
Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change

Family Peacemaking Materials for Clergy, Lay Leaders, Staff & Laity

Anoka County Faith Community

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Curriculum Outline and Background

Author's Note

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- The Administration for Families and Children of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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Introduction

Faith communities are in a unique place and time to respond to the horrible social crime of domestic violence. In a study done in a rural Minnesota county, 47.6% of respondents with abuse histories said, "I would rather rely on God to help me." This suggests that clergy need to understand the dynamics of domestic violence and become aware of the advocacy programs available (Kershner M., Long D., Anderson J., unpublished data). When social services agencies in Santa Clara, California asked domestic violence victims where they first turned for help, their answer, overwhelmingly, was to their church. But when the victims were asked where support was most lacking, their answer was the same: the church (National Catholic Reporter, 7-4-01).

A Note to Trainers

This manual has four chapters with separate purposes and components that are interdependent. While the focus of these materials is Christian, it is hoped that other faith communities can modify the materials to reflect their particular faiths.

1. *Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change: Faith Community Curriculum for Clergy and Lay Leaders*. Course content and tools that teach domestic violence awareness and the role of clergy and lay leaders. This course should be co-taught by a representative of the faith community and a local advocacy services community educator. The curriculum can be covered in 4 - 6 hours in one or two sessions. Primary components are:
 - Leader's guide
 - Introductory module and two major subject areas
 - Dynamics of domestic violence - the impact of abuse on victims and barriers that make it difficult to change the abusive environment; and
 - What individuals and faith communities can do to help victims and batterers.
2. *Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers A Manual for Faith Communities*. This manual provides information and suggestions to those individuals in faith communities who work on a personal basis with laity experiencing violence in the home. It is intended to provide suggested responses when identifying violent relationships. Primary components are:
 - Definitions and statistics
 - Working with survivors and perpetrators
 - Safety plan
 - Marriage preparation

- Use of scripture
 - Spiritual support measures
 - Community resources.
3. *Pastor's Packet: Family Violence Awareness Materials for Pastors*. A quick reference guide for pastors containing materials that can be used in services, publications and committees. This book includes:
- General information about domestic violence
 - "Are you in an abusive relationship?" tool
 - Resources
 - How the faith community can help
 - A family pledge of non-violence
 - Materials for worship services
 - Education resources
4. *Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change Curriculum for Laity*. This curriculum is divided into 2 sessions and is intended for use as a two-part 45 or 60 minute adult forum.
- Part I: Awareness raising and education
 - Part II: How to help those experiencing violence and those doing the violence, how individuals and the faith community can help.
5. *Appendices*. There are three supplemental appendices that accompany this manual:
- Handouts
 - Article: "Hostages in the Home: Domestic Violence Seen Through Its Parallel, The Stockholm Syndrome"
 - Brochure: Content for faith communities

Project Background - A Summary

The process that led to this project really began in 1995 when screening for domestic violence was initiated as part of the nursing assessment at Mercy & Unity Hospitals in Anoka County, Minnesota. In 1997 a group of parish nurses attended a seminar sponsored by the Domestic Abuse Religious Task Force in Anoka County, MN. This task force was a part of the county's Alliance for a Violence - Free Anoka County also formed in 1997. As a result, domestic violence screening was integrated

into the parish nurse's client assessment tool. In collaboration with the hospital violence educator, the Community Parish Nurse Program of Mercy & Unity Hospitals sponsored a workshop entitled, "People Are Hurting From Family Violence: How Churches Can Respond" in 1998. Well attended by area clergy, lay leaders, faith community staff and parish nurses the group asked for even more information, education and practical tools that would help them make their places of worship safe places to seek help. These requests motivated the production of a "Pastor's Packet" which provided basic information about domestic violence; what scriptures are often misused to excuse or explain a perpetrator's actions; how to incorporate the topic into sermons/homilies and worship; and local resources that are available to assist both survivors and perpetrators. This tool still left a gap, that of allowing for full understanding of the dynamics and cycle of violence.

Planning, Education and Implementation Process

The presence of parish nurses in six area congregations as part of the Community Parish Nurse Program provided a natural connection to education and screening activities occurring in the hospitals and clinics and prevention efforts in the community. The Administration for Families and Children of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Allina Foundation and the Community Health Improvement Department of Mercy & Unity Hospitals together provided funding to develop curriculum, manuals and resource materials for use within faith communities.

The project began by identifying and convening an interdisciplinary group of key stakeholders:

- Clergy
- Parish nurses
- Faith community staff and lay leaders
- Survivors of domestic violence and other experts
- Mercy & Unity Hospitals' Community Health Improvement Department (co-coordinators for the project)
- Violence Prevention Coordinator
- Parish Nurse Coordinator
- Alliance for a Violence Free Anoka County
- Alexandra House, Inc., domestic violence services for women and families

The task force developed the project mission and a work plan. The mission statement is: To develop a program which will provide clergy, staff, lay leaders and members of spiritual communities with:

- The skills helpful in identifying survivors of family violence;
- The ability to provide family violence survivors with support;

- Tools which can contribute to the enhancement of a violence-free society; and
- Knowledge and information about resources.

This group first became educated about the various issues surrounding domestic violence to provide them with necessary information and appropriate tools before expanding it throughout their congregations. They participated in the development and approval of curriculum content, materials, brochures, posters, etc. to be used within their faith communities. The parish nurses were key in keeping the process going. Their experience in working with individuals, various groups and staff in faith communities was very valuable. They were the communication link between the project coordinators and the faith community staff. In addition, the parish nurses were part of a sub-group, which developed communication and awareness tools including brochures, posters and lapel pins.

Early on, it was clear that some barriers existed. Time was a big issue - clergy schedules are busy and unpredictable. Assumptions and myths about domestic violence had to be addressed quickly - just because no one had come to them seeking help did not mean their congregation was free of the issue. From time to time the goals and expectations needed to be clarified. The sub-group that was formed to address some details kept things moving forward. With the help of an administrative assistant, the writing and actual development of materials was the responsibility of the co-coordinators of the grant and the consultant that had been hired.

After clergy, staff (including the parish nurses) and lay leaders had their training, curriculum was developed for adults in the congregations. In order for this to take place, it became clear that someone (pastor, parish nurse, staff member or congregant) needed to play the role of "champion". Survivors of domestic violence started coming forward. They were glad that their place of worship was addressing the issue and that it was safe to talk about their personal struggles with domestic violence.

All of that led to the need for even more education. There were questions such as: What about the perpetrators? How can they be helped? What about our children and teens? How can we keep this from happening in their lives? And then our older adults - what can be done to educate and support their special needs? A couple of the churches have schools on their campuses. Some teachers and school counselors attended the training session. The task force heard presentations by experts in each of these special areas and they were provided with community resources that address these specific issues.

Creating a Safe Place

While good work has been done by providing education to clergy, lay leadership and staff of 6 churches, it is clear ongoing education and awareness activities are essential to maintain awareness and sensitivity to these issues. Activities to achieve this goal must be pursued regularly.

Book I

Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change: Faith Community Curriculum for Clergy and Lay Leaders

Book I Contributors

Developed by:

Marlene B. Jezierski, RN, BAN, Violence Prevention Educator

Co-Editors:

Lyla Pagels, RN, Parish Nurse Coordinator Mercy & Unity Hospitals, Minneapolis, Minnesota
 Jayne Kane, Encourage to Hope Ministries, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Based on curriculum from: DV101, Allina Hospitals and Clinics Encourage to Hope Ministries

Faith Community Curriculum for Clergy and Lay Leaders Outline

Before beginning, have participants complete pre-course questionnaire. Total time to complete Book I: 4 to 6 hours

Table 1. Curriculum Outline

Part	Subject	Presenter	AV	Time (min.)
1-A	Opening comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening prayer • Round robin: introductions • Housekeeping • Acknowledge survivors • Statistics • Definitions 	Educator or Advocate	Overhead Handouts	Total: 15-20

Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change

Part	Subject	Presenter	AV	Time (min.)
1-B	Dynamics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power and control 10 -15 min • Why people stay. 10 - 15 min • Survivor story. 20 - 45 min • Abuser attitudes. 5 - 10 min 	Advocate and Survivor	Overhead Handouts	Total: 45-80
1-C	Barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To taking action in a faith community • Personal 		Group Discussion	Total: 10-20
1-D	Broken Vows Video Part I - Brief post-discussion	Educator and Advocate	VCR	Total: 35
	Break			Total: 10-25
2-A	Awareness raising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blanket exercise 	Educator and Advocate	Total: 15	
2-B	What to say, what to do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of actions. 10 - 30 min • Resources, legalities. 10 - 20 min 	Educator, Advocate and Small Groups	Manual, Handouts and Scenarios	Total: 65-110

Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change

Part	Subject	Presenter	AV	Time (min.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenarios. 45 - 60 min 			
2-C	What congregations can do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the participating congregation has already done. 3 - 5 min • Broken Vows Part II. 30 - 35 min • What the congregation can do. 3-5 min 	Parishioner and Educator	VCR	Total: 40-45
3	Closure: Good Samaritan	2 Readers		Total: 5

Upon completion, have participants complete post-course questionnaire

Instructions

This manual provides course content and tools to teach domestic violence awareness and their role to faith community clergy and leaders. **This course should be co-taught by a representative of the faith community and a local advocacy services community educator.** Additional speakers such as a survivor are suggested.

- The curriculum contains an introductory module and two major subject areas:
 - Dynamics: the impact of abuse on victims and barriers that make it difficult to change the abusive environment
 - What you can do: how individuals and faith communities can help victims and batterers
- Each component can be presented independently.
- Recommended course length: an absolute minimum of four hours, six is most desirable.
 - **Strongly encouraged!** If you are unable to get this amount of time, you will need to find other means to cover all of the basic curriculum.

- Options to accommodate faith community time constraints:
 - Split the course in two and give on two separate days.
 - Have participants watch the "Broken Vows" video prior to attending class.
- Suggested overheads* are indicated by a bold OH in the text.
- For hard copies of overheads call:
 - The Community Health Improvement Department, Mercy & Unity Hospitals: 763-236-4342
OR E-mail: lyla.pagels@allina.com [<mailto:lyla.pagels@allina.com>]

*It is suggested that you customize overhead language to coordinate with local statistics, laws, local incidents, etc. to make the material most relevant to participants.

If you are looking for a presenter (in Minnesota) contact: Jayne Kane, Encourage to Hope Ministries. Phone: 952-448-7178. E-mail: encouragetohope@aol.com [<mailto:encouragetohope@aol.com>]

Supplies Check-List

- Lecture outline
- VCR
- Overhead projector
- Overheads
- Participant packets with all handouts
- Attendance sheets
- Pre- and post-seminar questionnaires
- Flip chart and pens (optional)
- Audio tape player and cassettes (optional - play before session begins, during break and small group sessions)
- Teaching video(s) including "Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence"
- Food and beverages

Room Checklist

- Is the seating arrangement comfortable? Can you make eye contact with all participants? Classroom style with tables in a U-shape is most desirable.

- Is there a place for participants to place materials and write?
- Can everyone see the video and overheads?
- Does the audio-visual equipment work?
- Do you know how to get help when you need it?
- Is the room too hot or too cold?

Educator Qualities

The following criteria is suggested for any individuals assuming responsibility for conducting family violence educational sessions.

- A high level of interest and commitment to violence prevention
- Understanding of the dynamics and impact of family violence
- Communication skills
 - Group facilitation skills OR the ability to learn
 - Ability to keep a group on track
 - Ability to clearly articulate concepts and methods to learners
 - Teaching style that is respectful, supportive, objective
- Ability to provide support to individuals who find the content difficult or painful
- Ability to work collaboratively with community partners and survivors in a classroom setting

Key Issues and Points

Partnership

A teaching team composed of a champion/faith community member, survivor and an advocate from your local agency is very effective and can optimize the participant learning experience.

The learning experience

- Make the class as dynamic and interactive as you can.
- Look to other presenters for feedback throughout.
- Be continually aware of opportunities for participant involvement in the discussion.

- Don't always answer participant questions right away, ask them what they think.

However, stay on task!

The education team members must all help with the delicate balancing act of presenting content while flexing to participants' needs.

Begin and end on time. Plan on taking one fifteen-minute break. Resume promptly.

Remain objective

Educators will get a wide variety of comments in response to the content. This is good! You need to know what they are thinking. Always remember to be respectful of participants' opinions, remain supportive and validate comments.

Examples of responses:

- I can appreciate how you feel. Many people have said the same thing.
- What would you do in that circumstance?
- I'm really glad you asked that. That is a very important point.
- You know, no one ever asked that before. What a good question.
- You are right. It is often very hard to bring up the subject of possible violence in the home when the person who has come to you has not shared that. What is important is that you recognize the value of looking at all possibilities when working with someone and identify how you can overcome any of your personal discomfort.
- It is not unusual to be concerned about how people will react when you begin.

Primary prevention

Encourage participants to seek ways to provide information to all their members. Mention that a rural Minnesota domestic violence study (Ottertail County) revealed that over 50% did not know of local services, and that almost 50% of survivors in that study said they would rather rely on God than seek help.

Collect stories

An effective teaching tool is story telling - examples that will encourage participants to reach out. Preserving confidentiality, write down stories you hear so you can remember them for later classes.

Language

Emphasize that when speaking to community members or preaching, it is more helpful to use words like "hurtful" and "disrespectful" and to avoid words like "abusive," "violent" or "battering." Some

may not want to be labeled, others may not know what abuse is because it is the norm in their life. Consider using "survivor" instead of "victim." The latter can denote powerlessness, the former is a positive, supportive word.

Communication points

- Remember to respect participants' knowledge level.
- Do not make assumptions about their knowledge and experience.
- Capitalize on their expertise.

Focus on behaviors rather than gender. Consider the following points:

- Current research shows that 95% of physical battering is perpetrated by men against women, but it is important to recognize that many groups are physically, sexually and emotionally battered and that sometimes females are the abusers.
- Battering occurs in elders, teens, and gay and lesbian populations.
- Adult children batter their parents.
- An item to highlight to participants: ironically, various behaviors described in the power and control wheel are often considered to be "normal" or "acceptable."

If you have a large audience, be absolutely certain you can be heard. Generally, it is easier for the audience when the speaker uses a microphone if there is a large group.

It can become an emotional issue. Be forewarned that when painful information is presented, it can be emotionally difficult for both participants and educator.

Creating a Safe Place Objectives

Provide an understanding of the dynamics of abusive relationships, the elements of power and control and their impact on survivors of domestic violence.

Discuss barriers which prevent faith communities from identifying and providing support to community members who are possibly or actually experiencing family violence and ways in which these barriers can be overcome.

Provide information related to what can be said to survivors of domestic violence.

Provide suggested actions a faith community can take to help survivors of domestic violence.

Create insight related to limitations of clergy and lay leader roles when providing support to survivors and abusers, boundaries that should be respected and the appropriate use of referral resources.

Part 1-A: Introductions and Opening Comments

As participants begin to gather, have them complete the pre-course questionnaire (found in Appendix).

Desired Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Purpose:

- Set the tone for the class
- Identify participant learning needs
- Capture attention and motivate people to create a safe place and continue to learn
- Define violence
- Introduce objectives
- Engage participants and encourage class participation
- Provide support for survivors in the audience

Strategies:

- Handout overview
- A prayerful beginning
- Round robin introductions
- Acknowledge survivors
- Background information: statistics, etc.

Content:

Tips:

AV - Consider playing music and/or displaying a violence-free overhead as participants gather.

OH - You are the one who can make the peace.

Start on time.

- Begin with basic activities that can include latecomers in tone-setting activities.
- Explain handouts and mention objectives.

Open class:

- Welcome participants and introduce teaching team
- Open with a prayer
 - NOTE: Arrange ahead of time for one of the participants to do the prayer.
- Make any necessary housekeeping announcements: breaks, etc.
- Consider sharing how you got involved or an experience that motivates you
- Explain that due to amount of material, you will be moving the group forward at times
- Encourage participants to feel free to leave, that some of the material may become difficult
 - NOTE: If a participant leaves, check to see if the individual needs any support. Optimally, it may be most helpful that the person offering help is the advocate.
- Mention handouts follow sequence of class, encourage them to refer to handouts later.

OH - You cannot fix the problem BUT You can offer support and resources.

State: "We can make a big difference by opening doors and planting seeds. We have to remember that, rather than telling survivors what they should do, we should be there for them and provide them with support and resources."

Group member introductions In a round robin format ask participants to:

- introduce themselves
- state what their role is in the church
- indicate what they hope to get from the class

OH - Sad face

Acknowledge the artist: "The artist is a nurse who is also a survivor. She shares her art with others to express her experience as a way of helping people understand the personal impact of violence."

Acknowledge survivors and/or participants who are touched in a personal way by violence in the home. Make a sincere, supportive statement such as: "Whenever a group of any size gathers, survivors or those who have been touched by family violence are present. All of us teaching today want you to know that we are very sorry this has happened or is happening to you or someone you care about. No one deserves to be intentionally hurt; you did not cause it."

OH - Violence Definition (from MN Health Care Coalition on Violence) "Violence is the threatened or actual use of force against a person or group that either results in or is likely to result in: injury, death, emotional damage or coerced behavior."

State: "Violence may be defined in various ways. Not everyone considers coercion and intimidation to be violent. Simply stated, 'violence is words and actions that hurt people.'"

"A more comprehensive version is one from the Health Care Coalition on Violence. Note that this definition emphasizes threatened or actual use of force, and can be behavior that results in emotional damage or coerced behavior as well as injury."

OH - Women's Health Survey (rural study) State: "This study was done by a public health nurse in Ottertail County, Minnesota. Nearly 1700 women responded. As you can see, violence is not limited to the cities." (Source: Kershner, M. Journal of Public Health Nursing, December, 1998)

Use local statistics. (See "Statistics" handout in Appendix page 167)

OH - (Numerous slides that set the stage providing statistical, cultural and religious examples.)
The purpose of these overheads is to gain interest and to focus on the global nature of violence and its connection with family violence.

Show several overheads illustrating how violence is condoned, overlooked and minimized in various situations such as the legal system, humor, and the media.

OH - Why should faith communities get involved in domestic violence issues?

Domestic violence isn't even in the Bible . . . is it? Ask: IS family violence addressed in the Bible? Can anyone think of any examples? Where might the first incident be?

The speaker should prepare for this segment of the curriculum by reading and reflecting on one or more of the following and be prepared to discuss these examples. The intent of this component is to bring awareness to participants that the issue existed and was a problem.

Samples of scripture references:

- Genesis 4 (Cain & Abel)
- Genesis 37 (Joseph)
- Luke 22 & 23 (Jesus)

Part 1-B: Elements and Dynamics of Domestic Abuse

Desired Time:

- 45 - 80 minutes

- 10 - 15 minutes for power and control
- 10 - 15 minutes for "Why people stay" exercise
- 20 - 50 minutes for filling in the blanks regarding why people stay
- 5 - 10 minutes for abuser attitudes

Purpose:

- Provide basic knowledge about the dynamics of family violence
- Provide a forum of understanding why people stay, the dangers of leaving
- Provide a definition of domestic violence

Strategies:

- Statistics, definition, power and control
- "Why people stay" exercise
- Completing discussion of why people stay

Materials:

- Power and control wheels
- "Why people stay" exercise

Tips:

- Ask local advocacy services to present.
- Story telling is very helpful and makes the content come alive.
- Optimize the discussion/brainstorming component to encourage involvement.

Content:

OH - Pain has no gender, no race, no culture, no income level, no class. Jeri Martinez, Vermont Network against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

State: "Batterers use various tactics to gain and maintain control over their victims. These tactics work because they are human tactics. There is no way to quantify the pain victims feel. All victims feel pain whether they are female or male, old or young, poor or rich, encompassing all races and cultures. Overwhelmingly, research shows that 90 to 95% of reported domestic abuse are female victims and male perpetrators. This is not to say that males are not abused as well." - Martinez

Consider leaving this message up on a flip-chart stating you do this to honor and remember the pain suffered by all victims, both women and men.

OH - Domestic abuse: Is power and control of one person over another. Is the use of violence or threat of violence to control another. Results in low self-esteem and belief that the survivor is the reason for the abuse.

Another definition to consider using: Battering is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. The batterer uses acts of violence and a series of behaviors, including intimidation, threats, psychological abuse, and isolation to coerce and control the other person. The violence may not happen often, but it remains as a hidden (and constant) terrorizing fact. (Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1990)

OH - Power and control wheel Introduce the Power and Control Wheel and encourage participants to look at others in their packet later. (See handout in Appendix)

State: "The Power and Control Wheel was developed in Duluth, Minnesota, and is used all over the world to help people understand the dynamics that go into abusive relationships. The center of the wheel symbolizes the center driving force of the problem: power and control. The various elements of emotional abuse are held together by sexual and physical violence. While all abused persons are emotionally abused, not everyone is physically or sexually abused. You have other wheels in your packet, and I encourage you to look at those later."

Consider involving participants in the discussion by asking with each component: "What would be an example of..." (intimidation and threats), then elaborate.

Following are examples of each component.

Spiritual abuse:

- Preventing the partner from going to church or practicing a religious faith
- Quoting scripture to manipulate the partner
- Using a position of authority in the church to keep the partner quiet
- Saying God does not care for her or him
- Telling the children that mom or dad's religion is phony or fake
- Saying he or she would stop the violence if she/he would be more submissive
- Bringing up past sins
- Saying the partner is not a good Christian/Jew/Muslim
- Controlling the amount of money donated to the faith community

Emotional abuse:

- "You are stupid, ugly, fat, a bad mother, a horrible housekeeper."
- "You're lucky to have me, no one else would have you."
- "I didn't ask for pork I asked for beef. You bitch, you can't do anything right."
- Frequent cursing of partner, use of crude, demeaning words

Isolation:

- Moving out into the country
- "I don't like your mother, she's an idiot, let's just you and I be together."
- "That friend of yours is a whore, I don't want you to see her."
- "I want to spend as much time with just you, I love you so much."

Minimizing, denying, blaming:

- "If you weren't such a lousy mother the kids wouldn't be such idiots."
- "What is your problem? I didn't hit you that hard. Don't make a big deal out of it."
- "I didn't push you, you fell into that cupboard, as usual you're making things up. You are a real nut case."

Using children:

- "You leave and you'll never see the kids again."
- "No court in the land would give you the children, you're such a bad mother."
- Telling the children to hit, spit on or ignore the survivor
- Not allowing the children to talk to or be near the survivor

Using "privilege":

- Being in charge, making all the decisions
- Refer to the equality wheel to describe opposite behaviors

Economic abuse:

- Giving an unrealistically small allowance for household needs

- "One woman made \$100,000 a year, her husband was a house husband who had total control over the money. When she left she had nothing."

Coercion and threats AND using intimidation:

- Killing family pets. "One batterer called his wife in the hospital saying he wanted her home. She stayed one more day and when she got home, her dog was gone. Her husband had had it put to death."
- Smashes fists into walls, breaking windows/doors
- Threatens to commit suicide, takes a gun out and threatens her or the kids
- Lesbian or gay relationship: threatens to "out" or reveal the survivor's sexual preference to people who do not know - such as parents or coworkers

Make note of the equality wheel. (See handout in Appendix) State: "Sometimes when I talk about power and control, some individuals begin to look at their own relationship. The distinction is that power and control is the driving element in an abusive relationship. The equality wheel illustrates healthy relationships."

Statement connecting the elements of the power and control wheel with Biblical references.

State: "Think about the stories we identified as examples of family violence earlier. What behaviors and actions in those bible stories, or others, are reflected in the power and control wheel?"

State: "Scripture from Ephesians 5:21, is frequently mis-used in abusive relationships by abusers. Women who are being abused have often been told they are to be subject to their husbands. What part of Ephesians, which is usually not quoted, changes the context of that reading? How do you respond to the use of violence in a relationship in the context of power and control?"

Encourage participants to refer to the manual, "Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers, a Manual for Faith Communities," (beginning on page 35). Ephesians and other readings addressing the rights of wives to be respected and safe are discussed on pages 58 and 60-63) .

State: "Some additional power and control wheels are included in your handouts. Take some time after class to review them. They reflect issues related to specific groups such as the elderly and teens".

Why people stay in abusive relationships.

Group Exercises:

These exercises help participants understand how difficult it is to leave an abusive relationship. Select one of the three to use.

Exercise option one: State: "Take a few moments to focus on a particular time of stress in your life. Respond to the following questions as they relate to that stressful time."

Be prepared with two or three key elements if they have difficulty answering. Ask each of the four following questions. Write their responses (in removable ink) on overheads (or use a flip chart). Use 4 overheads, one for each question. Number them to keep them straight.

Following are a few examples of what people might say.

OH - Question 1: What happens to you when you are stressed?

- Headaches
- Muscle tension
- Unable to sleep
- Stomach problems

OH - Question 2: What do you (or others) do to cope with the stress? (Also: What are some unhealthy ways in which people cope with stress?)

- Drink, smoke, do drugs
- Talk to a friend
- Sleep
- Exercise

OH - Question 3: What do you say to yourself during stressful times?

- This, too, shall pass.
- Hang in there.
- It's not that bad.
- You are stupid to have gotten yourself into this situation.

OH - Question 4: Why do you keep doing that which stresses you?

- Financial reasons
- I like what I do.
- Some level of comfort with what I am doing

- I don't have a lot of options.

Group Discussion: Begin by placing the "What happens to you when you are stressed?" responses on the projector. Taking one or more of the class examples, elaborate, paralleling what people who are safe do with those who are in an abusive home. This exercise is intended to help participants relate more to people in battering/harmful/unhealthy relationships. Tell them that many of the responses they gave are the same for people in battering situations. Put each of the overheads with group responses on the projector in turn and briefly discuss, challenging participants to think.

What happens to you when you are stressed? "Think for a moment how difficult it is to function well when you can't sleep, and what an impact insomnia would have on a survivor who is being battered and has low self-esteem."

What do you do to cope? "Many of the normal coping mechanisms (shop, take a long bath, take a walk) are not options for survivors. They frequently can't talk to anyone, they are isolated or don't have the self-esteem to believe anyone else would care. So they repress their feelings. Because of this, many coping mechanisms of survivors are unhealthy."

What do you say to yourself? "Survivors say pretty much the same things you say." "They blame themselves for the situation." "Their low self-esteem makes it harder for them to see their strengths and potential."

Why do you keep doing that which stresses you? "The issue of finances is almost always a huge issue for people who are battered." "Survivors often feel they have little choice." "It isn't always bad at home. They have good days, they love their families." "It is not unusual for survivors to minimize what is happening to them."

Complete discussion with a summary comment: "It is so hard to understand when you aren't in an abusive relationship. Perhaps this exercise helps illustrate some elements of the dynamics of remaining in an abusive relationship."

Exercise option two:

This is a simple scenario that describes a possible real-life situation. It is intended to elicit discussion that results in understanding the difficulties survivors face.

Prior to reading the scenario, distribute seven response cards randomly to participants. Ask them to read the card out loud when you prompt them.

The individual responses should be placed on cards for participants to read. The responses are as follows:

- Sister:
 - You're so lucky to have Oliver. I'm so lonely now that my husband is gone.
- Law enforcement:

- Unless there's physical proof of an assault, fear isn't enough.
- Clergy:
 - I've explained to you that second marriages are tough. Oliver must be having difficulty adjusting.
- Landlord:
 - I've received complaints about another loud argument last night. If you two don't keep it down, you'll be asked to leave.
- Friend:
 - I know that you and I have met for lunch every Monday for years. But, you newlyweds need your time together.
- Banker:
 - I understand why you share an account with your husband. It really secures your finances. You're lucky to have a man like Oliver.
- Doctor:
 - Well, your heart checked out okay. You seem nervous and depressed. I am sending you to a nutritional counselor since I noticed you appear to bruise easily.

State: "I'm going to read a story about a woman who is like many of us. Take special note of how she reaches out time and time again for help. When I refer to the person on the card such as landlord or doctor, please read the response written on the card."

Read the following out loud:

"My name is Gloria. I am 70 years old. I was married to Harold for 48 years. We have four children, all who live in different states. Harold was a wonderful husband and a good provider. Harold died last year from lung cancer."

"Ten months after Harold's death I met Oliver. Oliver was funny, caring, compassionate and romantic. I introduced him to my children and grandchildren. They all loved him. My friends thought I was lucky to have found someone who was so charming."

"Before we got married, I sold my home. We planned to live in Oliver's apartment until we could find a place of our own. Once I moved in, we never went to look for another place."

Gloria says to her sister: "Oliver isn't the same as he used to be." And her sister says...

She says to law enforcement: "I'm afraid of my husband." And law enforcement says...

She says to her clergyman: "Oliver seems angry." And her clergyman says...

She says to her landlord: "I'd like to talk about my lease." And her landlord says...

She says to her friend: "Oliver likes me to stay home." And her friend says...

She says to her banker: "I'd like to talk about my account." And her banker says...

She says to her doctor: "I've been feeling stressed lately." And her doctor says...

Brief Group Discussion

Ask: "How do you think Gloria felt?"

After discussion, summarize key learning points. State: "Oftentimes, we only know a little of the whole story. People in abusive situations may often reach out tentatively to many and get such responses." "Think about anyone in this kind of a situation. How do you suppose Gloria, or anyone else feels as they reach out for help, support or affirmation?"

Exercise option three:

Ask participants to reflect on some or all of the following questions. Read questions aloud.

A Quiz: Have you ever.....*

- Said you would never forgive someone, then did anyway?
- Said you would never give someone a chance, and then decided it wouldn't be right to refuse one more sincere attempt?
- Thought it wouldn't be reasonable to refuse to talk over a situation that you were clearly wronged?
- Stayed in a job where you were being badly treated?
- Stayed in a job only because you were well paid?
- Stayed in a job because you had no alternative?
- Stayed in a job because you thought it would get better?
- Resisted saying what you thought because you might get punished?
- Gone along with an authority figure because it was your duty?
- Gone along with an authority figure because they were paying your way?
- Gone along because you didn't want to cause trouble?

- Decided not to point out someone's error because it might embarrass them?
- Inhibited your objections to the behavior of someone who seemed to be "crazy" or frightened you?

Ask: So.....why do people stay in abusive relationships?

Thoughtful reflection on these questions is enlightening. Spend a minute or two getting feedback and hearing how the questions brought a different perspective.

