participants they have 5 minutes to write examples of the type of abuse stated in the heading on each sheet. Participants should list at least one example on each sheet.

When completed, facilitator displays each sheet and reads through all the examples and discusses with the group any examples that may be inappropriately placed.

Read through ‘Definitions of Basic Types of Abuse’ and hand out copies to be placed in folder/sleeve. Add to the butcher’s paper any further examples that participants might think of after reading definitions.

**Story Cards**

20 mins

*Aim: To enable participants to accurately identify types and examples of domestic abuse.*

Place the whole group into smaller groups and provide each group with a story card. This may be done in pairs, or with each group given more than 1 story card. Be sure to use all of the story cards.

Ask groups to read (or the facilitator to read) through the story together and discuss what type or types of abuse are involved and give the examples of these.

After the smaller groups have discussed this, ask each group to read their story to the group and nominate their answers. Discuss each answer with the group.

### **Letters**

10 mins

Facilitator to read letters from previous participants to the group.

Ask for comments or thoughts on these. Do not hand out copies of these to participants (permission has not been obtained for this as yet). Instead, ask the group to write their own letter when they have completed the program which may be used in future programs.

### **Close**

5 mins

Facilitators to answer any questions, check that participants are feeling ok and remind the group of the availability of services for counselling/debriefing. Suggestions for debriefing include asking: How do you feel about today's session? What will you take away from today session? If you had to describe today's session in 1 word, what would it be?

### **Homework**

Handout folders/sleeve and a blank page and ask participants to create a drawing to personalise their folders/sleeve. This drawing may represent what Out of the Dark means to them. This drawing will go on the front of their folder/sleeve. Also, ask the participants to do a creative expression about the 6 types of abuse. Using the Types of Abuse handout ask the group to fill in each box with a drawing or a piece of writing, or even just a word. What is in the box can take any form – just something that depicts that type of abuse.

Explain that Handouts, like the ones given today, will be given throughout the program to eventually build into a resource manual which they will keep as a reminder of what they have learned. Remind the participants to bring their folders to each session because we will be referring to earlier sessions to see how the picture of domestic abuse is constructed.

# **Session 1**

## **Facilitators Resources**



## Story Cards

### *Debbie's story*

Debbie worked in a busy city office where she met Tim. She found Tim to be very friendly and easy to talk to so when he asked if she would like to go out to lunch with him and a few others from the office she agreed.

When Debbie arrived for lunch she found that there was only she and Tim there. He explained that the others could not make it. Over the next few weeks Tim constantly asked Debbie out, which she would politely refuse.

Debbie started to notice that Tim would find any excuse to 'drop in' on her and would often be waiting downstairs for her to leave of a night. Tim then started to phone her at work inquiring how her night out was describing the exact place she had been the night before. When Debbie started hanging up on Tim he became very abusive whenever he saw her.

Debbie became very frightened and sought an AVO order to protect her from Tim

### *Mary's story*

Mary had been going out with Tony for the past two months and she really enjoyed his company. They arranged to meet and attend a dinner party at a friend of Tony's place. On his arrival Tony became very angry with Mary as he accused her of wearing a top that was too revealing. Mary then went home and changed and Tony apologised explaining that he just didn't want his friends to think she was a 'slut'.

Over the next few months Tony's requests on what Mary would wear became a lot more demanding to the extent where he would insist on shopping with her and choosing her clothing. Tony also wanted to know where Mary was at all times and who she was with persistently phoning her whenever they weren't together.

Friends expressed their concern for Mary saying that this type of behaviour was not normal but Mary would insist that Tony was only doing this because he cared so much.

### ***Kara's story***

Kara was just 19 when she met Frank and fell in love for the first time.

Kara came from a very close family who were alarmed that just after 3 months of meeting Frank she moved in with him. Frank always had an excuse for not visiting Kara's family and would become rude and bad-mannered whenever one of the family members or any of her friends visited.

Within a year Kara became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy.

Kara would only see her family if she visited them as they said they felt too uncomfortable at her house. Before she realised, her friends had also dropped off one by one.

Visits to see her family became few and far between as Frank insisted on taking the car to work every day even though he had a bike and would give her little or no money.

Frank became upset and abusive if Kara did not stay at home during the day stating that this was where her family was now.

One day Frank came home and announced that they were moving to the country and when Kara objected he started shouting and screaming saying that if she did not come he would take the baby and she would never see him again. Frank hit her, breaking her nose.

The next morning Kara moved back home with her parents and took out an AVO on Frank.

### ***Sandy's story***

Sandy met Paul at her local pub. They were going out for a year before they decided to marry and have a child. Things had been wonderful until Paul lost his job. He had always been a drinker but he slowly took to spending his days at his local hotel sometimes drinking and gambling away all the unemployment cheque.

As he became consciously aware of his own change in behaviour he decided to seek salvation in a religious organisation. He asked Sandy to attend with him which she did. Sandy told Paul this religion was not for her.

Paul became progressively angry towards her when she refused to attend. Then the abuse started, he would hit and shout at her when she would not say her prayers or follow the doctrines of his religious cult. He started to bring couples home from the church and would suggest that Sandy join them in performing sexual acts and became violent towards her if she refused.

Sandy sought the help of her local community centre who gave her the phone number of the nearest refuge who immediately came to Sandy's aid, picking her up and giving her shelter until she was able to get back on her feet.

### *Cassey's story*

Cassey and Craig had been together for two months. Cassey established a small nail art business whilst Craig attended TAFE.

Craig suggested that he and Cassey pool their money and save up for furniture and a bond so they could move in together. He would put the account in his name for the benefit of Cassey's tax. Within six months they had moved into a small rented a flat.

Whenever Cassey asked for any money to buy new clothes or go out with friends Craig became hostile and they would end up in a fight so Cassey suggested opening her own account. This angered Craig who lashed out giving her a black eye and walking out of the house. When he returned he had a bunch of flowers and apologised saying it would never happen again.

But it did.

The next time Cassey wanted to go out with her friends there was an argument which resulted in another beating only this time Craig hit her continually in the back of the head screaming "who will believe you" and "where do you think you're going to go without any money anyway."

Cassey waited for Craig to leave for work the next day before packing the essentials and moving in with a friend.

### *Jane's story*

Jane met Sage whilst they were both incarcerated where they formed an intimate relationship.

Jane was very loving and caring and attentive at first but as the relationship progressed, Jane slowly started to manipulate Sage, controlling who she would talk to in the gaol and not allowing her to take on a job unless she worked with her. If Sage made a phone call to her family Jane would be within ear shot.

As part of Sages case plan she was required to attend Psychology. As the Psychologist was a very attractive female, Jane became extremely jealous and demanded that Sage not attend any more of her appointments. When Sage insisted on keeping the arrangements Jane became violent, beating Sages head into the wall until she was unconscious.

Although Sage would not tell the Custodial Officers who had attacked her others who had witnesses this act of violence did and Jane was moved to another gaol.

## TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GROUP

I got a lot out of doing this course, I feel I am a lot stronger person now more than I ever felt. I feel relived and loved a lot by the group. I hope that I made an impact on you girls as you did to me. I learned that we can stand up and say no and we can walk away without being hurt. There is no way that I am taking any more shit from any man and any woman, that I am in total control of **MY LIFE**.

I just want you girls to know please don't take it any more. Don't be afraid to stand up for yourselves, there is help out there girls just raise your hand and you will be seen. I promise you that if you get into trouble and you do that you will get help straight away as I have done. Just don't be afraid no more. We are women hear us roar as God didn't put us on this earth to be beaten or mentally tortured.

I was in a really bad relationship a long time ago where my boyfriend was so cruel to me and my son. He used to have a whip and he would whip my son and I would stand in front of him and take it instead. He'd throw him out of the house he used to torture us really bad. He once tied me up in the bedroom for two weeks, I wasn't allowed to move. Occasionally he fed me a piece of bread and every second day I'd get a small cup of water. I was so afraid I lost so much weight I was in hospital for two months recovering.

He done a lot of things to me sexually as well I could go on and on but I think your imagination could tell it all.

He always went out on weekends and he would pick up young girls and he'd bring them home and take them to bed and I had to watch this.

I stayed with him because I loved him so much and I thought it would end one day but it never did.

In the end he was leading a double life. I thought he was working nights as well as days but he wasn't, he had another family and that's where he was going.

No-one could possibly imagine the pain I went through when he finally kidnapped our three year old son that's what finally snapped me I had a nervous breakdown and hit the drugs.

Anyway girls what I'm saying is don't ever let this happen to you if I can save one girl I know that I have achieved my goal.

Please take care and I will keep you posted on my recent decision to end my marriage. Good luck to you all.

## TO THE WOMEN WHO DO THE DV SUPPORT GROUP

Well girls what can I say except thank you to the workers and fellow inmates who helped me find the strength to change my life. Through doing the DV group I became aware of all the different domestic violence and the available support networks there are for women.

My life was full of domestic violence from an early age and I continued that cycle through most of my relationships believing that I deserved no better and that I could not change it.

Now I know I don't have to be a victim anymore, that I have choices. My feelings and beliefs are important.

I am a very grateful person today knowing that I have survived all of it. Losing my daughter to domestic violence was a life changing event and one I wish never to experience again. My story is no different to anyone else; believing I could not leave or that I didn't deserve any better.

I stayed and accepted my lot in life wishing things would change making excuses for it, thinking I could change him but to no avail. Today I now know that there is plenty of help available if I ask.

Today my journey is on another path and I am making a new life for myself. I feel anything is possible for me to achieve if I just ask for help when needed and yes change is scary but hey anything of value is worth the effort and we are all valuable people. Trust your instincts for they are your best judgement.

Now I believe I will not accept anything but the best treatment for myself, I like myself today more than ever before and know I have the right to say no to anyone or anything that is not in my best interest. Give it your best go, you have everything to gain.

All the best from a fellow survivor who is no longer the victim ..... thank god

# **Session 1**

## **Handouts**

## Personal Reflection Sheet

What do I already know about Domestic Abuse?

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What do I hope to gain from participating in the Domestic Abuse Program for Women?

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How might I stop myself from reaching these goals?

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# Expectations Checklist

## You need to...

- Arrive on time and be ready to start
- Return from breaks within the amount of time given
- Coffee/Tea making or cigarette breaks are only to be taken at the appropriate break time – not during group sessions.
- Attend every session to successfully complete the Program
- Complete all homework
- Participants are expected to remain drug free throughout the program
- Bring all equipment needed to class
- Be prepared to participate in class discussions, group work and activities
- Be aware of the sensitive nature of the topic and other people's experiences – be conscious of making inappropriate comments or jokes
- Be respectful of other members in the group
- Be conscious of having good group behaviour – do not talk over people when they're speaking and limit swearing.
- Maintain confidentiality – do not discuss what is said in the group outside of the group. This is *your* group.
- Take care of yourself – access Offender Services & Programs (OSP) staff or talk to the group facilitator if you are feeling upset or stressed

# Group OK's

## It's OK to...

- State your feelings
- Have your own thoughts and think differently
- Disagree without feeling guilty or embarrassed
- Exercise your imagination
- Encourage and praise others
- Change your mind
- Learn in a style that is best for you
- Ask questions
- Ask for help
- Love learning



# Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following:

- To treat other group members with dignity and respect
- That all information shared by others is confidential and what is said in the group stays in the group
- To ask for help when needed
- To abide by the group rules, expectations and ok's
- To remain drug free
- To use the information in the group to make changes in my own life

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence is a crime, which occurs when one partner in a past or present relationship uses violent or intimidating behaviours to control or dominate the other.

Domestic Violence is a deliberate act. It is an abuse of power always perpetrated by the more powerful member of a relationship against a less powerful member in order to gain control.

Domestic Violence is found in all social classes, all age groups and across all cultures and communities.

### The National Committee on Violence against Women defines Domestic Violence as:

Violence and abuse perpetrated by a man upon a female adopted to control his victim which results in physical, sexual and/or psychological damage, forced social isolation or economic deprivation or behaviour which leaves a woman living in fear.

## FEAR

Is the common key element in violence against women and is often the most powerful weapon used by the perpetrator to control his victim.

## Types of Abuse

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** is the use of bodily actions and weapons to threaten, punish, dominate, restrain, control or injure another person.

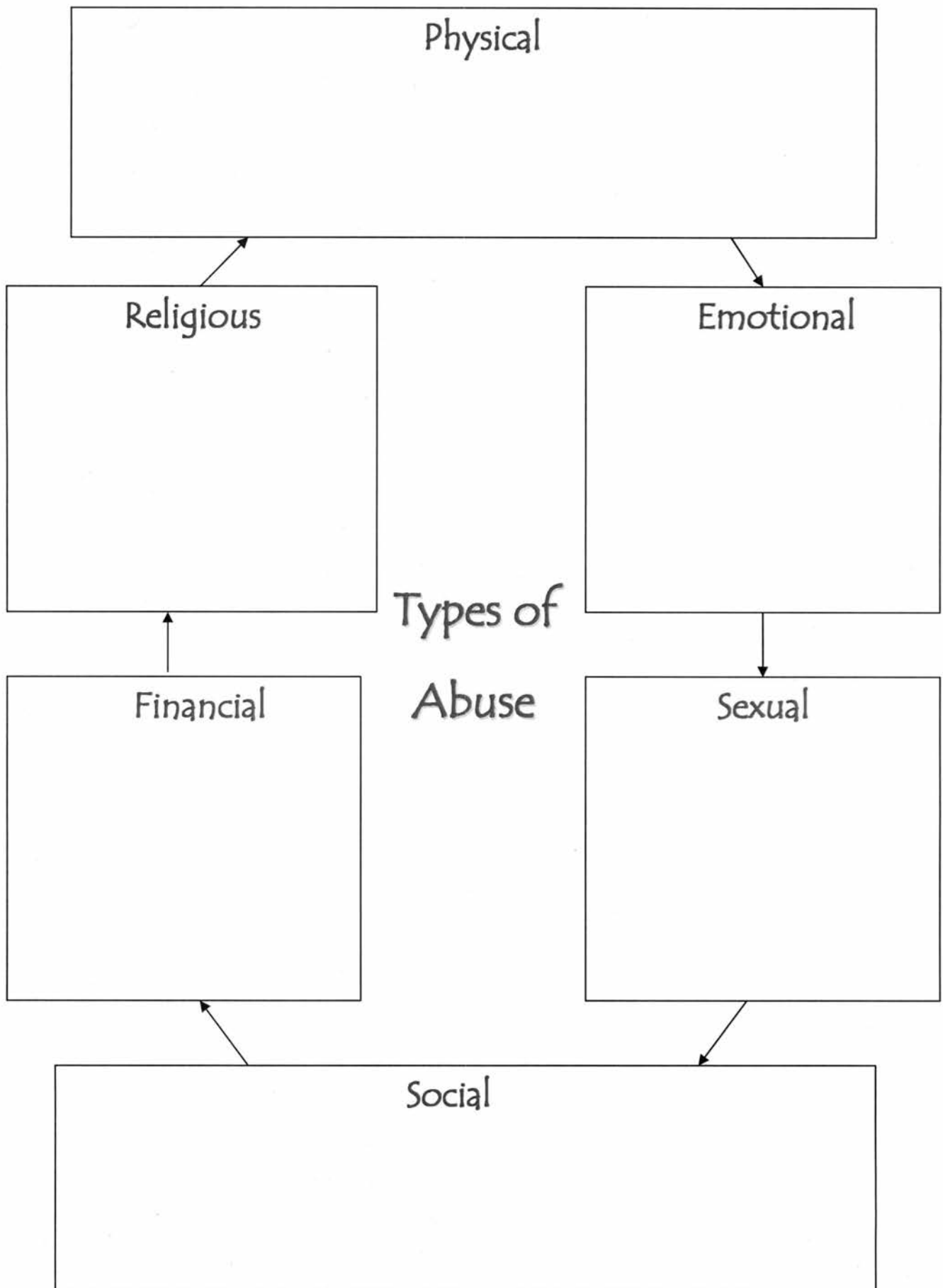
**EMOTIONAL/VERBAL ABUSE** is the use of mental tactics such as aggression, anger, humiliation, sabotage, manipulation, corruption, intimidation, fear, dominance, power and control to inflict emotional damage on another person.

**SEXUAL ABUSE** is the use of forced or unwanted sexual activities to dominate, manipulate, threaten, injure, corrupt or control another person.

**SOCIAL ABUSE** incorporates forms of abuse to dominate, manipulate, threaten, control or damage another person's social relationships.

**FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC ABUSE** is the use of money-related matters to dominate, sabotage, manipulate, threaten, control, inflict damage on or take advantage of another person.

**RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL ABUSE** is the controlling, damaging, or constraining of another person's religious interests or icons, or purposely misstating religion to abuse another person.



# Session 2

“Just knowing that there is a cycle to the violence and that it is repetitive helps the woman to better assess her situation. It also helps the man understand he no longer will be able to manipulate the woman by his behaviour.... Sometimes what seemed to be so loving in one context actually seemed a continuation of the controlling and over possessive behaviour of the batterer.”<sup>2</sup>

## SESSION 2

### Requirements:

- Facilitators guide
- Group Rules on the wall
- white board and markers
- paper and pens
- 'Cycle of Abuse' and 'Cycle of Abuse – Spiral Effect' either printed on A3 paper or on overheads,
- Overhead projector if needed,
- butcher's paper and textas
- handouts

### Icebreaker

5 mins

Autograph Bingo. This activity may be done inside the room or outside the room. Handout Autograph Bingo sheet.

Participants have 3 mins to complete the Bingo sheet by asking another group member the question on the sheet **in order**.

For each question the responder answers 'yes', the participant writes that person's name against the question. If the responder answers 'no', the participant must stop at that question, move to another group member and resume asking the questions from the last question asked.

The first person to write names against every question yells 'bingo'. The facilitator checks through the winner's sheet with the class. The winner is given a group clap.

### Review of Session 1

5 mins

Ask the group: "What did we do last session?"

Facilitators to review Session 1 content highlighting the definition of domestic abuse, the group rules and types of abuse

### Who's



**Involved?**

10 mins

*Aim: to identify relationships that can involve domestic abuse.*

Facilitator asks: “What type of relationships can involve domestic abuse?”

Write suggestions on whiteboard. The list should include:

- Boyfriend/girlfriend
- De-facto’s
- Husband/wife
- Same-sex couples
- Children
- Ex-partners
- Parents-child

Facilitator explains to the group: “Domestic abuse is classified differently by different organisations – some see it as between anyone living under the same roof. Others define it only as when it involves a partner from a current or previous intimate relationship, and as such it is sometimes referred to as ‘intimate partner violence’.”

Handout ‘What is Domestic Abuse’ sheet.

Facilitator explains to the group: “for this program we identify domestic abuse as involving partners from a current or previous intimate relationship. As such this does not include violence or abuse between siblings, neighbours, friends, or adult parent/child relationships.”

“It is important to note that both males and females can be victims of domestic abuse, however, statistics show that 95% of victims are female, and that the majority of perpetrators are male. This program does not intentionally focus on females as being the victim, however, it has been written for female offenders”

Facilitator also needs to specify that children can be victims of domestic abuse when they are **witnesses** to domestic abuse - **if a child or children are the target of the attack, or become the target of the attack, this is now not only domestic abuse.... it is child abuse.**

Explain to the group that the effects of domestic abuse on children will be covered next session.

## **Abuser and Victim Profiles**

10 mins

*Aim: to identify the characteristics of an abuser and a victim and how generic these characteristics can be.*

Facilitator tells the group: “In a domestically abusive relationship there is always an Abuser and a Victim.” Write ‘Abuser’ and ‘Victim’ headings on either side of the white board.

“What do you think the characteristics of a victim or an abuser might be?” If no response, facilitator should write one example under each heading, taken from the Abuser and Victim Profiles (in this guide).

As the group call out traits of an Abuser and a Victim the facilitator writes them on the board under the headings.

Handout the Profiles of an Abuser and Victim and compare with the list made by the group. Draw attention to the comparisons between the abuser and victim and ask the group why these comparisons might exist.

Alternatively, make overheads of the Victim and Abuser Profiles and display them for comparison.

## **Cycle of Abuse**

25 mins

*Aim: to begin to explain the pattern of domestic abuse relationships.*

Ask the group: “How do these relationships work?” Display overhead or A3 sheet of ‘Cycle of Abuse’ and handout ‘Cycle of Abuse’ sheet.

Explain that there is a cycle of domestic abuse, and there are six stages in the cycle. As you go through these stages, ask the group if they have experienced these stages themselves and what it looks like to be in one of these stages. Use comments from the group throughout this exercise.

### **Honeymoon Stage**

“This is where the cycle begins: when both parties are happy and making an effort. Almost every new relationship begins with this stage.”

Give an example, such as both parties sending each other nice text messages to make them feel loved, etc.

**Routine Stage**

“This is the stage the relationship moves into when both parties have settled in and things become ‘everyday’ and comfortable.”

Give an example, such as no longer feeling as much need to impress or agree with everything said.

**Tension Stage**

“At this stage issues are starting to build up and this is often the stage at which one party (the Abuser) starts to exert power over the other party (Victim) who starts to feel uncomfortable and powerless.” The abuser uses stand over tactics to control the victim.

Give an example, such as the Abuser always being in a bad mood when coming home from work and the Victim feeling concerned about the Abuser’s reaction if everything isn’t perfect.

**Trigger Stage**

“This is the point where something happens and the Abuser takes advantage of the situation to exert power over the Victim.” Highlight that the victim does not do anything wrong in this stage and she can not control what the trigger is or when the trigger might occur.

For example, the Abuser comes home in a bad mood and the Victim has not finished preparing dinner. This becomes the trigger for the next stage.

**Abuse Stage**

“This stage usually follows the ‘Trigger’ stage very closely and is where the Abuser exerts a type or types of abuse over the Victim.”

Give an example such as the Abuser yelling offensively at the Victim and smashing a dinner plate before stomping off because dinner wasn’t ready.

**Excuses Stage**

“This stage is when the Abuser tries to justify and explain their behaviour by diverting responsibility for their behaviour to someone or something else.”

Examples can include blaming it on the Victim, such as saying that the Abuser wouldn’t behave like that if the Victim had behaved in another way, i.e. had dinner been ready; or the Abuser blaming it on something or someone else, such as saying it is because of pressure at work. They may say things like: ‘it won’t happen again’,

'it only happened because I was drunk', 'I had a terrible day at work', 'I'll go to the doctor and find out what's wrong', and 'I couldn't live without you'. Highlight that no matter what excuses are made (e.g. 'if you didn't do that I wouldn't have hit you') the victim cannot control the abuse and the abuse is not the victims fault.

### **Honeymoon/Forget Me Stage**

Point back to the 'Honeymoon' stage and say: "at this stage the cycle starts again: only this time it can either be with the Honeymoon effect or the Forget Me attitude, or both."

Explain that this Honeymoon effect is when the Abuser becomes the 'perfect partner' again in order to win the Victim back over and often makes promises that it won't happen again. The abuser uses excuses and asks for forgiveness. This stage also includes the giving of gifts, extension of favours and open communication.

Give an example, such as the abuser coming home in a good mood with flowers and helping with the housework.

Explain that the Forget Me attitude also follows the abuse and is when the abuser starts acting normally again, like nothing has happened, and often makes up untrue excuses to cover the incident.

Give an example, such as the Abuser coming home and sitting down to dinner normally, and suggesting that they forget what happened and they start afresh, or simply ignoring that the abuse occurred.

As this stage is labelled the Forget Me stage, the victim forgets about their own rights, may ignore or deny the abuse, and goes along with the excuses made by the abuser. An example of this may be telling work colleagues 'I walked into a door. I'm so clumsy' to explain her black eye. In this stage, people who hear these excuses also go along with them, such as a friend agreeing that that she is clumsy and should watch out for those doors.

Explain that the cycle keeps going around and around. These stages have varying time frames

**BREAK - 10 MINS**

**Cycle of Abuse  
Spiral**  
15 mins

*Aim: to explain how the cycle of abuse continues throughout a relationship.*

Use the Cycle of Abuse – Spiral Effect diagram and the following text to explain that the cycle of abuse is like a tornado: it starts off moving slowly through the cycle, but becomes quicker and more violent as the relationship progresses over time.

Each stage can be hours, days, or months long – it is different in each relationship and can depend on how established the cycle is.

The speed at which a relationship moves through each set of stages usually increases from cycle to cycle, and the level and amount of abuse usually increases from one cycle to the next.

For example, the Abuser might be verbally abusive and smash a plate the first time (abuse stage), then say that they are just under too much pressure at work and it won't happen again (excuses stage); come home in a good mood with flowers and help with the housework (honeymoon stage); resume established roles i.e. come home in a good mood and not help with the housework (routine stage); start going to the pub before coming home in a bad mood (tension stage); Victim voices unhappiness with current situation (trigger stage); Abuser screams abuse at Victim and threatens to punch her (abuse stage); Abuser tell Victim that they wouldn't have behaved that way if they hadn't tried to control (excuses stage); Abuser says it will never happen again and shows Victim attentiveness and affection (honeymoon stage).

**Power and  
Control Comparison**  
15 mins

*Aim: To understand the way in which the perpetrator uses power and control to manipulate the victim.*

“An abuser uses different forms of power to control their victim throughout the relationship.”

Write the following eight types of power on the white board:

- Coercion /Threats
- Intimidation
- Emotional
- Isolation - Minimising, Denying & Blaming
- Using Children - Using Male Privilege
- Economic
- 

Ask for a definition and examples of each. Distribute either the Types of Power and Control handout or the Power and Control Wheel handout to the group.

Divide the large group into two groups and isolate the groups from each other. Give group 1 butcher's paper with the title "Hostages of War" written at the top. Give group 2 butcher's paper with the title "Domestic Abuse Victim" written at the top.

Tell both groups they have 10 minutes to write the eight types of power and control (listed on the white board and above) on the butcher's paper as sub-headings and then to list examples of each type of power underneath. Move between groups and assist with examples.

When finished, get both groups to lay their butcher's paper side by side and participants to gather around them.

Read out each sub-heading and the groups compare their examples. Highlight the similarities between being a hostage of war and being a domestic abuse victim and explain: "these eight forms of power and control are used as deliberately planned tactics by military groups to torture Hostages of War. Perpetrators of domestic abuse use exactly the same forms of abuse on their victims."

Distribute the handout Domestic Abuse and Prisoners of War.

**Close**  
5 mins

Close the session by asking some of the following: "How do you feel about today's session? If you were asked to describe your mood with a colour, what would it be and why? What will you take away from today's session?"

Answer any questions and remind the group that that they can access psychology or other services.

### **Homework**

Ask the group to complete the 'Relationship Warning Signs?' questionnaire.

Invite the participants to complete their own Personal Domestic Abuse Cycle using the handout. This is not mandatory, but may be completed if the participants feel comfortable enough to do so. The participants can draw or write in their stages of the cycle. They will not share their personal cycle with the group, but they may share it with the facilitator if they wish.

Distribute blank paper and ask the group to draw a picture or word which represents how you feel about this program so far. Also handout the picture with the house and ask the group to reflect on how they relate to this picture.

Distribute Session 1 and 2 Questionnaire (on Program CD under Session 2) and ask participants to complete and return next session.

# **Session 2**

# **Handouts**



# Autograph Bingo

Has a friend that lives in another state	Has played a team sport	Has been ten pin bowling
Has a dog	Has been to the library	Has a younger brother
Has been to the beach	Is an Aunty	Has been overseas
Has a friend they have known since 1sy grade	Has a friend in their neighbourhood	Has a best friend in their family

# Abuser Profile

## Abusers...

- Come from all races, religions, walks of life and income levels
- May appear to be non-abusers
- Often, but not always, come from abusive homes
- Often limit abuse to the privacy of home
- Often show remorse after abusing and may or may not intend to do it again
- May misinterpret religious doctrine in order to justify abuse
- Can be manipulators and liars
- May or may not move from emotional abuse to physical abuse and even murder
- Often suffer from low self esteem
- Often compensate for a sense of powerlessness by overpowering others
- Often are impulsive and become easily frustrated

(Enns and Black. 1997. p17)



# Victim Profile

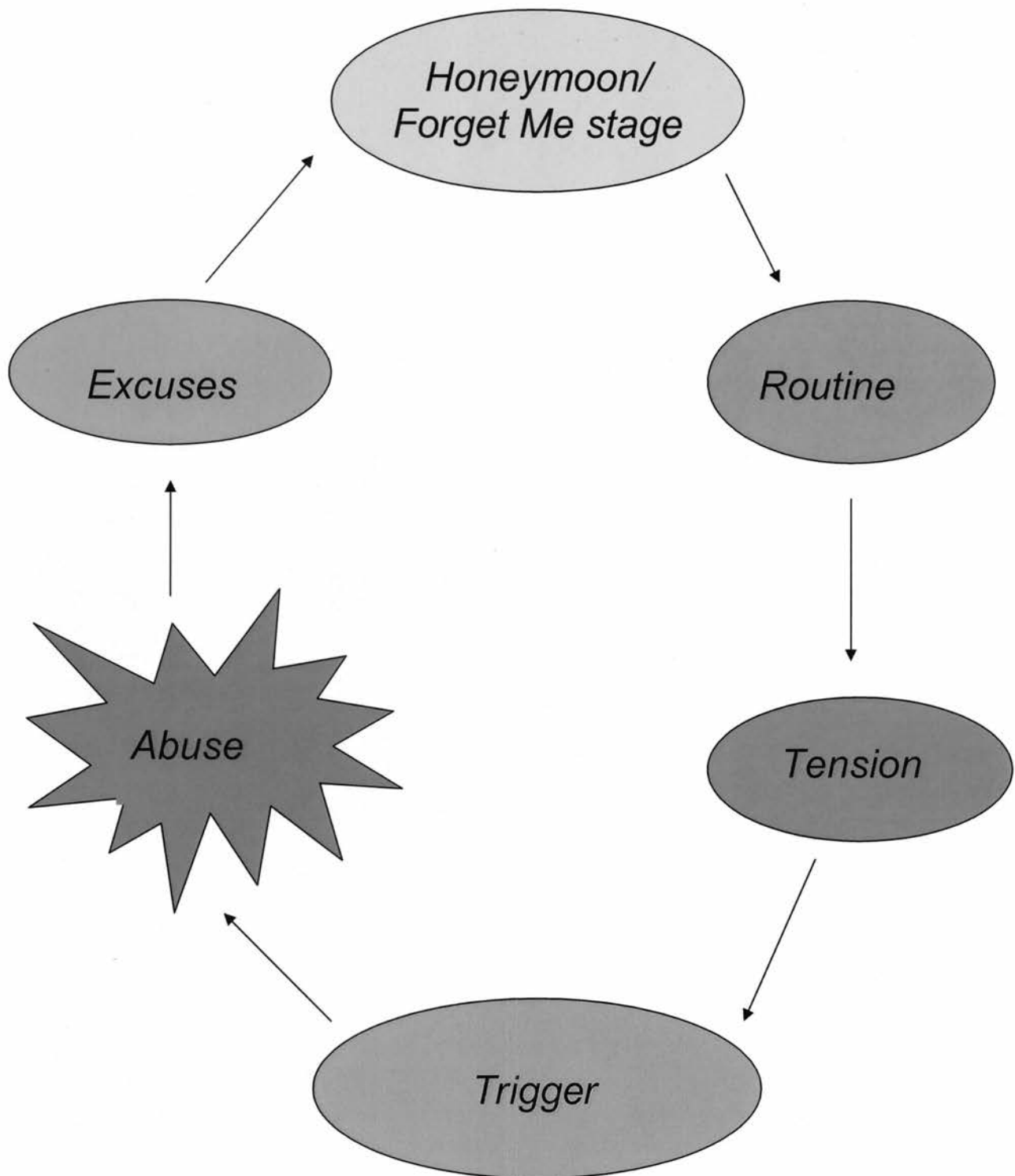
## Victims...

- Come from all races, religions, walks of life and income levels
- May or may not have come from abusive homes
- Often believe they cause and/or deserve the abuse
- May have been blind-sided by an abuser who appeared calm and controlled while dating
- Often hesitate to tell others about the abuse
- Usually wait too long before getting help
- Can often be convinced by their abusers that abuse isn't abuse
- Usually suffer from low self-esteem
- Usually stay in abusive relationships because they feel trapped economically and socially

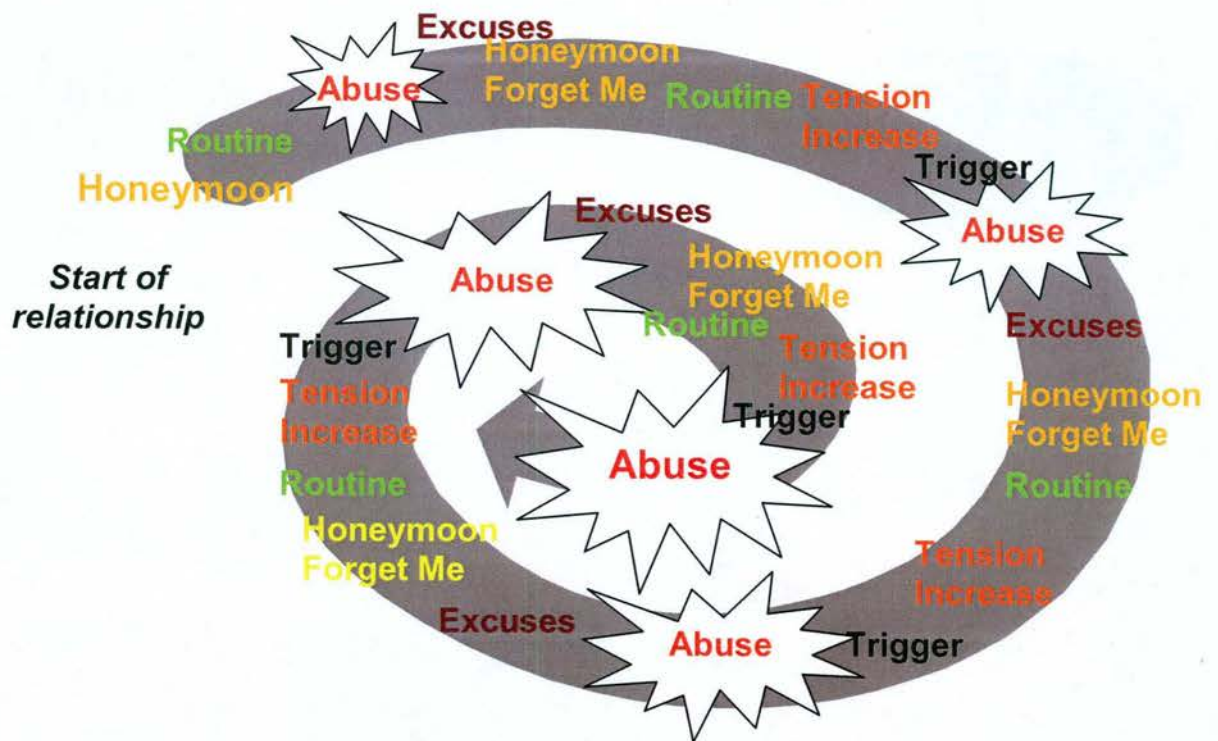
(Enns and Black. 1997. p18)



# The Cycle of Abuse



# The Cycle of Abuse Spiral



## Types of Power and Control

<b>COERCION and THREATS</b>	Threatening to: leave her, report her to welfare, commit suicide *Making her do illegal things *Making her drop charges
<b>INTIMIDATION</b>	*Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures *Destroying her property *Abusing her pets *Displaying weapons
<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	*Putting her down *Making her feel bad about herself *Calling her names *Making her think she is crazy *Playing mind games *Humiliating her *Making her feel guilty
<b>ISOLATION</b>	*Controlling what she does, who she sees, who she talks to, what she reads and where she goes *Limiting her outside involvement *Moving her away from family and friends
<b>DENYING &amp; BLAMING</b>	*Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns seriously *Saying the abuse didn't happen *Shifting the responsibility for the abusive behaviour *Saying she caused it
<b>USING CHILDREN</b>	*Making her feel guilty about the children *Using the children to relay messages *Threatening to take the children off her/away
<b>MALE PRIVILEGE</b>	*Treating her like a servant *Making all the big decisions *Acting like the "master of the castle" *Being the one to define the male and female roles
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	*Preventing her from getting or keeping a job *Making her ask for money *Giving her an allowance *Taking her money *Not letting her know about or have access to the family income

[www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)

# Power and Control Wheel



## Domestic Abuse and Prisoners of War

Do you know that the techniques used in abusive relationships are much the same as those used with prisoners of war?

	Prisoners of War Torture Techniques	Perpetrators Emotional Abuse
Isolation	Deprives victim of social support so they feel they can no longer resist	Moving you away from friends/family Not allowed to go anywhere without him
Induced Exhaustion	Weakens mental and physical ability to resist e.g. Keeps prisoner awake for days	Working two jobs whilst also having everything perfect at home Wake you up in the middle of the night to get him a cup of coffee
Threats	Cultivates anxiety and despair e.g. Threaten to cut off fingers one by one	Threaten to take the house and children off you Says I will kill you if you leave
Occasional Indulgences	Provides positive motivation for compliance Eg. Give you water in exchange for information	Buys you flowers and presents especially after a fight
'Superiority' of Power	Forced to perform acts against your will	Forced into sex after an argument Punch and abuse you
Degradation/Humiliation	Makes cost of resistance appear more damaging to self esteem than to just surrender Eg. Place them in compromising poses	Having an affair and bringing her to the house. Calling you names.