* Developed by and used with permission from Gail Holdeman, MSW, LICSW, Central Center for Family Resources, Blaine, MN

Other Elements of People Staying

OH - Why people stay in abusive relationships Complete the discussion. Touch briefly on some of the points that did not come out. Use overhead to emphasize points. Refer participants to "Barriers: Realities that Prevent Family Violence Survivors from Looking for Help," (see Appendix pages 143-144 and "Why Do I Stay?" page 168).

State: "The fact is, it is totally untrue that they just stay. Survivors are constantly trying to change their situation and/or get out of it. Fear is one of the most important factors in people staying. A significant percent of murders of battering victims occur AFTER the person leaves the relationship."

Survivor Story

Desired Time: 20 - 45 minutes

Purpose: Provide participants with opportunity to gain insight into a real-life situation.

Strategy: Presentation by speaker or an advocate who is able to share a personal story

Tips: If you have a survivor speak, consider the following:

- Meet with the person if she or he has never told their story before.
- Ask the survivor to share experiences with the faith community.
- Review "Speaking to faith community leaders: notes to survivors," with the speaker (see next page).

Content:

Option 1: Lecture: Survivor story

Introduce speaker. Have tissues available. When introducing, emphasize the incidence of battering. Encourage the participants to identify the many aspects of power and control and reasons people stay in abusive relationships as they listen to the talk.

Question and answer period

When survivor has finished, debriefing is important.

Consider what might feel appropriate. Suggestions include:

- Give the speaker a hug.
- Express appreciation on behalf of the group and for taking a risk.

Encourage questions. Look for a participant who may exhibit signs of wanting to ask.

Have a couple of questions prepared in case there are none, such as:

- What words or actions are the most helpful and least helpful?
- Were things done or said that made you feel badly about yourself?
- Please tell us why it is important faith communities are responsive to survivors.

Participants sometimes have many questions and it is necessary to close the discussion.

Speaking to faith community leaders: Notes to survivors

Your contribution to family violence education, sharing your story, is the most important part of our education. Your willingness to share is greatly appreciated. Through your message, people will understand power and control and be motivated to begin doing abuse screening. You will find that many will be deeply grateful to you. Others in the audience have shared your experience themselves. Before deciding to share your story, be sure you are ready to speak about such painful experiences to others.

In order to optimize your presentation's effectiveness, consider the following:

- Preparation
 - Practice so you are comfortable with the words and know how long the talk is.
 - Use an outline, notes, cards, or read from a written text.
 - Tell your own story sequentially, from the beginning to the present.
- Suggested speech outline and structure
 - Background of past relationship: length, children, good times
 - Current status: working, housewife, living situation
 - Your childhood history

- When the abuse began and specific examples of what your abuser did
- Share examples of abuse related to your religion. Were you prevented from going to church, or donating money or time to church activities? Is your abuser a church leader? etc.
- What you did when these things happened, how you felt
- How you were controlled, hurt, humiliated, downtrodden
- What happened when you reached out to others? What helped? What did not?
- ANY experiences with faith community leaders or clergy that were negative OR positive*
- How you came to get help, did someone help you?
- How the system failed or helped you
- The healing process

*Extremely helpful!!

Tips

- It is invaluable for faith community members to hear you say how important it is to be supported, acknowledged, and hear affirming words such as "God loves you" and "God does not want you to suffer."
- Tell people in the class what words and actions were especially helpful for you.
- Specific examples are strong educational tools, they help provide insight and motivation.

Developed by Marlene Jezierski, RN, 1997. Rev. 2001.

Option two:

If you are unable to find a survivor to share a story, use stories from the "Broken Vows" video. It contains several powerful, moving stories that provide insight.

Abuser attitudes

Desired Time: 5 - 10 minutes

Purpose: To introduce some of the basic concepts related to abusers To address some myths associated with abusers

Strategy: Briefly mention there is much to be learned about abusers, that the issues related to them are only briefly referred to in this class and in the video. Consider having a guest speaker for another session to provide in-depth information.

Content: Refer participants to the following components of "Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers," a Manual for Faith Communities (Book II beginning on page 35). Mention the content contained which includes:

- Understanding abusers (see pages 51-52)
- The ABC's of Men Who Batter (see pages 68-70)
- Myths about abusers (see page 72)
- Emphasize that it is essential abusers be held accountable for their actions.

Part 1-C: Barriers

Desired Time: 10 - 20 minutes

Purpose: To help participants begin thinking about what issues they should address in their faith communities and how they can go about it. To help participants begin to address barriers on a personal level.

Strategy: Flip chart or OH brainstorm responses, follow with discussion. (See "Helping Individuals in Domestic Violence Situations - Barriers to Faith Communities," pages 151-152). This is an interactive discussion where participants' individual concerns are raised and discussed. This portion helps participants move past reluctance and discomfort to recognition of their role.

Tips: This component can be shortened if time is an issue. Key points to emphasize in this exercise:

- You can't fix the problem, but you can offer support and resources.
- Emphasize a supportive, nonjudgmental, accepting, affirming, attitude.
- Emphasize limitations of their role and necessity to refer to experts (unless they have domestic violence advocacy in their area of expertise) .

Content:

Brainstorming

State: "Just for a moment, let's brainstorm some major issues that can interfere with faith communities providing help to abuse survivors or abusers."

Write responses on flip-chart or overhead.

Ask: "Now, think about barriers on a personal level. What prevents you from addressing this issue?"

Discuss identified barriers: ("Christian Myths about Sexual & Domestic Abuse," (see pages 90-92); "Family Violence: Myths & Misconceptions," (see pages 145-148); and "Helping Individuals

in Domestic Violence Situations - Barriers to Faith Communities," (see pages 151-152). Review participant handouts and be prepared to discuss them. When you are not sure, ask participants what they think.

Closure "We all have barriers, but once we acknowledge them, we can begin to address them."

Part 1-D: Broken Vows Video

Desired time: 35 minutes

Purpose: Provide concrete examples of survivor stories and their experiences with faith communities Identify the responsibilities faith communities have towards members who are in abusive relationships

Strategies: VCR "Broken Vows" video

Tips: Allow a short period for debriefing and then take a break. Consider utilizing the discussion guide which accompanies the video. It contains many valuable discussion questions and provides guidance to leaders.

Content "Broken Vows" Part I. A teaching video available through: Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 2400 N. 45th Street, Suite 10, Seattle, WA, 98103. Phone number: 206-634-1903; at a cost of \$139 to purchase or \$50 to rent.

Part 2-A: Awareness Raising

Desired time: 15 minutes

Purpose: Provide a genuine sense of the survivor perspective A subtly impactful physical demonstration of the effect of multiple violations upon a person's self-esteem and the isolation survivors experience

Strategies: A reader One of the presenters sitting in a chair 8 blankets

Tip: The person sitting under the blankets must not be claustrophobic!

Content: Why People Stay - Audience Exercise read by one and demonstrated by one or more volunteers.

Why People Stay - Audience Exercise

2-A Janet's Story: A Case History

The purpose of this presentation is to help participants visualize the way in which the circumstances of a battered woman's life limits her options. This is the most graphic way to answer their persistent question, "Why does she stay?"

Be prepared with a pile of eight blankets, quilts or bedspreads. One workshop leader or planner reads the script of Janet's story. Another workshop leader sits on a chair in front of the group. The reader asks the participants to listen to each statement from Janet's story, giving the instruction that, after each statement, one participant is to come forward and place a blanket over the person seated on the chair in front.

Script:

Janet is thirty five years old. She has been married for sixteen years. She grew up as a member of the church and is a committed Christian. She has four children ages seven to 15. [Pause.] When Janet was a child, she saw her father hit her mother. He did it once or twice a week. Several times, Janet recalls, her mother had to go to the hospital. [Pause. Wait for one person to come forward with a blanket.] Janet's uncle molested her for five years. She was eight years old when it started. She was afraid to tell anyone. [Pause. Wait for a second person to come forward with a blanket.] When Janet was in high school, her pastor taught a course for the church youth group on marriage. He emphasized that marriage is forever, that it is sacred. [Pause. Wait for a third person to come forward with a blanket.] Janet quit school in her second year of college in order to marry Bob. He had a good job and he didn't want her to have to work outside the home. [Pause. Wait for a fourth person to come forward with a blanket.] Bob began abusing Janet the first year of their marriage when she was pregnant. She threatened to leave. He told her to forget it, saying that no one else would have her. She nearly lost the baby. [Pause. Wait for a fifth person to come forward with a blanket.] Five years and two children later, Janet went to her mother for help. Her mother said that this was just the way marriage was. It was her cross to bear and she had to accept it. [Pause. Wait for a sixth person to come forward with a blanket.] Janet thought about going to her minister. But her minister knew and respected Bob, who was an active lay leader in their church. She didn't think her minister would believe her stories of beatings, humiliations, and rapes. [Pause. Wait for a seventh person to come forward with a blanket.] Janet left once and went to stay with her best friend. Bob found her and told her that he had a gun. He said that he would use it if he had to. [Pause. Wait for an eighth person to come forward with a blanket]. [Address the person playing Janet.] "Janet, why do you put up with this? Why don't you just leave him?"

[The person under the blankets replies nonverbally by attempting to move but cannot get up because of the weight of the blankets.]

When you pause after reading each of the next statements, ask a participant to come forward and remove a blanket.

Janet remembered that her ninth grade Sunday school teacher taught her that she was a child of God and that God cared about her. [Pause.]

Janet read in the newspaper about a new law that said that husbands could be arrested for beating their wives. [Pause.]

Janet remembered that Mrs. Jackson, the mother of her best friend in high school, had divorced her husband and moved away. Janet knew that her friend's father had been abusive. [Pause.]

Janet read a story in Good Housekeeping magazine about a battered woman who was her age. Until then, she had thought she was the only one. [Pause.]

Janet read in her Bible: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple." (1 Cor. 3:16-17) [Pause.]

Janet saw a newspaper ad for a battered women's shelter. She realized that there was a place to go and be safe. [Pause.]

Janet read in the church bulletin that there was a presentation at her church about battered women. She was afraid to go, but she thought that maybe this meant that her pastor would be willing to help her. [Pause.]

Bob hit their son and threw him across the room. Janet decided that she could not let her children be hurt any more. She knew that she had to protect them. [Pause.]

[Address the person playing Janet.]

"Janet, remember that 'for freedom Christ has set you free.' Go in peace."

Ask participants to take a few minutes to react to the presentation either in conversation with the person next to them or as a group.

The idea for this presentation was derived from an exercise developed by Ellen Pence and the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission 8/31/01.

Part 2-B: What to Say and Do

Desired time: 65 - 110 minutes

Purpose: Provide practical information about appropriate interventions Clarify clergy and leader boundaries when a survivor or abuser has been identified Direct participants to local resources

Strategies: Discussion of actions you can take: 10 - 30 minutes Community resources and legalities: 10 - 20 minutes Scenarios: 45 - 60 minutes

Tips: When covering actions you can take, be sure to reference the handout "Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers" to stimulate later reading. During the advocate presentation, have handouts addressing resources.

Content:

Actions that people can take

State:

- "Become informed. The more you can recognize signs, the better help you can be." Refer to "Indicators of possible abuse."
- "Be comfortable asking questions. Be sure the setting is confidential." Refer to "Asking a question: Is your partner hurting you?"
- "Respond with an attitude of openness, lack of judgment, acceptance and support." Refer to "Suggested responses when someone discloses abuse."
- "Use words of comfort and affirmation."
 - "I am so sorry this happened to you."
 - "You don't deserve it. You did not cause this to happen."
 - "It must have taken a lot of courage for you to tell me this."
 - "There is help for you."
- "One of your most important roles is spiritual support. Use phrases such as:
 - "God loves you. God does not want anyone to be hurt in this way."
 - "I do not believe God is punishing you."
 - "Would you like it if we pray together?"
- "Your prime focus should be a goal of safety for the survivor and ending the violence."
 - "Take fear of danger very seriously."
 - "Do not put yourself at risk."
 - "Seek help from local advocates."
- "Abusers must be held accountable!"

Resources and legalities

Community advocates are the best source of information and are usually willing to communicate their role, what is available in the community, and how they can help. Their presentation should include:

- Community resources available to survivors
- Resources available to abusers
- Function of their agency

- Mention of other agencies that are resources
- Information about legalities: what is and is not reportable
- Note Resource list

Scenarios

This component of the seminar brings everything together in practical discussions. The expertise of the educators is essential.

Directions:

- Form small groups of three to five people
- Provide copies of the scenario packet to each of them
- Assign a different scenario to each group
- Direct participants to read their scenario, then discuss using the questions provided to stimulate discussion
- Allow 10 minutes for small group discussion
- Bring the large group back together and debrief each scenario
- Reference Book II (beginning on page 35) as a resource
- Emphasize the expertise and skills present in the room
- Allow them to problem solve together as a group and identify their strengths and goals for this work

Part 2-C: What Congregations Can Do

Desired time: 40 - 45 minutes

Purpose: To emphasize what the congregation has already done (5 minutes) To provide examples of how some faith communities have helped victims ("Broken Vows" Video Part II - 30 minutes) To introduce suggested actions faith communities can take (5 minutes) To emphasize the importance of ongoing actions to assure sustainability

Strategies: Presentation by faith community member outlining violence prevention activities the faith community has already done Introduce other actions the faith community can take with practical suggestions View Part II of the "Broken Vows" video to see examples of what others have done and how it has helped survivors

Tips: Enlist a faith community member to present what the community has already done Encourage them to share peace-making activities they have done Emphasize that they need to foster sustainability of their work through various actions Emphasize the success of creating a safe place depends on the awareness and ability of clergy and counselors to respond supportively and with insight Reference the Pastor's Packet component of this manual

Content: What the faith community has done: (2-5 minutes) Brief presentation by faith community member Broken Vows Video: (30 - 35 minutes) Brief post-discussion of video What congregations can do: (2-5 minutes) One of the presenters introduces guidelines with suggestions See handouts "Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community" (see page 149) and "How to Create a Safe Place in Your Faith Community."

Part 3: Closure

Desired time: 5 minutes

Purpose: To provide closure to participants and energize them to continue the work To help them recognize their responsibility as people of faith to reach out to individuals suffering in abusive relationships

Components: Good Samaritan story - two individuals read alternately: one reading the bold parts, the other reading the italicized parts

Tips: State: "We all need to recognize that it is our calling and our personal responsibility to know what to do and then do it when we recognize someone who is hurting and being hurt. As people of faith, we are called to respond."

Content: Reading "The Good Samaritan"

Adjournment: Optional: Close with a prayer, a litany, a simple reflection or a moment of silence.

When you have completed the session: Distribute a post-course questionnaire to each participant. Suggestion: For optimal feedback, have participants complete the questionnaire prior to leaving.

The Good Samaritan

Jesus gave this illustration. A Jew going on a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes and money and beat him up and left him lying half dead beside the road. Josie had been secretly abused by her husband for years. George stripped her of her self-esteem, dignity, her ability to be self-sufficient and her faith in God.

By chance, a Jewish priest came along and when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed by. By chance, Ellen, a woman from her church noticed the ugly bruise on Josie's forearm. But Ellen ignored the suspicious bruise and said nothing.

A Jewish temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but went on. Brad, one of the people on church council noticed the bruise and wondered if it was related to why she had not been attending church regularly. But he decided it was none of his business.

But a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw him, he felt deep pity. But Rose, Josie's neighbor, not a fellow church member, in fact had no church of her own, saw the bruise and felt deep pity for Josie.

Kneeling beside him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with medicine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his donkey and walked along beside him until they came to an inn, where he nursed him through the night. Rose noticed that George was not allowing Josie to go out much. But one day when Josie was taking the garbage to the curb, Rose stopped Josie and said, "I hope that bruise wasn't caused by someone who wanted to hurt you, because no one deserves that."

The next day he handed the innkeeper two 20 dollar bills and told him to take care of the man. "If his bill runs higher than that," he said, "I'll pay the difference next time I'm here." The next day when George left for work, Rose called Josie and said to her, "I'll baby-sit for you if you want to go out for a while." Later, Rose offered to drive Josie to a support group for battered women. Rose also secretly slipped Josie two 20 dollar bills.

Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the bandits' victim? Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to Josie, the victim of abuse?

The man replied, "The one who showed him some pity." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same." The man replied, "The one who showed her some pity." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

The story of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10:30-37. The story of the Good Samaritan found in a church, workplace or community near you.

Created by Jayne Kane of Encourage to Hope Ministries. Found in the paraphrased edition of the Living Bible. Reprinted with permission.

Participant Handouts List

All handouts are located in the Appendix unless otherwise noted.

Statistics

- Power and Control Wheel
- Power and Control Wheel Prototypes:
 - Equality
 - For Disabled and Elderly

- Teens
- Parish Team
- Support from Parish Team
- Family Violence: Myths & Misconceptions
- Christian Myths About Sexual & Domestic Abuse
- Myths About Abusers
- Barriers: Realities that Prevent Family Violence Survivors from Looking for Help
- Understanding Abusers
- Faith Community Barriers
- Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community
- Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers, A Manual for Faith Communities - (Each participant should receive a copy of this manual.)
- Scenarios - (Each participant should receive a copy of each scenario when you begin working on this section.)
- Pre and post-seminar questionnaires - (Explain these when given to participants)
- Article: Hostages in the Home
- Faith community "Peace and Hope" brochures - (For copies please call the Community Health Improvement Department of Mercy & Unity Hospitals at 763-236-4342 OR E-mail: lyla.pagels@allina.com)
- Your local advocacy community resource information to be added by you

Book II

Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers A Manual for Faith Communities

Chapter Note

This chapter was written and compiled by Marlene B. Jezierski, R.N., B.A.N.

Generally speaking, material in this booklet makes references to both males and females when mentioning batterers and survivors. Although family violence victims and abusers can be either male or female, the vast majority of survivors are female and the vast majority of abusers are male.

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide information and suggestions to those individuals in faith communities who work on a personal basis with laity experiencing violence in the home. It is intended to provide suggested responses when identifying violent relationships.

Research has shown that, while clergy stated their training in counseling was lacking, 84% had counseled survivors of violence in the home in the course of their pastoral work (Weaver, 1995). In one study of 1,000 women who were survivors of family violence, one-third of them received help from clergy and one-tenth of the batterers were counseled by clergy (Weaver, 1995).

For your safety and the safety of others:

Those utilizing the information contained in this manual are reminded to apply the following principles when working with individuals experiencing or perpetrating violence in their homes:

- Recognize your personal and professional limitations.
- Always utilize the knowledge of individuals in the community who possess specialized education and expertise in the area of family violence. These include survivor advocates, specialists working for batterer programs and mental health professionals.
- Generally, your primary role is to provide spiritual and emotional support and access to community resources.

Definitions

Following are definitions of terms as they are used in this manual: (Excerpted and adapted from Domestic Violence Definitions by Jayne Kane, Encourage to Hope Ministries. Reprinted with permission).

- **Advocate** - one who pleads the cause of another, one who argues for, defends, maintains or recommends a cause or proposal
- **Battered person** - a victim of repeated physical, sexual and emotional abuse by an individual sharing a past or present intimate relationship including partners, children, siblings and elders. One who is abused.
- **Battering** - a systematic pattern of violent, controlling, coercive behaviors intended to punish, abuse and ultimately control the thoughts, beliefs and actions of the victim. Abuse.
- **Domestic violence** - intimate partner physical, sexual or emotional abuse

- **Family violence** - physical, sexual, emotional, financial abuse and/or neglect occurring within the context of home and/or intimate personal relationships
- **Survivor** - a victim of domestic or family violence. The term "survivor" is felt to be more empowering and affirming than "victim."
- **Violence** - (in an intimate relationship) a systematic pattern of violent, controlling, coercive behaviors intended to punish, abuse and ultimately control the thoughts, beliefs and actions of the victim. It is characterized by an imbalance of power. It may consist of repeated, severe beatings or more subtle forms of abuse including threats and control. It usually results in lack of self-esteem on the part of the victim and a belief that the victim is the cause of the violence.
- **Violence is words and actions that hurt people.**

Survivors

"Life was so painful, and I was spiritually lost. Pastor Pamela gave me plenty of space and time. 'What you've been through has been terribly unfair and wrong,' she said. 'It took a lot of courage and trust for you to share your story with me. I'm here to support you.' Her gentle and nonjudgmental approach was an important first step on my lifelong road to spiritual recovery." -Survivor

Myth: Family violence affects only a small percentage of the population.

One-third of all women have been kicked, hit or punched, choked, or otherwise physically abused by a spouse or partner in their lifetimes. Out of three million women, three percent reported domestic abuse during the past year. Sixteen percent reported they were either sexually or physically abused during their childhood (Commonwealth Fund Survey, 1998). In a survey conducted by the United Methodist Church, one in 13 church members responding had been physically abused by a spouse and one in four had been verbally or emotionally abused. An estimated 90% of all domestic violence incidences go unreported (MN Coalition of Battered Women).

Relying on faith: In a study of 1,693 rural Minnesota women, 27% of those in Women, Infant and Children Clinics (WIC) and 18.3% of those in health care clinics reported experiencing physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse in the past year. One component of the study examined barriers to survivors obtaining help from health care providers. One particularly compelling finding identified that 47.6% of survivors said, "I would rather rely on God to help me," suggesting that clergy (and faith communities) need to understand the dynamics of family violence and recognize their role in supporting survivors and facilitating access to community resources (Kershner, 1998 and 1999).

Characteristics

Family violence survivors may:

- believe the myths about domestic violence;
- be traditionalists about home, family unity and female sex roles;

- accept responsibility for the abuser's behavior;
- have low self-esteem;
- feel guilt, self-blame, shame and self-hatred and deny the legitimacy of their own feelings and needs;
- show martyr-like endurance and passive acceptance;
- hold unrealistic hopes that change is imminent;
- become increasingly socially isolated;
- act compliant, helpless and powerless in order to appease the offender and prevent further abuse;
- define themselves in terms of other people's needs;
- have a high risk for drug and alcohol addictions;
- exhibit stress disorders, depression and psychosomatic complaints;
- show anxiety, apprehension, fearfulness, nervousness, panic attacks;
- display poor grooming;
- have poor eye contact (can also be cultural);
- experience mood swings;
- suffer from excessive worry, phobic; and/or
- feel hopeless, helpless, inability to cope.

Indicators of possible abuse

Behavioral signs or "Red Flags" that may suggest violence in the home:

- In the faith community:
 - a decline or change in routine in church attendance or activities
 - refusing or denying contact from clergy or other church members
 - lack of eye contact or intentional avoidance at religious services or other activities
 - statements in which the individual questions God, His sovereignty, His love or existence. This may be particularly significant if the person appears to be struggling with this on an experiential level.

- In the home:
 - have a high risk for drug and alcohol additions
 - exhibit stress disorders, depression and psychosomatic complaints
 - have a history of frequent illnesses or hospitalizations
 - depression, suicide attempt
 - pregnancy complications (premature labor, miscarriage, bleeding)
 - chronic pain: headache, chest, abdomen, pelvic, back
 - series of injuries
 - bruises with patterns (cigarettes, shoes, belt buckles, cords, hands, fingertips)
 - many seemingly minor but continual and/or varied physical problems
 - delay in seeking treatment OR doesn't seek treatment for serious injury
 - injury doesn't fit with person's or others' description
 - inappropriate clothing
- Associated with the abusive partner:
 - person flinches in presence of partner
 - partner is excessively attentive and responsive to person
 - person seeks permission from partner
 - person demonstrates increased anxiety in presence of partner
 - refusal of partner to leave person alone

Actions to consider

- **When there are indicators, ask if they are being hurt at home.** Survivors of domestic abuse are less likely to come in and disclose abuse; they are more likely to come for counseling stating they have stress or marital relationship problems. It is very important to ask a specific question defining forms of abuse providing an opening for the person to share, if not at that point perhaps at a later date. (See "Asking a question: Is your partner hurting you?")
- **Be an active listener.**

- Listen thoughtfully with empathy.
- Believe what you are told. Generally survivors initially share the minimal story. They fear not being believed, particularly if the abuser is a pillar of the church. Your belief of the story at this point is more important than giving theological answers which may not meet the survivor's human needs and may be better said when the person is not in crisis.
- Avoid showing shock or horror over what you are told, this can cause the survivor to feel more shame and embarrassment.
- **Be respectful, nonjudgmental, supportive.**
 - Respond without assigning blame.
 - Avoid shaming.
- **Affirm the survivor's feelings. Examples:**
 - "You do not deserve this treatment."
 - "You did not cause this to happen to you."
 - "I am so sorry this is happening to you."
 - "You are a good person."
 - "You have a right to be treasured."
 - "It must have taken a lot of courage to share this with me."
 - "I am concerned for your safety and the safety of your children."
 - "I am here for you when you are ready to seek help or make a change."
- **Unequivocally challenge violence.**
 - State clearly that violence is not acceptable.
 - Never say anything that suggests an accusation such as, "What did you do to cause this?"
- **Provide the survivor with any of the following options: Remember the survivor must make the decisions**
 - Call a crisis line.
 - Contact a domestic abuse advocacy agency. Services are free and confidential, with no strings attached; survivors make their own decisions. Advocates are well versed in options available and legalities. Many agencies have 24 hour crisis lines.

- Report physical or sexual abuse to law enforcement.
- If the survivor is a male: there are services for men but they are not as prevalent. Most community domestic abuse agencies will provide phone crisis counseling and referral resources to males as well as females. Homosexual males may be best served by a gay, lesbian, bisexual transgender agency (GLBT).
- Seek individual counseling.
- Seek counsel from clergy.
- Develop a safety plan.
- Join a support group.
- Call law enforcement to report abuse and/or file an order for protection.
- Help identify sources of economic assistance: one of the greatest barriers that exist for survivors when they attempt leaving is lack of financial resources.
- Seek career counseling.
- **Attempt to assess what is happening to any children.**
 - You are a mandated reporter if you are aware of child abuse.
 - Advise the survivor that you are a mandated reporter.
 - Concern for the welfare of the children can motivate the survivor to action.
- **Continue to support the survivor.**
 - Don't just give resources and exit the scene.
 - Stay in touch in a way that assures safety to both of you.
 - Give the survivor the gift of time and be prepared for frustration. Survivors need time to sort through a lot of religious, social, emotional and economic issues. They need your time, patience and support to help rebuild self esteem and self-confidence.
- **Assure confidentiality.**
 - Do not discuss circumstances with anyone else unless the survivor consents.
 - Do not confront the abuser: any information must be considered confidential. Confrontation by untrained practitioners may endanger survivors and children or others. It should be avoided. If undertaken, it should be done under the advisement and guidance of experts who work with batterers.

- **Options to consider if the survivor feels she or he must forgive the abuser.**
 - Respectfully suggest that if the abuse is ongoing it means the abuser has not repented and that therefore forgiveness may not be appropriate.
 - Suggest that forgiveness is the end, not the beginning of the healing process. There are times that the survivor may need to be able to forgive in order to heal.
 - Suggest that forgiveness is up to God, not up to the victim.
 - "I know and care about both of you, but I cannot condone this violent behavior towards you".
 - To forgive does not mean to forget.
- **Avoid:**
 - Don't say things that suggest you are questioning the validity of what you are being told such as, "I can't imagine (name of partner) behaving that way." This assigns guilt to the wrong person, the survivor, and implies you do not believe what you are being told.
 - Never say anything that suggests an accusation: "Did you do something to cause this?" or anything else that suggests the survivor can be blamed for the abuse.
 - Saying words such as "Keep praying" or "Keep the commandments and things will be o.k.," or "Just accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and happiness will come." Phrases such as these that are not helpful, tend to put the survivor in a victim position and contribute to powerlessness.

Safety concerns

- Seriously consider the potential for danger
 - Verbalize concerns you have identified.
 - Give a warning that, while survivors may believe the violence won't happen again, it almost always does, and it gets worse with time.
 - Validate fearfulness on the survivor's part.
 - Stress the importance and value of contacting an advocacy agency.
 - Encourage the survivor to find a safe place to go (shelter or motel), possibly leaving town with the guidance of a domestic violence advocate.
 - If the survivor is afraid, discuss that fear, provide and discuss a safety plan, and strongly encourage contact with local advocacy services. (See Alexandra House Safety Plan)
- Safety planning

- Strongly encourage the survivor to contact your local advocacy agency for assistance in safety planning. Family violence advocates can assess the situation and provide objective education and encouragement which may help the survivor seek safety. (See Alexandra House Safety Plan pages 74-75) If it is clear that the survivor will not be doing so, offer safety planning materials.

Crisis Counseling

When receiving a crisis call from someone seeking help from an abusive relationship:

- Ask if the person is in immediate danger.
- Ask how you can help.
- Do not go to the home.
- Call the police at 911 if there is immediate danger. Err on the side of safety.
- Check out the current circumstances by asking the caller specific questions about what is happening at the moment, where the abuser and children are, if there are weapons, etc.
- As soon as the immediate crisis is past, strongly encourage survivor to call local advocacy program.
- If the couple comes to you for couple counseling, agree to meet with them separately. Couple counseling is not advised in crisis circumstances.

Spiritual Support

- Offer to pray with and for the survivor.
- The survivor needs to hear and make faith statements that address the person's safety, well-being and empowerment.
- Reference scripture that may provide insight and courage and suggest that scripture reading may be helpful. (See Marriage and relationship, Understanding the intent of scripture)
- Avoid platitudes such as "God never sends us anything we can't handle." This sincere belief may be an obstacle. It implies that God has sent this abuse, that it is God's will that violence be perpetrated against them. This could stand in the way of the survivor's safety.
- Consider offering this thought: "Let's name the resources you think God has given you to deal with this situation."
- "I am confident God does not want you to suffer."
- "I do not believe God is punishing you for sin."

- Be with the survivor in her or his suffering and healing. Do not stand withdrawn. Acknowledge your fears and pain as you hear the stories.
- Affirm the survivor's faith regardless where she or he stands theologically.
- Praise and support the survivor as there is movement towards wholeness.

Asking a question: Is your partner hurting you?

Ask questions if you have concerns that parishioners are being physically, sexually or emotionally abused by an intimate partner, caretaker or someone important to them.

If you have reason to suspect that a parishioner who has come to you for counseling, or approached you in some way for support, may be being abused at home, it is very helpful if you ask the person if this is happening. It is appropriate to consider this question in many cases of troubled people who seek help from their clergy.

A simple, thoughtful, respectful question, gently posed in a soft tone of voice may elicit acknowledgment of a host of problems and concerns that the individual has been hiding and struggling with. Remember that abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional.

Elders and disabled

Remember, too, that elders and the disabled are also abused and are particularly vulnerable to inappropriate treatment. Consider asking them a question if you have concerns. Besides physical, sexual and emotional abuse, this population is also neglected and financially abused.

Ask in a manner that is:

- Nonjudgmental
- Accepting
- Objective
- Caring

Suggested questions

- Use language that is specific so the individual knows what you are asking.
- Do you have any concerns about your relationship?
- We all have disagreements at home. What happens when you and your partner fight or disagree?
- How do you and your partner resolve conflict?
- Does your partner prevent you from seeing friends and family?

- Does your partner make all of the decisions?
- Does your partner constantly put you down? Call you names? Say you are stupid, incompetent, a poor parent, fat, ugly?
- Has your partner ever pushed you, slapped you, punched you?
- Do you ever feel as though you are walking on eggshells in your relationship?
- Are you afraid of your partner or caretaker?
- Does your caretaker take your money?
- Are you denied access to medical care?
- Has your partner ever threatened to hurt a pet, friends or family members?
- Has your partner ever threatened or abused your children?
- Has your partner ever destroyed things that you cared about?
- Has your partner ever forced you to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Does your partner mercilessly accuse you of infidelity?

Suggested responses when someone discloses abuse

- Listen and believe
 - Listen with concern, objectivity, openness.
 - Accept the information given you without question.
 - Allow the person to confide at their pace, don't force the issue.
 - Never blame the survivor or underestimate fear of potential danger.
- Do not give advice - Do offer choices such as the suggestions below
 - Consider the possibility of leaving the relationship.
 - Call a domestic abuse crisis hot line to discuss options (these agencies offer free, confidential choices with no strings).
 - Call police and get a restraining order.
 - Focus on the survivor's right to make decisions.

- When the survivor is the target of frustration, the survivor is re-victimized.
- **Make affirming, supportive, validating statements (see Actions to consider)**
 - You did not cause the abuse, it is not your fault.
 - You do not deserve to be treated this way. It is wrong.
 - Caring about someone means being respectful, not misuse of power in words & actions.
 - You are not alone, there are people out there who can help you.
 - Do express concern for their safety when that is a factor.
- **Support the choices the survivor makes**
 - It is difficult to see a person stay in a situation where she or he is getting hurt. However, that person has the right to make that choice. It is also important to recognize that even when people leave, the abuse does not end.
- **If you feel angry or frustrated, remember...**
 - Anger and frustration is more appropriately directed towards the abuser.
 - You may need to give yourself permission to step back.
 - Recognize your limitations to help when abuse is happening to a competent adult.
 - Don't blame the survivor for decisions that person needs to make.
- **When the violence is bad, why doesn't she or he just leave?**
 - For most people in any situation, ending a relationship is not easy. Often, someone in a battering relationship has strong emotional ties to the partner; they don't want the relationship to end, they just want the violence to stop. There are numerous financial, social, familial, emotional and other pressures that make leaving difficult. Sometimes leaving is a significant risk to the survivor and sometimes the children.

Remember: leaving does not necessarily end the abuse!

Encourage to Change

"My belief is that women turn first to ministers and members of the medical profession when they decide to disclose episodes of domestic violence. They need to understand that even if a victim does not have any broken bones or bruises, she still could be experiencing abuse. There is psychological and sexual abuse in so many marriages. Clergy shouldn't ask a victim why she's staying in an abusive marriage.

Pastors need to also realize that there are many men sitting in the pews of their churches who go home after the service and abuse their wives." -Survivor

Abusers (Batterers)

A violent act is the responsibility of the violent person...not the survivor.

There is a secret in faith communities. Many individuals are abusing their partners and children. Abusers may be leaders in the church, successful in business or as professionals, as well as blue collar workers or the poor. For generations this issue has long been kept behind closed doors and drawn curtains. Abusers traditionally have not been held accountable for their abuse. The entire community needs to accept responsibility in eliminating family violence and recognize opportunities to make peace.

Clergy and their faith communities are vital places to do this good work. They need to:

- make their communities a safe place where survivors can seek help;
- facilitate survivor connections with family violence (domestic abuse) advocates;
- hold perpetrators accountable for their actions;
- make zero tolerance for violence a credo in their communities; and
- seek opportunities to educate for purposes of awareness and prevention.

Battering is a learned behavior.

Battering in intimate relationships is difficult to stop because often perpetrators have learned to use violence as a way of managing every day stress and frustration. Sometimes this has taken the form of bullying other children or adults. This behavior may have been lifelong. Frequently, they have been violent throughout their relationships with their partners. They have unrealistic expectations of themselves and their partners.

A strong faith does not prevent battering.

Abuse in intimate relationships occurs when there is lack of understanding what it means to respond to the love of another as well as a fundamental lack of compassion. Both scripture and faith communities have been used to accept or condone violence in relationships. These same resources can also provide restraints against violence and define healthy, safe relationships. It takes much more than faith to prevent abuse. It requires acknowledgment of wrongdoing on the part of the perpetrator and a sincere desire and effort to change.

Proverbs 15:8-10. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination for the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but he loves the one who pursues righteousness. There is severe discipline for one who forsakes the way, but one who hates a rebuke will die. (Revised Standard Version)

Understanding abusers

(See ABC's of Men Who Batter; Abusers quotes; and Myths)

Abusers are sometimes extremely dependent on their partners for their sense of self-worth and a sense of control over their lives.

Many may believe "only sick, evil people are abusive." On the contrary, abusers usually appear to lead typical lives in most aspects, except they believe they are entitled to use violence and abuse to control the lives of their partners and families. They believe they have a right to abuse. They control others with violence to relieve tension and solve problems. They do not recognize their behavior as being violent. Often, these unacceptable behaviors are not challenged by society.

Abuser characteristics

- **Anyone** They come from every walk and socioeconomic level of life. Battering occurs in heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Adult children as well as teen-aged children batter their parents.
- **Self-esteem issues** They may display over-inflated self-esteem while portraying themselves as having no fault. They minimize the impact of their actions on others and blame others for their actions.
- **A sense of vulnerability and powerlessness** They often attempt to control others to maintain or gain power in relationships.
- **A tendency towards mental health disorders** They may have other issues in their lives such as depression, anxiety or other severe and persistent mental health disorders.
- **Vulnerability to chemical abuse** Batterers may cope with their stress by self-medicating with excessive drinking, smoking, or use of legal or illegal drugs.
- **Male abusers**
 - **Male batterers** tend to hold traditional beliefs regarding male supremacy and stereotyped masculine sex roles.
 - **Some theorists** state that male abusers believe they are less than they ought to be and that they do not live up to society's ideal of masculinity.
- **Female abusers** While statistics show that 95% of physical abuse is males battering females, men are also sometimes physically and emotionally abused by women.
- **Behaviors**
 - **Use of charm** as a manipulative technique towards their partners

- Poor impulse control or explosive temper
- They may use anger to justify abuse when (for example) the partner calls her mother "too often" or forgot to take the car in for servicing
- Have limited tolerance for frustration and severe reactions to stress
- Often presents a dual personality: at times loving and other times violent
- Have difficulty or are reluctant in acknowledging or describing feelings
- Controlling: threatened when not in charge of the decision-making process
- Relationships - Abusers
 - Have overly dependent relationships with their victims
 - Regard their partners and children as property
 - Are excessively jealous, possessive and controlling
 - Fear abandonment by their partner
 - Do not usually use violence at work, illustrating that both acts of violence and control of impulses are choices that abusers can and do make, depending on the situation
- Beliefs held by some abusers
 - They may believe the myths about domestic violence. These myths include:
 - The victim can learn to stop doing that activity which provokes the batterer to escalate to violent behavior.
 - Alcohol, stress and mental illness are major causes of physical and verbal abuse.
 - Survivors tacitly accept the abuse by trying to conceal it, not by reporting it, or by failing to seek help.
 - Their violent behavior should not have negative consequences.
 - They deny and minimize their violent behavior. They typically deny the abuse is happening, insist it happens rarely or simply lie about it.
 - They also believe that the partner or circumstances are to blame for the abusive behavior, they refuse to accept responsibility themselves.
- Recognizing a potentially abusive relationship

- A partner who has to make secret appointments with you
- When together, one partner is consistently deferential to the other
- When together, one partner seems to be fearful or insecure
- Exhibits one or more of the characteristics described in the previous pages
- A person who makes shame-based statements related to violent behaviors blaming the partner for the problem and implying the partner (survivor) needs to fix it.

Interventions

These interventions were adapted from a tool developed by EMERGE, 2380 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA, 02140. Reprinted with permission from EMERGE.

Most often, the prime objective with abusers is for the abuser to take responsibility for abusive behavior and to enter a treatment program.

Maintain confidentiality: do not discuss with the abuser what the survivor has shared with you.

Principles to apply if you meet with an abuser:

- Define violence broadly. The individual doing the battering may not believe that certain behaviors are violent. This includes acts such as pushing, hair pulling and threats along with punches and choking, etc.
- Be direct.
- Focus on the abusive conduct and its effect on the survivor, not on the perpetrator's explanations and rationalizations.
- Make a statement that indicates the choice to hurt another physically, sexually or emotionally is just that, a choice, and that to choose to do so is unhealthy and an unhealthy practice in terms of spirituality.
- Discuss options to determine willingness and availability for treatment and make appropriate referrals.
- If the abuser becomes aggressive or threatening (depending on the behavior), protect yourself, seek law enforcement intervention, or other protective acts.
- Advise the abuser that you will maintain confidentiality unless you become aware that the partner or children are in jeopardy and/or if you learn that child abuse is occurring, which you are required by law to report to child protection services.

If the abusive person confronts you:

- Do not be manipulated or misled by the excuses you are given. Be aware that your personal safety is of the highest priority. If you feel you are at risk, do not continue the discussion.
- Do not allow the individual to minimize, deny or blame anyone else for his or her actions. A typical response might be "I didn't hit her that hard." Their rationalized explanations include:
 - Minimizing
 - Citing good intentions
 - Blaming alcohol or drugs for the behavior (which gives permission for the behavior when not drinking)
 - Claiming loss of control
 - Blaming the survivor
 - Blaming someone or something else (work, upbringing, stress or pressure)

Ask specific, concrete questions that not only get to the specifics of the relationship but define violence. "How many times have you hit your partner?" "Have you ever choked your partner?" or "Have you pushed her?" "Have you ever pulled your partner's hair?" "Have you ever taken the car keys? Damaged property? Insulted family and friends? Made accusations of infidelity?"

Obtain some historical information in relationship to the battering including asking the following questions:

- "How often do these incidents of battering occur?"
- "What is the most serious incident of abuse?"
- "How do you discipline the children?"
- "How do you typically resolve disagreements?"

The abuser may have a long history of violence in his or her family of origin and will need help seeing the behavior as being violent and unacceptable. This should be a learning process to effect change and NOT an exercise in finding excuses for the violent behavior.

Remorse, repentance and responsibility

- Remorse, deep, painful regret for wrongdoing or repentance, is frequently expressed by batterers. If there is remorse, accept it, but do not give unconditional forgiveness. Instead, listen carefully to words used: is the abuser accepting responsibility for his or her own actions? True acceptance of responsibility can be manifested by the abuser taking steps to change behavior. This can include enrolling in a batterer's program, seeking counseling and substance abuse treatment, finding help

for the behavior, and ultimately stopping it. Note: these can also be tactics of control in themselves because, for example, they know their partner will stay with them if they attend a program.

- Repentance, when found in both the Hebrew and Greek references, very clearly refers to turning around, a change of self: "Repent and turn from all your transgressions...Get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!...Turn, then, and live." (Ezekiel 18:30-32) This is the kind of total change that is necessary for an abuser to stop the abusive behavior.
- Use "supportive confrontation:" identify violence as a problem and challenge the ways the individual minimizes or denies responsibility for it. Point out that violence is not a sickness but a learned behavior that can be unlearned. Help the person to see how self-defeating the violence is, how it damages the family long term. Use this to help the person see the need for change.
- Other suggested phrases:
 - "Violence is never justified and it always makes matters worse."
 - "You can only control yourself, not others."
 - "Seek compassion for others, especially your loved ones."
 - "This is your journey; be attentive to the legacy you will leave for your family and children. Abuse is generational."

Marriage counseling

- The immediate goal is not to save the marriage but to stop the violence. When one person abuses another, the marriage covenant has already been broken (as discussed in the teaching video, "Broken Vows"). (See video ordering information)
- Marriage counseling in a battering relationship is highly questionable. If the violence has completely stopped, the partner and family are no longer fearful, the batterer has successfully completed a program, and both want to work on their relationship, it may be appropriate.

Spiritual support

There are times when it is appropriate and important to serve as spiritual advisor to a batterer. When this occurs, there are key principles to apply:

- The batterer must always be held accountable for abusive behaviors and be told that physical, sexual and emotional abuse is unacceptable.
- It is always appropriate to provide spiritual support. Helpful interventions that can be provided include praying and using the Bible and other materials which provide guidance on respectful, peaceful relationships.

- As in any circumstance of conflict, the spiritual counselor must limit his or her ministry within the boundaries of that role, and be careful not to step out of those limits. Issues relating to legalities and psychological issues, for example, are usually best left to attorneys and psychologists. Accountability for battering behavior is usually best addressed in batterers' treatment programs.
- A miraculous, sudden change of heart that has occurred with the abuser claiming total healing from the abusive behaviors, yet lacks commitment to a long-term treatment program - is most likely to be short-lived.

Treatment

- Perpetrators of domestic violence may need substance abuse treatment and batterer treatment. It is important to note that substance abuse treatment alone does not suffice. It is imperative that chemically dependent abusers receive treatments for both substance abuse and battering.
- Suggest counseling and education for batterers. Call your domestic violence agency to obtain information on local resources. Anoka County resources include:
 - Domestic Abuse Program, Central Center for Family Resources: 763-783-4990
 - Alcoholics Anonymous: 763-421-9923
 - Community resource list (see pages 78-81)

There is no short-term solution to a life of violence.

The safety of the survivor and children is your highest priority. Engaging the batterer in a change process is your second priority.

Standards for batterers' treatment programs - Philosophy statement**

- Violence can never be condoned under any circumstances. There is no such thing as the provocation theory; all abusive behavior is the sole responsibility of the batterer.
- Provisions for the safety of the victims/survivors and their children should be utmost in any decision or policy.
- The primary goal of treatment programs for batterers is to end the violent, abusive and controlling behaviors.*
- Violence as a choice is a learned behavioral response and can be unlearned in an educational/therapeutic group setting.
- Domestic violence and alcohol abuse are often intertwined, although they do not share a cause and effect relationship. They must be treated as separate issues and perpetrators must address the chemical abuse issue before beginning a domestic abuse program.

- Child witnesses or victims of domestic violence suffer long-term emotional and behavioral consequences and often grow up to repeat the intergenerational cycle, either as perpetrator or a victim.

*Controlling behaviors maintain an imbalance of power between the abuser and his or her partner. It includes any act that causes the victim to do something she doesn't want to do and prevents the survivor from doing something she wants to do or causes fear.

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Safety issues

Assess lethality*

There is no question that many abusers can be extremely dangerous. Their threats should be taken very seriously. If you can connect one or more of the following findings to the abuser or perpetrator, the element of danger to the survivor and the children increases exponentially.

- Threat of homicide or suicide.
- Fantasies of homicide or suicide: has the person developed a plan as to how a murder would be completed?
- Weapons: does the batterer possess weapons? Has the batterer threatened to use them? Threatened members of the family with a weapon?
- Does the batterer insist that the partner is property and belongs only to him or her? "Death before divorce," or "You will never belong to another." A batterer who believes he or she is absolutely entitled to the partner; the partner's services, obedience and loyalty, no matter what, is likely to be life-endangering.
- Idolization of the partner or heavy dependence on the partner to organize and sustain his or her life and/or is isolated from the larger community.
- Separation violence: can't imagine living life without the partner.
- Depression: candidate for homicide or suicide. Research shows that many men who are hospitalized for depression have homicidal fantasies directed at family members.
- Access to partner and/or to family members in the presence of other factors.
- Repeated outreach to law enforcement.
- Escalation of risks: the batterer takes actions without regard to the legal or social consequences that previously constrained violent behavior.

- Hostage taking.

Action when safety concerns exist:

If you have a concern for the survivor and family members based on findings from the checklist above:

- Take measures to protect the survivor and children.
- Strongly voice your concerns and their basis to the survivor and abuser.
- Keep the location of the survivor and children confidential.
- Do not try to handle this situation without local authorities. Seek guidance from advocacy services and law enforcement.
- Protect yourself from danger.
- Be sure you are safe in your office.

*Adapted from: *Assessing Whether Batterers Will Kill*, by Barbara Hart, 1990. Reprinted with permission from the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 6400 Flank Drive, Suite 1300, Harrisburg, PA, 17112.

Batterers must not be diverted from prosecution.

Use of scripture

(See Marriage and relationship: Understanding the intent of scripture)

"Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." Luke 6:28

While the scripture intends seeking help for those who are hurtful to others, its intent is not to accept this behavior. We should pray for perpetrators while recognizing that the church is intolerant of abusive behavior.

"Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ." Ephesians 5:21-33

The Revised Standard Version states it slightly differently: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Rev. Marie M. Fortune) The instruction to husbands is very clear and concrete. A husband is to nourish and cherish his own body and that of his wife. Physical battering which occurs between spouses is probably the most blatant violation of this teaching.

While intimate partner abuse/violence may be a common pattern in some relationships it can never be legitimized by scripture.

"Perhaps I could have been influential in bringing my husband to Christ. Yet, I had enough insight to know that if I didn't get out of the marriage I was going to die.

But nobody, not the ministers nor my friends, were giving me permission to get out. No one ever called my husband on his inappropriate behavior. They simply kept talking about my responsibilities as a Christian wife." -Survivor

Marriage and relationship: Understanding the intent of scripture

When there is mutual love and commitment and two people begin a new life and future together, couples look ahead with high expectations and hopes and dreams of a long and happy life. Both must exert energy towards fostering a stable, life-long relationship. This vision of a loving, respectful home presupposes there is mutual trust and respect, that neither partner will hurt the other physically, sexually or emotionally.

Sometimes hurtful behavior has been inappropriately justified by misinterpretation of scripture. "Spare the rod" or "Wives, submit to your husbands" are two examples of this inappropriate use of the Word of God. Use of scriptures by partners to incur physical, sexual or emotional harm on family members are misusing and misinterpreting these very scriptures. "A careful study of both Jewish and Christian scriptures makes it very clear that it is not possible to use scripture to justify abuse of persons in the family." (Rev. Marie M. Fortune, Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence) Fortune goes on to say that sometimes people explain suffering, as when being abused in a relationship, as God's punishment for past sins. These explanations assume God to be stern, harsh and even cruel and arbitrary. This image of God runs counter to a biblical image of a kind, merciful and loving God. The God of this biblical teaching does not single out anyone to suffer for the sake of suffering, because suffering is not pleasing to God.

When interpreting biblical texts, people frequently cite short passages out of context. Very often this skews the meaning of the passage, and sometimes actually results in an interpretation of meaning opposite of that intended by the writer. In the following scriptural analyses, the approach was to read the text in its literary and social context to understand the real intent of the meaning of the passage.

The following scripture references specifically provide a basis for a marriage that is free of physical, sexual and emotional abuse in the context of the scriptures.*

"Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." - Ephesians 5:21 "For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything to their husbands." - Ephesians 5:23-24

This passage is often brought to bear when the husband claims he has the right to abuse his wife saying "the husband is the head of the wife" (v. 23) and "wives ought to be everything (subject) to their husbands" (v. 24). Is this what the passage says? Is this what the author intends? In this case, several crucial verses and parts of verses have been omitted to achieve this gross and blatant misreading. The overall principle governing these verses in Ephesians is found in verse 21, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." This passage, as well as others, does not serve the abuser's interests. He does not claim to be subject to his wife. But it does give us an idea about relationships between married people. This passage clearly explains what it means when it says that the husband

is the head of the wife. The husband is to follow the model of Jesus' relationship with the church (v. 23) and the relationship between Jesus and the church is "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (v. 25). Rev. Marie Fortune discusses this point as follows: "The model suggested here of husband-wife relationship is based on the Christ-church relationship. It is clear from Jesus' teaching and ministry that his relationship to his followers was not one of dominance or authoritarianism, but rather one of servant-hood. For example, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples in an act of serving. He taught them that those who would be first must, in fact, be last. Therefore, according to Ephesians, a good husband will not dominate or control his wife but will serve and care for her."

"In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church." - Ephesians 5:28-29

A further explanation of Christ's relationship to the church follows in subsequent verses from Ephesians. Paul explicitly tells husbands how to behave with respect to their wives' bodies. (See also I Corinthians 3:16-17 which also references respect for the body.) We have seen elsewhere that batterers are sometimes dependent on their partners for a sense of self-worth. Battering does not enhance self-worth, it diminishes it. This passage from Ephesians states unequivocally that a husband as the head of the wife must be like Christ and "love her as he loves himself" and "nourishes and tenderly cares for her." Marie Fortune's interpretation states, " This instruction is very clear and concrete. Physical battering that occurs between spouses is probably the most blatant violation of this teaching and a clear reflection of the self-hatred in the one who is abusive."

*Interpretation and dialogue in this section provided by Christine Frank, Ph.D., Professor of Theology, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN.

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, "I repent," you must forgive him." - Luke 17:3-4

Clergy and abusers alike have been known to tell the abused that the Bible teaches that the abused partners must forgive the abuser. The verses in Luke are cited in support of this position. "If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance you must forgive." Additionally, they have admonished survivors that if the same person sins against you seven times a day and turns back to you seven times and says, "I repent," you must forgive. The abuser wants the abused to think that even though the abuse continues to occur, the survivor must forgive the abuser and remain in the relationship.

What is the context of this passage, and what ideas in the passage are being left out so that the abuser's own interests are served? First of all, this is a general instruction to all of Jesus' followers. They are to rebuke an offender, they are to forgive the offender and to repeatedly forgive when the offender repents. Does this apply to the specific case of an abused partner? Is the abused partner to rebuke the abuser? The abuser does not ask the spouse to rebuke him--indeed this would most likely precipitate further abuse. The passage is misused to demand not just repeated forgiveness on the part of the abused, but erroneous interpretations suggest the abused party must continue to live in an abusive relationship. This is not what forgiveness means here or elsewhere, nor does it

have an adequate understanding of real repentance. Real repentance has the sense of a complete turning around, a change of self. Forgiveness is an attitude of the offended party toward the offender. Forgiveness is not the same as continuing to tolerate abuse. A continued pattern of repeated abuse is not an indication that the true repentance has occurred. After taking care of oneself, the survivors' response to the abuser should be to rebuke or confront him. Then if he repents, forgive him. Repentance, when found in both the Hebrew and Greek references refers to turning around, a change of self.

"Repent and turn from all your transgressions...Get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!...Turn, then, and live." - Ezekiel 18:30-32

This is the kind of total change that is necessary for an abuser to stop the abusive behavior. Forgiveness depends on this total repentance.

"Each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does...It is to peace that God has called you." - I Corinthians 7:2b-4, 15b

In this letter, Paul writes to answer questions which the Corinthians have about marriage. Some wondered if it is a good thing to marry. (They ask, "Is it good for a man not to touch a woman?" 7:1). The overall principle is in v. 15b. With respect to marriage, Paul has a very egalitarian view. There is no notion of subjugation of woman to man, but mutual submission to one another. Paul speaks of marriages between Christians and non-Christians (a growing phenomenon in cosmopolitan Corinth). He urges that these mixed marriages may have a benefit for the non-Christian partner ("Wife, you may save your husband, husband you may save your wife 7:16). But if this is not possible, the partners are not bound because "it is to peace that God has called you." Abusing partners break the covenant with their spouse, and just as in cases of the mixed marriage where the partners are not bound because of some disagreement, this would also apply when the abuser has severed the relationship. The wife is not bound. God's intent is to "call people to peace."

"He has declared to you, O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God?"- Micah 6:8

One of the most frequently stated values in both Old and New Testaments has to do with the treatment of members of the human family. The well known phrase from Micah sums up this value: God is directing us to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. Any person who suffers abuse is not being treated justly or with kindness. Any person who would walk humbly with God would seek to end abuse, wherever it occurs.

Other readings for consideration

"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple." - I Corinthians 3:16-17

"I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live." - Deuteronomy 30:19

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Jesus reading from Isaiah in the temple)
- Luke 4:18-19

Marriage Preparation

Marriage preparation should include individual, one-on-one assessments and discussions of domestic violence: defining it, identifying characteristics of abusive relationships and comparing them with relationships of respect, trust and equality. Pre-marital counseling is a unique and crucial opportunity for those involved in marriage preparation to assess how each person responds to and deals with not getting his or her own way, differences of opinion, anger and frustration and how they interact and respond to one another. It is helpful to know the lifetime experiences of individuals. For example, 70% of all men who batter saw their mother being battered. Early warning signs can help identify potential batterers. These early-warning signs and other literature or discussion of family violence should become an integral part of any pre-marital programs in the faith community.

Teaching points

- Define domestic violence broadly and teach that violence of any kind in marriage and family life is unacceptable.
- Identify the characteristics of respectful and abusive relationships.
- Provide community resource information on advocacy and batterer resources to attendees.
- Extend an open invitation for private discussion with participants.

Interviewing points

- See the couple together and separately.
- Discuss respectful and abusive relationships, identify characteristics of each.
- Explore existence of familial violence and identify inherent risks in its presence.
- Assess for presence of any early warning signs (see Self Assessment Tool).

Elements to consider for inclusion in course materials

- A self-assessment tool for both batterers and survivors.
- Printed materials describing domestic violence and what survivors can do.

- An invitation to contact parish staff with any concerns. This recommendation is based on the creation of a "safe place" in the faith community for survivors and abusers to disclose and seek help.
- Promise of absolute and unequivocal confidentiality, except when there is a clear risk of violence to self or others.
- A current list of local resources for survivors and batterers.
- A statement from clergy addressing the issue of domestic violence with special attention given to the misuse or misunderstanding of Scripture and Church teaching about marriage (see Marriage and relationship: Understanding the intent of scripture).

Definition

Violence in an intimate relationship is a systematic pattern of violent, controlling, coercive behaviors intended to punish, abuse and ultimately control the thoughts, beliefs and actions of the victim. It is characterized by an imbalance of power. It may consist of repeated, severe beatings or more subtle forms of abuse including threats and control. It usually results in lack of self-esteem on the part of the victim and a belief that the victim is the cause of the violence. Violence is words and actions that hurt people.

Early warning signs

Substance abuse Between 40 and 80% of battering incidents involve substance abuse. People who batter do not batter because of substance abuse, but they may use their dependency as an excuse for their battering. Also, the battering may be more severe when combined with substance abuse.

Physical abuse during courtship Physical abuse during courtship is a guarantee of later abuse. As time goes on, the abuse usually will become more severe and more frequent. It is a mistake to marry believing this will get better, it will almost definitely become more severe over time.

Violent environment Violent behavior is learned. Individuals who grow up with abuse in the home often think of abuse as normal behavior.

Cruelty to animals Anyone who beats a dog or other pets should be considered a likely batterer.

Abuse justified by frustration When relatively minor problems such as missing a parking space or being jostled in a crowd causes a person to become violent, scream or otherwise seriously over react to the situation, it is highly likely this behavior will repeat itself in the marriage.

Poor self-image Men often attack women when they feel their masculinity has been threatened. However, many abusers feel quite entitled to use violence and consider themselves superior to their female partners.

Extreme or subtle possessiveness and jealousy If a person considers his or her partner to be property and becomes enraged or expresses a need to be with the partner as much as possible, or when he

or she does not receive all of his or her attention, he or she is a potential abuser. If the potential abuser is threatened by a partner's friendships with others and does not allow the partner to form other friendships, that is a red flag.

A general dislike or mistrust of women (male abusers)

I CORINTHIANS 13

The words of Paul found in I Corinthians 13 gives us a standard for measuring our core behavior as Christians. It is the witness of this standard in our actions and our relationships that marks us before God and the world as a follower of Jesus Christ, and citizens and inheritors of the kingdom.

As a standard for all of our lives, I Corinthians 13 can also point to the ways we are treated that are not love. These ways, if they continue on a regular basis, are abusive and rob your spirit, and theirs, of the joy and blessing of life God wanted for us, and of the capacity to love as Christ loved us.

The following comparison may help you discover if you are in an abusive relationship:

A person who is not loving, and therefore abusive:

- Expects you to be obedient and compliant without question, does not tolerate your independent action.
- Sees themselves as the only source of knowledge and information to be used, and often sees your input as a threat.
- Turns minor things into major arguments and incidents.
- Often uses gifts and special attention to make up for hurting you, rather than changing their outlook or behavior.
- Threatens to hurt you, the children, and others. Hurts you physically and emotionally. Expects you to have sex on demand (sometimes against your will).
- Prevents you from appreciating something about someone else, reacts with extreme jealousy.
- Expects everyone to meet their needs. Gets suddenly angry, often explosive. Destroys your personal property. Constantly reminds you of your failings. Insults you, calls you names, and belittles you.

The standard for love as found in I Corinthians 13:

1. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
2. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.
4. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
5. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
6. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
7. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
8. Love never fails.
9. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.
10. For we know in part and we prophecy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.
11. When I was a child, I talked as a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man [woman], I put childish ways behind me.

Compiled by the Faith Committee of COMVAC Community Violence Action Committee of Johnson County, KS, PVS, The Dept of Preventive Medicine at Kansas University Medical Center, Sam Bauer and Zita Surprenant, MD. Reprinted with permission.

A person who is not loving, and therefore abusive:

- Defends their hurtful behavior, blaming you for their actions.
- Does not care to hear about your problems. Willingly humiliates you in front of others. Prevents you from going where you want. Prevents you from working, attending activities, seeing family and friends.
- Is no longer the caring person you remember, but seems like someone else.
- Reacts to changes and losses by hurting you, blaming you.
- Unwilling to acknowledge when they make a mistake.
- Does not accept you for who and what you truly are.
- Treats you as a child.
- Reacts strongly when you defend yourself or you are assertive for your needs.
- Prevents you from doing any self-improvement like classes, counseling.