Abstracts taken from the Bidermans Chart of Coercion (Condonis, Paroissien, Aldrich, 1990 p.38). Amnesty Internationals 'Report on Torture'.



## Captivity and Domestic Abuse

A single traumatic event can occur almost anywhere.

Prolonged, repeated trauma, by contrast, occurs only in circumstances of captivity.

Repeated trauma occurs only when the victim is a prisoner, unable to flee, and under the control of the perpetrator.

These conditions exist in concentration and slave labour camps. They can also exist in religious cults, in brothels and other institutions of organised sexual exploitation. These conditions can also occur in families.

Political captivity is generally recognised, whereas the domestic captivity of women and children is often unseen.

In domestic captivity, physical barriers to escape are rare. In most homes, even the most cruel, there are no bars on the windows and no barbed wire fences.

Women and children are not ordinarily chained.

**The barriers to escape are generally invisible. They are nonetheless very powerful.**

Children are rendered captive by their condition of dependency.

Women are rendered captive by economic, social, psychological, and by physical force.

The methods of establishing control over another person are based upon orderly, repetitive infliction of psychological trauma.

They are organised techniques of disempowerment and separation.

Methods of psychological control are designed to instil terror and helplessness, and to destroy the victim's sense of self in relation to others.

At first it may appear to the victim, who has become emotionally involved, that her partners' possessive attentions are a sign of passionate love.

She may at first feel flattered and comforted by his intense interest in every aspect of her life.

As he becomes more domineering she may minimize or excuse his behaviour, not only because she fears him but also because she cares for him.

Once the perpetrator has succeeded in establishing day-to-day control of the victim, he becomes a source not only of fear and humiliation but also of comfort. The hope of a meal, a bath, a kind word or some ordinary creature comfort can become compelling to a person who is long enough deprived.

The perpetrator may further weaken the victim by offering addictive drugs or alcohol.

As there is usually no physical barriers to prevent escape, the victim may attempt to flee after an outburst of violence. She is often persuaded to return, not by further threats but by apologies, expressions of love, promises of reform, and appeals to loyalty and compassion. For a moment the balance of power in the relationship appears to be reversed, as the perpetrator does everything in their power to win over his victim.

Additional methods, however, are usually needed to achieve complete domination e.g. as long as the victim maintains any other human connection, the perpetrators power is limited. It is for that reason that the perpetrator will seek to isolate their victims from any other source of information, material aid or emotional support.

The stories of prisoners are always filled with accounts of their captor's attempts to prevent communication with the outside world and to convince them that their closest allies have forgotten or betrayed them. The record of domestic violence is filled with accounts of jealous surveillance, such as stalking, eavesdropping, and intercepting letters and phone calls which results to solitary confinement of the battered woman in her home

Domestic prisoners frequently describe long periods of sleep deprivation during sessions of jealous questioning as well as meticulous supervision of their clothing, appearance, weight and diet.

Although violence is a universal method of terror, the perpetrator may use violence as a last resort. It is not necessary to use violence to keep the victim in constant fear.

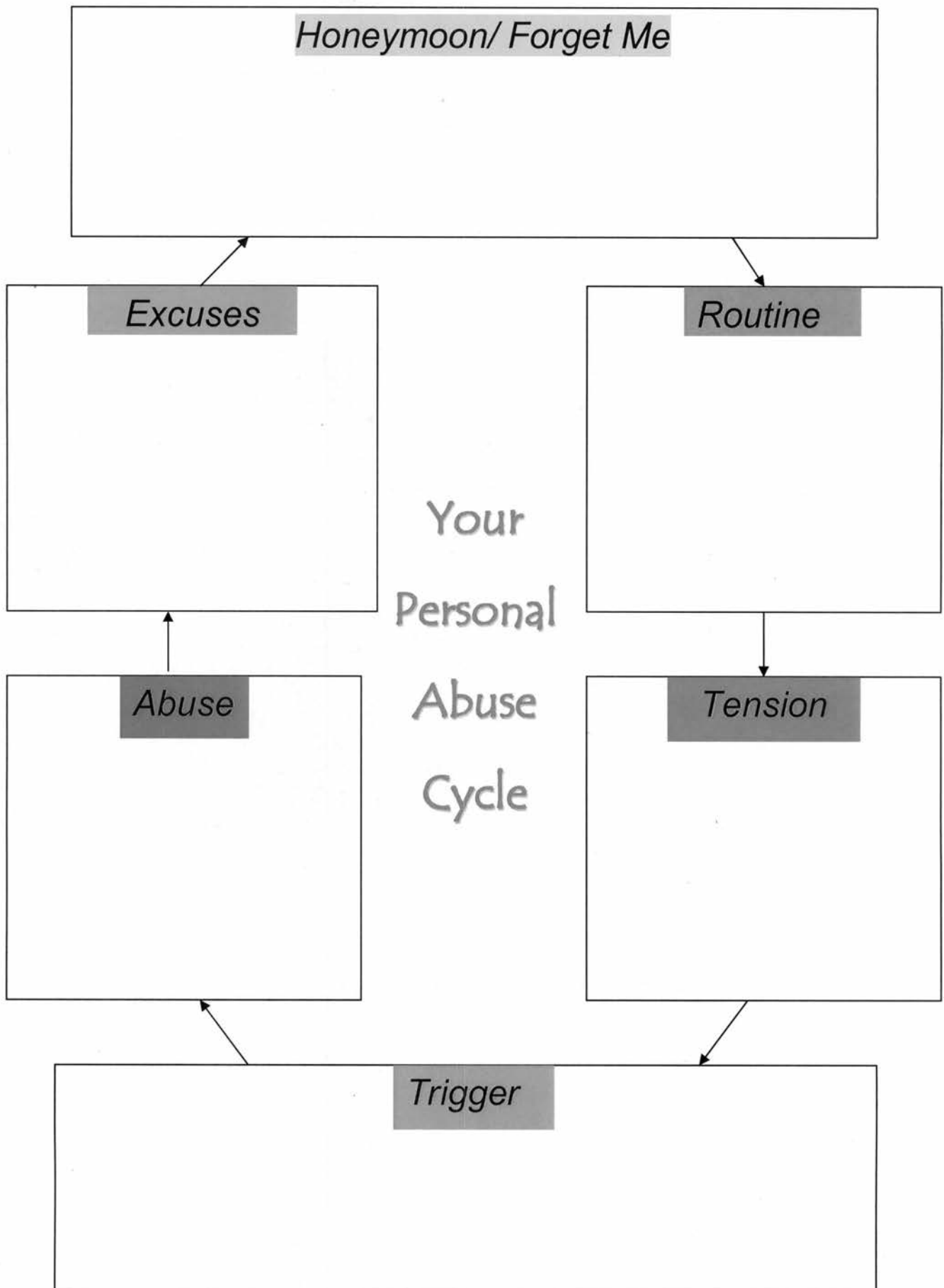
Women living with Domestic Abuse for example, often report that their abuser has threatened to kill their children, their parents or any friends who harbour them, should they attempt to escape

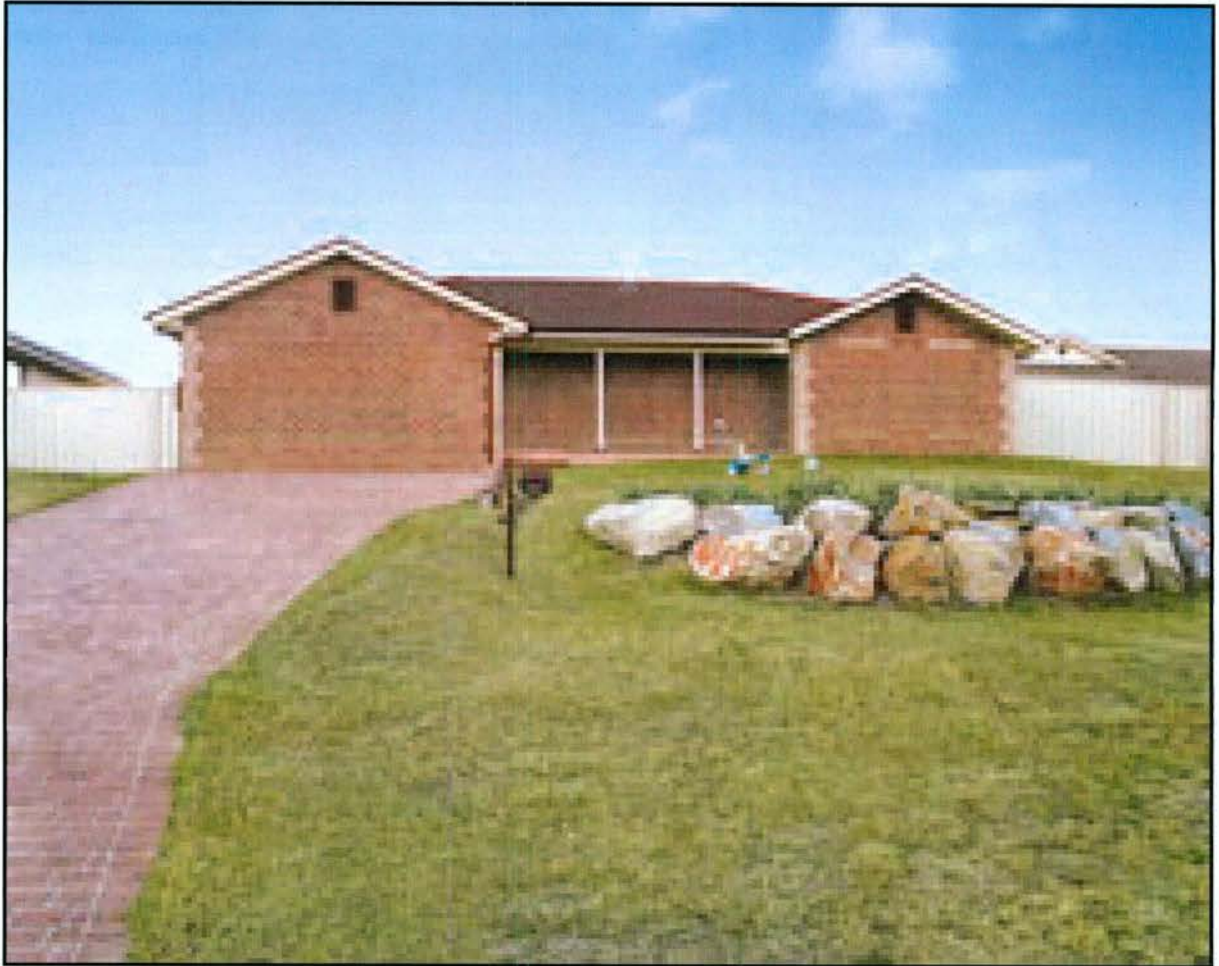
The goal of the perpetrator is often to instil in his victim not only fear of death but also gratitude for being allowed to live. He insists his domineering behaviour simply proves his desperate need and love for her.

Taken from: *Trauma and Recovery, "The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror"* 1992, Judith Herman MD, Basic Books, US

# Relationship Warning Signs

- Have you ever felt nervous around your boyfriend, girlfriend or partner?
- Have you ever had to be careful to control your behaviour to avoid their anger?
- Have you felt pressured by them when it comes to sex?
- Have you ever been scared of disagreeing with them?
- Have they ever criticised you, or humiliated you in front of people?
- Are they always checking up on you when you are by yourself?
- Have you ever been told that if *you* changed they wouldn't abuse you?
- Has their jealousy stopped you from seeing your friends or relatives?
- Have you often done things that you didn't want to do in order to please them?
- Have you felt that, with them, nothing was ever good enough?
- Have they ever prevented you going out and doing things that you wanted to do?
- Have they ever said that they would hurt themselves if you broke up?
- Have they ever made excuses for their behaviour e.g. it's because of the alcohol, drugs or that they just can't control their temper?





*"It feels like there is no escape....."*

# Session 3

“There is a link between the experience of being a victim of violence and lack of adequate pro-social behaviours towards others. When abused toddlers were compared with other preschool children who had affectionate and caring parents, they were found to be quite unsympathetic towards age-mates in distress.”<sup>13</sup>

"Some countries, such as the United States and Canada, include children's exposure to domestic violence a form of emotional abuse or neglect... This is in recognition that it is emotionally harming to a child to witness injury to a loved parent with whom the child identifies and on whom he or she relies for care. Furthermore, research shows that witnessing has a pronounced effect on children's adjustment ....and that domestic violence often overlaps with physical abuse of the child.... For example, one study showed that in the most recent domestic violent episode, mothers received 70% of injuries and children received 12% (Graham-Bermann, 2000)."<sup>4</sup>

"The findings in relation to the effect of witnessing domestic violence on both attitudes and the experience give support to the "cycle of violence" thesis: witnessing parental domestic violence is the strongest predictor of perpetration of violence in young peoples own intimate relationships."<sup>5</sup>

The Women's Safety Survey Australia (1996) found that of the 700 000 women who were pregnant during an abusive relationship, 42% reported that violence occurred during a pregnancy. Twenty percent of these women experienced violence for the first time when they were pregnant. This study also stated that: "68% of women who experienced violence by a previous partner reported that they had children in their care are some time during the relationship (682,200) and 46% (461,200) said these children had witnessed the violence."<sup>6</sup>

## **Some Australian Statistics on Young People and Domestic Abuse**

An Australian survey conducted in 1998-99 of 5000 young people aged from 12 – 20 years of age<sup>7</sup> found that:

- One-quarter of the young people reported at least one act that could be described as physical domestic violence against their mothers and stepmothers.
- The witnessing of male to female parental violence ranged from as low as 14% for those young people living with both parents, to a high of 41% for those young people living with 'mum and her partner'.
- Females, older teens, those of lower socioeconomic status and those not living with both parents were found to have been more likely to have witnessed adult domestic violence.
- Young people in households of lower socioeconomic status are about one and a half times more likely to be aware of violence towards their mothers or their fathers than those from upper socioeconomic households.
- Indigenous youth are significantly more likely to have experienced physical domestic violence between their parents (or parents' partners).

From the responses to the survey it was estimated that one in ten live in households where the male carer has hit them and/or their siblings for other than bad behaviour. In these households, 55.3 per cent of young people report having been aware of male to female physical violence occurring at the same time.

Young people perceive one of the major causes of domestic violence to be what the perpetrator has learnt in their own upbringing (the cycle of violence). Young people also clearly saw alcohol intoxication as one of the major 'causes' of domestic violence.

Almost 70 per cent of the young people surveyed had had a boyfriend or girlfriend at some stage. Forty two per cent of 19-20-year-old women who have had a boyfriend admitted experiencing some form of physical violence from a boyfriend at least once. Young people growing up in homes where there had been couple violence (both male and female carers perpetrating and being victimised by domestic violence) were more likely to be victims of relationship violence and perpetrators of violence in their intimate relationships. For example, they were twice as likely to have been forced to have sex and four times as likely to have admitted forcing their partner to have sex.

**Overall, the best predictor of perpetuation (and victimisation) of violence in young people's relationships was found to be witnessing types of male and female violence in the home.**

There seems, therefore, to be further support for the 'cycle of violence' theory. It is worth remembering however, that this refers to increased probability, not fate. The majority of people who grow up in violent homes do not go on to perpetuate violence in their relationships (see reference 11).



## SESSION 3

### Requirements

- Facilitators guide
- white board and markers
- paper and pens
- 4 sheets of butcher's paper
- blank pieces of paper
- handouts

Preparation: Write the following age groups as headings on 4 sheets of butcher's paper: 0-2 years, 2-8 years, 8-12 years, and 12+ years. Draw 3 separate columns on each sheet, with the headings 'social', 'emotional' and 'behavioural'.

### Icebreaker

5 mins

Identify me! Ask the participants to quickly write down three nice/positive things about their physical appearance on a piece of paper – things which will be read out to the group. Tell them NOT to write their name on the paper. Collect and shuffle them, and then hand out to group. One by one each participant reads out clues and guesses who it might be.

### Review of Session 2

10 mins

Facilitators to review main themes in session 2 by asking the group "what did we do last session?" Gather answers which cover the cycle of abuse, the spiral cycle of abuse and the comparisons between prisoners of war and victims of domestic abuse. Ask further questions which ensure understanding such as: "What happens in this stage? What does the cycle represent? What are some similarities between prisoners of war and victims of domestic abuse?"

Go through homework: Relationship Warning Signs. Ask the group: "Who had some ticks? Who had a lot of ticks? Do you think these are accurate warning signs?" Handout the Relationship warning signs information sheet.

Inform the group that they can share their personal abuse cycle with the facilitator at the end of the session if they wish.

**Effects of Domestic Abuse on Children**  
30 mins

*Aim: To identify the many and varied effects of Domestic Abuse on children at different age/stages.*

Tell the group: "Today's session will focus on children and domestic abuse situations. Domestic abuse has devastating effects on children. Children can be exposed to domestic abuse in different ways. What do you think some of these different ways are?" Write these on the whiteboard. Discuss examples of each.

The answers should cover –

- Seeing abuse in the house. E.g. a son seeing his father hit his mother, a daughter seeing her dad smash a plate or yelling threats at her mother.
- Hearing abuse in the house. E.g. son hiding in room hears yelling and mother crying, daughter outside hearing things being thrown and smashed.
- Knowing abuse happens in the home by living in a household filled with constant tension. Children often pick up on tension in the house and know that mum and dad have been arguing, especially if they see the aftermath such as smashed furniture or mums bruises. E.g. son comes home from school, see a hole in the wall and notice that dad and mum are not talking to each other.
- Being targets of the abuse. Simply being present whilst the abuse is occurring may mean that the child becomes a target as well. Sometimes the child feels obliged to intervene to protect their mother and then becomes the target of the abuse.

If appropriate, encourage personal experiences to be shared by participants. Ensure to inform participants

that often children are exposed to domestic abuse at a young age. If the participants don't have children themselves, it may be easier for the participants to reflect on their own childhood. Highlight that a lot of women believe that 'they doesn't hit me in front of the kids, so they are ok'. Debug this myth by noting the different ways children can be exposed to domestic abuse.

Divide the group into four smaller groups. Give each group one of the pieces of pre-prepared butcher's paper.

Tell each group that the heading on the top of their paper represents the age group of children they will be working on, i.e. 0-2 years.

Explain that children are affected by Domestic Abuse in different ways depending on the age they are. Each group is affected in three different areas: socially, emotionally and behaviourally. If it is too difficult for the group to distinguish between the three types, you may leave this part out and only ask for effects on each age group, without the sub-divisions of social, emotional and behavioural.