- Does not believe you, value you, or accept you for who and what you truly are.

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Supportive Background Materials

The ABC's of Men Who Batter

By Barbara Corry, M.A., 1994 (Reprinted with permission from Barbara Corry, Peace Offerings, P.O. Box 1172, Alhambra, CA 91802.)

Abused as children Most batterers were beaten, verbally abused, or sexually abused as children. The majority of batterers also were "under-fathered," i.e. they had fathers who neglected or rejected them, or fathers whom they could never please. Treated like objects, batterers were taught, by example, specific techniques to hurt and humiliate others. In addition, batterers learned that violence is "normal" in families: they were taught that bigger people get to hit and abuse smaller people. In turn, batterers discipline their children with violence, thus perpetuating the cycle of abuse.

Believe in traditional sex roles Batterers hold to traditional sex roles (macho men, subservient women). They believe that a woman is there to take care of them, feed them, bear their children, keep their house clean, accept their infidelities, and tolerate their drinking. Batterers believe that women should be disciplined if they "disobey their husband" or "forget their place." Abusive men often talk about their rights as husbands and their role as head of the family. They believe that their wives are theirs to do as they wish. Batterers also hold attitudes consistent with male privilege such as, "a little slap will do her good" or "I'll show her who's boss" or "what she needs is for someone to teach her a good lesson."

Controlling Battering is purposefully controlling behavior by someone who wants total control. A man who batters may control where his spouse goes, who she sees, what she reads, when she eats, and what she buys. He may monitor her phone calls, mileage, clothing and make-up. A batterer fears abandonment, and therefore, he tries to control his mate's actions by controlling the money and by limiting her access to family and friends. These men control their partners in order to feel like they have some control in their lives and some power in the world. Their need to dominate stems from a need to reassure themselves that they are special, valued by others, and worthy of appreciation - all things they did not get as children. A batterer's fear of not being in control is also related to the fear of death or injury he experienced as a child in a violent home.

Deny, minimize and blame A batterer does not want to be responsible for his violent actions or for the harm he causes. Abusive men learn to deny wrong doing, minimize injury and blame others. Men who batter will blame others for their actions and say things like, "If she didn't want a beating, why did she interrupt me when I was on the phone?" or "She knew not to disrespect me in public" or "You're really asking for it when you make me crazy like this" or "I don't get this way with anyone else. It's your fault." Batterers will also deny hurting their partners with comments like "She

tripped and fell" or "I was swinging at the air and she walked into it" or "I was just trying to push her away" or "She's fair skinned and bruises easily."

Finally, batterers will minimize their violent actions with excuses like "It was just a bump" or "I just twisted her arm a bit" or "I only slapped her a couple of times last year" or "Compared to what some other men do it's not so bad." A batterer also may say "I didn't know what I was doing" or "I was out of control" as if someone else was responsible. In reality, battering is target specific: the batterer aimed at his spouse, not the mailman or the grocer, and he even may have aimed for specific parts of her body.

Emotionally abusive Battering is not limited to physical abuse. Emotional abuse may include repeatedly criticizing his spouse: shouting at her, swearing at her, putting down her opinions, blaming or shaming her, making her feel stupid, treating her like a servant, accusing her unjustly, undermining her self-confidence, calling her names, insulting her family, embarrassing her in front of others, withholding encouragement, flirting openly or having affairs, and not discussing events which damage the relationship.

Feel powerless Batterers are actually frightened men who are afraid to be alone in the world. Like marshmallows, they are crusty on the outside but soft (scared and insecure) on the inside. Feeling powerless as children, batterers learned how to bully and dominate in order to feel less afraid and avoid being victimized any further.

Grew up with violence Batterers learned early on that they could gain control and get power by throwing things or by raising their voice. Violence became an acceptable way to express their emotions or get what they wanted. Slapping, punching, etc. became normal, taken-for-granted ways for spouses to relate to one another and to resolve conflicts. They also learned early on, by example, that men get to hit and that women tolerate it.

Have a negative belief system about women Batterers lump all women together and do not see women as individuals. In addition, they have negative stereotypes about women such as: "all women are manipulative" or "all women see men as paychecks." Batterers also dismiss women's ideas and opinions. Furthermore, they believe that a man must control his woman or she will control him.

Insecure Abusive men have a deeply rooted fear that they are inadequate. They don't believe they have a lot to offer. Batterers are unhappy with who they are and see themselves as failing to live up to their image of manhood. All of their bullying and intimidation serve as a smoke-screen to keep others from seeing how insecure they really feel. Their violence is controlling behavior designed to keep themselves from feeling inadequate and powerless. Batterers are actually very lonely, alienated men.

Jealous Batterers tend to be extremely jealous and have difficulty trusting others. They believe that jealousy is natural in men.

Kill or torture what they cannot possess In the worst cases, battering involves extreme physical or mental cruelty, such as tying up the woman's hands and feet; beating her so badly that the batterer breaks a shotgun in three pieces; stabbing her repeatedly so that she requires hundreds of stitches;

cutting her throat; fracturing the roof of her mouth; and making cigarette burns on her breasts. Other batterers stalk and kill what they can no longer possess. These tragedies are usually portrayed as crimes of passion caused by the man's intense "love" for and inability to live without the woman. However, murder is actually the ultimate expression of the batterer's need to control the woman.

Lack relationship skills Men who batter have had very poor role models for important relationship skills such as problem solving, conflict resolution, and establishing intimacy with a partner. If they do not learn new skills, batterers tend to repeat the destructive patterns which they observed in their respective families. Batterers don't know how to ask directly for what they need. They also do not know how to tell their partners that they are not feeling appreciated or that they are not feeling heard. Batterers have poor skills to resolve differences over money, disciplining the children, etc; without intervention these areas often become major battlegrounds. It is important to note, also, that in the content of an unequal and violent relationship, the woman is usually discounted and unable to be more assertive. And, with both parties unable to express themselves effectively, little communication or conflict resolution occurs in battering relationships.

Master manipulators A batterer is someone who knows exactly how to convince his partner to feel sorry for him. He becomes very skilled at telling his partner exactly what she wants to hear. He will beg and plead and promise and say all the right things. The batterer's worst fear is that his partner will leave, and he tries to be charming enough to make sure this doesn't happen. Just as his violence was overblown so are his apologies and gifts. However, unless the batterer is made to be accountable for his violence and unless he becomes committed to personal change, his manipulation and his abusive behavior will not end.

Not able to nurture Batterers have difficulty giving and receiving love. They find it hard to make themselves vulnerable and, without treatment, they are not able to empathize with their spouse's pain.

Overly dependent on their spouses Batterers become overly dependent on their partners for their unmet emotional needs. They seek from their mates the nurturing and security they did not receive as children. When his mate cannot meet his needs, the batterer becomes frustrated. As one man put it, "I felt I needed her to 'make' me happy; if I wasn't happy, I thought it was her fault."

Prior history of violence If you listen carefully, you might hear a batterer's friend say that he is frequently "moody" or "has a hot temper." He may have a history of being a bully at work or school. He may also have an obvious or subtle track record of mistreating other women. If a man's anger is out of proportion or if he acts impulsively when he is angry, e.g., by punching walls, throwing things, or breaking objects, these signs say that he needs professional help to control his rage and express his anger in non-violent ways.

Quickly change from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde Batterers can be extremely passive and very charming one minute and explode in anger the next. The violence can be triggered if he feels threatened, shamed, powerless, or humiliated. Drugs or alcohol are often used as an excuse for "losing control" or "going off."

Regard spouses as easy targets Most batterers would not think of doing to other men what they do to their spouses. A batterer knows he can easily vent his anger on his spouse in the privacy of his own home and that she probably won't tell anyone. A female partner is most likely someone smaller and weaker, someone who is economically dependent on him, someone who cares about him, and someone whom he can bully into not going to the police. If he intimidates her sufficiently, and she doesn't tell anyone, he knows he can get away with abusing her.

Self-centered Batterers lack consideration for others. As one batterer put it, "I had the 'Do what I want, when I want, why I want, and because I want' syndrome."

Try to punish and control with subtle forms of abuse Batterers often use subtle forms of abuse to punish, humiliate, and control their partners. A batterer may say things to create fear such as: "If you EVER gain weight, I will leave you." or "If you EVER let the housework go, you'll be sorry." In addition, a batterer's verbal abuse and criticism often become chronic. He will repeatedly complain about the way his spouse takes care of him or the children, and he will find other things wrong - even after his partner has turned herself inside out to lose weight, stay within the budget, cook his favorite foods, etc. A batterer feels so small inside (i.e., he has such low self-esteem), that he will repeatedly put his spouse and/or children down in order to feel more important or feel better about himself.

You must follow his orders and do things to his satisfaction - or else As one battered woman put it, "You have to follow his commands, take his shoes off, stay away from his electronic equipment, heat his dinner, NOW, or else, like he was king and this was his domain and everybody else in the family were little ants made to serve him." Batterers will beat or verbally abuse their mates for things like forgetting to put the butter on the table, burning the meat, not ironing the shirts correctly, not sewing clothes to his satisfaction, making scrambled eggs instead of eggs over-easy, serving limp lettuce on a sandwich, or not getting dressed fast enough.

Zeroes in on spouses' vulnerabilities Men who batter often betray the trust of their spouses and break their confidences. They are skilled at knowing how to use their mates' vulnerabilities against them.

Abuser quotes*

*From the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Marines domestic violence curriculum.

"I don't want to hit her but she keeps nagging me. It is just like she wants me to hit her."

"The man is the head of the wife. I have the right to do what I have to do to keep things in order."

"Hitting actually helps both of us. It relieves all the tension I've built up, and it makes her behave. She treats me better and I treat her better after we've had a little fight."

"All I ever have to do is yell at her. I don't hit. I'm not a wife beater. She does what I tell her, and as long as she does I will never hit her."

"I just do what my Dad did, and they had a good marriage."

"If I was married to somebody else, this wouldn't happen. I'm not that kind of person."

"It must be okay. Last time we had a fight she went and saw her pastor and he sent her home."

"All I know is what I see on TV and what I see is people fighting and the stronger person winning."

"The military taught me that this life is the survival of the fittest. I'm a survivor and I ain't going to be dominated by any woman."

"I think secretly she likes it. I think she does it because she likes it when we make up."

"Look, I've a responsibility to my family. I go out and make a living and she stays home and takes care of the kids. If she isn't going to pull her own weight I'm not going to let her get away with it. They wouldn't let me get away with it at work. Anyway, the guys at work think it is all right to hit once in a while if the wife really needs it. It's just part of marriage."

"I love my wife. If I didn't love my wife, I wouldn't hit her. I'd just leave."

"Every once in a while you have to take her on a little trip to knuckle junction. When she comes back she is just like she was on the honeymoon."

Myths about abusers

From The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, 450 N. Syndicate St., Suite 122, St. Paul, MN 55104, 651-646-6177

People who batter must be sick. Battering is a learned behavior, not a mental illness. The perpetrator's experience as a child and messages received from society contribute to a batterers' perception that violence is an effective and appropriate way to achieve power and control over a partner's behavior. Anyone who batters is accountable for any actions.

Battering is an organic defect, like a disease. Group facilitators who work with men who batter often hear the excuse "I lost control of my emotions." One facilitator responds, "At the point you lost control and decided to start hitting your partner, who decided to start hitting? When you stopped hitting, who decided the beating would stop?" Batterers remain very much in control.

It is worth noting that in an extremely small percentage of cases, violent behavior may stem from a brain disorder or damage. However, people with this condition commit violent acts at random toward anyone with whom they're in contact. This is not the situation in the vast majority of battering relationships. While some batterers use excuses such as physical problems, drinking and war flashbacks to justify their actions, these "afflictions" usually do not cause them to harm anyone else except their partners. Battering is not a disease but rather a learned behavior. Abusive behavior is within a person's control. A person uses violence to obtain and maintain control over another person.

More importantly, battering can be lethal; a deadly crime that can be perpetrated by social institutions unless they intervene to stop it.

The batterer has a drinking problem, that is the cause of the violence. Studies reveal that 40 to 80% of the time alcohol is a factor in incidents of domestic violence. Some abusers do not use chemicals at all. However, researchers agree that alcohol is not the cause of domestic violence. Drinking lowers one's control or inhibitions. Chemical use is known to intensify violent behavior but it is not the root cause of the choice to batter. Perpetrators typically make excuses for their violence claiming a loss of control due to chemical use or stress. Batterers who use chemicals need chemical dependency treatment. However, this treatment will not stop the abuse. The treatment is a first step which should be followed by specific work on the violent behavior. A key point: battering is a choice and has nothing to do with loss of control but stems from a desire to exert power and control over a partner.

Abusers batter because they have low self-esteem. Many people believe that batterers are violent because they feel bad about themselves. They pick on their partners to make themselves feel better. While it may be true that many or all batterers have low self-esteem, this does not explain why they batter. There are many men and women with low self-esteem who are not violent.

Self-Assessment Tool

See "Domestic Violence Test"

- Are you afraid of your partner?
- Have you been hit, kicked, choked, pushed, or otherwise hurt by your partner?
- Has your partner restrained you and/or dragged you by the hair?
- Does your partner prevent you from working?
- Has your partner threatened to kill you, your children, your pets, or him/her self?
- Does your partner force you to have sex or touch you sexually when you do not want to be?
- Does your partner take away your money and/or control all the money?
- Does your partner call you names such as fat, ugly, stupid, or crazy?
- Does your partner use your religious or spiritual beliefs to control you?
- Are you able to see family and friends without guilt or fear?
- Does your partner put you down in front of other people?

If you answered yes to any of the above you are very possibly in an abusive relationship.

Insert local domestic abuse hotline here: Free & Confidential

- Are you extremely jealous?
- Do you have a need to control your partner's activities such as attending or not attending social events, seeing other friends or visiting family?
- Do you use physical force to solve problems?
- Do you "lose control" when you consume drugs or alcohol?
- Do you believe you are the head of the household and should not be challenged?
- Are you worried about stress, anger or losing your temper?
- Do you sometimes feel out of control with your children?
- Are you concerned about losing someone you love?
- Do you have concerns about feeling angry with people that you care most about?
- When you get frustrated or angry do you explode?
- Did one of your parents physically or emotionally hurt the other?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, it is possible you are a batterer.

Call the Men's Line: 612-379-6367 (Minnesota) Free & Confidential

Alexandra House Safety Plan

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SAFETY DURING AN ARGUMENT OR VIOLENT INCIDENT

If an argument seems unavoidable, try to move to a room or area that has access to an exit or a phone. Avoid the bathroom, kitchen, or anywhere near weapons.

Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell would be best.

Have a packed bag ready and keep it in an undisclosed but accessible place in order to leave quickly.

Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.

Devise a code word to use with your children, family, and neighbors when you need the police.

Decide and plan where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).

Use your own instincts and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

You don't deserve to be hit or threatened!

SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

If possible, open a savings account in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence, including knowing what you can do about your monthly income and credit debts.

Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, and extra clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.

Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.

Keep the shelter's phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card on you at all times for emergency phone calls. Memorize emergency numbers. You can call shelters collect or dial 911 at no charge.

Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your abuser. Leaving your abuser can be the most dangerous time.

The violence is never your fault. You deserve to be safe at all times.

SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.

Discuss a safety plan with your children for times when you are not with them. Teach children about the use of "911" and when to call the police.

Inform your children's school, day care, etc. about who has permission to pick up your children. Discuss with them who they can tell at school or daycare if they see the abuser.

If possible, keep a phone in a room which can be locked from the inside or obtain a cellular phone to keep with you at all times. Get an unlisted number, block caller ID or use an answering machine to screen calls.

Inform your neighbors and landlord that your partner or ex-partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him/her near your home.

If you are in danger and can reach a phone call 911.

SAFETY WITH A PROTECTIVE ORDER

Keep your protective order on you at all times. Make extra copies to keep in your car, at work, in your brief case, or purse.

Call the police if your partner or ex-partner breaks the protective order.

Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.

Inform trusted family, friends, neighbors, co-workers or employer that you have a protective order in effect.

SAFETY ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC

Inform key people at work of your situation. This should include office or building security and supervisor. Provide a picture of your abuser if possible to the security guard.

Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls if possible. If the abuser attempts to contact you at work, save the voicemail, e-mail or written message.

Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car or bus. If possible, vary your route home. Think about what you would do if something happens while going home (in your car, on the bus, etc.)

SAFETY & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.

If you have to communicate with your partner or ex-partner, determine the safest way to do so.

Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs. You may wish to read books, articles, and poems to help you feel stronger.

Receive support from someone whom you can talk with freely and openly.

Plan to attend a woman's or victim's support group to gain support from others and learn more about you and the relationship.

Receive support and information through a 24-hour crisis line or advocate service.

You are not alone. There are others who can provide you with assistance in safety options, information, resources and support 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Contact Alexandra House, Inc. Crisis/TTY Phone Line: (763) 780-2330

CHECKLIST - WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE WHEN YOU LEAVE:

FINANCIAL:

- _____ Money - Cash
- _____ Bank Books
- _____ Checkbooks
- _____ Pay stubs
- _____ Income tax records
- _____ Charge account numbers and amounts
- _____ Safety deposit box keys

MEDICAL:

- _____ Medications
- _____ Medical records for all family members
- _____ Insurance cards

CHILDREN:

- _____ School records
- _____ Immunization Records

IDENTIFICATION PAPERS:

- _____ Driver's license
- _____ Green card
- _____ Passport
- _____ Other identification records
- _____ Social Security cards for all family members
- _____ Welfare identification
- _____ Your birth certificate
- _____ Children's birth certificates

EMPLOYMENT:

- _____ Work permits

HOME/PERSONAL:

- _____ Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage papers
- _____ Insurance papers
- _____ Divorce/Separation papers
- _____ House and car keys
- _____ Address book
- _____ Pictures
- _____ Jewelry
- _____ Sentimental possessions
- _____ Child Custody documents
- _____ Protective Orders

OTHER: _____

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"There are so many resources out now, domestic violence is no longer just a dirty little secret. Every church should have a food pantry and money set aside for women trying to escape abusive situations. When we're trying to run away from our batterers, we ain't got no money. The perpetrators have all the money." -Survivor

Minnesota Metro Community Resources*

*Additional Minnesota resources are available by calling: The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW) 651-646-6177 Nationally, call The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) 1-800-799-7233

Resources for Survivors

24-hour crisis lines National hot line.....1-800-779-SAFE Minnesota state hot line.....1-866-223-1111

Table 2. Resources for Survivors

County	Agency	Crisis Line
Anoka	Alexandra House	763-780-2330
Carver	Southern Valley Alliance	952-873-4214
Chisago	The Refuge	1-800-338-7233651-257-2890
Dakota	Inver Gr. Hts. - Lewis House- Eagan - Lewis House	651-452-7288651-452-7289
Hennepin	Bloomington - CornerstoneEd- ina - CornerstoneEden Prairie - CornerstoneRichfield - Corner- stoneHopkins - SojournerMin- neapolis - Harriet TubmanPly- mouth - Home Free	952-884-0330952-884-0330952- 884-0330952-884-0330952-933- 7422612-825-0000763-559- 4945
Isanti	The Refuge	1-800-338-7233
Kanabec	The Refuge	320-679-1737
Ramsey	Women's AdvocatesHill House	651-227-8284651-770-0777
Sherburne	Rivers of Hope	763-441-07921-800-439-2642
Washington	Ann Pierce Rogers	651-770-0777
Wright	The Refuge	763-682-64241-800-439-2642

Resources for Specific Populations

Table 3. Resources for Specific Populations

Group	Agency	Phone
African American	African American Family Ser- vices	612-871-2567
Asian	Asian Women United	651-224-2650 (not a crisis line)
Hispanic	Casa de Esperanza	651-772-1611
Native Amer.	Eagle's Nest	651-222-5836
GLBT	OutFront Minnesota	612-824-8434
Males	Men's Line	612-379-6367
Christian	The Dwelling Place	651-776-4805 (not a crisis line)

Resources for Batterers

- Alcoholics Anonymous - 763-421-9923

- Central Center for Family Counseling - 763-783-4990
- MEN's line - 612-379-6367
- North Anoka Domestic Abuse Program - 763-323-9874
- City Limits Counseling - 763-689-4040 (N. Anoka County)
- Family & Children's Service - 763-560-4412 (Brooklyn Park)
- East Side Neighborhood Service - 612-781-6011 (N.E. Minneapolis)
- Domestic Abuse Project - 612-874-7063 (Minneapolis)
- Family & Children's Service - 612-729-0340 (Minneapolis)
- Community Univ. Health Care Center - 612-824-4774 (Minneapolis)
- Community Family Counseling Clinic - 763-545-7907 (Plymouth)

Additional 24-Hour Crisis Response Resources

Anoka County Sexual Assault Hotline Day (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) - 612-323-5559 Evening - 612-427-1212

Citizen's Council Victim Services 612-340-5400

Crisis Connection 612-379-6363

Crisis Nursery Anoka County - 612-785-9222 Hennepin County - 612-824-8000 Ramsey County - 651-641-1300

First Call For Help 612-335-5000

Minnesota Relay Service 800-627-3529

Sexual Violence Center 612-871-5111

Legal Resources

Alexandra House Legal Clinic 763-576-9999

Legal Aid Hennepin County - 612-334-5970 Ramsey County - 651-222-5836

Judicare Anoka County - 612-783-4970

Chrysalis LAW Clinic 612-871-2603

Centro Legal Inc., (Spanish Speaking) 651-642-1890

Volunteer Lawyers Network 612-752-6677

Other Resources

Anoka County Child Protection 763-422-7125

Anoka County Adult Protection 763-422-7168

Parenting Assistance Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)* - 763-506-1266 (Anoka Co.)
Family Support Network - 651-523-0099

Minnesota Relay Service (hearing impaired) 612-297-5353

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women 651-646-6177

Resources for Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Mental Health Association of MN 612-347-5770

North Suburban Counseling 763-784-3008

Rape & Sexual Abuse Center 612-374-9077

Sexual Assault Resource Service 612-347-5832

Sexual Violence Center 612-871-5111

*Call your local public or community health department to identify local ECFE resources.

Sources and acknowledgments

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With sincere appreciation to reviewers and contributors:

Graham Barnes, Team Coordinator, Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN

Christine Franke, Ph.D., Professor of Theology, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN

Jenny Haider, Manager, Alexandra House, Blaine, MN

Gail Holdeman, MSW, LICSW, Central Center for Family Resources, Blaine, MN

Jayne Kane, Encourage to Hope Ministries, Carver, MN

Marion Kershner, PHN, MS, Ottertail County, MN

Scott McRae, Chaplain, Mercy & Unity Hospitals, Fridley, MN

Lyla Pagels, RN, Parish Nurse Coordinator, Mercy & Unity Hospitals, Fridley, MN

Joseph Wotruba, Ph.D., LP, Central Center for Family Resources, Blaine, MN

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Book III

Pastor's Packet: Family Violence Awareness Materials for Pastors

Author's Note

Prepared by: Marlene Jezierski, R.N., Violence Prevention Educator & Program Coordinator in cooperation with Lyla Pagels, R.N., B.A., Parish Nurse Coordinator of Mercy & Unity Hospitals.

Definitions

What is violence?

Violence is the threatened or actual use of force against a person or a group that either results in or is likely to result in injury, death, emotional damage or coerced behavior. (Health Care Coalition On Violence)

What is domestic violence?

Battering is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. The batterer uses acts of violence and a series of behaviors, including intimidation, threats, psychological abuse, isolation, and others to coerce and control over the other person. The violence may not happen often, but it remains as a hidden (and constant) terrorizing fact. (Uniform Crime Reports, FBI, 1990)

A pattern of violent and coercive behavior exercised by one adult in an intimate relationship over another. (Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, an inter-religious educational ministry, Seattle, WA)

Statistics

Overall, it appears as if 20-30% of all women are physically abused by a present or former partner during their lifetime. (Pagelow MD, Family Violence: New York: Praeger, 1984)

The incidence of acute partner abuse with a current male partner was 11.7%. The lifetime prevalence of domestic violence was 54.2%. (Abbott J, Johnson R, Koziol MJ, et al. Domestic violence against women. Incidence and prevalence in an emergency department population. JAMA 1995; 273: 1763-1767)

Battering is the single greatest cause of injury for women. Battering causes more injuries to women than auto accidents, muggings and rapes combined. FBI statistics indicate that a married woman is beaten every 30 seconds in the U.S. The researchers note that this is a conservative figure and estimate that 28% of all couples experience domestic violence. For any given woman in the United

States, there is an estimated 50% likelihood that she has been battered. (Violence Fact Sheet, Office of Drug Policy and Violence Intervention, MN) 15% to 25% of pregnant women are battered. (Stark and Flitcraft, 1992)

Study subjects were solicited in the waiting room areas of primary care internal medicine and walk-in clinics. Of 406 women in the study, 40% reported having experienced emotional/physical abuse by a partner. 7% were currently in abusive relationships, 3% were forced to have sex within the past year. The majority of conflicts (75%) were considered minor (yelling, threats and intimidation, pushing or shoving); 52% experienced severe violence (being hit, punched, kicked or beaten up); 22% were victims of life-threatening violence (stabbed, shot, raped). (Panagiota C, Musialowski R, Women's experiences with domestic violence and their attitudes and expectations regarding medical care of abuse victims, Southern Med. J, Nov, 1997 90(11))

In a rural Minnesota study of 1,693 women at 8 clinics and 17 WIC sites: 21% of subjects (350 women) reported some sort of abuse in the past 12 months:

- 7% physical
- 21% emotional/verbal
- 2% sexual

(Kershner M, Long D, Anderson J (1998) Abuse against women in rural Minnesota. JPH Nsg. 15(6) 422-431)

A review article by McNeely and Robinson-Simpson highlights the problem of husband battering and argues against any "stand-alone mention" of wife abuse. It also addresses the underreporting of husband abuse, which, as the numbers quoted indicate, does occur. "Because in my practice I ask about violence in a non-sex-discriminatory manner, I now hear about the difficulties women have with their physical aggressiveness." (McNeely RI, Women can abuse, too. Can Med Assoc J 1992, 147(12))

Young children are at the greatest risk for physical abuse. Forty-one percent of children killed by parents or caretakers are under one year of age and only 10% of child fatalities are over four years of age. (Gelles, RJ, 1997, Intimate violence in families, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing)

Girls aged 10 to 12 are the most likely victims of sexual abuse by adults. Adolescents are underreported as victims of physical and sexual abuse. Not only are they less likely to be diagnosed and receive help, but they also are often considered delinquent, troublemakers, and contributors to their victimization. (Gelles, RJ, 1997, Intimate violence in families, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing)

Recent studies have pointed to intimate partner violence as a significant health issue for adolescents. It is associated with increased risk of substance use, unhealthy weight control behaviors, sexual risk behaviors, pregnancy, and suicidality. Approximately one in five female high school students

report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. (Molitor, Tolman, & Kober, 2000, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2001, Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway, 2001)

Results from the 1998 Minnesota Student Survey: one in 10 girls and one in 20 boys report being raped or physically abused on dates. Approximately six percent of boys and girls report some type of date-related violence by the ninth grade. Youth who have been victimized by dating partners are more likely than their non-victimized peers to report having experienced emotional problems including suicidal thoughts, poor emotional well-being, low self-esteem and eating disorders. (Diann Ackard and Dianne Neumark-Steiner, 2001)

Nationally, reports of domestic abuse against the elderly increased from 117,000 in 1986 to 241,000 in 1994. The National Center on Elder Abuse estimates that 818,000 elderly Americans were victims of domestic abuse in 1994... two-thirds of the cases are women. (Tatara, 1996. Brandl B, Raymond J, Unrecognized Elder Abuse Victims, Journal of Case Management, Summer, 1997, Vol. 6, No. 2). (Also see "Statistics" in Appendix A page)

In families where there is intimate partner violence, children are at high risk for being abused. Half of men who frequently assault their wives also frequently abuse their children (Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2001). The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect (2001) reports a 30% - 60% overlap between abuse of children and intimate partner abuse of parents.

The best estimation (e.g., Renzetti, 1992) is that the incidence in regard to abuse (in homosexual relationships), is about as frequent as among the heterosexual population. (Harris R, Cook C, Attributions about spouse abuse: it matters who the batterers and victims are; Kansas State U, Department of Psychology, Manhattan, US. Source: sex roles, Vol. 30-(7-8) 553-565, April 1994)

See additional statistics in Appendix.

Who Is Impacted?

At first glance it may seem that only the couple is impacted by domestic violence. In reality, violence in the home has far-reaching effects on children, elders, teens, and friends. Reactions extend deeply into the community, i.e. school shooting.

- The entire family and the community
- Children from homes where domestic violence occurs are physically and/or seriously neglected at a rate of 15 times the national average.
- A number of studies suggest that between 53 and 70% of male batterers also abuse their children.
- Many children who witness adult domestic violence suffer from trauma symptoms such as anxiety, depression, stress and dissociation.
- Children witnessing domestic violence often learn that power and control, aggression and violence are the only ways of getting their needs met.

- Effects of child-witnessed domestic abuse can include development of:
 - abuse of alcohol and drugs;
 - hearing, speech and learning difficulties;
 - significant behavioral problems; and/or
 - inability to control and express emotion or delay gratification

Christian Myths about Sexual and Domestic Abuse

The following information was compiled by Mary Potter Engel, Ph.D., United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

1. Sexual and domestic abuse do not occur in nice Christian families. Statistics show that sexual and domestic abuse occur as frequently in religious households as in non-religious households.
2. Sexual and domestic abuse occur in "those other" denominations, not in the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, (etc.) faiths. All Christian denominations are affected by sexual and domestic abuse. To deny this is to try to find yet one more way to avoid the injustice and shift the responsibility.
3. Theology is irrelevant to sexual and domestic abuse. There are some reports that members of more rigid Christian groups are at higher risk of abuse. While we have no reliable data on this as yet, it is the case that a theology that is more hierarchical and patriarchal than egalitarian is one, among many other factors, that can increase the likelihood of the abuse of women and children.
4. The power of God alone will change the situation. By "turning it all over to God," the individual avoids the help that God sends to us through the hands and hearts of other human beings, whether they be social workers, ministers, friends, other family members or counselors. In other words, it is a fallacy to assume that God works WITHOUT any effort on the part of human beings. We are created to be responsible selves, and thus we are human beings. We are created to be responsible selves, and thus we are obligated to use the gifts for healing that God places before us in this life.
5. Accepting Jesus as his or her personal savior will solve the problem of the abuser. Domestic and sexual abuse are rarely one time events. Often they are patterns of behavior that are very difficult to overcome. A flash conversion experience will not cure a person of deeply ingrained patterns immediately. Therefore, it is necessary to make use of whatever legal, psychological and pastoral aids and services that are available to assist the perpetrator in his or her recovery toward wholeness.
6. Redemption comes only through suffering. Personal suffering can be an occasion for our own growth, but it is never the cause of growth. In other words, suffering is not necessarily redemptive. It embitters some persons rather than urging them towards growth. We can be redeemed in our

suffering but we are never redeemed because of our suffering. God does not require any one or any groups of persons to pay a demanding price in order to purchase redemption. God grants wholeness and healing as free gifts of peace. For women in the church, the revolutionary theology of the cross of Christ, a witness to his active choice to take a stand against the injustice in the world, has been distorted into a reactionary theology of suffering, a justification for the passive and unprotesting acceptance of their own unjust victimization.

7. God teaches us, trains us, through suffering, therefore it is to be accepted as a gift. The belief that God has a divine plan, purpose or reason for the ills that one must suffer during her or his life may bring comfort to some victims by giving them a sense of control of their reality. (If they cannot control what happens to them, they can at least control the interpretation of it.) In other words, this theological belief may be part of the survival mechanism of the victim and should be dealt with sensitively and gently. The aim, however, would be to lead victims and survivors to see that there are acts of violence that have systemic roots, (i.e. caused by an unjust system in society) and that impinges upon their individual lives rather than that of others in a random way, (i.e. the acts are irrational and they personally are not singled out for some divine purpose).
8. Suffering is a punishment for past sins. Many women feel that they are beaten or raped or otherwise abused as a punishment for previous sins (usually previous sexual activity). They need to know that being sexually active is not in itself sinful and therefore requires no punishment. They also need to know that they do not deserve the treatment they are receiving; that they are the unwitting and involuntary victims of an explosive system; and that it is the perpetrator, because of his abuse of his force or authority, who carries the full responsibility for his action toward her.
9. Suffering is a divine vocation. Women will occasionally argue that it is their "mission" or vocation to save their husbands by their example of patient forbearance. While each one of us is given a divine vocation, no one of us is called to save another human being. That is as presumptuous as it is impossible. It is the work of God to save.
10. Suffering presents us with opportunities to show compassion and love in our suffering with the victims of abuse. According to Mother Theresa, God is present in suffering human beings and we are to take the suffering of others as opportunities to do works of compassion and love. This is an individualistic and passive approach that accepts the whole system of injustice and does not work to change that system or to understand the social causes of the problem of exploitation of women and children. We do not need to accept unjust suffering in order to show compassion and love. In fact, acts of social justice that aim at restructuring the entire patriarchal system so that there will be no more victims can be fine works of compassion and love.
11. Suffering gives victims a "moral edge" or moral superiority. This is basically a romantic view of suffering that treats victims of abuse as one-dimensional creatures, as victims alone, rather than seeing them as the incredibly strong and resilient survivors that they often are. Our own need to romanticize suffering can blind us to the great strength and dignity that are present in the lives of survivors as well as to the full horror of the harm that has been done to them.

12. The suffering of women and children is random. In his popular book, *When Bad Things Happen To Good People*, Rabbi Kushner presents suffering as a random event. While I think this view is helpful to counter the suffering as punishment and to help us understand the suffering we experience with terminal diseases and other "natural" physical ills, I do not think it is helpful for the victims of sexual and domestic abuse. The suffering in our society of women, children, and elders, like that of Jews, lesbians, gays and people of color is not totally random. Rather, it is a necessary consequence of a sexist and exploitative patriarchal system that dehumanizes women, trains them to be willing victims, and blames them when they cry for help.
13. The suffering of individual women is a result of choices they have made. While the suffering of women as a group is not random, the suffering of a particular woman is. What this means is that there may be no final explanation for why a certain abuse happened to this woman and not to her sister or friend. In other words, we must be extremely careful not to blame for the suffering that she experiences individually because of the exploitative system that exists in our society.

Signs

Examples of what BEHAVIORS to look for in recognizing physical, emotional or spiritual abusive relationships.

Battered people come from all walks of life, all races, all educational backgrounds, all socioeconomic levels and all religions. A battered woman might be the vice president of your bank, your child's Sunday school teacher, your beautician or your dentist.

A victim may come to clergy seeking help without acknowledging battering. The person may be looking for support for other more general concerns such as stress or relationship problems.

What are some elements and/or signs of an abusive relationship?

Physical abuse or physical manifestations

- Bruises in various stages of healing
- Chronic illnesses such as irritable bowel syndrome or pain (back, chest, pelvic, abdominal, head)
- Multiple physical problems
- Substance abuse

Sexual abuse

- Forced to have sex without consent
- Sexual touching without consent

Emotional abuse

- Isolated from friends, family, the community
- Not allowed to work
- Prevented from doing things without partner or without partner's consent
- Put-downs: negative statements about appearance, ability to think, parenting skills
- Threats: to commit suicide, to kill partner or children, to hurt others
- Economic control
- Shaming or blaming

Spiritual abuse

- Not allowing partner to attend church or practice faith of choice
- Forcing partner to go to church when uncomfortable
- Quoting scripture to keep partner in line
- Demanding forgiveness
- Justifying abusive behavior using scripture or sermons out of context
- Denying, justifying, minimizing or lying about abuse to clergy
- Telling partner that God does not care about her
- Stating violence would stop if victim would be more submissive
- Saying partner is not a good Christian
- Bringing up past sins

Domestic Violence Test: Are you or could you be a victim?

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Directions: This is a private test for you alone. Answer YES or NO to the following questions:

Is your partner jealous of the time you spend with friends, family or co-workers?

Does your partner control or try to control your comings and goings?

When something good happens, do you feel as if you don't deserve it?

Do you tend to blame yourself for things that go wrong?

Are you the child or relative of someone who has been physically or emotionally abused?

Does your partner tell you how to spend your money or control the amount of money you have?

Does your partner cut you off from support systems such as friends you talk with on the phone or lunch with?

Does your partner blame you for his/her problems, failures, unemployment, etc.?

Is your partner cruel to animals or people or show insensitivity or pleasure to their mental pain and suffering?

Does your partner verbally abuse you, say cruel and hurtful things to you, humiliate you privately or in front of others?

During sex, does your partner use force, hold or throw you down or demand sex regardless of how you feel?

Does your partner threaten you or cause physical pain and/or injury?

Does your partner make you feel afraid?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be in an abusive relationship or at risk of becoming involved in an abusive relationship. For more information or help, contact your local battered women's program. In Minnesota, Alexandra House - 763-780-2330.

Why Do People Stay?

It is a myth that abuse stops when people move out of a relationship. This can be in the form of threats, stalking, punitive legal proceedings, etc. Here are some of the REASONS:

Fear:

- that the violence will not end even if the children are taken away
- of retaliation
- of being alone
- of being killed or the children being killed
- of being ostracized from whatever community the person has
- of the system: e.g. previous bad experiences with the legal system

Family:

- "we've never had a divorce in our family"

- marriage is forever
- children should be raised in a home with two parents

Faith:

- it's against religious beliefs to divorce

Finances:

- believes she is unable to work
- has no job skills
- has no access to funds

Fidelity:

- love for the partner
- doesn't want the relationship to end, just the violence

For additional material, see "Barriers: Realities that Prevent Family Violence Survivors from Looking for Help", page 143-144; and "Why Do I Stay?"

How Can Our Faith Community Help?*

(*See Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Community)

- Educate the faith community.
- Make your church a safe place, a place that has a zero tolerance for violence.
- Learn what to say to people who are being hurt and how to help them.
- Learn about local resources.
- Encourage parishioners to take a family pledge of non-violence.

What Can I Do To Help?

Recognize this is a problem in our community and prepare yourself to participate in solutions.

- If it "feels right," ask the person if they are OK at home, if they are afraid.
- Ask privately, with no one else around.
- Believe the person's answer.

- The best thing you can do is listen to the person and then be affirming in your response to them.
- Don't make any judgmental statements about the abusive partner.
- Don't tell the person what to do.
- Give messages of concern, support and validation.
- Tell the person: "You don't deserve it, you did not cause this to happen to you, there is help for you. Sexual and physical abuse are against the law."
- Find out contact information for your local advocacy service and tell the survivor to call, and that services are free, confidential and with no strings attached.
- Do not confront the abuser.
- Give the individual the gift of time: to think, to learn, to develop self-esteem.

Advocators

Permission to reproduce from the Inter-Faith Action Team of the Initiative for Violence-Free Families and Communities in Ramsey County.

Congregations advocate for justice and public policies/resources aimed at eliminating violence by:

- Advocating legislation
- Holding adult sessions on public policy issues
- Monitoring violence in the mass media
- Being active in an Inter-Religious Task Force
- Working on policy or systemic changes
- Mobilizing resources of larger church body
- Formulating public statements/witness

Our congregation advocates for justice and public policies/resources to eliminate violence from our families and communities.

- We have volunteers as legislative advocates for issues related to violence in families and communities (with Congregations Concerned for Children, the Archdiocese's Office of Social Justice, Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy, etc.).
- We provide three or more educational sessions for adults on the public policy related to violence in our families/community.

- We have one or more volunteers who are a part of efforts to monitor and limit the violence in the mass media.
- We have one or more active members on the Inter-Religious Task Force for Family Violence which is part of the Initiative for Violence Free Families and Communities in Ramsey County.
- We have members who are active in their professional work settings and/or volunteer work in efforts to prevent violence through policy or systemic changes.
- We have members active in our larger religious body to help it mobilize its resources to end violence.
- We have a social justice group that helps formulate public statements/witness against family and/or community violence.
- Other:

Collaborators

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Congregations outreach to help the community deal with violence by:

- Sponsoring support groups
- Partnering with social service agencies
- Mentoring
- Offering "parent break" groups for the neighborhood
- Giving financial contributions
- Volunteering in community organizations

Our congregation does outreach to help the community deal with violence.

- We sponsor a support group in a local congregation or community agency for persons involved with family violence.
- We are a partner congregation with a shelter, crisis nursery, child care center, parent resource center or other social service agency to provide support and assistance to families directly or through the agency.
- We sponsor one or more volunteers from our congregation to be Parent Befrienders or provide other forms of mentoring to persons/families in need of social support.

- We give financial contributions from our congregation to organizations which attempt to end violence.
- We have members who serve on the boards or volunteer at agencies in our community which seek to end violence.
- Other:

Preventors

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Congregations can be active in prevention of family and community violence by:

- Doing children's programs on violence alternatives
- Studying the scriptural basis for violence-free families
- Assembling a library of materials on prevention
- Training staff/volunteers in prevention
- Providing regular parenting classes
- Conducting annual special focus worship services
- Sponsoring events/groups addressing males' roles

Our congregation is active in prevention of family and community violence.

- We provide all children in our religious education program at least one age-appropriate educational session of family violence and skills in the use of alternatives to violence (e.g., problem solving, assertiveness, conflict resolution, identification of feelings, communication).
- We create annual opportunities for adults/children to study scriptural basis for violence-free families and communities.
- We maintain a library of good materials on violence prevention.
- We make sure staff and volunteers in education, youth and elder work receive some training and/or professional development education in prevention of violence.
- We design a worship service at least once per year with special focus on the causes, effects, prevention and intervention of violence with sermons making explicit reference.
- We sponsor an event or group to raise issues about male roles and the use/misuse of power, dominance, sexuality, etc.

- Other:

Responders

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Congregations respond to people in need of pastoral care regarding family violence by:

- Providing referral resources
- Training staff/volunteers about reporting
- Incorporating issues of family violence in pastoral care
- Promoting responsibilities /confidentiality
- Becoming befrienders
- Welcoming those in treatment

Our congregation responds well to people needing pastoral care regarding family violence.

- We have clergy that know how to contact professional resources for referral.
- We train our staff and volunteers about reporting abuse of children and vulnerable adults.
- We train our clergy to discuss family violence in helpful ways as part of pastoral care.
- We teach our staff how to handle boundaries and responsibilities related to confession, confidentiality, fifth-step work, etc., when abuse/neglect/violence is identified.
- We identify and connect lay persons who have first hand experience, skills and willingness to befriend people in crisis or transition, with others who need support.
- We welcome and make comfortable through concrete actions those who are seeking treatment for violence-related problems.
- Other:

Family Pledge of Nonviolence

Making peace must start within ourselves and in our family. Each of us, members of the family, commit ourselves as best we can, to become nonviolent and peaceable people;

To respect self and others To respect myself, to affirm others and to avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical attacks and self-destructive behavior.

To communicate better To share my feelings honestly, to look for safe ways to express my anger, and to work at solving problems peacefully.

To listen To listen carefully to one another, especially those who disagree with me, and to consider others' feelings and needs rather than insist on having my own way.

To forgive To apologize and make amends when I have hurt another, to forgive others, and to keep from holding grudges.

To respect nature To treat the environment and all living things, including our pets, with respect and care.

To play creatively To select entertainment toys that support our family's values, and to avoid entertainment that makes violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.

To be courageous To challenge violence in all its forms whenever I encounter it, whether at home, at school, at work or in the community, and to stand with others who are treated unfairly.

This is our pledge. These are our goals. We will check ourselves on what we have pledged once a month on for the next twelve months so that we can help each other become more peaceable people.

Taken from A Call to Peace; 52 Meditations on the Family Pledge of Nonviolence, Jim McGinnis, Liguori Publications, 1998.

Somebody has to talk for us kids 'cause we don't always know the words to tell our pain. So watch for our signals... Are we scared? Are we shy? Are we always acting bad? Do we hurt inside or out? Are our screams coming out in our dreams? Can we pay attention to what you are saying or are we always spacing out? Are we too over active or don't we play enough? Are we always hanging around you or do we push you away too much? Ask us questions. Let us know that we are not alone. If you think we are lying just to cover up then ask someone else who will know. We need your help. We need your understanding. Just always remember we are kids. We are doing the best we can. Cricket - 10 years old

Worship Service Resources

Sermon Themes

Breaking the Silence of Abuse As Christians, we have often been reluctant to acknowledge that abuse happens in our homes and our churches. These Scriptures illustrate that God's people have always struggled with sexual and domestic violence. These biblical stories assist us in naming violence in our own lives

Biblical Texts: Judges 11:29-40 2 Samuel 13:1-19 Psalm 55:1-15, 20-21 John 8:31-32

Suffering, Abandonment, Hope These texts demonstrate the range of emotions that survivors may feel. The journey towards healing involves intense pain and intense feelings, including feelings of

being abandoned by God. Caring church people can become a source of hope when they provide safe places for pain and a whole range of feelings to be expressed.

Biblical Texts: Psalm 22 Psalm 27 Isaiah 25:4-5 Romans 8:31-39

Church's Response to Survivors Sometimes our tendency is to blame the "victim" for the abuse they have suffered. These passages demonstrate that Jesus honors peoples' pain and suffering. Jesus' healing power is demonstrated by his compassionate non-judgmental response to suffering.

Biblical Texts: John 9:1-7 John 4:7-14 Luke 8:40-48 Luke 10:29-37

Church's Response to Perpetrators Responding to perpetrators in our midst may be one of the most difficult challenges we face. Our tendency might be to avoid or to "shun" offenders. These biblical texts emphasize naming offenses as sin, holding offenders accountable for their actions, and challenging them to repent, to turn away from evil.

Biblical Texts: Matthew 18:15-18 Galatians 6:1-2

Relationships Biblical Texts: Ephesians 5:22, 25 1 Corinthians 13

Anger and Empathy Biblical Texts: Ephesians 4:31-32 1 Timothy 3:2

Peace and Justice Biblical Text: Proverbs 19:19

Other Scripture Passages That May Be Useful Biblical Texts: Jeremiah 6:13-15; 31:15-17 Luke 18:1-8 2 Corinthians 4:8-18 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Compiled by the Faith Committee of COMVAC Community Violence Action Committee of Johnson County, KS, PVS, The Dept of Preventive Medicine at Kansas University Medical Center, Sam Bauer and Zita Surprenant, MD. Reprinted with permission.

Scripture to Consider when Addressing Violence

Psalm 55 "...suffering, anger, horror, tempest, storm, violence, strife, malice, abuse, destructive forces, threats, lies, insulting, distress, attacks, violates his covenant, war, soothing, drawn swords, cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you, bloodthirsty and deceitful men, trust."

Colossians 3:18,19 "Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them."

Ephesians 5:21-25 "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Malachai 2:16,17 "'I hate divorce,' says the Lord God of Israel, 'and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment,' says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith. You have wearied the Lord with your words. 'How have we wearied him?' you ask. By saying, 'All who do evil are good in the eyes of the Lord, and he is pleased with them' or 'Where is the God of justice?'"

Isaiah 58:4-6 "Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"

Romans 12:9,10 "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves."

Proverbs 13:24 "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."

Matthew 19:14,15 "Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there."

Psalms 118:5,6 "In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and he answered by setting me free. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

Matthew 15:18-20 "But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man 'unclean;' but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean.'"

Micah 6:8 "What does the Lord require of us? To do justice and walk humbly with our God."

The Holy Bible, New International Version, 1983. B.B. Kirkbride Bible Co., Inc. and Zondervan Corporation

Lectionary Cycles A, B, C: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence

A Note to Preachers The Sundays listed have a strand that may be related to the topic of Domestic Violence and provide comfort to those in the assembly who are victims in their own homes. Those Sundays noted with two asterisks** have texts which invite very sensitive interpretation so as not to be misunderstood by victims or perpetrators as offering any justification for abuse.

Cycle A

Sundays throughout the Year - 2001

First Sunday of Advent - Dec 2 - Is.2:1-5; Rom.13:11-14; Mt.24:37-44 Immaculate Conception**
- Dec 8 - Gn.3:9-15,20; Ep.1:3-6, 11-12; Lk.1:26-38 Second Sunday of Advent - Dec 9 - Is.11:1-10; Rom.15:4-9; Mt.3:1-12 Third Sunday of Advent - Dec 16 - Is.35:1-6; Jm.5:7-10; Mt.11:2-11
Feast of the Holy Family** - Dec 30 - Si.3:2-6, 12-14; Col.3:12-21; Mt.2:13-15, 19-23

2002

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord - Jan 13 - Is.42:1-4; Acts 10:34-38; Mt.3:13-17 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Feb 3 - Zeph.2:3, 3:12-13; 1 Cor.1:26-31; Mt.5:1-12 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Feb 17 - Si.15:15-20; 1Cor.2:6-10; Mt.5:17-37 Trinity Sunday - May 26 - Ex.34:4-6, 8-9; 2 Cor.13:11-13; Jn.3:16-18

Cycle B

1999

Second Sunday of Advent - Dec 5 - Is.40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt.3:8-14; Mk.1:1-8 Immaculate Conception**
- Dec 8 - Gn.3:9-15, 20; Ep.1:3-6, 11-12; Lk.1:26-38 Third Sunday of Advent - Dec 12 - Is.61:1-2, 10-11; 1 Thes.5:16-24; Jn.1:6-8, 19-28 Feast of the Holy Family - Dec 26 - Si.3:2-6, 12-14; Col.3:12-21; Lk.2:22-40

2000

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord - Jan 9 - Is.42:104, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Mk.1:7-11 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Jan 30 - Dt.18:15-20; 1 Cor.7:32-35; Mk.1:21-28 Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Feb 27 - Ho.2:16-17, 21-22; 2 Cor.3:1-6; Mk.2:18-22 Sixth Sunday of Easter - May 28 - Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48; 1Jn.4:7-10; Jn.15:9-17 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time** - Aug 27 - Jos.24:1-2, 15-18; Eph.5:21-32; Jn.6:60-69 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sept 10 - Is.35:4-7; Jm.2:1-5; Mk.7:31-37 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sept 17 - Is.50:5-9; Jm.2:14-18; Mk.8:27-35 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Oct 8 - Gn.2:18-24; Heb.2:9-11; Mk.10:2-16 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Oct 15 - Ws.7:7-11; Heb.4:12-13; Mk.10:17-30

Domestic Abuse in Jewish Life*

Rabbi Norman M. Cohen, Bet Shalom Congregation

Once a month, we as a congregation honor those couples in our community celebrating their wedding anniversaries. We do so with no small measure of awe and wonder, knowing that anniversaries are accomplishments, especially in today's society. The honor and respect is well deserved by married couples who face the many challenges of life together and have persevered to reach such occasions. Judaism has always stressed the importance of creating marital ties and preserving them in a healthy fashion in order to bring blessing to families and to the world.

Our opening chapters in the Bible tell us that it is not good for a person to be alone. But not to be alone takes much work and energy, adjustment, sensitivity and self-control. The prayer that we offer each month recognizes the challenges and difficulties, the fact that all marriages have their

struggles, their tough times, and their arguments. But what we must acknowledge here in the synagogue, in public places, from pulpits and podiums of public recognition is that there are limits on what is acceptable and what goes beyond the line, what can be called abuse, physical, verbal, and emotional. Some insist on making a distinction between physical and mental or emotional abuse. The difference may be in form but in substance even non-physical abuse can be just as powerful and painful.

We often think of the absence of peace as war and violent strife. We recall the Vietnam era and the images that came into our homes on TV screens during the news. How awful it was to see again and again in living color, the villages being bombed, the jungles and swamps, the machine gun bursts. But then we could turn off the TV and gain some respite and peace.

Peace and war are not only global matters. As Jews, we have the highly valued goal of bringing peace to the world. We are adjured to seek peace and pursue it. This does not mean only at international summits and negotiating tables of nations. It means in the small circles of life over which we have much more control.

For those living in homes with domestic abuse, there is no TV knob to switch it off, there is no peace, no escape from the nightmares that are so real. The huddling children in their beds covering their heads and ears with their pillows, who turn on their clock radios to drown out the shouting and arguing, not to hear the disrespectful accusations and screaming that blast through the night. There is no protection for the woman who is beaten, if not physically, then verbally with a barrage of undeserved insults. We may think that abuse works both ways, but in reality, over 97% of abuse is directed from the man toward the woman.

This weekend, at the urging of the National Council of Jewish Women, Rabbis throughout the Twin Cities are sharing thoughts on this subject with their congregations, in what we hope will only be the beginning of raising our community's awareness and consciousness on matters such as these. We have been blind for too long and that failure to recognize the issue has been in part responsible for making the issue that much more difficult to face, especially for the victims.

*This paper was originally delivered as a sermon on Domestic Abuse Awareness Shabbat, October 29, 1993 and is reproduced with Rabbi Cohen's permission.

The Jewish community has been especially non-attentive to this matter. Shalom Bayit, peace in the home, has always been regarded as a significant Jewish value. These are the values spoken of at a Jewish wedding, what is ideally symbolized by the huppah that hovers over the heads of the loving couple standing there that day.

Shalom Bayit is part of the ideal picture of the Jewish family, an essential aspect of the Jewish mystique. Indeed, in literature about mixed marriages, some non-Jewish women revealed that they married Jewish men because they believed, they had heard that Jewish men don't beat their wives.

This kind of myth raises expectations sometimes to the unattainable level. For there is no such thing as "Father Knows Best" and "Leave it to Beaver" when it comes to family systems.

The Eshet Chayil, the woman of valor described in Proverbs and read on Friday nights by husband to wife is not immune from the possibility of abuse. Unfortunately, the beautiful Jewish value of Shalom Bayit is not always evident and never automatically attainable.

Sometimes, in fact, it is used to cover up real problems in family relationships. For the sake of Shalom Bayit, things were not revealed, not discussed, not admitted. Shalom Bayit has been at times an excuse for not looking at real problems. We can be fairly certain that the rabbis never meant for Shalom Bayit to be used as a trap.

There are countless stories of Shalom Bayit in our tradition. One unusual explanation for the woman's obligation to kindle Shabbat candles in the home was so that there would be enough light for the husband to see what he was eating at the dinner table and therefore not get irritated and then take out his frustration on his wife and children. This kind of fanciful explanation is rather frightening when we consider the resultant assumptions, that the man has the right to express his irritation by abusing his family, and that Shalom Bayit is the woman's responsibility. All too often this is the syndrome that afflicts our approach to domestic abuse, that somehow the husband need not take responsibility for his actions.

One of the shocking aspects of abuse is that it happens with those closest to us. The Book of Psalms offers one possible explanation for this phenomenon. "It is not an enemy who reviles me, it is you my equal, my companion." Irritation is found, in other words, in the everyday activities of life, by those closest to us.

Abused wives often feel that they have failed, they have let their children down. They have failed as mothers and wives. They often are made to feel that they have deserved the abuse. The victim is blamed. They even seriously think that it would not have happened if only they had acted differently. Domestic abuse often functions like terrorism. When kidnapping occurs, the terrorist turns the tables. "If you don't do this or that, the hostages will be killed." This approach makes the victim feel responsible for the crime. The fact remains that it is abusive men who most often attack those who are most vulnerable to their assault, their wives and children.

There is an old wise adage that takes into account this insight of human behavior. It recommends that we should treat family like friends and friends like family.

Jewish tradition, while heavily promoting Shalom Bayit, recognized the danger and power of domestic violence. We find many Talmudic and Midrashic comments related to this subject. Husbands should go out of their way to honor and assist their wives. One rabbi suggested that if your wife is short, you should bend down to hear her whisper. Another rabbi stated that one deserves greater punishment for striking his wife than for striking another person, for he is enjoined specifically to honor his wife and thereby harshly violates that commandment.

In Jewish tradition a dual role can be found in relationship to women. There is ambivalence about women. There is on the one hand a fear of women's power and seductive ability. On the other, a high praise and respect.

Today we need to reinforce those positive aspects in our tradition for the role of women in religious life. We need to emphasize the concept of Shekhina, a name of God which invokes the Deity's feminine qualities of compassion and forgiveness, caring and concern. We must remind ourselves that the woman most in need of liberation is the woman in every man.

We can study the Bible with certain Rabbinic insights in mind. When, in the spring, we read the Torah portion Tazria, we are puzzled by the concept that women were deemed defiled for twice as long after the birth of a girl than of a boy. The Rabbis' explanation was that women are more God-like, so that when a girl baby is born, the mother has lost twice as much of the Divine presence. Thus the purification process following childbirth takes twice as long. The rabbis extended that principle to explain that as the reason why men traditionally must do more mitzvot than women. Men simply have further to go to achieve the Divine presence.

On the whole, the rabbinic literature deals fairly with domestic violence. While there are some very harsh anti-woman judgements, we find many more instances of support of the woman's position in wife abuse cases. Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg recommended ex-communication of the abusive husband when cases came before him. The Shulchan Aruch, the medieval Jewish code of law, also rules sensitively in this manner, noting that wife beating was not to be tolerated, and providing a fair manner in which to adjudicate the charges. If it is found that a man cannot do anything about his abusive behavior, he is to divorce his wife as a release for her from the pain. The Sulchan Arukh states unequivocally that if a husband is habitually cruel to his wife, this is grounds for divorce. According to one commentary, a man who beats his wife, commits a sin, as though he has beaten his neighbor, and if he persists in this conduct, the court may castigate him and place him under oath to discontinue this conduct. If he refuses to obey the order of the court, they will compel him to divorce his wife at once because it is not customary or proper for Jews to beat their wives.

Divorce has always been permitted in Judaism, though never encouraged, only to be used as a last resort with the realistic recognition that life should not be lived in misery. In fact, one of the most justifiable reasons for divorce was as a way out for a woman from an abusive marriage.

In general, husbands were obligated to respect their wives, and wives in turn, were expected to be good companions. It cannot be judged as to whether or not complaints of abuse came frequently before the rabbinical courts. They were not unheard of, however. Did the courts actually punish the offenders? Were the rabbis deciding the cases always so lenient that they accepted the women's testimonies? Did the women even come forward with their complaints, except under the worst circumstances? Those questions for now are unanswered.

What remains significant is that spouse abuse has been a known phenomenon in the Jewish community in centuries gone by, and is not new to the modern era, or America after the women's movement. Sanctions do exist against the mistreatment of wives. Why then, are there so many rabbis who are unaware of this? Why are so many people in the Jewish community afraid to speak out?

In our society the family is viewed as a sacred institution with intrafamilial love and support believed to be the norm. The stigma attached to the admission of violence in families is great. The lack of admission and discussion of the problem by both batterers and their victims allows the Jewish

community in particular to reinforce the myth that the problem does not exist. This vicious cycle reinforces the isolation and the ostracism of the violent families.

The cycle needs to be broken. The stigma and sense of isolation felt by the abusers and their victims must stop. In accepting the reality that the problem exists, the Jewish community can meet it head on. Our synagogue and community professionals must be educated about the existence of Jewish family violence. We must learn to identify the characteristics of abuse from the perspectives of the abused and the abuser in order to respond with appropriate guidance and reference. Finally, we must accept responsibility to be the first line of support for victims of abuse. On our Oneg tables this evening are resource materials for all to take home.

Our tradition teaches us that we are responsible for one another. Therefore we should not turn our backs on abusers and abused, some of which may live next door or even in your own home.

It is a shanda to engage in abuse. It is not a shanda to come forward and seek help. That is the only way to break the cycle. It has been a shanda to admit victimization. Family and friends often unwittingly perpetuate the assumption that a victim must have done something wrong. While it truly is a shanda to behave abusively, it is not shameful to seek help, abused or abuser.

Domestic abuse is one of the most flagrant manifestations of the Yetzer Hara, the evil inclination that lurks within us all, that urges us to do such things. All of us at times feel the frustration of relationships, the pressures of homes and family, the stress of irritating behavior in those closest to us. It is natural to feel like lashing out. In Judaism there is an important distinction made between feeling something and acting on it. We are blessed with a Yetzer Hatov, a good inclination as well. Unfortunately, too many do not learn how to restrain the Yetzer Hara, and we use it as an excuse for our behavior rather than as an explanation for our tendencies.