Allow 10 minutes to brainstorm in their groups the effects of domestic abuse on the age group they have, in all three areas. Form the larger group and ask each group to read through their examples. Validate answers and go through the following discussion as a general note of the effects of domestic abuse on children.

Ask the group: "what feelings do you think these children have?" Read through the following: Feelings of fear, anger, depression, grief, shame, despair and distrust are common in children who have witnessed domestic abuse. A sense of powerlessness is also common – which means feeling they have no control over anything. Also, children of domestic abuse households can also have slowed developmental capacities such as poor school performance, low self-esteem, and difficulty relating to peers.

Ask the group: "what physical reactions (i.e. what goes on in the body) do you think these children

experience?” Discuss responses. Read through: “physical reactions such as stomach cramps, headaches, sleeping and eating disorders, and frequent illnesses are common in children who have experienced domestic abuse in their home.”

Ask the group: “how do you think these children might behave or act?” Discuss responses and read the following: “Substance abuse is common to children of domestic abuse. Often they use to deal with the abuse in their house and the memories of it. Using aggressive language or running away from home are other common behaviours.

**“One of the most devastating things is what children who experience domestic abuse LEARN – they learn that abuse is a legitimate way of maintaining control of a situation or resolving conflict. They learn that by using abuse they get what they want and it is ok to use abuse on other people particularly when you are upset and angry.”**

### **Domestic Abuse and Pregnancy**

10 mins

Discuss the effects of domestic abuse on pregnant women and their babies. Explain that Pregnancy may be a stimulus for the first episode of abuse or may prompt an escalation of abuse. Ask why they think this could be so e.g. unwanted pregnancy, feeling trapped, financial worries, reaction to pregnancy from family and friends etc.

If appropriate, encourage responses from participants regarding any personal experiences of this.

Briefly discuss how domestic abuse seems to perpetuate through generations as it becomes familiar to both perpetrators and victims. Acknowledge that witnessing domestic abuse as a child may normalise abuse and make it seem more acceptable as an adult. Inform participants that research has shown that children who witness abuse may grow up to be either a victim of abuse or a violent person themselves.

**B R E A K - 1 0 M I N S**

### **Abuse in same Sex relationships**

15 mins

*Aim: To acknowledge that domestic abuse can occur in homosexual partnerships. There may be additional pressures to consider in relation to domestic abuse within homosexual partnerships.*

Start this section by asking the group: “how common is domestic abuse in same sex relationships?” Discuss. “What added difficulties do you think victims of domestic abuse in same sex relationships might face?”

Facilitators explain to participants that same sex relationships may be frowned upon within certain family, cultural and religious groups, making it very difficult to report domestic abuse, even to family members. Give the example of a woman in a same sex relationship disclosing to her mother she is in a homosexual partnership and her mother is finding it difficult to accept this situation. If this woman also experiences abuse, it may be very hard for the woman to disclose to her mother that her same sex relationship is a domestic abuse one.

Lead on from this by asking the participants how homophobia impacts on domestic abuse in same sex relationships. Discuss the following: “There are multiple barriers to disclosure of domestic abuse both within gay, lesbian and bisexual communities and the mainstream community where homophobia compounds the risks for victims of domestic abuse.” Distribute handout Abuse in Gay and Lesbian Relationships and discuss.

### **Myths and Facts**

15 mins

Use the three myths about homosexual domestic abuse on the three pieces of paper. Split the larger group into three smaller groups and assign a myth to each group. Ask the group to consider the statement and whether they believe to be true or false. DO NOT SAY THE STATEMENT IS FALSE YET. Allow 5 minutes. Discuss each myth with the larger group, and then inform the group that all 3 are myths. (Alternatively, you may wish to use a continuum here by placing the myth on the floor and asking the group how true do you believe this statement to be? Ask them to

place themselves along a scale of 1 to 10 on the floor using the cards on program CD under session 5).

Dispense handouts Myths and Facts and read aloud.

Go through the Abuse in Gay and Lesbian Relationships sheet and discuss each dot point, asking the group what they think of that statement and in their experience, if they believe it to be true.

### **My statement**

10 mins

Tell the group that today's session has looked at some intense issues, like the effect on children and how domestic abuse operates in homosexual relationships. Now we are going to do something a little more positive and that allows us to move on from the negative things we have covered today. We are each going to create a statement/promise/mantra about what we will no longer tolerate and what we want for ourselves in the future (examples of these are following). Ask the group to think about what they will write and allow a few minutes for this. Have a piece of paper large enough for each person to write their statement on. Ask the group to write their statement one by one on their piece of paper. Participants can write more than one if they so wish.

The facilitator, if possible, should take away this piece of paper and type it up or copy it for each group member. It is important that participants are able to take a copy of their statements away. Display the original in the wall of the group room.

### **Close**

5 mins

Tell the group that today's session was probably particularly difficult for some people, given the discussion of the effect on children. Some people are likely to walk out of the group today thinking about the effects on children and how their children might have been effected by domestic abuse. You might even think about how you have experienced domestic abuse as a child and how this might have affected you. This is ok and expect this, but if you become distressed, like not being able to think about anything else, crying, not feeling like eating or having trouble sleeping, make sure you let a staff member know.

Use the knock up system if you feel this way and are alone at night to let someone know.

Ask to group to memorise their statement and to remember it later tonight, if they start to dwell on today's session.

Close the session by asking the following: "How do you feel about today's session? What is one thing that you will take away from today's session?"

Handout the information sheets on the effects of domestic abuse on children – Effects of domestic abuse on children, Some effects common to children etc, Longer term implications etc, Statistics on children etc, and Protecting your children from domestic abuse.

### **Homework**

Distribute two pieces of paper (or use journal) and ask the group to:

1. Draw a picture or word which represents how you feel about what we covered in today's session, in particular the effects that Domestic abuse has on children and
2. Ask the group to write up their statement on a piece of paper in any way they want.

# **Session 3**

## **Facilitator Resources**



Violence in  
gay and  
lesbian  
relationships  
is a mutual  
fight

The law can't  
help me and  
the police  
aren't  
interested

I won't be  
able to meet  
any other gay  
or lesbian  
people

Examples of Statements

**I will not let another man take control of power over me again**

**If it happens I will ever seek help**

**No man will ever hit me**

**No man will ever hit me again**

**If a man hits me I will never let a man intimidate me again**

**I will never let a man abuse me again**

**I wish I had sought more help with family and friends for my self-esteem**

I will never let a man  
hit me, run my life,  
tell me what to do  
ever again.

I deserve better, you dont need him,  
I'm a good person you can do much better

I'll never get myself into  
situation like that again

I will  
not  
let  
a man  
hit  
again

I will seek men  
you can do better  
than that

I will talk to  
someone it if  
does occur

I deserve better

# **Session 3**

## **Handouts**

## Relationship Warning Signs Information

You might have answered yes to some of these questions but still think "it's not that bad".

Feeling scared, humiliated, pressured or controlled is not the way you should feel in a relationship.

You should feel loved, respected and free to be yourself. Your feelings and safety are important.

People who are abusive will often make you feel that you are to blame for their behaviour. You might think that if you try and change to be more like what they want you to be, the abuse will stop. But in a relationship, you should be able to feel OK just being yourself and doing what you want to do. Think about what you want for yourself.

If you are in an abusive relationship, it is likely to get worse over time. But you can't make your girlfriend or boyfriend change their behaviour. They are the ones who have to change their attitude and accept responsibility for abusing you, without making excuses for their behaviour.

If this does not happen and you want the violence to stop, then unfortunately, leaving them might be your only choice.

**IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT IF YOU ARE BEING ABUSED.**

**EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT**

From: Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre  
1998-2005, Tech Wise Consulting, VIC



## EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE ON CHILDREN

Children may be affected by their experiences of abuse in a number of different ways. All children must be viewed as unique in their responses to abuse.

Here are some indicators of domestic abuse, and their effects on children. These should not be regarded as conclusive indicators, but they should not be ignored.

### **Difficulty with concentrating at school**

Instead of listening they may often "switch off" or be wondering about what is happening at home. Anxiety is a major distraction and impacts on a child's ability to learn.

### **Withdrawn and fearful/aggressive**

By seeing the world as a hostile place, they may become victimised and bullied by other children. They may become too frightened to assert themselves when fear and vulnerability replace the basic trust children need to thrive and develop.

The other side to this can see the child becoming aggressive, copying the violent behaviour they learn at home.

### **Eating Disorders**

Children living with violence may either lose their appetite or eat excessively. They may grab food, steal or even hide food.

### **Timidity or shyness**

Children living with violence may be tearful and timid because they live in fear. They may cower in threatening or menacing situations, or physically freeze when intimidated.

### **Tiredness**

Sometimes children are kept awake by violence and are likely to have disturbed or disrupted nights sleep. They may also be prone to frightening nightmares and bedwetting.

### **Sensitivity**

Children, especially males who live in a violent household, may become desensitised. This means, in order to cope, they get used to the violence. They may grow up thinking that violence is a part of normal life. They may become insensitive to physical pain. They learn how to use violence to solve problems and attain power over others or to gain some kind of advantage.



# SOME EFFECTS COMMON TO CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC ABUSE – IN AGE GROUPS

## 0-2 years

Children at this age react to their environment. When distressed they tend to cry, withdraw or refuse to feed.

### **Social**

Shies away from adults  
Difficulty interacting with other children



### **Emotional**

Cries a lot  
Withdrawn  
Can develop medical problems such as diarrhoea or rashes from anxiety  
Appears sullen  
Difficulty bonding with either parent  
Failure to thrive



### **Behavioural**

Pinches, bites, hits, kicks other children and adults  
Abnormal sleep/feeding routines  
Delays in speech  
Difficulty with toilet training



## 2-8 years

At this stage, children are very self-centred and believe that everything revolves around them or is caused by them. They may believe the violence is their fault.

They may run away or hurt themselves to distract their parents from the violence or try to get other adults to help

### Social

Difficulty interacting with others

Slow to form friendships

Difficulty maintaining friendships

Trust issues



### Emotional

Fear/terror – hides/shakes/cries at yelling, loud bangs

Bedwetting or problems with wetting their pants, stomach cramps/diarrhoea

Excessive angry outbursts

Difficulty in displaying emotions

Withdrawn

Divided loyalty between parents

Chronic illness

Nightmares



### Behavioural

Speech difficulties i.e., stuttering, slow speech development

Inattentiveness at school

Constantly tired

Aggressiveness

Under-eating/over-eating

Poor/slow growth development

Insomnia/excessive tiredness



## 8-12 years

Although not so self centred at this age, many children still believe the violence is their fault. Many try to intervene to try and stop the violence. Their frustration at not being able to stop it may be expressed in either withdrawal or aggression. Children at this age can form friendships; however, children who have witnessed domestic violence are often afraid of close relationships in case their 'secret' is found out.

### **Social**

Lack of sportsmanship skills  
Difficulties with interactions between peers  
Violence and aggression towards others  
Mistrust of people



### **Emotional**

Living in a state of constant anxiety, waiting for the next outburst  
Feeling that the violence is their fault, or they should be able to stop it  
Poor self-esteem  
Extreme anger/depression/fear  
Difficulty naming/expressing feelings  
Nightmares



### **Behavioural**

Attention seeking  
Inability to concentrate  
Under-achieving/over-achieving at school  
Extremes in behaviour – either very bad or very good  
Vandalism  
Easily distracted or frustrated  
Cruelty to animals  
Little/no concept of safety or personal/physical boundaries that can manifest in dangerous behaviour and/or leave the child at a higher risk of broader abuse/mistreatment.



## 12+ years

Children now can see the domestic violence as their parent's problem. They often see the victim as responsible for the violence. They are often angry at the mother for not stopping the violence. Adolescents who witness their mother being abused often feel isolated and helpless as well as sad, guilty and fearful. These feelings may be expressed as anger, aggression and withdrawal. This stage is often marked with low self-esteem and poor coping skills.

### **Social**

Aggression towards peers, mother  
Inappropriate relationships (particularly in girls)  
School refusal  
Disrespect for women



### **Emotional**

Self harm  
Blames mother  
Poor self-esteem



### **Behavioural**

Vandalism/fire lighting (particularly in boys)  
Criminal activities  
Problem-solving using violence/avoids confrontation  
Deceptive behaviours (lying, cheating, stealing)  
Over-responsibility (particularly in girls – take on mother role)  
Running away  
Poor academic performance  
Cruelty to animals



Younger children may appear more negatively affected than older children because of their dependence on their care givers. Older children may also have the support of peers and school. These support systems have not yet developed in young children's lives.

As with gender, however, it is important not to generalise. While these trends have been observed, there can still be great variation in the responses of children from the same age group.

## LONGER TERM IMPLICATIONS ON CHILDREN FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENT SITUATIONS

Children of Domestic Abuse can learn that:

- The only way to cope with stress and pressure is through the use of violence
- Disrespect for women
- It is possible to love and physically hurt someone at the same time
- Using violence is an appropriate way to solve problems
- It is OK to use violence to get what you want

Although not all children grow up to repeat their parents patterns, many researchers have found that currently violent people often have histories of domestic violence in their childhoods.

If children live in an atmosphere of fear, chaos and uncertainty instead of a safe nurturing environment, their health and wellbeing will suffer.

They need help in building self-esteem and social skills, developing relationships and learning that there are non-violent ways of solving problems.

As parents we must teach our children that they have choices in their lives and as their carers, to make these choices available to them.

## Statistics on Children Living with Domestic Abuse

1. 70% of the children living in violent domestic situations are also victims of violence themselves.
2. Increasing severity of spouse abuse is accompanied by increasing severity of child abuse.
3. Statistics show that there is a higher incidence of sexual abuse on children where there is domestic abuse in the household.
4. Abused women are 150% more likely to use severe discipline with their children than were non-abused women. (Stark & Flitcraft, 1997)
5. Babies can be damaged in the uterus when their mother is beaten during pregnancy
6. Children are frequently caught in the crossfire, either "accidentally" or as a consequence of trying to defend their mother. They may also be assaulted as a way of torturing their mother.



## PROTECTING YOUR CHILD FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

Although children may not be the intended victims of spousal or partner abuse, they can become victims by being physically abused, witnessing abuse or bearing the aftermath of abuse.

Not only do children who experience Domestic Abuse have to cope with the trauma of seeing their mothers abused and living in fear of what will happen to her, many are also in danger themselves. Even if they are not the direct targets of violence they are often caught in the crossfire.

Can you protect your children in a crisis?

Can you protect your children before a crisis occurs?

In a crisis or emergency situation, consider:

- Restraining orders, which include children if they have been harmed or their safety has been threatened
- Notifying school officials and caregivers that your abuser should not be allowed to pick up the children if the abuser has threatened to remove them from your custody
- Having an adult capable of protecting your children to be with them at all times if they are endangered.
- Giving the older children a mobile phone for their own protection if abusive parents might attempt to harm them.



## ABUSE IN GAY AND LESBIAN RELATIONSHIPS

Domestic abuse in same sex and heterosexual relationships share many similarities, including the types of abuse and the impact on the abused partner. However, there are a number of aspects that are unique to the same sex domestic violence. These include:

### **Outing as a method of control**

If the abused partner isn't out to their family, friends and workmates or within their cultural community the abusive partner may use 'outing' or the threat of outing as a method of control.

### **The abuse becomes associated with sexuality**

For many people, especially those new to gay or lesbian relationships, their sexual identity becomes associated with the abuse so that they blame the abuse on being gay or lesbian. So they may feel that "I'm experiencing this abuse because I'm gay/lesbian. If I wasn't gay/lesbian I wouldn't be experiencing this. I hate being gay/lesbian".

### **Domestic abuse isn't well understood in the community**

There hasn't been much information or discussion in the gay and lesbian communities about domestic violence in our relationships. Most of the information on domestic abuse relates to heterosexual relationships with the man abusing the woman. This lack of understanding means that some people may not:

- Believe it happens in same sex relationships
- Recognise abuse as domestic abuse if it does happen to them and/or
- Know how to respond if they see domestic abuse in their friends or family member's relationships.

### **Confidentiality**

The relatively small size of the gay and lesbian communities, especially in smaller cities and rural areas can make it difficult for the abused partner to seek help. They may feel embarrassed about the abuse or their partner may have tried to turn others in the community against them. An abusive partner may isolate the other from contact with the gay and lesbian community by preventing them reading the community press or attending gay and lesbian venues and preventing those seeing friends from within the community. This is especially true for people in their first same sex relationship who may not have had much contact with the gay and lesbian community before the relationship began.

### **Services may not be well developed**

Although women in lesbian relationships can access most general domestic abuse services, like refuges and court assistance schemes, these services may have little experience in working with same sex domestic abuse and therefore, may not offer the most appropriate service. For gay men there are currently few specific services that offer assistance or support. However, the Same Sex Domestic Violence Interagency and other organisations are developing strategies for addressing this issue.



## MYTHS AND FACTS

**Myth:** Violence in gay and lesbian relationships is a mutual fight

**Fact:** Domestic abuse is about power and control and will almost always involve a number of forms of abuse, for example emotional or social abuse. Physical violence may only be one of those. Regardless of whether an abused partner may be able to fight back during a particular incident, they are still experiencing domestic abuse.

**Myth:** The law can't help me and the police aren't interested.

**Fact:** Threats, stalking and physical and sexual violence are all illegal. The law in NSW offers the same protection to same sex victims of domestic abuse as it does to heterosexual victims - including police protection and access to AVO's. It also allows for division of joint property after two years of living together.

The police have a responsibility to provide assistance and protection to anyone in NSW experiencing forms of domestic abuse - regardless of sexuality. If someone feels that the police or other legal service responses hasn't been adequate or appropriate, they have the right to make a complaint to the Police Customer Services Unit on; 1800 688 571

or the NSW Ombudsman's Office on; 1800 451 524.

**Myth:** I won't be able to meet any other gay or lesbian people

**Fact:** One form of abuse is social isolation. Some people worry that they will end up isolated and alone. This is especially true for people in their first same sex relationship. There are many community groups that can help people out to make connections with other gay/lesbian people.

Another closet, Domestic violence in same sex relationships, ACON & NSW Attorney General's Dept, Crime Prevention Division

## Facts about Domestic Abuse in Homosexual Relationships

- Lesbians are much less likely to report domestic abuse because of fear of homophobia.
- Domestic violence is largely ignored or kept quiet in the lesbian community because it is believed that women cannot be abusers.
- Statistics show that domestic abuse occurs in one of every four lesbian relationships
- 50% of women polled in 1988 said they have been victims of domestic abuse in lesbian relationships. 50% of these women said they had also been the abuser in lesbian relationships.
- 25 – 33% of all same sex relationships include domestic abuse.
- Domestic Violence is the 3rd largest problem facing gay men in the USA, second to substance abuse and AIDS.
- Homosexual domestic violence occurs just as much as heterosexual domestic violence.



# Session 4

Research contradicts the popular myth that women go from one abusive relationship to another. It seems that women who have experienced an abusive relationship are able to have healthy relationships there after. For abusive men, however, the research indicates otherwise – abusive men tend to transfer their dependency from one woman to another and the abuse begins again (Walker, L. 2000).

# SESSION 4

## Requirements

- Movie: 'A love that kills'
- Whiteboard
- Handouts
- Facilitators Guide
- Television
- DVD/VHS player
- spare paper for homework
- butchers paper
- Healthy and Unhealthy relationship flower cut outs. - Photocopy flowers on coloured paper and cut out petals and centres.
- Tissues

***Note:** this is a very long session. If it needs to be divided into two smaller sessions, do not simply end the session at the allocated break time. If dividing the session, it **must** be broken up like this:*

1. *Review*

*Video*

*Break*

*Abusive relationship paper*

*Healthy relationship paper*

*Close*

2. *Review (of above)*

*Unhealthy relationship flower*

*Break*

*Healthy relationship flower*

*Close*

## **Review of Session 3**

10 mins

Review last session on the effects of domestic abuse on children & domestic abuse in same sex relationships. Ask if any questions have arisen about these topics since the group last met.

Review the homework – the 2 tasks of drawing how they felt about the content of session 3 and the artwork of their statements. Explore the drawings (what each participants drawings mean and how they are interpreted by the artist) and discuss both drawings in

turn – how it felt when creating the drawings, how it feels now looking back on them, what meaning these drawings have to each person etc. Distribute photocopies of their statements.

**Video:**  
**A Love That Kills**  
 50 mins

*Aim: To identify who is involved in Domestic abuse relationships, types of abuse, use of power and control and the Cycles of Abuse.*

*Note: This is a very emotional and powerful video which may be disturbing to some participants in the group. Please explain that if they find it upsetting they are free to excuse themselves from the group and return when the video concludes. Additionally, it will benefit the facilitators to watch this video prior to watching in group to be familiar with the content. There is a video Learning Tool on the program CD under session 4. Have a look at this to determine whether it will be useful for your group.*

The video itself is approximately 25 minutes. Time is left after the video for processing the content through facilitator-led discussion. This discussion flows from the structure of the question sheet. Allow extra time for processing the content of this video, and be sure to have tissues in the room!

Distribute handout entitled VIDEO: A Love That Kills. Play the video and be sure to monitor participants' reactions to the video whilst it is playing.

After watching the video, ask the group a general open question such as 'what do you think of that?' Go on by asking 'How did people go answering the questions on the handout?'. Have the facilitators answer sheet nearby and discuss the questions and answers from the handout. Be sure to monitor participant's reactions and answers to each question to gauge how they coped with the video. During this discussion be sure to ask questions such as:

- Can anyone identify with what Monica was going through? How? What part of the video?

- What about Adam? Does anyone see any 'Adam's in their life?
- What part of the video had the most meaning for you?
- What about the mother? How much do you think her daughter's abusive relationship has affected her?

You may also wish to use the video Learning Tool (on program CD under Session 4) for discussion ideas.

Tell the group we are going to have a break, but after the break we will revisit the video by discussing unhealthy relationships. Ask the group if it is ok to break here for 10 minutes or if people want to continue discussing the video. If it is ok, then have a break.

If participants request more time to talk or continue to talk, allow the discussion to flow and come to a natural close.

If you have any concerns, ask the group before the break "Are we going to walk out of the room feeling safe?" If yes, have a break. If not ask "What can we do now to make us feel safe enough to walk out of the room?" Act accordingly and use your group skills and assessment skills to judge if participants are now safe to leave the room.

## **B R E A K - 1 0 M I N S**

### **Abusive Relationship Paper**

15 mins

Write 'Abusive Relationship' on a piece of paper and place it in the middle of the room/table. Ask the group what they think this is, to define it. Ask the group to attach an emotion to this piece of paper that is related to their experience with abusive relationships. Encourage the group to each share a story about their experience in an abusive relationship. Acknowledge and validate participants' experiences.

Close this activity by informing the group that we are going to move on from the video and are now going to do an activity about unhealthy relationships.

## **Unhealthy Relationship Flower**

20 mins

This is a creative activity that is thoughtful yet fun to do. It is deliberately placed after the video as this video often creates a dark atmosphere. This activity has been designed to lighten the mood and end the session with a positive outlook.

Place the cut out petals and flowers with blank pieces of paper on a table. Explain to the participants that they are going to create two flowers – a healthy relationship one and an unhealthy relationship one. On the centre circle they are to write ‘Unhealthy Relationship’. On the petals they are to write a characteristic of an unhealthy relationship – what an unhealthy relationship looks like to them. Examples of unhealthy relationship characteristics are: coercion, threats, intimidation, put downs, name calling, humiliation, isolation, control, jealousy, using children, not being allowed to make decisions, being a servant, and financial control. Link this to the Power and Control Wheel which was looked at in session 2.

This unhealthy flower need not be pretty or neat and may represent more of a weed than a flower. The flower can look any way they want and can have any amount of petals (i.e. characteristics) that they would like (See the following pages for an example of an unhealthy and healthy relationship flower). Once participants are clear on the instructions ask them to start. Whilst they are creating their flower discuss aspects of an unhealthy relationship with them. Ask: ‘What does an unhealthy relationship look like?’

Once the unhealthy relationship flowers are complete refer back to the piece of paper with ‘Abusive Relationships’ and emotions attached to it. Tell the group you would now like to take this paper from the middle of the room and put it to one side. Tell the group by doing this we are acknowledging abusive relationships and our experiences with this, but we are also saying we want to move on from them. Ask the group if it is ok to move this piece of paper to the floor

in the corner of the room. If it is ok, do so. If not, discuss the topic until it is ok to move the paper to the corner of the room.

**Healthy  
Relationship Paper**  
15 mins

Write 'healthy relationship' on a piece of paper on the floor and ask the group: What do you think this is? What does this look like? Encourage each person to share a story about their experience in a healthy relationship. Ask each person to write an emotion on this paper which is related to a healthy relationship. Leave this paper in the middle and tell the group we are now going to do a healthy relationship flower. At the end of the session place this paper up on the wall.

**Healthy Relationship  
Flower**  
20 mins

Creating the healthy flower follows the same process – any number of petals with a healthy relationship characteristic on each petal. This flower may be pretty and colourful. Again, whilst doing this discuss aspects of a healthy relationship, what it looks like and what it feels like. Examples of characteristics of a healthy relationship are – negotiation and fairness, non-threatening behaviour, respect, making decisions together, shared responsibility, shared parenting, honesty, trust and support. Make this exercise personal and realistic - focussed on what each participant wants from a relationship in the future.

Inform the group that there is a diagram called the Equality wheel which covers some of these important healthy relationship characteristics. Distribute the Power and Control Wheel (if participants don't have their one from session 2), Equality Wheel and People in Healthy Relationships handouts.

**Close**  
10 mins

Ask the group how they feel about what was covered today. Especially draw out information about how the video affected them and how they feel now after completing the relationship flower task. Debrief any participant that shared something significant about themselves (this may be done out of group if you feel it is not appropriate to do in group). Again ask the group:



Are we feeling safe enough to leave the room? If no, put procedures in place for the participants who are feeling unsafe. If yes, ask: If you begin to feel unsafe later on, what will you do?

Make yourself available for individual follow up after group. Inform the group that you are available and that referrals to see psychology or other OSP staff can be made.

### **Homework**

Ask the group to do something creative which represents the kind of healthy relationship they want in the future. Rather than a flower, this may be a story, a poem, a song, a drawing, a collage etc. Alternatively they want to find a symbol or something tangible like an object, which represents the kind of relationship they want in the future. Ask the group to think of a story or an explanation to go with this piece of artwork/object to present to group next session.

Distribute Session 3 and 4 Questionnaire (on Program CD under Session 4) and ask participants to complete and return next session.

# **Session 4**

## **Facilitator Resources**

## A LOVE THAT KILLS

### Facilitators Answer Sheet

**1) Before moving in with Adam, how did he treat Monica?**

*With respect, love and understanding*

**2) Name some of the warning signs you witnessed in the video before the physical abuse began.**

*Threats*

*Insults*

*Anger*

*Controlling finances*

*Not letting her speak to others*

**3) Give an example of each abuse**

*Social: Would not allow her to speak to old friends, would demand to know where she was at all times (even when she was working).*

*Note: there are no examples of spiritual abuse in this video. Remind participants what spiritual abuse is and what it looks like.*

*Sexual: Although not talked about, sexual abuse may have occurred. It is probably the least spoken about type of abuse. Ask the group if sexual abuse had occurred in Adam and Monica's relationship, what do you think might have happened?*

*Economic/Financial: Controlled her money only giving her an allowance*

*Emotional/Verbal: Humiliating her because she couldn't spell  
Displayed dominating and controlling behaviour, shouted at her*

*Physical: Hit her, pushed her*

**4) What did Adam do to persuade Monica to move back in with him the first time she left?**

*Manipulated her by saying he would change and never be violent again and threatening to commit suicide*

**5) Where is the cycle of abuse in this relationship?**

*The relationship started off in honeymoon phase where things were nice, Tension began to rise with the plate smashing, for example. The physical abuse occurred with a minute trigger. Then it returned to honeymoon phase again with Adam promising it will never happen again and saying he was sorry.*

**6) What support did Monica seek?**

*Spoke to friend  
Spoke to mother  
Moved out*

**7) What other support systems could Monica put in place**

*Taken out an AVO  
Contacted Domestic Violence help line/ Community Centre  
Gone to a refuge  
Not see him alone  
Not open the door to him  
Not let Adam know where she was living  
Silent phone number  
Call the police*

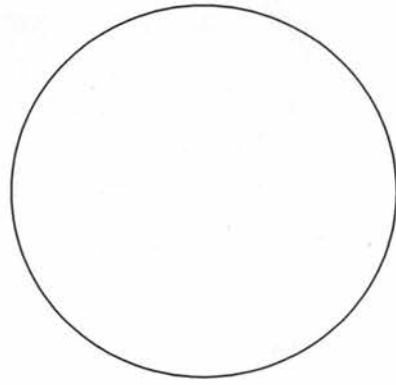
**8) Do you think the cycle of abuse would be different if Monica had been in a same sex relationship? If so how?**

*No, a relationship between two people is just that – A relationship. Domestic Abuse does not discriminate*

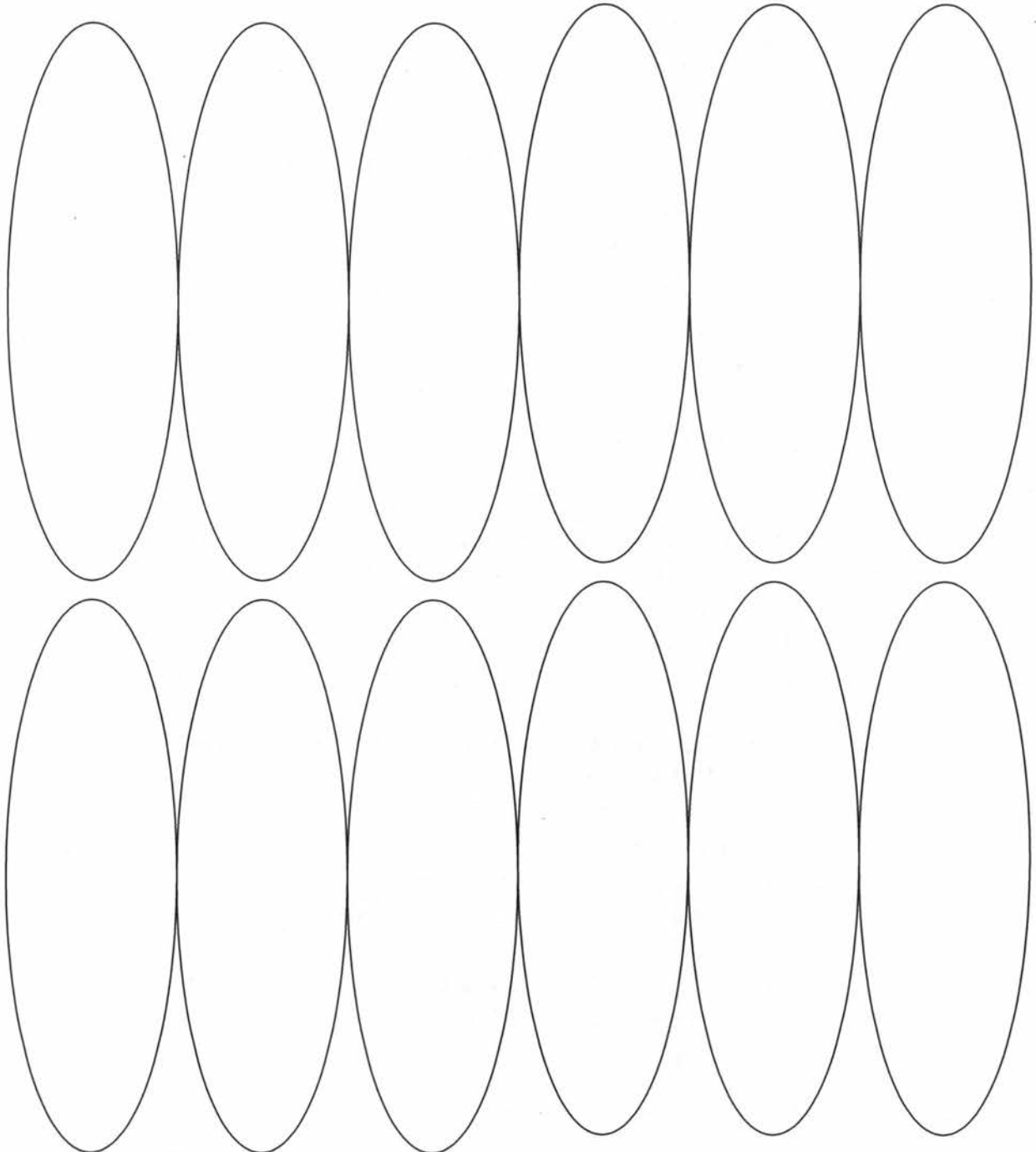
**9) What may have been the implications if children were involved?**

*Kidnapping of the children  
Emotional abuse of children  
Children learning lessons such as 'it is ok to use violence to get what you want'  
Children remembering the abuse at a later time – re-traumatising them  
Children trying to defend their mother  
Children being murdered*

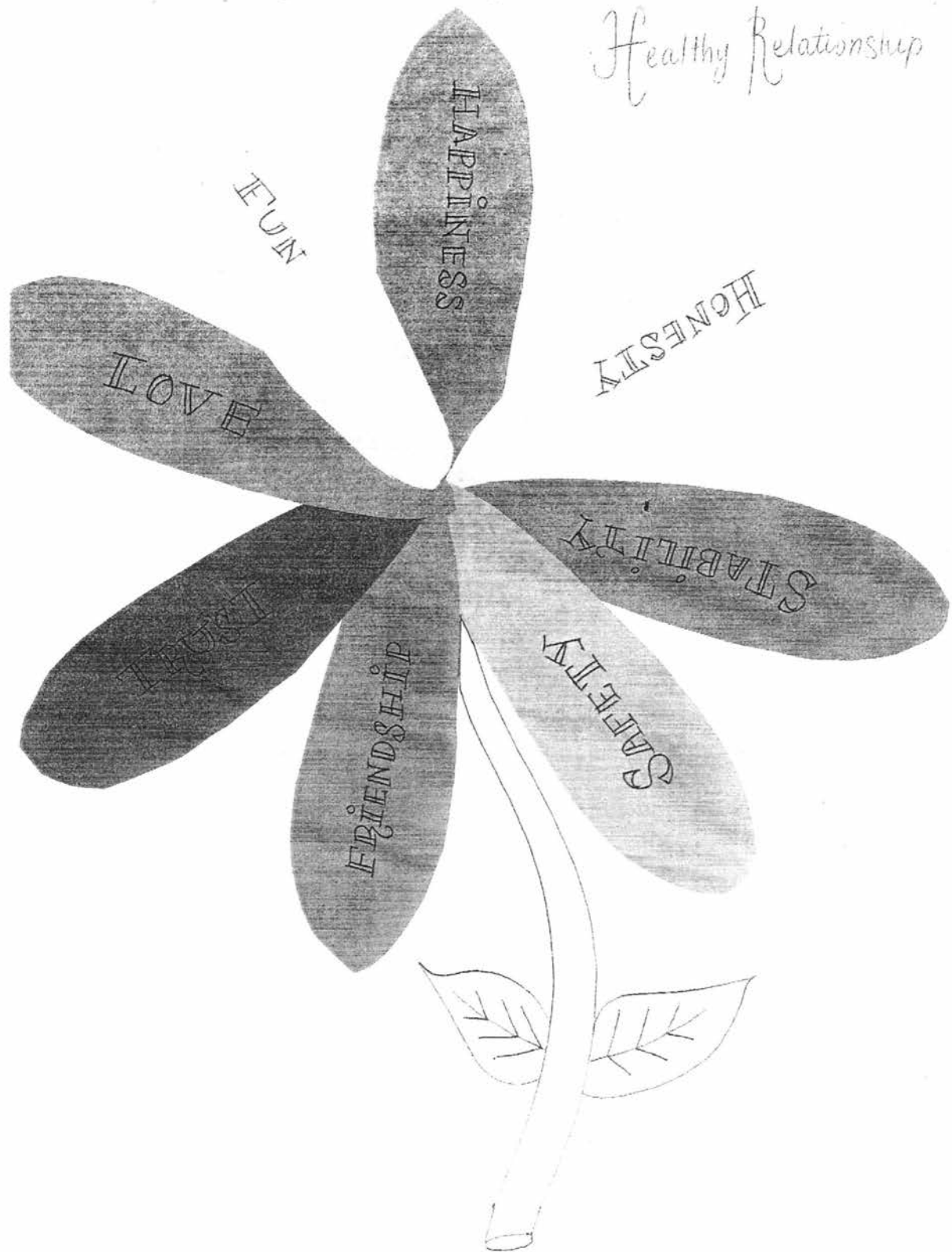
**Unhealthy and Healthy Relationship Flower**  
**Centre of Flower**