There are effective, caring alternatives to violence. Learn from God, our tradition invites us, who suffers and overlooks adversaries, though having the power to do otherwise. Perhaps we need to inscribe in our consciousness in the most prominent way possible the Talmudic teaching, "at all times let a person be keen-witted in the fear of God, giving a gentle answer, withholding anger, extending peace to brethren and relatives and to all people, so that he may be beloved above and popular below and acceptable to his fellow creatures."

All of us need a reminder that honoring one another is an ongoing procedure for mothers, fathers, children and parents.

Shalom Bayit should still be our aim. Peace in the home - combining honesty with equality for men and women. That peace is a shared responsibility. Certainly the time has come for the Jewish community itself to take some responsibility in resolving the pain.

"The Darkness of Violence, the Light of God's Healing Presence"

Kim Goodman, UH Chaplain

Call to Come Together: We gather together, aware of the darkness around us. The darkness is violence, and the fear, distrust and betrayal that comes from violence. The darkness may be part of our home, or of our neighbor's home. The darkness is part of our society, in media images, children's games, and in pornography. The darkness is part of our world, when nation mistrusts nation. We gather together, aware of the darkness around us. We remember the people, who walked in darkness.

Prayer of Confession: O God of truth, we recognize that violence is part of our life, and we name this violence as sin. We confess that for a long time we have called this violence by names we could tolerate. We have called physical abuse, discipline. We have called violence - a family fight. We have called isolation, a need for privacy. O God of Light, we acknowledge that family violence has been a secret among us for a long time. We have helped to keep this secret. We confess that we shut our eyes to the bruises. We have shut our ears to the cries of fear and pain. We name this silence and apathy as sin. O God of Light and Peace, there is darkness in our homes, and in our world. We claim our responsibility for allowing this darkness to continue. We seek your peace and healing for our homes and for the world.

Assurance of Pardon: Within us and among us, God's forgiveness is born whenever we acknowledge our sin and truly repent, turn around. Let us begin and continue the long process of change within our community, the world, and ourselves so that the darkness of violence is no longer tolerated.

Prayer of Dedication: (in unison) We offer ourselves to you, O God our Creator, and to your call for peace and justice. We offer our hands. Use healing touch to comfort sisters and children who are afraid. We offer our eyes and ears. May we see and hear the signs and stories of violence, so that children and sisters have someone with them in their pain and confusion. We offer our hearts and our tears as their hurt and sorrow echo within us. We offer our own stories of violence. May we be healed as we embrace each other. We offer our anger. Make it a passion for justice. We offer all our skills. Use our gifts to end violence. We offer our faith, our hope, and our love. May our encounters with violence bring us closer to you and each other.

The Blessing: May the light of God shine in our darkness. May the peace of God dwell in our homes. May the justice of God rule in our communities. May the healing of God mend our brokenness. May the blessing of God, our Creator, Redeemer and sustainer dwell within us and among us, now and forever. Amen.

"Making the Peace Sunday"

4th Sunday after Christmas

Prelude

Welcoming Words

Call to Worship Leader: We gather in the presence of God, through whom all children and families on earth receive their life and their name. Cong: We come, in the prayer that the peace of Christ might dwell in our family relationships, and in all relationships. Leader: We come, in the prayer

that the peace of God might permeate the life of the human family. Cong: May the love of Christ fill all our hearts, our lives and our world, to the glory of God. Amen.

This section is a possibility: (Prayer of Confession) Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Cong: Amen. Pastor: Most merciful God Cong: You show us your care in so much of life around us. You invite us into your great life of love. But often we refuse your invitation, and turn away from your call. Instead of asking you for help when we need it, we rely on our own stubborn wills. Instead of knocking at the doors of your people, we close our hearts and hide from one another. Instead of seeking you in the faces of our sisters and brothers, we pretend not to see the need and want around us. Deliver us, great God. Show us the new life and give us the courage to live in peace and grace. Amen.

Opening Hymn: Spirit of God Descend On Us We Pray

A Litany for Peace Pastor: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Cong: Where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury pardon. Pastor: Where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith. Cong: Where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Pastor: Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. Cong: For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Special Music "Hungering" "The Prayer of St. Francis" "Chariots Comin"

Scriptures Old Testament, Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 23 Leader: The Lord is my constant companion, there is no need that He cannot fulfill. Cong: Whether His course for me points to the mountain tops of glorious ecstasy or to the valleys of human suffering, He is by my side. Leader: He is ever present with me. Cong: He is close beside me when I tread the dark streets of danger. Leader: And even when I flirt with death itself, He will not leave me. Cong: When pain is severe, He is near to comfort. Leader: When the burden is heavy, He is there to lean upon. Cong: When depression darkens my soul, He touches me with eternal joy. Leader: When I feel empty and alone, He fills the aching vacuum with His power. Cong: My security is in His promise to be near me always. Leader: And in the knowledge, All: THAT HE WILL NEVER LET ME GO.

New Testament, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Gospel Response; (please rise) Sing: Spirit of the Living God Gospel John 1:29-42 Gospel Response: Sing: Spirit of the Living God (Please be seated) Hymn of the Day: Blest Are They - (Gia hymnal) or No Greater Love - (Gia hymnal) or Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart Creed Offeratory Offering Offeratory Response Heart to Heart Prayers of the Church Prayers for Healing Let us pray for the whole people of God ... Into your hands O Lord ... Lord's Prayer Benediction Closing Hymn: Your Kingdom Come or Take My Life that I May Be

A Litany of Women for the Church

Dear God, creator of women in your own image, born of a woman in the midst of a world half women, carried by women to mission fields around the globe, made known by women to all the

children of the earth, give to the women of our time the strength to persevere, the courage to speak out, the faith to believe in you beyond all systems and institutions so that your face on earth may be seen in all its beauty, so that men and women become whole, so that the church may be converted to your will in everything and in all ways.

We call on the holy women who went before us, channels of Your Word in testaments old and new, to intercede for us so that we might be given the grace to become what they have been for the honor and glory of God.

Saint Esther, who pleaded against power for the liberation of the people, - Pray for us.

Saint Judith, who routed the plans of men and saved the community,

Saint Deborah, laywoman and judge, who led the people of God,

Saint Elizabeth of Judea, who recognized the value of another woman,

Saint Mary Magdalene, minister of Jesus, first evangelist of the Christ,

Saint Scholastica, who taught her brother Benedict to honor the spirit above the system,

Saint Hildegard, who suffered interdict for the doing of right,

Saint Joan of Arc, who put no law above the law of God,

Saint Clare of Assisi, who confronted the pope with the image of woman as equal,

Saint Julian of Norwich, who proclaimed for all of us the motherhood of God,

Saint Therese of Lisieux, who knew the call to priesthood in herself,

Saint Catherine of Siena, to whom the pope listened,

Saint Teresa of Avila, who brought women's gifts to the reform of the church,

Saint Edith Stein, who brought fearlessness to faith,

Saint Elizabeth Seton, who broke down boundaries between lay women and religious by wedding motherhood and religious life,

Saint Dorothy Day, who led the church to a new sense of justice,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who heard the call of God and answered,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who drew strength from the woman Elizabeth,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who underwent hardship bearing Christ,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who ministered at Cana,

Mary, mother of Jesus, inspirited at Pentecost,

Mary, mother of Jesus, who turned the Spirit of God into the body and blood of Christ, pray for us. Amen.

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Living Parable

VOICE 1: I am in my 30's and so is my husband. I have a high school diploma and am presently attending a local college trying to obtain the additional education I need. My husband is a college graduate and a professional in his field. We are both attractive, and for the most part, respected and well liked. We have four children and live in a middle-class home with all the comfort we could possibly even want. I have everything except a life without fear.

VOICE 2: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but find no rest.

VOICE 1: I am afraid to leave my husband because I think I'll loose my kids. I've taken medication that was prescribed to "calm my nerves" and my husband says he'll prove to the courts that I'm crazy.

VOICE 2: But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads.

VOICE 1: After I left my boyfriend, he broke into my apartment and raped me. When I called the police hours later, they said they couldn't help me.

VOICE 2: "Commit your cause to God; let God deliver - let God rescue the one in whom God delights!"

VOICE 1: When I was a child, my mother hit me with an electrical cord, her hand, whatever she could find. When I got to be about 10, she began to make me go places with her "friends." These grown men sexually abused me.

VOICE 2: Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast. On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

VOICE 1: My husband didn't let me go out much. I had just the money and gas to go to the grocery store. One day, with the groceries, my son, \$0.65, and an eighth of a tank of gas. I had no idea where I'd go.

VOICE 2: Many bulls encircle me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me; they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

VOICE 1: I would never call the police, but my neighbors did call one time. I'm trying to convince the DA's office not to press charges. I don't want people to know I get beat up by my wife.

VOICE 2: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax. It is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

VOICE 1: Julia thought she had escaped to a women's shelter. Just because she had used drugs with a man didn't mean she would let him chain her to a bed. She ran fast and hard when she could. Still, what could it hurt to see him once, in the daytime, in a public place? After all, he was the father of her unborn child. So she met him at Crown Center. He shot her.

VOICE 2: O God, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid!

Compiled by the Faith Committee of COMVAC Community Violence Action Committee of Johnson County, KS, PVS, The Dept of Preventive Medicine at Kansas University Medical Center, Sam Bauer and Zita Surprenant, MD. Reprinted with permission.

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

Oh divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

Prayers for Worship

Prayers of Confessions

O God, You know our hearts, our minds, our feelings, and our thoughts. You know the heavy stones that weigh down our spirits. We cry for all that cannot be saved. Comfort us as we mourn the loss of women's lives to violence. Strengthen us as we break the silence, confront evil, and cry out for justice. Help us see the chains that bind us and the chains that we place around others. Set us free to walk in the fullness of life that is promised to all people. Let us live into that promise with every moment of our lives. Amen.

O merciful one, we confess that by our silence and inaction we have passed by on the other side, leaving a sister suffering by the side of the road. We confess that in our fear, we have hesitated and turned away from life, adding to the pain and suffering. Bring us to repentance.

O Holy one, Open our eyes to see the violence in our lives, within us and among us. Open our mouths to name what we see and to acknowledge our own pain. Open our hearts to let in the pain and suffering of family members, friends, child victims, adult survivors, and our neighbors. Open our mouths to call to account those who have harmed others. Be merciful and bring us back to life in Christ. Amen.

God of Love and Justice

God of love and justice, We long for peace within and peace without. We long for harmony in our families, For serenity in the midst of struggle. We long for the day when our homes Will be a dwelling place for your love. Yet we confess that we are often anxious; We do not trust each other, And we harbor violence. We are not willing to take the risks And make the sacrifices that love requires. Look upon us with kindness and grace. Rule in our homes and in the entire world; Show us how to walk in your paths, Through the mercy of our Savior. Amen.

Compiled by the Faith Committee of COMVAC Community Violence Action Committee of Johnson County, KS, PVS, The Dept of Preventive Medicine at Kansas University Medical Center, Sam Bauer and Zita Surprenant, MD. Reprinted with permission.

Assurance of Pardon

Sisters and brothers, hear the good news! There is no sin so large, no shortcoming so great that it can separate us from the love of God. For all who truly desire new life, God offers forgiveness and new opportunities for healing and wholeness in our lives. Accept God's grace and live!

Prayer of Dedication

We offer ourselves to you, O God our Creator. We offer our hands. Use healing touch to comfort sisters, brothers, and children who are afraid. We offer our eyes and ears. May we see and hear the signs and stories of violence So that all may have someone with them in their pain and confusion. We offer our hearts and our tears as their hurt and sorrow echo within us. We offer our own stories of violence. May we be healed as we embrace each other. We offer our anger. Make it a passion for justice. We offer all our skills. Use our gifts to end violence. We offer our faith, our hope, our love. May our encounters with violence bring us closer to you and to each other. All this we ask through Jesus Christ who knows the pain of violence. Amen.

God of Peace and Comfort

God of peace and comfort, We pray for those who are not safe in their own homes, Or with people they care about, because of domestic violence. Give strength and courage to those who are abused and battered. Grant repentance to those who abuse the ones they love. Help us all to nurture one another in the spirit of love and peace Proclaimed by Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Responsive Prayer for Healing

God of grace, you nurture us with a love deeper than any we know, And your will for us is always healing and salvation. We praise and thank you, O God. God of love, you enter into our lives, our pain, and our brokenness, And you stretch our your healing hands to us wherever we are. We praise and thank you, O God. God of strength, you fill us with your presence and send us forth With love and healing to all whom we meet. We praise and thank you, O God. God of love, we ask you to hear the prayers of your people. Hear us, O God of life. We pray for the world, that your creation may be understood and valued. Hear us, O God of life. Touch with your healing power the minds and hearts of all who Suffer from sickness, injury, or disability, and make them whole again. Hear us, O God of life. Touch with your healing power the minds and hears of all who are burdened By anguish, despair, or isolation, and set them free to in love. Hear us, O God of life. Break the bonds of those who are imprisoned by dear, compulsion, Secrecy, and silence. Come with your healing power, O God. Fill with peace those who grieve over separation and loss. Come with your healing power, O God. Restore to wholeness all those who have been broken in life or in spirit by Violence within their families; restore to wholeness all those who have been Broken in life or in spirit by violence within our Family of Nations; restore to Them the power of your love; and give to them the strength of your presence. Come, O God, and restore us to wholeness and love. Let us now name before God and this community gathered those, including ourselves, for whom we seek healing. (The congregation may call out names.) We lift up before you this day all those who have died of violence. (The congregation may call out names of those how have died.) That they may have rest In that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal. O God, in you all is turned to light, and brokenness is healed. Look with compassion on us and on those for whom We pray, that we may be re-created In wholeness, in love, and in compassion for one another. Amen.

Bulletin Articles

Domestic violence: because there is help, there is hope. Call Alexandra House at 763-780-2330.

As a victim/survivor, you have choices: You are not responsible for the violence against you. You do not deserve to be abused. You can take legal action to protect yourself and your family. You have choices: stay in the relationship, leave the relationship, call the Alexandra House.

As a batterer, you have choices: You can be angry, but it's not OK to strike out. You don't have to be violent when you are angry. You can learn other ways to deal with your anger, frustration and stress. You have choices: leave the situation, talk to a friend, make a phone call: 24-hour crisis line: 612-347-3161 Central Center for family resources: 763-783-4991

Every man, woman and child has a right to experience life in an environment of safety and well being.

It's not a private matter! Battering is a crime.

Are you in a battering relationship? You may be if you: Have ever been threatened, hit, kicked, shoved, or had things thrown at you by your partner; Are frightened by your partner's temper; Need your partner's permission before buying food or clothing, writing checks or making other daily

decisions; Often go along with plans you don't like because you are afraid of your partner's anger; Are often accused by your partner of things you have never done; Make choices about activities and friends according to how your partner will react; and/or Feel you have no choice about what you wear, what you say, or who you spend time with or where you go.

Abuse in the home . . . Is a common and serious problem, one which almost always gets worse unless there is some type of intervention. Every 15 seconds a woman is assaulted and beaten. Every day four women are murdered by husbands or boyfriends. 61% of all rapes are of females under 11 years of age. Prison terms for killing husbands are twice as long as for killing wives. 25% of all crime is wife assault. 70% of men who batter their partners sexually or physically, also abuse their children.

Family violence survivors and abusers fit no specific category or stereotype. The abuse affects the lives of families from all walks of life: rich or poor, all races and religions. It is happening to members of our community.

Did you know that: Domestic violence occurs in families of all races, religions, economic and social backgrounds. An estimated 60% of families experience violence in their homes. Domestic violence is the single major cause of injury to women in this country. Three to four million American women are battered every year. Battering often starts or becomes worse during pregnancy. Once violence begins, it tends to increase over time and becomes more severe. Two-thirds of men who are violent toward their partners are violent toward their children.

Children witnessing domestic violence are at a higher risk for becoming the next generation of victims and abusers, experimentation with drugs and alcohol, running away as teenagers and exhibiting school performance problems.

Young children who see one adult abuse another adult may exhibit the following signs: Extreme passivity Poor concentration skills Consistently tired or sleepy Easily distracted Sensitive to loud sounds Always striving for perfection

You may be in life threatening immediate danger if your partner: Threatens or fantasizes about suicide or homicide Has access to weapons Is being treated for depression Abuses drugs or alcohol Harms family pets Says he or she can't live without you Stalks or closely watches your whereabouts If your partner is exhibiting any combination of the above behaviors, talk to someone.

Numbers you can call: 763-780-2330 1-800-799-SAFE

Domestic violence is always wrong! This is not a women's issue. This is not a feminist issue. This is an individual human rights issue.

Definition of domestic violence. Violence is words and actions that hurt people. Violence is the abusive or unjust exercise of power, intimidation, harassment and/or the threatened or actual use of force which results in or has a high likelihood of causing hurt, fear, injury, suffering or death.

Songs

Taken from the "Gather Hymnal" (Published by GIA)

Title and Hymn Number

And I will Raise You Up - 337 Be Not Afraid - 263 Blest Are They - 284 Come! Live in the Light - 301 Come to the Water - 202 Gather Us In - 311 Gospel Canticle (Mary's Magnificat) - 14 Healer of Our Every Ill - 357 How can I Keep from Singing - 260 Morning Has Broken - 317 Now the Green Blade Rises - 175 On Eagle's Wings - 261 Peace Before Us - 305 Peace is Flowing Like a River - 306 Psalm 27 The Lord is Our Light - 23 Psalm 34 The Cry of the Poor - 26 Psalm 91 Be With Me - 42 Psalm 98 All the Ends of the Earth - 44 Psalm 103 The Lord is Kind and Merciful - 46 Shepherd Me, O God (or any setting of Ps. 23) - 20 We Will Rise Again - 350 Where Charity & Love Prevail - 267

Taken from the "Worship III Hymnal" (Published by GIA)

Let My People Go - 507 All Creatures of Our God & King - 520 For the Beauty of the Earth - 557 Now Thank We All Our God - 560 Lord of All Hopefulness - 568 O God, Our Help in Ages Past - 579 Amazing Grace - 583 How Firm a Foundation - 585 What Wondrous Love Is This - 600 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say - 607

Education Resources

FROM Violence TO Wholeness: a ten-part program in the spirituality and practice of active nonviolence

From Violence To Wholeness is a ten-part study and action program developed by Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center that explores active nonviolence as a creative, powerful and effective process for addressing and resolving the conflicts in our lives and in the life of the world. Employing small group discussions, role plays, presentations and readings, From Violence To Wholeness offers participants the vision of a constructive alternative to the violence in our world today and practical tools for translating this vision into reality.

Ken Butigan is an instructor at the Franciscan School of Theology and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California and is on the staff of Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center. He has been an organizer and participant in a series of nonviolent social movements.

Patricia Bruno, O.P. is on the board of Parable: A National Conference for Dominican Life and Mission.

Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center Las Vegas Office 1420 W. Bartlett Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89106 (702)648-2281 e-mail: paceebene@compuserve.com

Family Violence: What the Church Community Can Do Women Helping Women

Rationale: Faith communities can help families in violent circumstances by providing pastoral care and referral, education and advocacy. Together, members can collaborate to build resources for protection and response.

Pointers: Start small and go slowly Initial work: education and providing opportunity for personal work Involve the men Obtain support and involvement from existing programs Have resources available at the beginning

Action Items: Form and educate an action team Provide education for clergy and parish ministry representatives to become educated and plan (e.g. the Deacons' group, Women's Ministry, Missions group, Stephens ministers and Parish Nursing) Communicate actions parishioners can take to impact family and community violence Make your parish a safe place for survivors of family violence Adopt a zero tolerance for violence action plan Train clergy and others so they can appropriately intervene Become a "Peace Site" Educate the parish community Initiate a media campaign Display non-violent/peaceful posters Provide informational family violence brochures and posters that educate and give resources Sponsor a lecture series Partner with local advocacy services Regularly utilize the church bulletin Place brochure racks in church rest rooms Prevention activities Positive parenting classes and information Launch a family pledge of nonviolence campaign

Resources

Ramsey County Inter-Faith Action Team: The Religious Community's Response to Family Violence. Peg Wangenstein, St. Paul Council of Churches. 651-646-8805, extension 20

"You're the One Who Can Make The Peace," Minnesota Peace Project, Minnesota Children's Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention, www.makethepeace.org. For materials, call Nancy Riestenberg, 651-582-8433.

"Peace Site," World Citizen, Inc., Nancy Baumgartner, Executive Director, 651-695-2587

Harriet Tubman Domestic Violence Services, Minneapolis, MN, 612-825-0000

Men's Line, 612-379-6367

Teaching video "Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence", from Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 2400 N. 45th Street, Suite 10, Seattle, WA 98103, 206-634-1903. \$139 to purchase and \$50 to rent.

Domestic Violence Awareness Resources, from Initiative for Violence-Free Families and Communities in Ramsey County.

The following resources are available and may be viewed or borrowed through the Inter-Faith Family Violence Prevention Resource Center. Use them to help build awareness, understanding and concern in your congregation about the problem of domestic violence.

VIDEOS

"Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence" This documentary video presents the stories of six formerly battered women from diverse religious traditions. It includes introductory information, a discussion of theological issues, interviews with clergy and survivors and ideas about how religious institutions can work to end domestic violence. Part I is 37 minutes. Part II is 22 minutes. Produced by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. Discussion guide available.

"Just to Have a Peaceful Life" This 10-minute documentary video presents the story of Pat, an older battered woman whose hope is "just to have a peaceful life." It addresses the particular difficulties encountered by older women in abusive situations. Produced by Terra Nova Films.

"From Our Hearts" A video borne out of the stories of survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Actors, using survivors' words, talk about what effects abuse had on the survivors' spiritual lives and the ways in which spirituality has helped them overcome abuse. 33 minutes. Produced by The Spirituality and Sexual Abuse Program at United Ministries. Resource and discussion guide available.

"Hear Their Cries: Religious Responses to Child Abuse" This 48-minute video is a documentary on the role of clergy, lay leaders, and religious educators in preventing child abuse. A study guide and audience brochure, "What you need to know if a child is being abused or neglected," are included. Produced by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.

"Love Shouldn't Hurt: A Call for Action Against Domestic Violence" This 22-minute video, produced by the U.S. Catholic Bishops, addresses some of the myths of domestic violence, explains how scripture is misinterpreted and offers suggestions for church leaders when victims of abuse turn to the church for help. (1994)

"Profile of an Assailant" This video presents an interview with an assailant, discussing his arrest, conviction and change. It also contains six formerly battered women discussing the characteristics of an assailant. 43 minutes. Produced by the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project.

"Love - All That and More" An exciting new video series and 6-session curriculum (50 minutes each) with lesson plans, including, background materials on healthy and abusive relationships; suggestions for the facilitator; discussion questions; and dynamic, interactive follow-up activities. Produced by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.

TO BORROW A VIDEO: Videos can be borrowed at the Inter-Faith Family Violence Prevention Resource Center, St. Paul Area Council of Churches, 1671 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. Phone: 651-646-8805, ext. 18. Resource Center hours are Tuesdays, 1 - 4:00 p.m., and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Videos can be borrowed for 2 weeks. Cost is \$7.50 if mailed to you; \$4.00 if you pick up.

(Note: These videos may trigger a memory or a strong emotional response. Preview them. Consider having a counselor available during a group showing.)

BOOKS

Keeping the Faith: Questions and Answers for the Abused Woman By Reverend Marie M. Fortune
A concise response to common religious questions raised by victims of domestic violence. Written for victim/survivors, but also a valuable resource for clergy.

Abuse and Religion: When Praying Isn't Enough By Anne L. Horton and Judith A. Williamson
In this unique new handbook, family violence experts, religious leaders and members of abusive families offer practical, "how to" insights on every significant aspect of the needs of this large and generally unacknowledged population.

Battered Women: From a Theology of Suffering to an Ethic of Empowerment By Reverend Joy M.K. Bussert
In this challenging book, Rev. Bussert walks the delicate line of finding a common language and a common meeting ground between the two worlds of the churches and the shelters for battered women. (1986)

Battered Into Submission: The Tragedy of Wife Abuse in the Christian Home By James and Phyllis Alsdurf
Citing their findings from extensive research and summarizing eight years of interviews with victims, abusers and pastors, James and Phyllis Alsdurf provide a comprehensive treatment of this troubled topic. They show the psychological, spiritual, and personal impact of wife abuse, and call on the church to re-examine its role in addressing this issue. (1989)

CURRICULA AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

Victims: A Manual for Clergy and Congregations By Reverends David and Anne Delaplane
Curriculum suggestions: child abuse - domestic violence - elder abuse - rape, robbery, assault - violent death.

The following curricula were produced by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. Each addresses sexual abuse prevention and is intended for use in a Sunday school format, but could also be used in summer Bible school or an after school program.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, Ages 5-8 By Rev. Kathryn Goering Reid (1994), 10 one-hour sessions.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, Ages 9-12 By Rev. Kathryn Goering Reid and Rev. Marie M. Fortune (1989), 13 one-hour sessions.

Sexual Abuse Prevention: A Study for Teenagers By Rev. Marie M. Fortune (1984), 5 one-and-one-half-hour sessions.

TO BORROW A BOOK, CURRICULA OR REFERENCE MATERIALS:

Contact or visit the Inter-Faith Family Violence Prevention Resource Center, St. Paul Area Council of Churches, 1671 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. Phone: 651-646-8805, ext. 18. Resource Center hours are Tuesdays, 1 - 4:00 p.m., and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Book IV

Creating a Safe Place: Encourage to Change Curriculum for Laity

Table 4. Curriculum Outline: Part 1

Part	Subject	Time
1-A	Opening comments Honor survivors in attendance Definitions Incidence of battering Violence in scripture	5" to 10"
1-B	Dynamics Power and control Why people stay	20" to 30"
1-C	Myths	10"
1-D	Questions & answers, discussion	10"

Table 5. Curriculum Outline: Part II

Part	Subject	Time
2-A	Opening comments Questions or thoughts from last segment	10"
2-B	How individuals can help Victim/survivors Abusers Teens and children	20" to 30"
2-C	How Faith Communities can help	10" to 15"
2-D	Closure: The Good Samaritan	5"

Some basic domestic violence knowledge is necessary in order to facilitate these discussions. Consider inviting a local domestic violence advocacy agency educator to partner with you.

Please refer to the following segments in the curriculum for clergy and lay leaders: Educator qualities Key issues and points

Part I

Part 1-A: Opening Comments

Desired Time: 5 to 10 minutes

Purpose: Provide support for survivors in the audience Define violence Make a note of examples of violence in scripture

Strategies: Discussion

Content Opening comments Introduce speaker(s) and welcome attendees. Honor survivors. Acknowledge survivors and/or participants who are touched in a personal way by violence in the home. Make a sincere, supportive statement such as:

"Whenever a group of any size gathers, survivors or those who have been touched by family violence are present. I want you to know that I am sorry this has happened or is happening to you or someone you care about. No one deserves to be intentionally hurt; you did not cause it."

Emphasize the faith community member's role in helping people in abusive relationships. Refer to "Statistics" sheet on page 167 and state:

"People may not realize it, but one in four women and one in seven men statistically have a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse in their lifetime."

Define violence:

"One way of defining violence is to say it is words and actions that hurt others. Another is to say that violence may be defined in various ways. Not everyone considers coercion and intimidation to be violent. A more comprehensive version is one from the Health Care Coalition on Violence. Note that this definition emphasizes threatened or actual use of force, and can be behavior that results in emotional damage or coerced behavior as well as injury."

Ask if anyone can think of scriptural examples of violence.

The speaker should prepare for this segment by reading and reflecting on one or more of the following, and be prepared to discuss these examples.

Briefly discuss. Examples include: Genesis 4: Cain & Abel Genesis 37: Joseph Luke 22 & 23: Jesus

Part 1-B: Elements and Dynamics of Domestic Abuse

Desired Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Purpose: Provide a definition of domestic violence Provide basic knowledge about the dynamics of family violence Provide a forum of understanding why people stay, the dangers of leaving

Strategies: Group discussion

Materials: Power and control wheels "Why people stay" exercise

Tips: Story telling is very helpful and makes the content come alive.

Optimize the discussion/brainstorming component to encourage involvement

Content State: "Domestic abuse is power and control of one person over another and the use of violence or threat of violence to control another. It results in low self-esteem and belief that the survivor is the reason for the abuse."

Another definition to consider: Battering is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. The batterer uses acts of violence and a series of behaviors, including intimidation, threats, psychological abuse, and isolation to coerce and control the other person. The violence may not happen often, but it remains as a hidden (and constant) terrorizing fact. (Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1990)

Power and control wheel with spiritual abuse wedge Refer participants to handout and explain the wheel. State: "The power and control wheel was developed in Duluth, Minnesota, and is used all over the world to help people understand the dynamics that go into abusive relationships. The center of the wheel symbolizes the center driving force of the problem: power and control. The various elements of emotional abuse are held together by sexual and physical violence. While all abused persons are emotionally abused, not everyone is physically or sexually abused."

Involve participants in the discussion by asking with each component:

Ask participants: "What would be an example of... (Spiritual abuse?, Emotional abuse?, etc.)"
Follow up their input with examples. Following are examples of each component:

Spiritual abuse: Preventing the partner from going to church or practicing a religious faith Quoting scripture to manipulate the partner Using a position of authority in the church to keep the partner quiet Saying God does not care for her or him Telling the children that mom or dad's religion is phony or fake Saying he or she would stop the violence if she/he would be more submissive Bringing up past sins Saying the partner is not a good Christian/Jew/Muslim Controlling the amount of money donated to the faith community

Emotional abuse: "You are stupid, ugly, fat, a bad mother, a horrible housekeeper." "You're lucky to have me, no one else would have you." "I didn't ask for pork I asked for beef. You bitch, you can't do anything right." Frequent cursing of partner, use of crude, demeaning words

Isolation: Moving out into the country "I don't like your mother, she's an idiot, let's just you and I be together." "That friend of yours is a whore, I don't want you to see her." "I just want to spend as much time with just you, I love you so much."

Minimizing, denying, blaming: "If you weren't such a lousy mother the kids wouldn't be such idiots." "What is your problem? I didn't hit you that hard. Don't make a big deal out of it." "I didn't push you, you fell into that cupboard, as usual you're making things up." "You are a real nut case."