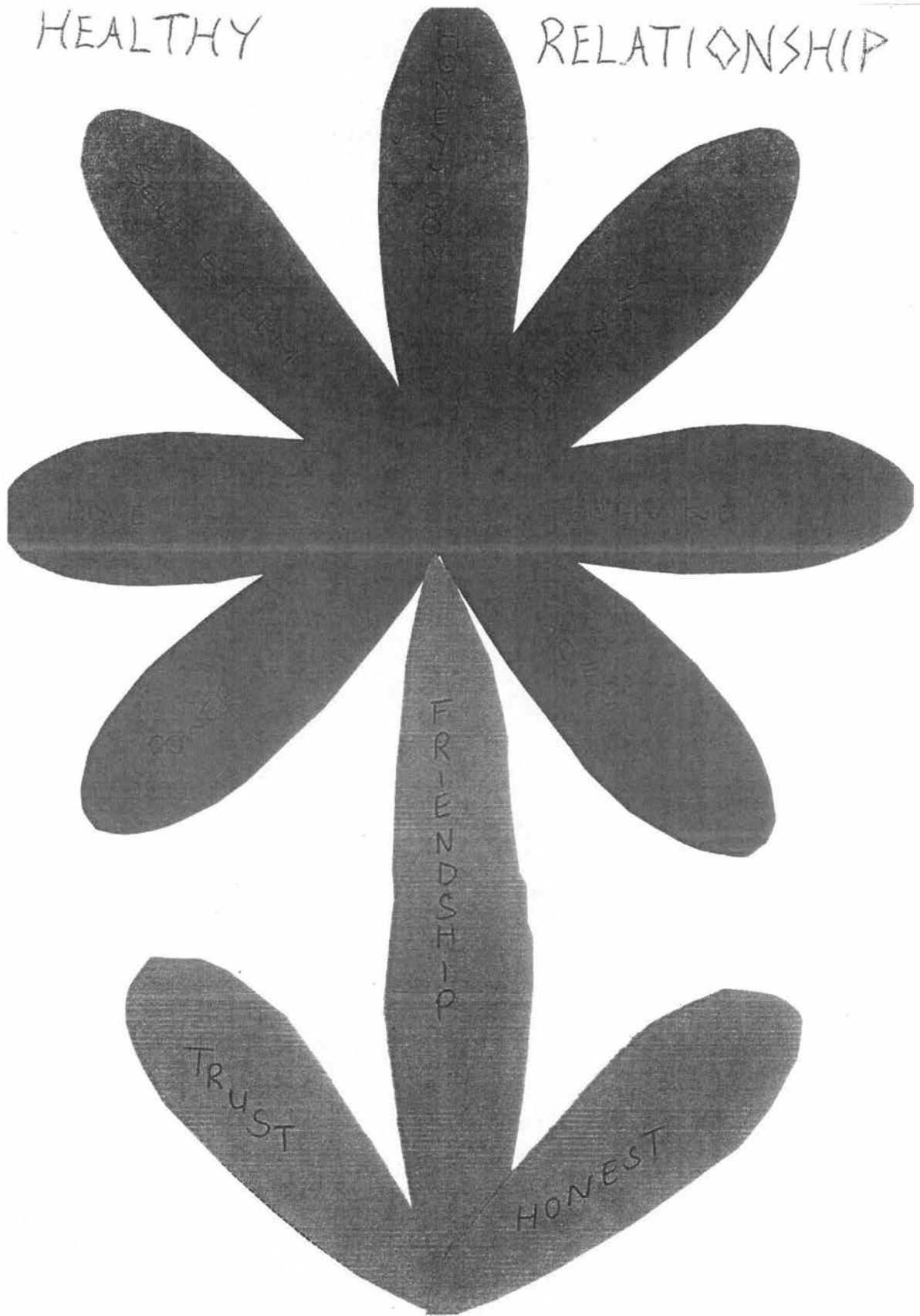


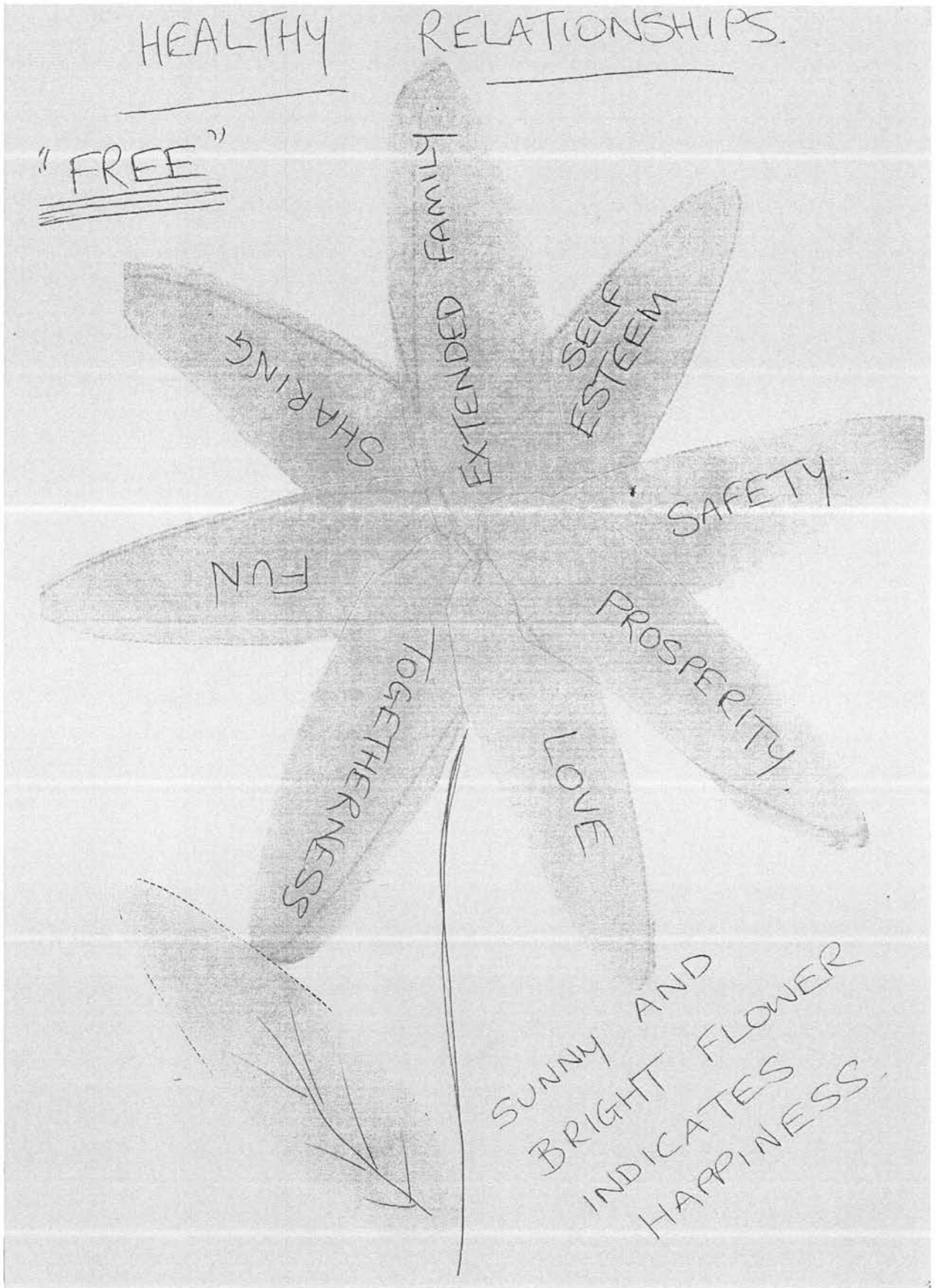
**Petals**



### Example of Healthy Relationship flower

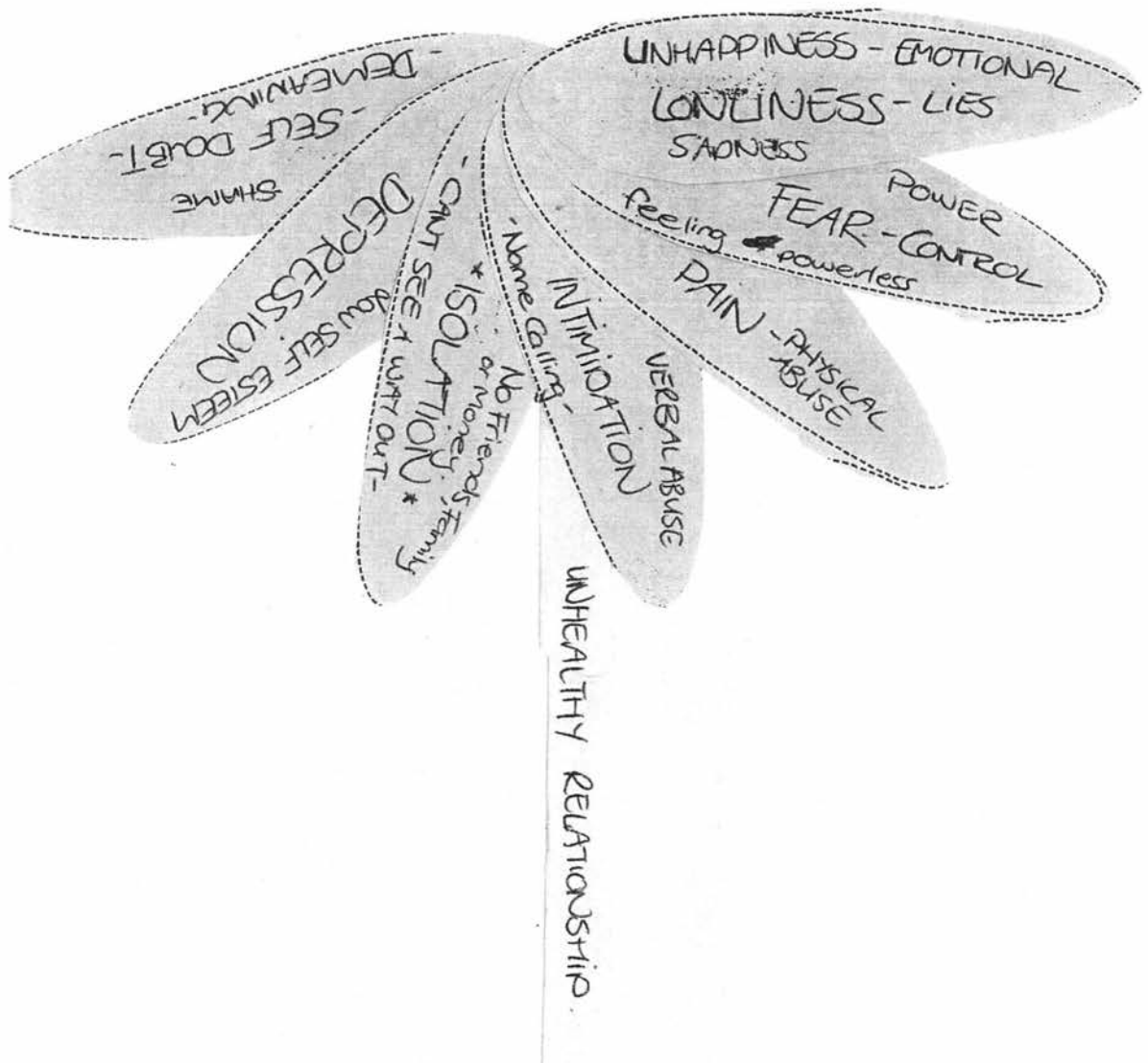






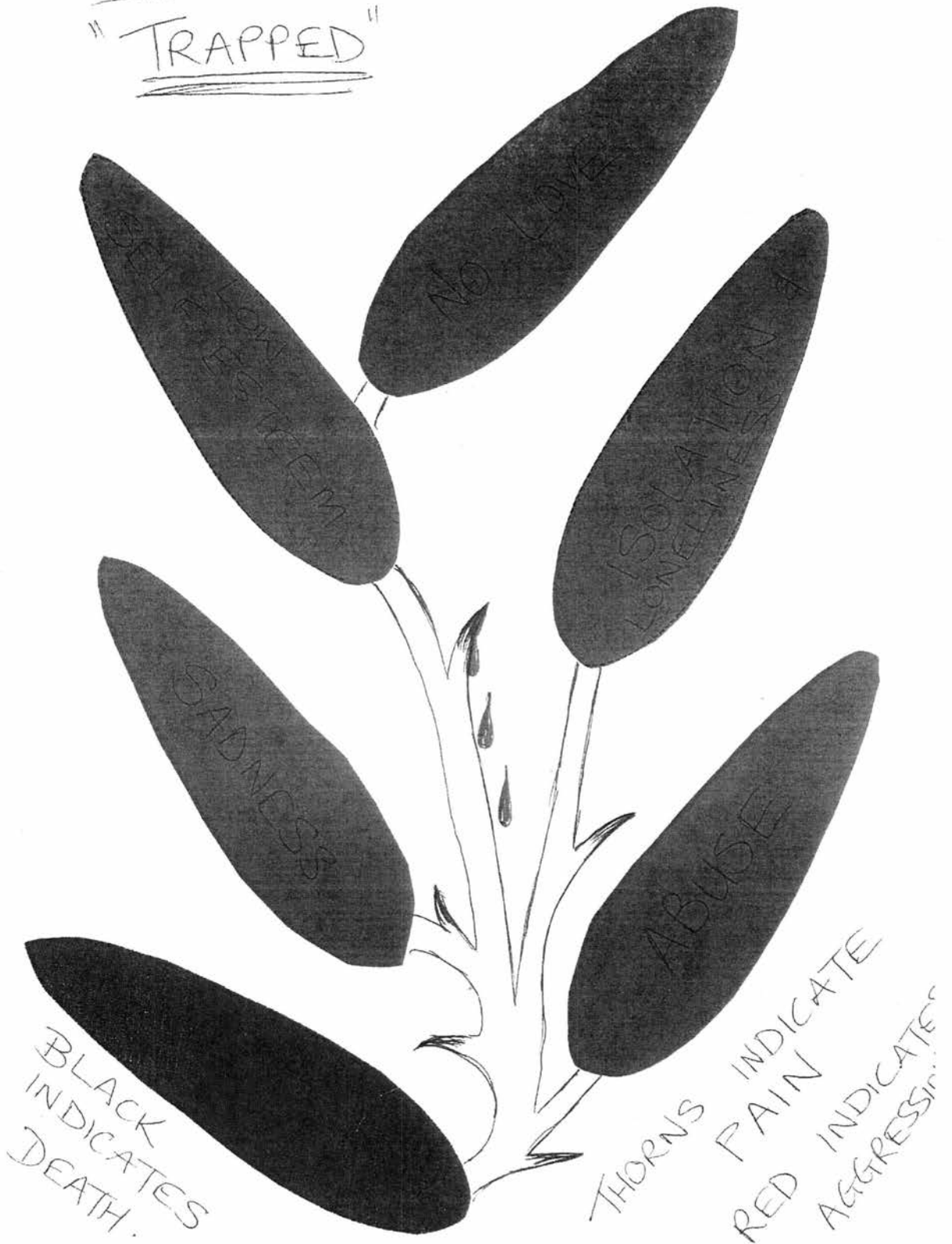


# Example of Unhealthy Relationship flower



# UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

"TRAPPED"



# **Session 4**

# **Handouts**

# "A Love that Kills"

## The Video

1) Before moving in with Monica, how did Adam treat her?

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2) Name some of the warning signs you witnessed in the video before the physical abuse began.

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3) Give an example of each type of abuse

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4) What did Adam do to persuade Monica to move back in with him the first time she left?

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5) Where is the cycle of abuse in this relationship? Say what happened in each stage.

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6) What support did Monica seek?

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7) What other support systems could Monica have put in place?

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8) Do you think the cycle of abuse would be different if Monica had been in a same sex relationship? If so how?

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9) What may have been the implications if children were involved?

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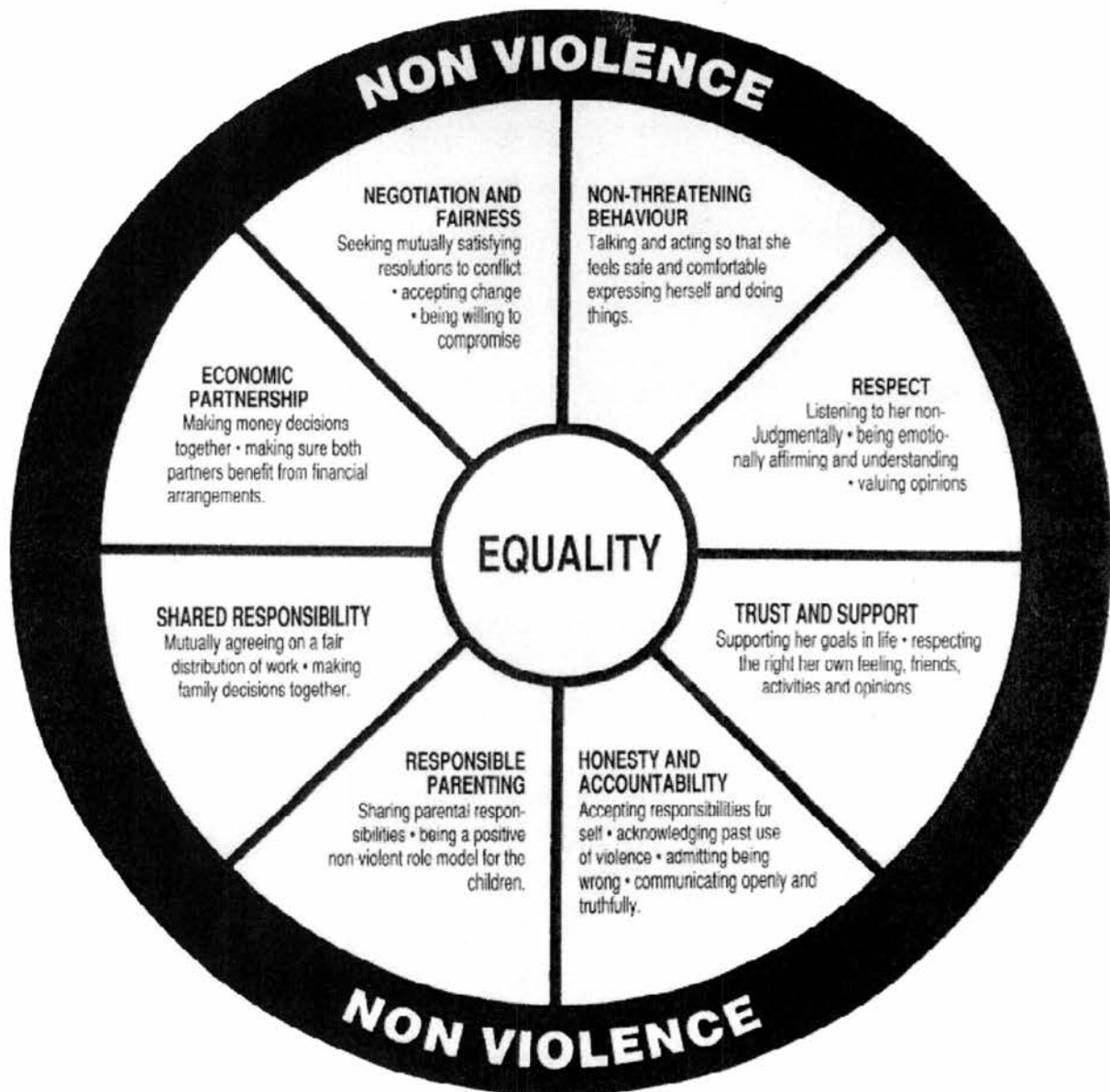


# Power and Control Wheel



[www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)

# Equality Wheel



## People in Healthy Relationships...

- Treat each other with respect
- Have fun together
- Can be themselves
- Talk positively and listen to each other
- Do activities together
- Have different opinions and interests
- Take responsibility for their actions and are prepared to say sorry when they upset the other person
- Trust each other
- Can negotiate, compromise, make decisions together and argue fairly
- Make decisions about sex together and give each other the freedom to say no
- Don't have to spend all of their time together – can spend time on their own or with their own family and friends.