Using children: "You leave and you'll never see the kids again." "No court in the land would give you the children, you're such a bad mother." Telling the children to hit, spit on or ignore the survivor Not allowing the children to talk to or be near the survivor

Using "privilege": Being in charge, making all the decisions Refer to the equality wheel to describe opposite behaviors

Economic abuse: Giving an unrealistically small allowance for household needs One woman made \$100,000 a year, her husband was a house husband who had total control over the money. When she left she had nothing.

Coercion, threats AND using intimidation: Killing family pets. "One batterer called his wife in the hospital saying he wanted her home. She stayed one more day and when she got home, her dog was gone. Her husband had had it put to death." Smashes fists into walls, breaking windows/doors Threatens to commit suicide, takes a gun out and threatens her or the kids Lesbian or gay relationship: threatens to "out" or reveal the survivors' sexual preference to people who do not know such as parents or coworkers

Make note of the equality wheel. State: "Sometimes when I talk about power and control, some individuals begin to look at their own relationship. The distinction is that power and control is the driving element in an abusive relationship. The equality wheel illustrates healthy relationships."

Understanding issues related to seeking help: why people stay

"Have you ever"... exercise

Read each of the questions, asking the audience to respond by raising their hands or to simply privately reflect about their responses.

Ask for discussion and participant reaction. State: "What parallels do you see in these questions to people staying in relationships that are unhealthy and abusive?"

Part 1-C: Myths

Desired Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: Identify myths surrounding domestic violence Help participants to recognize possible biases

Strategies: Discussion

Materials: Handouts: "Family Violence: Myths and Misconceptions" (see pages 145-148) and "Christian Myths About Sexual and Domestic Abuse"

Content Ask the group to describe what they think may be a characteristic of a typical battered person. Direct participant attention to the handout, "Family Violence: Myths and Misconceptions". Read some out loud or have participants read some of them. Ask for comments and discussion.

Part 1-D: Questions and answers

Desired Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To identify unanswered questions and issues that may exist To identify any need for inclusion of other information for second session

Strategies: Open-ended question with discussion

Content State: "In Part II, we will be addressing how we can help as individuals and as a faith community. Prior to our covering that, does anyone have any questions or concerns they would like addressed?" Respond to their expressed comments. If you are unable to address, bring it up at the subsequent session. Prayerful closure: Consider reading together the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Part II

Part 2-A: Opening Comments

Desired Time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To briefly address any unresolved issues or questions from Part I To solicit any thoughts participants would like to share since the previous session

Strategies: Discussion

Content Introduce self, opening comments and greeting Ask if anyone has any questions or comments or concerns since hearing Part I.

If you have a sense that the issue being raised is of significance to the questioner, consider at least the following options (there may be more): Briefly address the issue and offer to speak to the person privately afterwards; Briefly address the issue and offer to arrange for an additional educational session addressing that concern; Change the focus of that session if it appears to have dominated the groups' desires and seek another method of meeting the individual's issue.

Part 2-B: How individuals can help

Desired Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Purpose: Provide practical "what to say and do" tools

Strategies: Discussion

Materials: Handout: "Actions that people can take" Community resource material when available OR brochure

Content Discuss how individuals can help by mentioning some of the following examples. Information is found in greater detail as indicated in the list below. (From Book II: "Family Violence: Helping Survivors and Abusers

State: "Become informed. The more you understand the better help you can be." "Learn to recognize it." "Be comfortable asking questions. Be sure the setting is confidential." (See "Actions to consider,") "Respond with an attitude of openness, lack of judgment, acceptance and support." "Use words for comfort and affirmation." "I am so sorry this happened to you." "You don't deserve it. You did not cause this to happen." "It must have taken a lot of courage for you to tell me this." "There is help for you." "One of the most important roles you have is spiritual support." Use phrases such as: "God loves you. God does not want anyone to be hurt in this way." "I do not believe God is punishing you." "Would you like if it we prayed together?" "Your prime focus should be a goal of ending the violence and the safety of the survivor." Take fear of danger very seriously. Do not put yourself at risk. Seek help from local advocates. (See "Alexandra House Safety Plan,") "Abusers must be held accountable!"

Part 2-C: How a faith community can help

Desired Time: 10 to 15 minutes

Purpose: To emphasize what the congregation has already done To introduce suggested actions faith communities can take To emphasize the importance of ongoing actions to assure sustainability

Strategies: Overview of handout Presentation by member outlining what the faith community has already done Introduce other actions the faith community can take with practical suggestions

Materials: Handouts: "Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community" (see page 149), and "How to Create a Safe Place in Your Faith Community"

Content Discussion of what faith community has already done Introduce other actions the faith community can take with practical suggestions

Tips: Encourage members to share peace-making activities the faith community has already done. Emphasize that successful creation of a safe place is dependent on the ability of faith community members to respond supportively and with insight.

What congregations can do Introduce guidelines handouts on what congregations can do: "Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community" and "How to Create a Safe Place in Your Faith Community," and briefly review.

Part 2-D: Closure

Desired Time: 5 minutes

Purpose: Provide closure, direction and encouragement To help them recognize their responsibility as people of faith to reach out to individuals suffering in abusive relationships

Strategies: Good Samaritan reading

Content Good Samaritan exercise: Two individuals read alternately: one reading the bold parts, the other reading the italicized parts.

Tips: State: "We all need to recognize that it is our calling and our personal responsibility to know what to do and then do it when we recognize someone who is hurting and being hurt. As people of faith, we are called to respond."

Read "The Good Samaritan"

Participant handouts

Actions to consider Barriers: Realities that Prevent Family Violence Survivors from Looking for Help* Christian Myths About Sexual and Domestic Abuse Equality wheel* Family Violence: Myths and Misconceptions* Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community* How to Create a Safe Place in Your Faith Community* Myths about abusers Power and control wheel* Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (optional) Spiritual support Statistics* Survivors: Characteristics and Indicators of possible abuse The Good Samaritan

*Found in Appendix

Appendix

Handouts

Barriers

Realities that Prevent Family Violence Survivors from Looking for Help (with quotes from survivors)

Challenges in getting help are varied, complex, valid and compelling. Some survivors may find it difficult to see alternatives while still enmeshed in the relationship.

Fear

Fear of retaliation When a person makes a decision to leave an abusive relationship, the chances of being seriously physically hurt or killed increase 75%. Many times the partner may have threatened to hunt the person down and kill her/him and the children.

- "I always took the blame. I believed his violence was because of something I did or didn't do. And he was wonderful when he wasn't violent. One night he pulled me out of bed, punched me all over, and threatened me with a gun. I realized my life was at stake. It took 20 years."
- "I feel trapped, threats of abuse make me too afraid to take action."
- "If I leave, he'll kill me. He said he'd hunt me down."
- "If I'm with him, at least I know his mood and what he's up to."
- "It's not possible to be safe, ever, any more."

Fear of making it alone

- "I'm afraid of being alone."
- "I'm afraid no other man will want me."
- "Single parenting scares me."

Finances The survivor may have no financial resources, access to the resources or job skills. Many are not employed outside the home, have not been allowed to work. If there are dependents, it becomes more difficult to leave without having the ability to get affordable housing, transportation, etc.

- "I don't think I can provide for myself and my children financially."

Faith Many times people stay in a relationship because of religious beliefs. Separation or divorce may ostracize the person from the religious community. Some clergy are trained to focus on the goal of saving the marriage at all costs rather than stopping the violence.

- "After I told my pastor about my husband's physical abuse, my pastor asked me, 'And what is your sin?'"

Family The partner may have convinced the family that everything is good in the relationship, that problems are the survivor's fault. It may also be that the family of origin has also experienced violence, violence in the home may be considered normal.

- "I don't want to lose his family."
- "I don't want to disappoint family and friends."

Adapted by Marlene Jezierski from numerous sources including "Why Women Stay", Alexandra House.

Children They may believe that any father is better than no father at all. They may have the belief that the children will be negatively impacted by the family breaking up. Some fear being charged with desertion and losing their children. Abusers sometimes threaten to kidnap them.

- "He'll get custody of the kids. He'll turn the kids against me."
- "My kids need a father."
- "My kids will resent me."

Fidelity Many times the person does not want the relationship to end, just the violence. Sometimes the survivor loves the abuser and believes the batterer will change. They may rationalize the abuser's behavior by blaming stress, alcohol, problems at work or other issues. Abusers rarely physically batter all the time. Often the relationship can be romantic and satisfying.

- "He loves me. I love him."
- "I made a commitment to work things out: marriage vows."
- "I failed. I made my bed, now I must lie in it."
- "I feel responsible for the relationship and what's gone wrong."
- "I can usually control his anger. I'm used to his behavior."
- "I keep hoping things will get better, that he'll get help."
- "He will have nowhere to go. I'll ruin his life. He'll lose his job."
- "He put me in the hospital twice but I melted when I saw him crying. I thought hitting me showed he cared. I believed him when he said he would change."

Frailty: Seniors Elders are frequently less likely to take steps to leave an abusive relationship and start over. The violence may have gone on throughout the relationship and been kept "secret" or hidden for years. They are often isolated from friends, family, and other support systems.

Fatigue

- "I never think about leaving. I've been brain washed."
- "People think he's so nice. They'll think I'm crazy."
- "I don't have any real options that will work."
- "My depression immobilizes me. Nobody cares anyway."

Isolation There is often no access to support systems available from friends and family.

- "I have nobody to help and protect me."
- "I don't want to lose our friends. They'll think I'm terrible."
- "He turned everyone against me. I had no friends, no social life, no support. He got our boys to keep track of my movements and tell him what I'd been doing and who I'd talked to."

Shame Frequently, survivors feel shame about being abused, blame themselves, believing they deserve it. This contributes to reluctance to let anyone know abuse is occurring.

- "He'll spread rumors around the community about me."

Family Violence: Myths and Misconceptions

Many myths are associated with domestic violence. Myths about domestic violence perpetuate bias against survivors, prohibit the development and dissemination of accurate information and divert attention from the real issues. Eradication of these myths brings enlightenment and greater ability for societal and individual support.

ERADICATING MYTHS

Eradicating the myths associated with violent relationships requires our understanding and acknowledgment that there is no "typical" batterer/abuser, or victim/survivor. While many abusers love their partners and do not want to use violence, others do not love their partners, feel comfortable using violence and do not care whether their partners stay or leave. Likewise, many survivors love the partner who is beating them, do not want to see the partner get hurt and just want the beatings to stop; others hate their batterer and would like the batterer to go away and leave them alone or to die.

Myth 1: Only a few people are affected by domestic violence.

More than one-fourth of all couples are involved in domestic violence sometime in their lives. This impacts children and families significantly. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between ages 15 and 44 in the United States, more than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.¹

Myth 2: Battered women are masochistic.

Battered women do not want to be beaten. Survivors have begged the abuser to stop, sought help and tried to leave. Belief in this myth reflects the lack of understanding of the physical and emotional trauma the survivor has experienced and how the survivor has tried to stop it. The abuser is responsible for the violence, it is not the survivors' fault. What is viewed as masochism may be an adaptation for survival.

Myth 3: Abusers and survivors are crazy, lower-class, minority, dysfunctional, uneducated people with few social or job skills and no religious belief. It could never happen to anyone you know.

Domestic violence is an equal opportunity crime. Lack of education or wealth, and social background do not make battered people. Perpetrators and survivors come from every walk of life. Many doctors, ministers, psychologists, police, attorneys, judges and other professionals are abusers. Even though some mentally ill people are battered, most survivors live in crazy-making situations in which they can become confused and overwhelmed. They tend to blame themselves because so many others blame them, yet throughout it all, they remain remarkably sane.

Myth 4: Love and violence cannot exist together in a relationship.

¹Uniform Crime Reports, FBI, Department of Justice Statistics, 1991

Most batterers and survivors love each other. Many batterers act in loving, caring ways some of the time. Most survivors love the batterer and want the battering to stop. However, over time, the loving periods lessen, change or fade as physical damage, learned helplessness, post traumatic stress disorder and Stockholm Syndrome take their toll.

Myth 5: Once a battered woman, always a battered woman.

Women who receive positive intervention move past the victim stage, rebuild their sense of self and rarely choose another battering relationship. However, given that 20 to 30% of all relationships experience violence indicates there are many batterers in our society.

Myth 6: Once a batterer, always a batterer

Although the prognosis for change is dim (Gallup, 1990), some men do stop their violent behavior. Men have more success at stopping physical violence than they do at stopping verbal and emotional violence. It is estimated that it will take between three and five years of weekly therapy for a man to make a significant, lasting change in all aspects of his violent behavior (Standards for Treatment, 1989).

Myth 7: "I just lost it."

Batterers say they could not stop themselves from using violence. Most batterers use other methods of dealing with frustration, anger or "provocation" when it is convenient for them to do so. Angry batterers do not beat up the boss, secretary, neighbor, a stranger on the street or children playing in the next yard. Only in the privacy of the home or when it is perceived there will be no negative consequences, will the batterer choose to use violence towards the partner and possibly the children. In the vast majority of cases, the batterer hurts no one else (Ewing et al., 1984; Ptacek, 1988; Stordeur & Stille, 1989).

When the perpetrator uses violence, it is because there has been an assessment of the situation and the batterer has determined that:

- What I am doing is not wrong.
- If it is wrong, I will not get caught.
- If I get caught, I can talk my way out.
- If I cannot talk my way out, the penalties will be minor. I will decide what the penalties are.

In these "I just lost it" episodes of violence, batterers say and do things they know will hurt their victim. They yell obscenities and threats. They kick the pregnant woman in the stomach. They hit the victim in places that will be seen or hidden, depending on the message to be delivered by the violence. Batterers use violence because they know they can and no one will stop them or apply negative consequences.

Myth 8: Survivors of family violence can always leave.

This myth is based on the erroneous belief that leaving the relationship will stop the violence. In fact, batterers are likely to stalk their victims who leave them--often making good their threats: "If I can't have you, then no one can." The point of separation is the most likely time for batterers to kill the partner, the children, themselves and anyone who gets in the way.

Two major concerns block survivors from leaving: financial and emotional. Most survivors have not been allowed access to information about finances or control of assets, including their own, if they work outside the home. In a society where the average woman earns 60 cents for every dollar the average man earns, even if she has marketable skills, she is likely to have great difficulty supporting herself and her children. Because of the violence, the survivor has probably been isolated from friends and family, leaving few if any emotional support systems. In addition, the batterer has, in the vast majority of cases, threatened murder of the survivor, children, parents, friends, boss or anyone special or will threaten suicide.

Myth 9: Children need their father, even if he is a batterer. Some abusers are good fathers and should have joint custody of their children.

Male children who see their father beat their mother are 700 times more likely to be violent as adults than those who did not witness such violence (Straus et al., 1981). Children need healthy role models. Unhealthy role models damage children now and in the future. Men who batter women are more likely to batter children physically, sexually and emotionally. Their need for power and control of family members often stifles the healthy development of their children.

Nearly 90% of children who grow up in abusive homes witness the assaults. Nearly half of the batterers also abuse their children.

Myth 10: Stress causes violence

Neither stress nor drugs nor heredity cause domestic violence. Domestic violence is "caused" by a person choosing to use violence. That person has learned from the culture and interpersonal relations to use violence and that violent behavior is legitimate, necessary and appropriate at that moment in time. Like drug and alcohol abuse, many people use stress as an excuse to be violent.

Many people who experience stress do not use violence. Violence is only one of a myriad of responses to stress.

Myth 11: The source of the violence and the source of the conflict are not the same.

Violence is one choice for conflict resolution. The source of the batterer's violence is complex and results from experience, training and permission. Using violence to resolve what is perceived to be conflict is a choice the batterer makes.

Myth 12: Battering is caused by bad relationships. Women would not get beaten if they did not nag. Men are forced to be violent because women do not behave properly.

Battering is an individual issue. Many men who batter have acted that way with several partners. Men in poor relationships have a choice not to batter. Battering is not about how women do or do not behave, it is about poor choices involving power and control on the part of the abuser.

Myth 13: Women are just as violent and abusive as men.

While there are a minority of females abusing males, in approximately 95% of assaults, the man is the perpetrator. There are frequent instances of females using self-defense against their male abuser. Battering also occurs in lesbian and gay relationships. Domestic violence throughout life is experienced as child abuse and neglect, dating violence, spouse abuse and abuse of the disabled.

Myth 14: When there is violence in the family, all family members are at fault to a certain extent and therefore all must change for the violence to stop.

Only the abuser has the ability to stop the violence. Battering is an attitude and chosen behavior. Many survivors try to change their behavior and their children's in the hopes of stopping the abuse. Changes in family members' behavior will not cause or influence the abuser to be non-violent.

Myth 15: Drinking or using other mind-altering drugs causes battering.

Substance use is a factor in battering but it is best described as being a trigger or excuse to be abusive rather than a cause.

Myth 16: Batterers are abusive because they cannot control themselves or because they have poor impulse control.

Abusers are usually not violent toward anyone but their partners or their children. They can control themselves sufficiently enough to pick a safe target. Many assaults are planned and can last for hours.

Myth 17: People who are being battered could leave if they want to by simply calling the police.

Police traditionally have been reluctant to respond to domestic assaults, or to intervene in what they think is a private matter. They temporarily separate the couple, leaving the survivor vulnerable to further violence later. Laws have been improved and some law enforcement agencies have had more education and are more sensitive than others in responding to domestic assault cases, but considerable change is still needed in law enforcement and the court system.

Myth 18: People who are being battered could leave if they wanted to by simply asking for help from her minister or other clergy.

Some clergy have been extremely supportive of survivors. Others ignore the abuse, are unsupportive, or actively support the assailant's control of the partner. Sometimes this is based on the defense that a man has a right to be head of the household.

The preceding discussion is adapted and expanded from numerous sources including the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence's DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A Guide for Health Care Providers, Lenore Walker, 1979. July, 2001.

Guidelines for Creating a Safe Place in Your Faith Community

In this guide you will find a list of activities that your church may want to consider implementing in an effort to address violence and abuse in the family. There are two ways of breaking the silence, which is the beginning of preventing and stopping abuse. The activities fall into two primary categories - raising awareness and sensitivity; and educating and training. When planning and programming there are some basic principles that should be applied:

1. Prayerfully consider what would be the best for your church. Through prayer you will be asking for God's will, which makes a person's own agenda secondary.
2. Begin with simple awareness-raising activities, working slowly through to some of the more complex ones.
3. Think along the lines of short-term planning i.e., activities to do in one year's time and also do long-range planning i.e., in the next two to five years.
4. Plan a variety of activities for different groups. For instance, a child-focused program can be strengthened by parallel adult education curriculum.
5. Even though the activities are categorized, this does not mean that the activities may not be pertinent to the other groups. For example, an elder group may be interested in providing brochures for victims and perpetrators. Go for it!
6. The "Other" line on the form was put there to indicate that you may have a unique idea for your church. The activities that are listed are not meant to be limiting, but instead to stimulate and to help create.
7. If an activity is not well received, do not give up or think that it will never work. Learn what you can from the experience and consider doing it again another time or in a different context. For example, if the youth group did not respond positively to a presentation on the topic of dating violence, try doing it again another year as part of a confirmation retreat.
8. Do not expect just one sector of the congregation to carry the burden of implementing this type of programming. Incorporate as many people from the various sectors to assist. This will be awareness raising and educational in itself.
9. Consider partnering with another congregation, especially when taking on a bigger project. This will also help give the community at large a sense that the faith community is concerned.
10. Try some ideas of your own too!

By Jayne Kane of Encourage to Hope Ministries. Reprinted with permission 9/01.

How to Create a Safe Place in Your Faith Community

By Jayne Kane of Encourage to Hope Ministries. Reprinted with permission 9/01.

For Children

- Education on conflict resolution/healthy attitudes
- Mentoring programs for kids
- Service projects for related agencies
- Other

For Youth

- Dating violence education
- Mentoring for teens
- Peer counseling
- Service projects
- Confirmation education on serving in the community
- Education on prostitution
- Other

For Victims/Survivors of Abuse

- Verbal prayer in worship
- Helpful discreet phone numbers/cards
- Healing services
- Training for lay people to become advocates
- Provide space for support groups
- Other

For Perpetrators/Abusers

- Resources/phone numbers & brochures
- Verbal prayer in worship

- Other

For Pastors

- Formal training on family violence
- Incorporate abuse screening in premarital counseling
- Screen members seeking counseling & then refer victims and abusers to the appropriate resources
- Homilies
- Other

For the Congregation

- Verbal prayer for victims and perpetrators

Adult education/forums on:

- Family violence in general
- Child abuse
- Dating violence
- Prostitution
- Speakers from local resources
- Bible study on use/misuse of scripture & violence
- Elder abuse
- Effects of violence on children
- Sexual violence
- Lay training/retreat on family violence
- Special offerings & fund raisers for related agencies/resources

Media events:

- Brochures
- Books
- Posters/banners

- Displays
- Artwork
- Videos
- Bulletin articles
- Advertising the church as a "Safe Place"
- Partnering with other churches
- Provide activities promoting the family
- Other

For the Elderly

- Education on elder abuse
- Service projects
- Mentoring children
- Other

For Leaders, Staff & Health/Wellness/Social Ministry Committees

- Training on family violence
- Contact legislators about issues/bills supporting families
- Develop congregational policies denouncing violence and supporting families
- Assist with and support any of the activities listed above
- Other

Helping Individuals in Domestic Violence Situations

Barriers to Faith Communities

I don't know my legal responsibilities regarding reporting of abuse. Mandated reporting is required for some groups in cases of child abuse (children under the age of 18), and vulnerable adults (individuals deemed to be incapable of making decisions for themselves or unable to defend themselves). Except in rare cases domestic abuse does not generally fall into these categories. Married teens are considered emancipated and are not subject to the child abuse laws if they are being battered by their partner. There are no laws in Minnesota requiring mandated reporters to

report domestic abuse. Physical and sexual abuse is against the law, but domestic violence advocates recommend that, for safety and autonomy reasons, the victim self-report. (Minnesota law)

I minister to both parties and don't want to take sides. Violent families are in need of help: support, resources, options. As in any case of family crisis, each individual is entitled to this help. Rather than taking sides it can be interpreted as assessing individual issues and needs and responding in accordance to individual findings.

It is difficult to discern the truths about this situation. Frequently individuals being hurt are reluctant to discuss the abuse openly, sometimes for reasons related to the myths surrounding domestic violence. Being sensitive to the signs, creating a zero tolerance environment in the parish and making information available to all parishioners breaks the silence and opens the door encouraging individuals to come forth.

My church has limited material and financial resources to help with the substantial needs of abuse victims. Fortunately there are a number of agencies whose primary role is to provide help to individuals in domestic abuse situations. Agencies already have educational materials and staff dedicated to this purpose. Creating a responsive, safe environment for domestic abuse survivors involves education and can be accomplished with little cost.

I have confronted a suspected abuser who then left the church. Several principles can apply in circumstances of domestic violence which can parallel adherence to religious doctrine. The church models and teaches universal respect for humanity and reverence for life. Every individual needs and is entitled to these. Individual choices may conflict with these values.

Victims of abuse may not trust clergy of the opposite sex. This may be true in some circumstances. However, more often, individuals who represent hope and faith are regarded with high levels of respect regardless of their sex, they are seen as leaders of spiritual values and sources of hope and support.

No one in my congregation has come forward with domestic abuse issues. There is no question there are survivors of domestic violence in every segment of the community: socioeconomic, cultural, spiritual. Statistics proving this are overwhelming. Creating an environment which is safe for survivors will result in individuals coming forth for help.

I have not had training in counseling domestic abuse and fear I may do more harm than good. I am not sure which counseling approach I should take. This is an important concern and thought needs to be placed towards what the role of the clergy should be in these circumstances. This varies greatly depending on individual background, education, experience and basic knowledge. Knowledge of the dynamics of family violence is key to taking appropriate steps. All members of the spiritual community can help immensely through simple measures which include making affirming, supportive statements and providing resources and options. Couple counseling is contra-indicated in cases of family violence. Most domestic violence agencies have well-established, well-staffed support groups which help survivors grow in their self-esteem and begin a process of self-discernment and growth. There are a number of agencies which specialize in domestic abuse counseling.

I am concerned that scripture conflicts with my role or couples' roles in circumstances of family violence. While various faith communities have different precepts upon which they structure family, there are some basic human rights values which must underwrite family dynamics. Our culture, our community, has clearly taken a position that physical and sexual violence is against the law. Our faith communities teach respect for life. Basic Christian principles teach peaceful, respectful ways for all human interaction.

Developed by Marlene Jezierski, April 1998

The Power and Control Wheel - Aspects of an Abusive Relationship

1. **USING INTIMIDATION** Instilling fear by using looks, actions, gestures, smashing things, destroying property, abusing pets, displaying weapons.
2. **USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE** Using putdowns or other tactics which make the victim feel badly about self - name calling - playing mindgames - humiliation - laying guilt.
3. **USING ISOLATION** Controlling what the victim does, who the victim sees and talks to, choices of reading material, limiting outside involvement - using jealousy to justify actions.
4. **MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING** Making light of the abuse and not taking concerns seriously - saying the abuse didn't happen - shifting responsibility for abusive behavior to the victim.
5. **USING CHILDREN** Accusing the victim of bad parenting - using the children to relay messages or to physically abuse the victim - threatening to take the children away.
6. **USING PRIVILEGE** Treating the victim like a servant - making all the big decisions - being in charge of the home, the social life - being the one to define the roles in the relationship.
7. **USING ECONOMIC ABUSE** Preventing the victim from getting or keeping a job - making the victim ask for money or giving an allowance - taking the victim's money - not allowing access to family income.
8. **USING COERCION AND THREATS** Making and/or carrying out threats to do something hurtful - threatening to leave the victim, commit suicide, report the victim to welfare - making the victim drop charges or do illegal things.
9. **SPIRITUAL ABUSE** Mocking prayer life, beliefs or spirituality - misquoting Scripture or uses passages to manipulate - not allowed to go to church or is forced to go to a different church - using worship as a time to flaunt and display affection - telling victim that the problems are from a weak faith or from not praying enough - controls the offering.

Adapted from model developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, Minnesota

The Power and Control Equality Wheel

1. **NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR** Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.
2. **RESPECT** Listening to her non-judgmentally - being emotionally affirming and understanding - valuing opinions.
3. **TRUST AND SUPPORT** Supporting her goals in life - respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.
4. **HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY** Accepting responsibility for self - acknowledging past use of violence - admitting being wrong - communicating openly and truthfully.
5. **RESPONSIBLE PARENTING** Sharing parental responsibilities - being a positive non-violent role model for the children.
6. **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work - making family decisions together.
7. **ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP** Making money decisions together - making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.
8. **NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS** Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict - accepting change - being willing to compromise.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 206 West Fourth Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55806, 218-722-4134

Power & Control Wheel for Disabled and/or Elderly Adults

1. **INTIMIDATION** Abusing pets, swearing, breaking things, displaying weapons, property damage.
2. **ISOLATION** Cutting off contacts, not allowing visitors, taking mail, denying access to the phone.
3. **ECONOMIC ABUSE** Taking money, taking over titles, taking over home, giving away assets, misuse of powers of attorney, spends assets, takes over property, stealing.
4. **USING PRIVILEGE** Treatment like a servant, master of the home, perpetuating the belief that it is the abuser's right to be served.
5. **NEGLECT** Denying food, water, personal care or medical care.
6. **INCREASING DEPENDENCY** Exploiting vulnerabilities: withholding care, taking walker, wheelchair, glasses or teeth.

7. **THREATS OF VIOLENCE** Taking away access to children or grandchildren, facility placement, denying care, abandonment.
8. **USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE** Instilling guilt, humiliating, yelling, degrading, insulting, de-meaning, denying, blaming, withholding affection, creating a siege mentality.

The "Disabled and/or Elderly Adults Power & Control Wheel" developed by Anoka County Community Health, Anoka, Minnesota. Based on "Power & Control Wheel for Older Battered Women" developed by San Francisco Consortium for Elder Abuse Prevention.

Teen Violence

1. **MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING** Making light of the abuse by saying you caused it or that you like it; saying he/she loves you after he/she yells at you; playing mind games; making you feel bad about yourself; saying you are just too emotional; using jealousy to justify actions.
2. **USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE** Yelling; calling you names; making you feel worthless; embarrassing you in front of other; putting you down; saying you're stupid; making you feel inferior; making you feel crazy.
3. **USING ECONOMIC ABUSE** Taking your money for personal use; preventing you from getting or keeping a job; taking your money and giving you an allowance; making you ask for money; buying something for you and then holding that against you.
4. **USING INTIMIDATION** Displaying weapons; destroying property; abusing things close to her/him; driving too fast/recklessly; threatening phone calls; stalking you; giving you the "evil eye".
5. **USING ISOLATION** Not letting you go out with friends; controlling your every move; telling you what to wear; always wanting you to be by them; not able to talk to others of the opposite sex; wanting to know who you talk to; disapproving of all your friends.
6. **USING PRIVILEGE** Expects you to go out every weekend without asking; decides what you do, who you associate with, and where you go; he/she makes all the decisions; defines all the roles in the relationship; treating you like a servant; doesn't ask for your input.
7. **WHAT HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED?**
8. **USING THREATS** Threatening to spread rumors; threatening to leave you; threatening to commit suicide; threatening to beat you up; threatening to kill you; destroying your property; putting you in fear with dirty looks.

Alexandra House, Inc. 1993

Special thanks to Anoka/Northern Hennepin Area High Schools for providing us with this information. Power and Control Wheel design adapted from Domestic Abuse Project.

Are We Part of the Problem?

1. **VIOLATING CONFIDENTIALITY** Interviewing in front of family. Telling parish team members issues discussed in confidence without her consent. Calling the police without her consent.
2. **TRIVIALIZING AND MINIMIZING THE ABUSE** Not taking the danger she feels seriously. Pretending that parishioners have only minor problems.
3. **BLAMING THE VICTIM** Asking what she did to provoke the abuse. Focusing on her as the problem: "Why don't you just leave?", "Why do you put up with it?", "Why do you let him do that to you?"
4. **NOT RESPECTING HER AUTONOMY** "Prescribing" forgiveness, prayer, couples counseling, or law enforcement involvement. Punishing the parishioner for not taking your advice.
5. **IGNORING HER NEED FOR SAFETY** Failing to recognize her sense of danger. Failing to make the parish a safe house. Being unwilling to ask, "Is it safe to go home?", "Do you have a place to go if the situation escalates?"
6. **NORMALIZING VICTIMIZATION** Failing to respond to her disclosure of abuse. Acceptance of intimidation as normal in relationships. Belief that abuse is due to non-compliance with God's Will.