Adapted from: Getting what you Want: A peer guide into healthy relationships.

# Session 5

"Most young people reject the use of violence in relationships – yet small pockets still retain attitudes supportive of violence... Not surprisingly, the same factors associated with higher rates of witnessing and higher rates of violence in relationships were also predictors of pro-violence attitudes" (reference 8).

## SESSION FIVE

### Requirements:

- Myth and Facts photocopied onto coloured paper and cut out
- Whiteboard
- Facilitators Guide
- Spare paper for homework
- handouts

### Review

10 mins

Review main components of session 4, outlining concepts in video and types of domestic abuse demonstrated. Recap main issues around the healthy and unhealthy relationships. Review homework by asking participants to share their artwork/object and a story related to this with the group.

### Icebreaker

10 mins

Ask the group to think of an emotion, perhaps related to how they are feeling today or a feeling they have experienced during the program. Using their body only, they are to do a sculpture of this emotion by using their body to demonstrate this emotion. The rest of group will try to guess what emotion this is. Each participant is to have a turn with the facilitator demonstrating this first.

### Myths and Facts

40 mins

*Aim: To acknowledge domestic abuse issues are surrounded by myths and stereotypes and to dispel the accepted views pertaining to the abuse of women.*

Split large group into smaller groups of 4 or less.  
Divide the Myth and Fact cards to each small group.

Ask the participants to identify which statements are facts and which statements are myths. Place cards into 3 piles - Myths and Facts and Unsure. Ask for a spokesperson from each smaller group to share their discussion and which statements are myths or facts with the larger group. Refer to the facilitator's notes for Myth and Facts when unsure of why a statement may be a myth.

Using the Unsure pile, create a continuum from Myth to Fact (using the Myth and Fact cards following) where space allows. Read each unsure statement aloud and ask

the group: 'How much do you believe this to be true? Place yourself along the continuum from Myth, meaning absolutely not true to Fact, meaning absolutely true.' Allow all participants to think about this for a moment. Once all participants have placed themselves along the continuum, ask them where they are at and to discuss this in pairs with a person near them on the continuum - Discuss what places them this number and what they considered when making this decision. Sit the group back down and discuss the unsure statements with the larger group. (Alternatively, you may wish to pick several pertinent myths and use the continuum for each of these myths)

Sit back down and go through the rest of the cards with the whole group, asking if the statement is a myth or fact. Ask for reasons why it may be a myth or fact. When discussing the facts pile, encourage participants to note reasons why the statements may not be a fact.

At the end, reveal to the group that in fact ALL statements are myths. Discuss how these myths may assist the secretive nature of domestic abuse and the tendency to blame the victim: 'Many people still hold on to the myths and stereotypes about domestic abuse – what it is, who it happens to, who commits it, and why it happens. These ideas often excuse the perpetrators of the abuse, and prevent women from talking about what is happening to them. Where women who have suffered domestic abuse do 'break the silence', these unpopular myths mean that responses to them are often unhelpful'.

Many women strongly believe the statements to be true and some groups may not realise that indeed all statements are myths. At the end of the activity, it may be worth noting to the participants that all statements are in fact myths, if the group has not already grasped this. Refer to the facilitators notes on Myth and Facts if need be.

Discuss why myths are dangerous and put women at risk. In this discussion include the following concepts: 'At the heart of these myths is a denial of the problem of abuse against women. Myths minimise and trivialise the reality of abuse and perpetuate the belief that domestic abuse is a private issue between the individuals concerned.'

**BREAK - 10 MINS**

## **Myths and Facts and Cycle of Abuse**

25 mins

*Aim: to acknowledge how the facts and myths are related to and influenced by the stages of the cycle of abuse.*

Use overhead or draw Cycle of Abuse (from session 2) on whiteboard. Ask participants to look back at the handouts from session 2 and refer to them.

Ask: 'How do Facts & Myths fit into the Cycle of Abuse?'

Facilitators are to discuss responses and to explain to the participants that when in a domestic abuse relationship, they are often stigmatised, labelled and re-victimised.

Base this activity on the myths that were identified as facts in the previous activity. These statements should be discussed regarding how they relate to the cycle of abuse, and if time permits, other statements may be discussed additionally. Attempt to fit the statements into the cycle drawn on the whiteboard.

E.g. the following could go in the excuses stage – 'alcohol causes domestic abuse', 'women in abusive relationships have mental health problems or are crazy', 'violent men are monsters' 'jealousy is a sign of true love'. The myth 'Relationships are private family matters' could fit into the Forget Me stage. 'Women only get beaten when they ask for it' and 'It's ok for your partner to hurt you if you do something wrong' could go in the Trigger stage. 'Men who are abusive do not show love to their partner' goes with the honeymoon stage.

## **Homework**

Distribute handouts - Violence against Woman: A Lifetime Spiral and A Lifetime of Violence: Older Women. Ask the group to read over these before next session and highlight one sentence, line or word that stands out to them. This sentence, line or word and why it stood out will be discussed in the next session. Make arrangements for those participants who have limited reading ability such as pairing them up with another participant or by making time to go through it with the facilitators present (if time permits you may want to go through the readings in this session).

Ask participants to listen for any comments made by people through the media (TV, radio, magazines, and newspapers) that seem to perpetuate the myths surrounding domestic abuse. Ask them to record them if possible and bring to next session.



# **Session 5**

## **Facilitator Resources**

### Myths and Facts cards

<p>Heterosexual domestic abuse occurs much more often than lesbian domestic abuse</p>	<p>Alcohol is the main cause of domestic abuse</p>	<p>Women are free to leave an abusive relationship any time they want to</p>
<p>Children need their father, even if he is abusive</p>	<p>Some women seek out abusive men</p>	<p>Women only get beaten when they ask for it</p>

<p>Upper class people don't beat their partners</p>	<p>Most women in abusive relationships don't defend themselves</p>	<p>Women in abusive relationships have mental health problems or are crazy</p>
<p>Abusive men are monsters and/or mentally ill people who can't control themselves</p>	<p>Relationships are private family matters and no-one else's business</p>	<p>It's ok for your partner to tell you whom you can talk to</p>

<p>Jealousy is a sign of true love</p>	<p>You should do things that please your partner rather than please yourself</p>	<p>Its ok for your partner to hurt you if you do something wrong</p>
<p>All Arabic men are abusive, its part of their culture</p>	<p>All Aboriginal men are abusive, its part of their culture</p>	<p>In lesbian relationships, women can't be abusers</p>

<p><b>AVO'S are useless</b></p>	<p>Women only apply for AVO's because they want to get back at their partners and cause problems for them in the family law court.</p>	<p><b>Some women like being beaten</b></p>
<p><b>Domestic Abuse is not a big problem</b></p>	<p><b>Domestic abuse mostly happens in poor families</b></p>	<p>Domestic Abuse only occurs in certain cultures/ethnic communities</p>

<p>Men who abuse their partners are abusive to other people as well</p>	<p>Men who are not abusive with other people cannot be abusive with their partners</p>	<p>Upper class women don't get beaten</p>
<p>Religious people don't abuse their partners</p>	<p>Men who abuse do not show love to their to their partners</p>	<p>Men who are abusive towards their partners are abusive towards their children too</p>

## MYTHS AND FACTS

Facilitator's notes

*Many of these myths are from Lenore Walker's book, 'The Battered Woman', 1979. Research by Ewing & Aubrey (1987) and Ewing, Aubrey and Jamison (1986) found that many people subscribe to many of these myths (noted in Wrightsman, 2001).*

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE IS NOT A BIG PROBLEM**

It is difficult to know the extent of Domestic abuse because of the hidden nature of the problem. Domestic abuse often goes unreported, so research is often inaccurate or underestimates the prevalence of the problem. No Australian wide survey has ever been conducted, but a number of American surveys show that one third of marriages suffer at least one violent incident and between 3 and 4% of the women suffered repeated, severe domestic abuse. Old NSW figures indicate that domestic abuse occurs in one out of every four to five marriages or de facto relationships, whilst 43% of murders in NSW (between 1968 and 1981) were perpetrated by family members on each other.

Domestic abuse IS a big problem – it effects many families and has a large effect on communities. Ask the participants how many women they know who have experienced domestic abuse. If you wish, you can discuss the statistics in the Introduction section.

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE HAPPENS MOSTLY IN POOR FAMILIES**

#### **UPPER PEOPLE DON'T BEAT THEIR PARTNERS**

#### **UPPER CLASS WOMEN DON'T GET BEATEN**

Domestic abuse does not discriminate. It happens in all types of homes and neighbourhoods and to all kinds of women – including doctors and lawyers. It knows no socio-economic barriers and definitely happens in all social classes. The frequency and level of abuse is similar in relationships of people from all social classes.

However, women with fewer financial or family resources ARE more likely to come to the notice of helping agencies such as police, the courts and women's refuges.

## **ALCOHOL IS THE MAIN CAUSE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Alcohol consumption plays a part in triggering violent incidents in the home. It also can trigger violent incidences anywhere, such as the pub or at a footy match. But alcohol consumption is NOT a CAUSE of domestic abuse. Alcohol consumption may be a contribution factor as it can be in any offence, because inhibitions are lowered and judgement and reasoning is poor. However, not all abusers drink alcohol prior to an abusive incident. Studies have shown that in at least 50% of cases, neither partner had been drinking when domestic abuse occurs. Similarly, not all people with an alcohol addiction are domestic abusers. Some abusers who are drunk are able to direct punches to places on a woman's body where the bruising will not show. This indicates a degree of control and intent in the abuse. These facts are the same for drug use and domestic abuse – drug use does NOT cause domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is about exerting power and control over someone. Being drunk is no excuse for violent behaviour. Often abusive people tell their partners that they only abuse when they are drunk and that they could not control themselves. This is an excuse and is part of the excuses section in the cycle of abuse.

## **WOMEN ONLY GET BEATEN WHEN THEY ASK FOR IT**

### **IT'S OK FOR YOUR PARTNER TO HURT YOU IF YOU DO ANYTHING WRONG**

#### **SOME WOMEN LIKE BEING BEATEN**

#### **SOME WOMEN SEEK OUT ABUSIVE MEN**

All of these BLAME the victim. They assert that the woman had some level of control over the abusers actions. Women usually do everything they can to minimise violent outbursts from their partners and ex-partners. Women should not be made to feel that they have to accept responsibility for the actions of a violent partner. Perpetrators have to learn to accept responsibility for their own behaviour. Besides, what woman would like to be physically attacked and be in pain?

Often women get involved in more than 1 abusive relationship throughout their life, which perpetuates the myth that some women seek out abusive partners. These women do NOT seek out violent partners but may be attracted to some similar characteristic that these partners share. Have a look in the personal ads in the newspaper or on dating websites – do you ever see women asking for a mate who is abusive?



**RELATIONSHIPS ARE PRIVATE FAMILY MATTERS AND NO-ONE  
ELSE'S BUSINESS**

Domestic abuse is a crime and therefore it affects everyone and is NOT a private matter. This myth is dangerous as it contributes to the social isolation of women who are being abused. If such women believe this myth they will not tell other people about the abuse and then will not seek help. This myth allows the cycle of abuse to continue. Abusive partners encourage this myth by threatening the women with further violence if she tells anyone about the abuse. Men not only do this because of the shame attached to their actions but this also limits the power of the woman – if she cannot tell anyone she cannot get help and must stay in the relationship.

When a woman suffers abuse and brutality it becomes the concern of the whole society in the same way it would if a woman is attacked by a stranger.

**ABUSIVE MEN ARE MONSTERS AND/OR MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE  
WHO CANNOT CONTROL THEMSELVES**

**MEN WHO ABUSE DO NOT SHOW LOVE TO THEIR PARTNERS**

**MEN WHO ARE NOT VIOLENT WITH OTHER PEOPLE CANNOT BE  
ABUSIVE WITH THEIR PARTNERS**

**MEN WHO ABUSE THEIR PARTNERS ARE ABUSIVE TO OTHER  
PEOPLE AS WELL**

Violent partners are ordinary and capable of being charming and loving as well as violent. Link this back to the cycle of abuse – there is the honeymoon stage and the abuse stage. Often abusive people do show love to their partners and tell them they love them.

Violent partners often present well in public and are not usually violent elsewhere e.g. work or with the rest of the family. They are often only abusive to their partner and do not show abuse to other people in their life.

Violent people can usually control themselves outside the family. Even when beating their partners, they often ensure they injure parts of her which will not be visible in public. This indicates the abusive people have control over their actions and there are thoughts that precede their actions.

Note: research shows there are three types of batterers.

1. Generally violent people who are anti-social and impulsive. These are assaultive both in and out of the home. The above myths do not apply to this type.

2. over controlled people who do not express feelings and react to conflict with a sudden explosion.
3. Emotionally volatile people who are angry, jealous or depressed who are only violent toward their wives and who have a build up of tension prior to violence. These myths are based on this type of abuser, which is the most common type and the type most referred to the literature about domestic abuse.

### **CHILDREN NEED THEIR FATHER EVEN IF HE IS ABUSIVE**

There is one thing that children need more than an abusive father - a living mother. You're not any good to your children bruised and battered – or dead.

By rejecting abuse in our personal relationships, we are teaching our children to live in a world of non-violence. We are the ultimate role models for our children and how we behave effects their views and experiences.

A single parent in a calm peaceful household is worth more than a two parent upbringing in a house full of abuse.

*The greatest gift that a father can give his children is respecting their mother.*

Review the effects of domestic abuse on children that were covered in session 3. Highlight that children who experience domestic abuse are much more likely to experience domestic abuse as an adult – either as a perpetrator or as a victim.

### **MEN WHO ARE VIOLENT TOWARDS THEIR PARTNERS ARE ABUSIVE TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN TOO**

Not all people who are violent towards their partners are violent towards their children. Some people are exclusively abusive towards the partner. This often provides a reason for women to stay in an abusive relationship – because ‘they only hits me and never hurts the children’. But as we have seen, children are greatly affected when there is violence in the household, even if they are not the targets of the attacks.

### **HETEROSEXUAL DOMESTIC ABUSE OCCURS MUCH MORE OFTEN THAN LESBIAN DOMESTIC ABUSE**

#### **IN LESBIAN RELATIONSHIPS WOMEN CAN'T BE ABUSERS**

See information from session 3

### **WOMEN ARE FREE TO LEAVE AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP ANY TIME THEY WANT TO**

This is a commonly held belief. People are in control of their own lives right? So women in an abusive relationship can leave at any time they choose too – they have control over what they do. This may be the case in normal relationships, but remember the domestic abuse relationship is all about power, control and fear. Over time a woman in an abusive relationship learns to be fearful of her partner and stops standing up for her rights. She also believes she has no power over her situation, often due to things like threats being made by her partner and to the increasing isolation she may be experiencing. All of this leads to a sense of hopelessness and complete lack of power felt by the woman – this means that often women are certainly NOT free to leave an abusive relationship at anytime.

There are many barriers which stop women from leaving abusive relationships. These include: Social isolation which was established during the relationship, emotional dependence of partner (such as them threatening suicide if she leaves), financial dependence, lack of self-confidence and self esteem, fear of reprisals or being punished for leaving,

### **WOMEN IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS HAVE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS OR ARE CRAZY**

Who would stay in an abusive relationship? You would have to be crazy right? This not only feeds into the above myth (women are free to leave at anytime) but also allows responsibility to be placed on the woman for her role in the abusive relationship. Again, this is blaming the victim. Certainly women who are in abusive relationships MAY have mental health issues – such as low self-esteem or experience episodes of depression – but this is not the CAUSE of them being in an abusive relationship. Often it is a consequence of being in the relationship.

### **MOST WOMEN IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS DON'T DEFEND THEMSELVES**

This encourages a stereotype of women in abusive relationships seen as passive, timid, quiet and defenceless. This is often not the case. Women may try to defend themselves when feeling threatened by their partner, especially when the safety of their children is at stake. However, controversy arises when women do defend themselves as they may then be seen as the aggressor and this may cause legal complications.

### **IT'S OK FOR YOUR PARTNER TO TELL YOU WHOM YOU CAN TALK TO**

This feeds into the increased power and control that the abuser has over his partner. If your partner tells you whom you can talk to, it is not only them exerting a great amount of control over your life, but it is also isolating you from people that you know. This means you have limited people to talk to and limited supports around when you might need them. This attempt at isolation is intentional.

### **JEALOUSY IS A SIGN OF TRUE LOVE**

With jealousy, often people see it as a sign of love and affection, especially at the beginning of a relationship. It is often interpreted as the person caring for you. This again is about control and isolation – when they is jealous they may get upset and make the women feel guilty which means she is less likely to interact with people who will make them jealous in the future. Jealousy is about power and control – NOT love. Link this up to the example used in the video ‘A love that kills’ when Monica speaks to another man outside the store. Adam was clearly jealous - did Adam’s jealous reaction seem to be in a loving manner?

### **YOU SHOULD DO THINGS THAT PLEASE YOUR PARTNER RATHER THAN PLEASE YOURSELF**

Relationships should be about equality – you do things that please each other. And this often means doing things that you both enjoy together. What do you enjoy doing? What is something that you enjoy doing that you could do with your partner?

### **ALL ARABIC MEN ARE ABUSIVE, ITS PART OF THEIR CULTURE**

### **ALL ABORIGINAL MEN ARE ABUSIVE, ITS PART OF THEIR CULTURE**

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE ONLY OCCURS IN CERTAIN CULTURES/ETHNIC COMMUNITIES**

### **RELIGIOUS PEOPLE DON’T ABUSE THEIR PARTNERS**

As discussed before, domestic abuse unfortunately permeates through all cultures, all communities and families of all socio-economic status. Surely, abuse may be more common in some societies or ethnic groups, but this does not mean it is more acceptable in those cultures.

In 1986, the Domestic Violence Advocacy Service had calls from women from 50 different countries.

## **AVO'S ARE USELESS**

### **WOMEN ONLY APPLY FOR AVO'S BECAUSE THEY WANT TO GET BACK AT THEIR PARTNERS AND CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR THEM IN THE FAMILY LAW COURT**

We will explore AVOs more in session 6, but AVOs are certainly not useless. You may have had an experience with taking one out and it not being as meaningful as you wanted it to be. Remember AVOs are only a piece of paper – certainly not strong enough to stop someone from hurting you if they really want to. But the meaning of it stands – it is a sign that you don't agree with how you are being treated and you want it to change. Importantly, it also lets the police know what is going on.

Myth

Fact

# **Session 5**

# **Handouts**



## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A LIFETIME SPIRAL

Domestic violence is just one amongst many forms of violence against women. From the aborting of female foetuses to intimate homicide, girls and women can encounter numerous oppressions during infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and as elders. Some of these are confined to one stage in the lifecycle, some continue into subsequent stages. Violence against women is more than physical, sexual, economic and emotional abuse; it is also about living in a climate of fear, misery, loss, mistrust, humiliation and despair. There are also cultural burdens of shame and devaluation. These abuses are experienced in the context of additional oppressions based on race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, type of labour being performed, level of education, class position, disability or immigration/refuge status.

## ABUSES ENDURED BY A WOMAN DURING HER LIFE CYCLE: A GLOBAL VIEW.

### INFANT:

- Female foetuses are aborted.
- Infanticide
- Malnourishment – less food &/or less nutritious food.
- Withholding medical care.

### CHILD:

- No or very little schooling
- Child labour
- Child Prostitution
- Physical abuse &/or neglect
- Sexual abuse – incest and/or molestation.

### TEENAGER:

- Rape or coerced sex, resulting pregnancy can get victim killed.
- Forced marriage (to parent's choice, to a much older man, to the woman's rapist).
- Ignorance about sex, anatomy, sexual health.
- Control over sexuality and sexual orientation.
- Trafficking (including mail order brides).
- Forced into prostitution.

**YOUNG ADULT:**

- Date violence, date rape.
- Rape, including wartime rape.
- Denying choice of marriage partner &/or sexual orientation.
- Dowry-related deaths.

**ADULT:**

- Domestic violence
- Same sex domestic violence.
- Violence and/or abuse by mother, father, brother, sister-in-law and/or by natural family members.
- Sexual abuse that can include marital rape, being forced to watch and imitate pornographic acts.
- Economic abuse and isolation from family and friends.
- Battering during pregnancy.
- Being coerced into criminal activity.
- Extreme exploitation of household labour.
- Sexual harassment (by employers, fellow employees, father – or brother-in-laws, clergy, therapists or doctors)
- Victim blaming and rejection by the community.
- Being infected with STI's and/or HIV.
- Kidnapping and/or killing of children.
- 'Honour' killing.
- Murder, also referred to as intimate homicide or femicide.

**ELDER:**

- Physical abuse by adult children and caretakers.
- Spouse abuse.
- Exploitation for household labour or child care.
- Withholding health care or medication.
- Demeaning widowhood.



## A LIFETIME OF VIOLENCE: OLDER WOMEN

For many older women the extent of violence reporting can be influenced by a range of barriers including the cultural tolerance of violence as part of the marriage, the perception that there is no suitable path or other alternative to just 'putting up with it', reluctance to leave a long-standing connection with home (including perhaps a life-long collection of momentos and family artefacts), community networks and non-abusive family all contribute to older women's reluctance to report violence or attempt to change their living arrangements. The length of time in an abusive relationship can make it difficult to convince others to take it seriously (Olle, 2005). Older women are also more likely to have had exposure to social, legal and community views about what constitutes violence and who they can turn to for assistance. Women may also find themselves in the position of being the only available carer for an abusive partner or family member and are thereby compelled to provide comfort/assistance to a perpetrator. Frailty with age and dependence on the perpetrator for care needs, medication and mobility aids and the fear of institutionalisation can act as further barriers to disclosure. We could therefore expect that the rates of violence towards older women could definitely be under reported.

Older women's experiences of violence may extend across the life span: injury incurred as a child, teenager, young woman or mature woman could still be impacting in later/older years. It seems foolish to believe that a man who has been abusing his partner for decades will stop doing so just because he turns 50 or 70 years of age or at any other age just because he has become too old to do so. It also seems unreasonable to expect that a woman will cease to feel the impact of a life time of violence just because she reaches a certain age.

For women who have lived in abusive relationships for decades, the health and social impacts are often chronic and profoundly disabling. Gender-based violence against older women follows similar patterns to that against younger women but with the increased risk to their health and well-being because of factors like frailty, illness and disability. Some impacts reported by older women when surveyed included anxiety, depression, changes in eating habits, fears and phobias, panic attacks, alcohol and drug use, sleep disturbance, general poor health and frequent illnesses (Disney, 2000). Whilst these impacts are similar to reports for younger women experiencing abuse, the length of time they have been enduring violence, the compounding effects of untreated or inappropriately treated effects and the fear that the helping professions will pass off their symptoms as merely ageing related, means that many older women do not seek the care that they require to alleviate their symptoms thereby leaving them more vulnerable to predatory attacks.

A single episode of victimization can 'tip over' an otherwise productive, self-sufficient older person's life. In other words, because older people usually have fewer support systems and reserves – physical, psychological and economic – the impact of abuse and neglect is magnified, and a single incident of mistreatment is likely to trigger a downward spiral leading to loss of independence, serious complicating illnesses and even death.

In conclusion, we don't know how often a fall that results in a broken hip is caused by a push or an attempt to flee an imminent episode of abuse or whether dementia may have resulted from early untreated violence or decades of continual violence.



# Session 6

United States studies indicate that about 10% of women are assaulted by their husband and 7% are assaulted repeatedly. Only about 1 in every 7 of these assaults is reported to the police. One reason for these low reporting figures is that victims do not expect police to be sympathetic or helpful (Wrightsman, L. 2001).

## SESSION SIX

### Requirements

- Facilitators Guide.
- Any brochures or cards on domestic abuse are to be on display and for the participants to take away. See list of useful websites at end and print out electronic copies of brochures on the program CD (under Session 6, Pamphlets).
- A roll of toilet paper for the icebreaker.
- Handouts

*Note: A guest speaker on legal issues of domestic abuse and AVO's or other domestic abuse community contact is required. It would be beneficial to meet with your guest speaker prior to the session. You may wish to do the Program Close activities prior to hearing from the Guest Speaker.*

*A guest speaker for this session is a priority, however, if you are unable to organise a guest speaker contact the program coordinator for an additional video that may be watched during this session.*

### Review

15 mins

Ask participants to contribute one example of how the media has made comments that perpetuate the myths surrounding domestic abuse. Explore these ideas and link them directly to myths covered in session 5. Reiterate how myths about domestic abuse can be dangerous.

Discuss the handouts on Violence throughout the lifetime (Violence against Woman: A Lifetime Spiral and A Lifetime of Violence: Older Women). Ask for the highlighted sentence, word or line and discuss why this stood out for each participant.

### Icebreaker

10 mins

Pass around a roll of toilet paper and instruct participants to take as many sheets as they like (or ask them to imagine we a running out of toilet paper and to take as many sheets as they will need for the day). Once everyone has some sheets tell the group that for

each piece they are to say 1 thing that they have learnt from the group or program, or an experience that they will take away. Facilitator's may participate but be sure to go last.

**AVO's**  
15 mins

*Aim: for participants to acknowledge the benefits and advantages of Apprehended Violence Orders (AVO's) and to understand domestic abuse and the laws which protect victims.*

Handout and discuss: What you need to know about AVO's and Domestic Abuse and the Law. Acknowledge and explore resistance to AVO's and ask for reasons why or if participants have not found them useful in the past

**Emergency Checklist**  
15 mins

*Aim: to explain the concepts of an escape plan and emergency checklist.*

Discuss points on Emergency Checklist handout. Acknowledge that the person is an expert in their own life but encourage seeking community support when thinking about leaving the domestic abuse relationship. Hand each participant an Escape Plan Booklet (on program CD under session 6) and invite participants to create their own escape plan after the cessation of the program. This personal escape plan may be reviewed with the facilitator at a later date.

**B R E A K - 1 0 M I N S**

**Guest Speaker**  
30 mins

*Aim: For participants to form contacts with community members.*

A guest speaker (see contact list on program CD) is to provide participants with information pertaining to domestic abuse and services in the community.

**Program Close**  
15 mins

Refer to Personal Reflections sheet completed in Session 1 and kept in folder/sleeve. Discuss responses and if participants think they gained what they hoped

and if they know more about domestic abuse now. Did they stop themselves from achieving these goals?

Ask participants if they have any questions regarding the program or domestic abuse in general, and answer where possible. Remind participant's individual (one to one) support is available and to contact the facilitator if this is desired.

You may wish to discuss program pathways for participants by considering program options from here, such as: Life Management, Seasons for Growth, Getting SMART, POISE etc.

Ask participants to complete the Session 5 and 6 Questionnaire.

Encourage participants to take brochures and information to link them with community support.

**Closure activity**  
15 mins

To close the program, use this final activity. Ask the entire group to stand in a line. This activity has several stages.

- When standing in a line tell the group 'this where you were before you attended the program. Consider what your thoughts about Domestic Abuse were before you attended this program. Take a step.'
- 'Now we are at the end of Session 1.' Facilitator to briefly recap session 1 content and ask 'Share one word that explains what you will take away from Session 1.' Facilitator to participate. 'Take a step.'
- Do this (take a step, next session, review content, share one word) for each session up to Session 5. 'Take a step.'
- 'Now we are at the end Session 6 and the end of the program – exactly where we are now. Share one word that explains what you will take away not only from session 6 but from the program in total'.

Alternative closure activity: Place three chairs in the middle of room. Inform the group that the first chair is Where I was before the group started, the second chair is Where I am Now and the third chair is Where I am going now the program have



finished. Ask each participant to move from  
through the chairs in that order and to say one  
sentence about where they are on each chair.

# **Session 6**

# **Handouts**

## DOMESTIC ABUSE AND THE LAW

### Apprehend Violence Orders' or AVO's

Domestic violence laws were made to ensure the safety and protection of all women and children who experience domestic violence

AVOs are orders made by the court that protect you for the future. They basically tell the abuser what they are not to do. AVO's can be made if you are worried that your partner or ex partner will assault, molest, harass, intimidate or stalk you. The court can make these orders even if the abuser has not been charged with a criminal offence.

AVOs do not give an abuser a criminal record. BUT, if they break the order then they can be arrested and charged, and may get a criminal record if found guilty.

### Who can get AVOs?

Anyone over 16 can apply for an AVO. A person under the age of 16 can be included in an adults AVO if they are at risk.

### What do I need to prove to get an AVO?

The important thing is to remember you don't need to be physically hurt to get an AVO. You need to prove that you are fearful of the abuser, and that your fear is reasonable. You may be fearful of the following;

- violence such as assault
- harassment or molestation

- intimidation or stalking
- destruction or damage to your property

## What can an AVO do?

An AVO tells the abuser that they are not allowed to do certain things. It tells them that they are not to stalk or intimidate you. An AVO can be made to suit your circumstances. You can have an AVO and still live with the abuser or you can have an AVO which tells the abuser they are not allowed to contact you at all.

## Exclusion Orders

This is another order which prohibits the abuser from living with you, even if you share a house which is in their name. If the abuser does not know where you live, it is possible to get an order which says they are not to go to any place where you may reside, without actually specifying an address. You can ask for your own orders to suit your needs. The magistrate will decide whether they are appropriate. If you have orders made under the Family Law Act you must tell the magistrate before the AVO is made, so that he or she can decide whether the children's contact with their father should continue.

## How to get an AVO?

There are two ways to get an AVO. Either the police can take out an AVO for you or you can do it yourself through a chamber magistrate at your nearest Local Court.

## Police taking out an AVO

If you call the police to attend a domestic abuse incident they must take out an AVO on your behalf, unless they see there is a good reason not to take out an AVO for you, you may still apply for one through the chamber magistrate. When the police apply for an order on your behalf, you referred to as 'the person in need of protection'. The person you are taking the order against is called the 'defendant'.

## Applying for an AVO through Chamber Magistrate

You may apply for an AVO yourself by going to your nearest Local Court and making a complaint to the chamber magistrate. You should ring the Local Court first to see whether you can make an appointment to see the chamber magistrate.

Applying for an AVO is free.

## Urgent/Interim Order

If you are scared that the abuser will become more violent once they finds out that you have taken action, you can ask to go into court immediately to apply for an interim AVO. The chamber magistrate will direct you to the courtroom where you need to speak to the magistrate about your fears of the perpetrator.

If the magistrate is satisfied that it is necessary and appropriate in your case, they will then make the order.

**The order does not take effect until the police give a copy to the perpetrator.**

## Women's Domestic Violence court assistance schemes

The NSW Government funds Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes throughout the State. The schemes are set up to give women legal advice and support while they are at court. If you have applied for an AVO, you can use the scheme. The schemes sometimes have a separate room inside the courthouse for you to use while you are waiting for your case to come up, so you don't have to wait in the same place as the abuser you are taking the order out against although you still have to go into the courtroom itself.

## Child Protection

Children can also get protection from an AVO. They maybe included on your AVO, or the police may apply for one on your behalf. In fact, the police must make an application for an AVO for a child less than 16 years of age when an act of domestic abuse has happened, or is likely to happen. It is important to remember that children who experience domestic abuse are *always* harmed in some way from it.

Woman & Violence, Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, Department for Women, Sydney 2000



## What you need to know about AVO'S

- ❖ An AVO is not a criminal conviction
- ❖ There is no fee to apply for an AVO
- ❖ Every major police station has a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) whose job it is to help you with your AVO, but any officer can help.
- ❖ AVO's are meant to protect you from violence, harassment, molestation, intimidation and/or stalking in the future. If you are in fear then you can apply for one.
- ❖ AVO's are legal and if the abuser breaks the conditions of the AVO, then they are "in breach." And that is breaking the law.
- ❖ A breach is a criminal offence and there are penalties.
- ❖ You can apply for an AVO yourself through the chamber magistrate at the local court or the police can apply for you
- ❖ Your AVO can also protect anyone in your family or extended family including your children if they are at risk (or being abused). This is called a 'Domestic Relationship' according to the law in N.S.W.
- ❖ If you are under 16 years old and you want an AVO, only the police can get it for you

- ❖ AVO'S usually last for one to two years but some women get them for longer or shorter
- ❖ If you live in the same house and feel unsafe, an AVO can say the abuser must leave the house – this is called an exclusion order
- ❖ You can still live together and have an AVO if you want
- ❖ You can change the conditions of the AVO if at a later date you think its O.K for your abuser to call you or move back home, or if you need to increase you protection.
- ❖ This is called a variation of your AVO. You have to go back to court to do this, if you don't you could be charged with "aiding and abetting," that means, helping the abuser to break the law.
- ❖ If you want to move to another State or Territory and you still want protection, you must go to the local court there and take a copy of your original AVO to have it registered.
- ❖ In a study of young women, severity of violence reduced after police response, and reduced further if court protection as well as police response was obtained.





## Emergency Checklist: What you need to take when you leave

- Identification for yourself
- Drivers license and registration
- Children's birth certificates
- Your birth certificate
- Money
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed, and/or mortgage payment book.
- Bank books, savings books
- Cheque books, ATM card
- Insurance papers and cards
- Keys – house, car, safety deposit box
- Medications – Prescriptions
- Small saleable items
- Address book
- Pictures and photos
- Medical records for all family members
- Social security/centrelink cards for yourself and your children
- School and vaccination records
- Passport
- Divorce papers
- Order for AVO/ADVO/restraining order
- Jewellery
- Children's small toys – significant toy/possession eg Teddy
- Computer disks containing essential information
- Items of special sentimental value,
- Domestic Violence Hotline No. & local refuge phone number
- Mobile Phone – remember 000 for emergency

**NOTE:** Have these things stored in a safe place that can be accessed quickly. Store with family/friends ahead of time for safety reasons.



**End of Program**

### Recommended Books

Dutton, D. (1995). *The Domestic Assault of Women: Psychological and Criminal Justice Perspectives*. Vancouver: UBC press

Enns, & Blanck. (1997). *Its not Okay anymore: your personal guide to ending abuse, taking charge and loving yourself*. London: New Harbinger.

Geffner, R. Ingleman, R. Zellner, J. (Eds.). (2003). *The effects of intimate partner violence on children*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.

Hotaling, G. Finkelhor, D., Kirkpatrick, J., Straus, M. (1988). *Family abuse and its consequences*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage (at CSA library).

Jones, A (1994). *Next time, she'll be dead: Battering and how to stop it*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Walker, L. (2000). *The battered women syndrome, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

## Recommended Websites

[www.salvos.org.au](http://www.salvos.org.au) – follow the links to Domestic Violence. Lists various support options.

[www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au](http://www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au) – regular newsletters

[www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au) – for training courses on domestic abuse delivered by NSW Health

[www.dvas.org.au](http://www.dvas.org.au) – Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, part of Women's Legal Services. Free and confidential legal service for women experiencing domestic violence.

[www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au) – Court assistance program. Follow the links to Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance program.

[www.dvrc.org.au](http://www.dvrc.org.au) – Domestic Violence Resource Centre

[www.nswclc.org.au](http://www.nswclc.org.au) – NSW Community Legal Centre. Provide training and legal information on court processes and AVO's.

[www.australiasaysno.gov.au](http://www.australiasaysno.gov.au) – Violence Against Women Australia Says No.

[www.acadv.org](http://www.acadv.org)

[www.womensrefuge.org.au](http://www.womensrefuge.org.au)

## References

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Department of Corrective Services Corporate Research Evaluations and Statistics Research Publication no 32: Women in prison with drug related problems pt 1.

<sup>2</sup> Walker, L. (2000). *The battered women syndrome, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* New York: Springer Publishing Company. (NSW DCS Offender programs unit has a copy).

<sup>3</sup> Vaughan, G. M. & Hogg, M. A. (1998). *Introduction to Social Psychology (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed)*. Prentice Hall; Sydney. Pp. 287.

<sup>4</sup> Mash, E. J., & Barkley, R. A (eds. ). (2003). *Child Psychopathology (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*. The Guildford Press: New York

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996). 4128.0 - Women's Safety Survey Australia.  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/0d21d0868273a2c3ca25697b00207e97/46ea7c5b824d2940ca256bd0002840df!OpenDocument>

<sup>7</sup> Australian Institute of Criminology: Trends and Issues in crime and criminal justice, No. 195 Young Australians and Domestic Violence.

*Blue text indicates this research is on the program CD.*