The "Parish Team Power & Control Wheel", developed by Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Green Bay, is based on the "Medical Power and Control Wheel" developed by the Domestic Violence Project, Inc., 6308 8th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53143, 414-656-8502. Both are based on the "Power & Control and Equality Wheel" developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 206 West 4th St., Duluth, MN 55806, 218-722-4134.

Or Part of the Solution?

1. **RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY** All discussions must occur in private, without other family members present. This is essential to building trust and ensuring her safety.
2. **BELIEVE & VALIDATE HER EXPERIENCES** Listen to her and believe her. Acknowledge her feelings and let her know she is not alone. Many women have similar experiences.
3. **ACKNOWLEDGE THE INJUSTICE** The violence perpetrated against her is not her fault. No one deserves to be abused.
4. **RESPECT HER AUTONOMY** She is the expert in her life. Respect the presence of the Holy Spirit in her own life drawing her to the good.
5. **HELP HER PLAN FOR FUTURE SAFETY** What has she tried in the past to keep herself safe? Is it working? Does she have a place to go if she needed to escape? Is the parish a safe house?

6. **PROMOTE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES** Know the resources in your community. Publish the hotline and shelter access.

The "Priestly Power & Control Wheel", developed by Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Green Bay, is based on the "Medical Power and Control Wheel" developed by the Domestic Violence Project, Inc., 6308 8th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53143, 414-656-8502. Both are based on the "Power & Control and Equality Wheel" developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 206 West 4th St., Duluth, MN 55806, 218-722-4134.

Faith Community Peace Initiative DV Education - Pre-Course Questionnaire

This training is intended to offer practical and helpful services. Toward this goal, we ask you to complete this questionnaire before attending today's class. Thank you for your input. We will use the data to build upon and improve our program..

Please score the following on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not a lot of knowledge, 5 being knowledgeable.

1. How would you score your knowledge level of family violence issues, statistics, dynamics?

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

2. I would rate my comfort in addressing the issue of family violence with a parishioner at:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

3. I would rate my knowledge of resources for victim/survivors and perpetrators of family violence at:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

Please check one of the following that best describes your role:

Clergy Counselor Parish nurse Lay leader Parish school Office staff (Describe): Other (please describe):

Faith Community Peace Initiative DV Education - Post-Course Questionnaire

This training is intended to offer practical and helpful services. Toward this goal, we ask you to complete this questionnaire after attending today's class. Thank you for your input. We will use the data to build upon and improve our program.

1. I will be able to apply the information presented in this class in my place of worship.

Yes No

Comments:

2. My overall satisfaction with the class is:

Very high High Moderate Low

Comments:

Please answer the following questions on a scale of 1-5, 1 indicates strong disagreement with the statement and 5 indicates strong agreement with the statement.

As a result of attending today's class:

3. I understand there are roles that faith community clergy and leaders have in regards to family violence prevention and intervention.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I have been made aware of indicators of family violence

1 2 3 4 5

5. I am aware of appropriate responses to be made to persons experiencing family violence.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I can identify appropriate interventions and referrals for people experiencing family violence.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I would rate my family violence knowledge level:

1 2 3 4 5

8. I would rate my comfort level addressing family violence with a parishioner:

1 2 3 4 5

9. I would rate my knowledge of resources:

1 2 3 4 5

10. What of today's class did you feel was not necessary?

1 2 3 4 5

11. What did you find to be most valuable?

1 2 3 4 5

Please check one of the following that best describes your role:

Clergy Counselor Parish nurse Other (describe): Lay leader Parish school Office staff (Describe):

Scenarios - Faith community

Young mother with concerns about marriage

A woman in her early 30's who is a member of your faith community asks to speak privately with you about something personal. When she comes for her meeting with you, she shares the following concerns she has about her marriage.

- She is having difficulty being a good wife and explains that her husband works late frequently and is tired due to a demanding job so he is not able to help her much with the children and household chores.
- She is unable to attend church regularly because her husband won't help her and often refuses to go.
- She has three children, is pregnant with a fourth and feels overwhelmed with the child care and household duties.
- She has had many health problems including "low blood" which adds to her fatigue, and seems to pick up every virus the children bring home.
- She feels very depressed, cries a lot, does not feel she is a good mother or a good wife.
- Lately, she is often too tired to pray, and when she does, she gets no sense of peace or support from her prayers.

Discussion points

Are there any issues here that may suggest a potential for abuse in the home? If so, what are they?

What general questions might be appropriate?

Would you ask this woman a question about abuse in the home? If you decided to ask, what words would you use? How might the conversation play out?

If you suspect or are told there is some form of abuse, what resources might you suggest?

If she is in an abusive situation, what kind of spiritual support might be helpful?

Woman who is afraid of her husband

You receive a phone call from the wife of one of the leaders of the church. She tells you she is afraid of her husband, that he watches pornographic movies and subscribes to pornographic materials. In addition, he hit her and threatened her. She is afraid of telling anyone, fearful she would be responsible for his failure or other negative consequences if others learn of his habits. She is currently struggling with her relationship with God because her husband has been clear that she must defer to his interests and desires, including sexual, and that is God's intent in the scheme of things. She feels distant from her faith and struggles with guilt because of it.

Discussion points

What might be some suggested initial responses to this woman?

How concerned would you be if you took this call?

What actions and words would someone in a position of church leadership do?

What actions and words would a clergy or someone who counsels parishioners do?

Couple seeking marriage counseling

A couple you know only slightly, who are regular attendees at church services, have come for an appointment with you, the pastor, for marriage counseling. The husband called and made the appointment. You learn the following. The wife has held 3 jobs in the past 18 months, each time leaving because it wasn't working out at home. The husband insists she just needs to manage the finances better and be home for their children. An 11 year old son is having 'trouble' at school with bullying. The wife has had numerous health issues including stomach problems and headaches. The husband espouses a strong faith, stating "God is the leader in our house" and "He knows the way for all". He espouses devout faith, stating he leads family bible reading, discussion and prayer times with the entire family most evenings. He states they need to continue to worship faithfully and regularly at home and at church, learn to pray better and listen to God, and He will provide strength and guidance.

Discussion points

Do you see any "red flags" in this situation? If so, what are they?

What questions would you ask the couple?

What would you say to the couple?

What concerns and constraints might you have?

What would your next steps be?

What resources would you recommend?

Behavior changes noted in long-time member

You observe some changes in a long-term, active member of your community, a 54 year old single male and member of the church council. You know he lives with another man who is his roommate. When he joined the church ten years ago he was an energetic, active man with a good sense of humor, eager to participate in faith community activities and was a reliable volunteer. Within the last year you have noted the following:

- Bruising on his jaw
- He wore a sweatshirt one hot July day on a day a group painted the exterior of the church
- He has had several episodes of illness and problems with chronic back pain
- He has become quiet and speaks less in groups than in the past
- He has stopped teaching Sunday School and attending bible study
- His church attendance has gone from every Sunday to once or twice a month

Discussion points

What concerns do you have about this man?

Is there anything that you might say to this man?

You are president of the parish council. If you have identified concerns, are there any actions you feel would be appropriate?

You are the co-pastor. If you have identified concerns, are there any actions you feel would be appropriate for you to take?

Stormy teen relationship

You are the parish youth director. You have known a 16 year old girl who has been involved in youth activities in your community since she was 12. She has been an active, energetic participator in many activities and is well-liked by her peers. She begins bringing her boyfriend to weekly youth group after-school gatherings. He accompanies her to every gathering. He is a very gregarious, talkative individual who likes to tell jokes and entertain others. Over a period of months you notice the following changes:

- The girl and her boyfriend come late on several occasions
- The girl interacts minimally with other teens and when she does the interactions are very brief
- When you ask her questions, the boyfriend answers
- She has failed to show up twice after volunteering to teach Sunday school
- After several months their attendance drops off and you only see her about every month

Discussion points

What might concern you in this situation?

What might you say to whom?

What could you do?

If you feel there are any needed, what resources exist in the community?

General marital problems

A woman in the church confides in you that she is having marital problems. She reports that her husband often puts her down and calls her names and sometimes shoves her around. During the last argument he "lost it" and pushed her off of the bed and she hit her head on the dresser. She says he has not hit her in over a year but last week locked her out of the house after a violent argument. The couple and their three small children have come to your church regularly for several years and the husband has been serving on the education committee.

Discussion points

What concerns to you have about this situation? Are there any risks?

You are a deacon in the church. What responses might be appropriate to this woman?

You are the co-pastor. What responses might be appropriate to this woman?

Does the co-pastor have any responsibilities to the husband? If so, what?

What are the best ways you can help the children?

Statistics

- A woman is being battered at least once every 9 seconds in the U.S. (Family Violence Prevention Fund, San Francisco, CA)

- Battering is the single largest cause of injury to women in the U.S. Additionally, the leading cause of death among women is domestic violence. (Surgeon General, 1984; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, December 1991)
- More than 1 million women per year seek medical care for injuries caused by battering. (Deckstein & Nadelson, 1986)
- Domestic violence is the largest single cause of injury among women at hospital emergency rooms, more common than auto accidents, muggings and rapes combined. (Stark & Flitcraft, 1985)
- There are 3,000 animal shelters in the U.S., but only 700 shelters for battered women. (Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings, 1990)
- In one year, over 11,000 petitions are filed in Minnesota courts for Orders For Protection. (MN Dept. of Corrections - Program for Battered Women)
- Domestic violence is the leading cause of birth defects and premature delivery according to the March of Dimes.
- It is estimated that 87% of children in homes with domestic violence witness that abuse. (Walker, 1984)
- Between 3.3 and 10 million children witness domestic violence each year. (Carlson, 1984)
- Physical violence occurs in 35% of dating relationships. (O'Keefe, et al., 1986)
- Of the children who witness domestic violence, 60% of boys eventually become batterers, and 50% of the girls become victims. (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence)
- More than a million women age 65 and older in the United States are victims of abuse each year. (Policy Research Inc., 1994 cited in OWL's 1994 Mother's Day Report)
- In 1996, four million children in the U.S. were physically abused. (Gavin deBecker, The Gift of Fear)
- Only one in every six cases of elder abuse is ever reported. (Advocare)
- More than half of all reported elder abuse and neglect is caused by a family member (approx. 61%). (31-33% by the children, 14-15% by the spouse, 12-13% by other relatives)
- 835,000 men are attacked by their wives or girlfriends each year. (1998 Department of Justice & Centers for Disease Prevention & Control Report)
- Every five years the death toll of persons killed by relatives or acquaintances equals that of the entire Vietnam War. (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

- We are the most violent society in the world. (Dr. David Walsh, National Institute on Media and the Family)

WHY DO I STAY?

I keep hoping things will get better - he'll get help. I don't know where I would go. I never think about leaving - I've been brain washed. My depression immobilizes me - nobody cares anyway. He threatened me - if you leave, I'll... I feel trapped - threats of abuse make me too afraid to take action. I'm afraid of being alone. I have nobody to help/protect me. Everyone else is coupled - I should be in a relationship too. My kids will resent me. My kids need a father. He will have nowhere to go - I'll ruin his life - he'll lose his job. I need to stay to take care of him, the house, pay the bills. I feel guilty about what I need to do for myself and for what I want. I made a commitment to work things out - marriage vows. A "White Knight" will come to rescue me. He will protect me from other men. I need a man at my side to feel like a woman. People think he's so nice - they'll think I'm crazy. I feel responsible for the relationship and what's gone wrong. I fear independence. I'm afraid no other man will ever want me. Another man may be worse than the one I have. I keep hoping it won't happen again. He loves me - I love him. I want the traditional family - kids, house, dog, white fence. I don't think I can provide for myself and my children financially. If I leave he'll kill me - he said he'd hunt me down. He'll spread rumors around the community about me. He'll get custody of the kids - he'll turn the kids against me. I can usually control his anger - I'm used to his behavior. I fear his/my return to drinking. What if he finds somebody else. It's not possible to be safe ever, anywhere. I'll miss the good times - the good things about him. I failed - I made my bed, now I must lie in it. I don't want to disappoint relatives and friends. I'm no good at making decisions on my own. He's not bad all the time. If I'm with him, at least I know his mood and what he's up to. I don't want to lose his family. I don't want to lose our friends - they'll think I'm terrible. I feel sorry for him. My coupled friends won't trust me around their partners. If something happens to me, who will take care of me and the kids? I don't have any real options that will work. I'll fall apart without him. Single parenting scares me.

From Women's Groups

Article

HOSTAGES IN THE HOME: Domestic Violence Seen Through Its Parallel, The Stockholm Syndrome

By Jeri Martinez

When people think about domestic violence, most imagine bloody noses, black eyes, split lips, broken ribs. So they invariably react by saying, "I wouldn't take that! The very first time he hit me, I'd be out the door!" Believing that one becomes an abuse victim at the moment of the first assault, they imagine how they would react to a stranger assault and blame the abuse victim for not reacting to her partner's assault as they think they would.

People who work with abuse victims are often frustrated and angered by decisions victims make which they consider bizarre and inexplicable. For example, abuse victims often:

- minimize their injuries,
- refuse to participate in the prosecution of their assailants,
- pay the bail to get their abusers out of jail, and
- stay with or return to the men who abuse them.

Because physical abuse is concrete and is all that people see, and because they do not think a physical assault would make them do the "crazy" things abuse victims do, they conclude that the victim is mentally unbalanced.

While she's not crazy, in fact, her mental state has been changed through her relationship with the abuser. Her perceptions of herself, her abuser and her life have been altered. Not solely due to the physical abuse she may have suffered, but due to the abuser's psychological assaults, the unremitting use of tactics defined by Amnesty International (1973) as "psychological torture."

By the time of the first assault, the abuse victim sees her world very differently from those who judge her. Prior to that first assault, the abuser has spent months or years escalating his tactics of mental abuse and intimidation, then using "minor" physical aggression to control her before moving to actual physical assault. He undermines her psychologically before he ever lays a hand on her. By the first time the abuser strikes her, the victim is no longer like unvictimized people, and simply cannot react like them. Living in fear while undergoing constant psychological degradation each and every day changes her far beyond what outsiders can imagine.

After that first assault, his power over her grows exponentially because her memory of the violence, and her fear of further violence, keeps her in check. Despite the fact that "most people view physical violence as a more serious offense than psychological violence, both battered women and prisoners of war report that threat of physical violence is more psychologically debilitating than actual physical violence." (Graham, et al.a)

One way to make the complex process of victimization which abusers use to gain and maintain control over victims understandable is to look at domestic violence through its parallel: the Stockholm Syndrome.

The Stockholm, or Hostage, Syndrome is a sort of "conversion" that occurs when an individual is terrorized while being held captive. Given certain specific circumstances, a hostage's view of his/her captor and his/her relationship to him changes 180 degrees from hatred to adulation.

The best way to illustrate this psychological turn-around is through the Shi'ite Muslim hijacking of TWA Flight 847 in Athens, Greece, on June 14, 1985. (Smith) After capturing the plane, the terrorists released the women and children. Left on the plane were two sailors and 34 American businessmen-people at the pinnacle of our society-the men who earn the most money, men used to control, men whose lives revolve around their power and control of all about them: money, resources, and their own and other people's lives.

The terrorists took the plane to the Beirut airport, holding the men captive for seventeen days. During their captivity, the hostages' lives were threatened numerous times, in various ways. Hostage Peter Hill said that at one point, Shi'ite militiamen laid "primer cord and explosive charges from one end of the plane to the other. I thought we might all be blown to smithereens." (Hill & Friend) Hostage Jimmy Del Palmer reported that one night they were taken off the plane and brought to a cellar where they faced "a half a dozen machine guns looking at us, and a lot of us thought ... this was it." (Watson & Nordlanda) They also saw their captors savagely beat Navy diver Robert Stethem and then shoot him to death. (Watson & Nordlandb) Most of us still retain vivid memories of this hijacking because of the television reports that showed the plane in silhouette as Mr. Stethem's body was dumped out onto the tarmac like a sack of garbage.

After their release, the hostages were flown to the U.S. When they got off the plane, waiting reporters rushed over to interview a hostage who had been forced to read a political statement to the world media from the cockpit of the plane. They asked him only three questions:

- "Is it good to be home?" "Yes, it's wonderful."
- "What was it like?" "It was hell."
- "What were your captors like?" "It's funny you asked that. They weren't bad people, really."
- "They let me eat, they let me sleep, they gave me my life."

Then he said something advocates and police officers have heard from hundreds of victims of abuse: "They have such potential to be good people." Then he spontaneously reiterated the Muslims' point of view, going on to say that the terrorists were forced by America to do what they did to bring the Islamic Jihad to the world's attention. Within moments after his statement was broadcast, a government spokesperson appeared on camera to say that we must not forget the murder of Mr. Stethem, but that we must also understand that the man was a victim of the Stockholm Syndrome. (Walker, L.) In fact, only one of the 36 hostages, Peter Hill, did not develop Stockholm Syndrome. (Graham, et al; Hill & Friend)

The Stockholm Syndrome was named for the terrorist take-over of a bank in Stockholm, Sweden, on August 23, 1973 when three women and one man were held hostage for six days by two ex-convicts. (Cooper; Lang) During that incident, the captives fought against police at the side of their captors. Afterwards, they blamed the police for endangering them, and subsequently, two of the female hostages became engaged to the jailed criminals. (Annin) These bizarre occurrences led to the investigation and definition of the Stockholm Syndrome.

Since then, following numerous hostage-takings, the world has seen former hostages:

- minimize their injuries,
- refuse to participate in prosecuting terrorists,
- raise money for defense counsel (Symonds, Strentz) and

- visit their captors in jail (Symonds, Strentz)-even as long as 2 years after the incident (Strentz)-all the same things battered women do.

While hostages sometimes refuse to prosecute terrorists-even when their assailants are in jail-the public reacts with compassion and understanding. But all too often, when a battered woman is too afraid to assist in prosecuting her batterer-who, unlike terrorists, is out on the street knowing where she and her loved ones are-her recanting and her "refusal" to participate is used as an excuse by some members of the criminal justice system to refuse to protect her and prosecute him.

The bond of interdependence between captive and captor called the Stockholm Syndrome develops "when someone threatens your life, deliberates, and doesn't kill you." (Symonds) The threat against your life can be a threat to your physical existence, or to your psychological survival. The relief arising from the removal of the threat generates intense feelings of gratitude as well as fear, which combine to make captives reluctant to display negative feelings toward the terrorist. This is pathological transference, a kind of "conversion." Recognition that the terrorist/abuser has the power of life and death over them, combined with gratitude that he has let them live, causes a unique change in perspective-the hostage/abuse victim and children come to see the captor/abuser as a "good guy," even a savior because "[t]he victim's need to survive is stronger than his impulse to hate the person who has created his dilemma." (Strentz)

Overwhelmingly grateful to terrorists for giving them life, hostages focus on their perceptions of their captors' kindness, not their brutality. Similarly, battered women convince themselves that the abuser is a good man whose violence stems from problems they can help him solve.

Now, after much study, researchers say that the Stockholm Syndrome "appears to be a universal response to inescapable threat to survival. It is seen in humans and nonhumans, young and old, males and females, and peoples of different cultures. It occurs when animals, human and nonhuman, whose survival is threatened seek to survive." (Graham, et al.a) This bonding to one's abuser has been found in all nine "hostage" groups studied: POW's (Amnesty International), hostages (Graham, et al.c; Soskis & Ochberg; Strentz; Symonds), concentration camp prisoners (Bettelheim; Eisner, cult members (Alexander; Atkins; Bugliosi, with Gentry; Mills; Yee & Layton), civilians in Chinese Communist prisons (Lifton; Rickett & Rickett; Schein with Schneier & Barker), physically and/or emotionally abused children (Alexandera; Coleman; Finkelhor; Kemp & Kemp), incest victims (Hill), battered women (Dutton & Painter; Ehrlich), and pimp-procured prostitutes (Barry). "Even infant, nonhuman social animals, such as birds, dogs, and monkeys, were found to bond to their abusers." (Rajecki et al.; Sackett et al.; Scott; Seay et al.)

Stockholm Syndrome develops when a person is subjected to four conditions (Graham, et al.b):

1. A person is held captive and cannot escape, so her or his life depends on the captor.

The reality of captivity is easy to see in the context of hostages or prisoners because the walls which confine them are made of brick or stone or wood. However, the walls which confine the abuse victim are built from societal attitudes and practical barriers as well as the psychological pressures to which she is subjected every day by her abuser.

A now-familiar example of captivity and isolation while living in the public eye is Nicole Brown Simpson. That the beautiful, wealthy wife of a famous public figure could actually be a victim of domestic violence-the cliché being a low-income, downtrodden hag in a housecoat-electrified America and blasted open the stereotypical image of battered women. Because her image and circumstances are now firmly engraved on the public consciousness, it is easier to evoke thoughts of captivity in the midst of everyday "freedom": imagine slender, delicate Nicole trapped by a man so famous that even when attempting to evade capture, his flight is broadcast on TV, he is cheered by onlookers, and law enforcement authorities permit him to drive home and surrender on his own terms.

Societal Barriers - Many victims ask family, friends, police and/or the courts for protection or help to escape, only to be refused and find that nothing stopped the abuser from punishing them for the attempt. Often it is not only the batterer, but his family and friends, who threaten, harass, intimidate and harm the victim seeking help. Victims all too frequently learn that no one will treat their situation seriously, and they feel as though they have run into a brick wall when they hear:

- "What did you do to provoke him?"
- "Give him another chance. Stand by your man."
- "You made a vow before God to stay with him `in sickness and in health until death do you part.' Clearly he's sick, so it's your duty to stay with him and help him."
- In a 1985 survey of Protestant pastors in the U.S. and Canada on domestic violence, "26% ... agreed that a wife should submit to her husband and trust that God would honor her action by either stopping the abuse or giving her the strength to endure it. About 50% of the pastors expressed concern that the husband's aggression not be overemphasized and used as a justification to break up the marriage. ... According to 21% of these clergy, no amount of abuse would justify a separation." (Alsdurf)
- "It's only a family dispute-I'm not going to arrest him."
- "We're releasing him on his own recognizance."
- "We don't send first-time batterers to jail."
- In 1989, after Nicole Brown Simpson was left with "a cut lip, a swollen and blackened left eye and cheek, and a hand imprint on her neck," O.J. Simpson pleaded no contest to spousal abuse. The judge fined the millionaire \$700, sentenced him to 120 hours of the community service of his choice, and allowed him to receive counseling from the psychiatrist of his choice. (Rimerb) Based on media reports on the Simpson trial, the \$700 fine imposed on Simpson in 1989 paid for approximately 20 minutes of the "dream team." At a 1992 hearing in Vermont, a county State's Attorney addressed the court: "Your honor, this man is accused of two crimes: beating his wife and killing a neighborhood dog. I'm asking a sentence of one to three months for beating his wife-and six to twelve months for killing the dog." In front of a court filled with neighbors outraged by the dog's death, the judge struggled to control herself before speaking. In her silence,

the State's Attorney continued, "After all, your honor, we all know how confusing these domestics are-and in this case, the dog was totally innocent." (Author)

- The strangling with the hands and violence and threats that were described by Karen have been blown way out of proportion as evidenced by the fact that she stayed throughout the four years of marriage." (Blair v. Blair. Reversed by the Vermont Supreme Court on appeal.)

These responses to her appeals for help, repeated over and over, teach the victim that she cannot escape.

Financial Barriers - Another brick in the wall preventing victims from escape is lack of access to money. The abuser controls the family finances to more effectively control his victim because her financial dependence increases his power. As one study found, "[m]ore than half of battered women surveyed stayed with their batterer because they did not feel that they could support themselves and their children." (Sullivan)

Even in the 1990's employed women with college degrees face major barriers when seeking a way to support themselves-with or without children-if they leave an abuser:

- According to figures released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1997, for every dollar in annual salary earned by American men, women make 75 cents. (Lewin) Translated to annual earnings, where a man earned \$30,000, a woman earned \$22,500.
- In 1999, the possession of a bachelor's degree added \$28,000 to a man's salary but only \$9,000 to a woman's. A degree from a high-prestige school contributed \$11,500 to a man's income but subtracted \$2,400 from a woman's." (Angier)
- Many victims without children cannot make it financially, and there is virtually nowhere they can turn for assistance.
- An estimated 40-50% of women in homeless shelters are homeless as a result of fleeing domestic violence. (Horn; Zorzaa)
- If the victim has a job, the abuser's harassment may cause her to lose it. "Battering, not pregnancy, is the main reason women leave the workforce altogether." (Jonesa)
- Lack of access to money makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for even a middle-class woman to afford to take care of herself and the children if she leaves.
- Battered women report that, prior to separation, abusers destroyed an average of \$10,000 in family property.(Harta) In addition, it costs the average victim who must move \$5,000 to relocate. (Harta) But almost half of domestic violence statutes, and many divorce ones, do not include any provisions for restitution (Hartb) and even when the law allows, courts almost never order it, and in the few instances when they do, rarely enforce payment of what they order (NCWFL). (Hartb)

- A prevalent myth about divorce is that women receive generous alimony and child support from former husbands. While this may be true for some, it is far from true for battered women:
 - One year after going to court and being awarded support, 88% of women with full restraining orders had not received any money to support themselves, and 64% had never received any child support. (National Center on Women and Family Law)
 - "[F]athers who do pay [child support] often do so irregularly and incompletely, creating recurrent financial hardship in the children's household; one-fourth to one-third of fathers never make the first court-ordered payment...." (Bode)
- If she has children, she may well be forced to turn to welfare.
 - A 1996 study of Welfare-to-Work programs found a prevalence of current or past domestic violence among women enrolled in the programs from 30% to 75%. (Kenney & Brown)
 - Domestic violence is also a prime reason why women get on welfare in the first place. Preliminary research on a sample of Chicago welfare recipients found that nearly half mentioned abuse as a factor in their need for welfare. Officials at some battered women's shelters report from 60 percent to 95 percent of the women they help spend some time on welfare as they struggle to recover from years of abuse. (Raphael)

The reality is that women and children do not fare well on public assistance. For example, in June 1997 in Vermont, supposedly one of the states supplying the maximum in welfare benefits, the annual Aid to Needy Families with Children grant for a parent and two children was \$7,200. (Anderson)

So victimized mothers have to think long and hard about the ramifications of leaving the abuse. They worry, very realistically, that a lower standard of living after separation or divorce will adversely affect their children's self-esteem and their future education options, or will result in increased danger to the children from a new environment: substandard housing, exposure to drugs, gangs, etc.

Children - When there are children, the situation becomes extraordinarily complicated. Children increase women's economic dependency on men; children make leaving, even for short periods, extremely difficult; children often miss their father, begging the victim to take them home and not break up their family; courts routinely order visitation, thus empowering batterers to use their children as hostages to control mothers, as well as providing them with ongoing access to mothers; and fleeing with children makes it harder to keep a new location secret from a vengeful batterer. (Ptacek)

Most horrifying of all to the victim is the abuser's most common and most dreadful threat: he will win custody of the children, or simply snatch them.

- "25% of the abusive male partners of battered women shelter residents had kidnapped their children, 35% threatened to take the children in a custody action...." (Liss & Stahly)

His threat to gain custody through the legal process can easily be seen as plausible when one imagines the testimony and demeanor of the parties in a custody proceeding. The abuser, who controls the family's finances, often has an attorney who prepares him for testifying in accordance with the specific behaviors judges are trained to look for in assessing a witness' veracity. They are taught that truthful witnesses make good eye contact with the judge and the attorneys, they speak calmly but with assurance, and they tell a consistent story which doesn't change under cross examination.

Remember, the abuser is someone who has spent the last 5, 10, maybe 20 years denying his violence. He has denied it to friends, family, co-workers, police, maybe even judges, his victim, his children, and himself. In a way, he has been rehearsing for this day all those years. So he says, "Your honor, I'm a decent, ordinary man. I would never hit a woman. She's just upset/crazy/vindictive/not taking her medication." Due to years of practice denying his violence, and his attorney's preparation for testimony, he behaves precisely as judges expect a truthful witness to behave.

More often unrepresented, the victim, like her abuser, has spent years denying his violence, trained in compliance by his abuse. In contrast to her abuser, whose years of denial perfectly prepare him for this moment, the victim must overcome her years of training in order to testify. This may be the first time she has spoken publicly about the degrading abuse to which she has been subjected. Wishing she didn't have to reveal the degradation she's undergone, she tends to speak softly so only the judge will hear. Shamed and afraid of the blame she'll see in the eyes of onlookers, she may avoid eye contact. As a victim of trauma forced to relive those experiences in order to testify about them, she is likely to omit details or break down on the witness stand. So who is the judge more likely to believe? This dynamic may well account for researchers' findings that, when fathers fight for custody, they are very likely to win.

- One Los Angeles study found that 63% of the fathers who fought for judicial custody were successful. (Weitzman & Dixon)
- Chesler (1991) found that fathers who fought for custody won 70% of the time, whether or not they were absentee or violent fathers. Further, Dr. Chesler found that:
 - 12% of the mothers and 37% of the fathers she studied kidnapped their children.
 - All of the maternal kidnappers were primary caretakers and had been prevented by the fathers from seeing their children.
 - 14% of the paternal kidnappers had been involved in primary child care. None had been prevented by the mothers from seeing their children.
 - None of these fathers was economically, legally or custodially punished.
 - Of the smaller number of maternal kidnappers, 80% were both found and punished.

The threat of abduction is also a credible scenario, given the number of children's pictures we've all seen on television and on milk cartons.

- More than 40 children are abducted by a parent each hour in this country. Most of these abductions are perpetrated by fathers or people acting on their behalf, including step-mothers and relatives. Fifty four percent of these abductions are short-term manipulations around custody orders, but 46% involve concealing the whereabouts of the child or taking the child out of state. (Finkelhor, et al.)
- More than 54% of abductions occur in the context of domestic violence. (Greif & Hegar)

"Each publicized custody battle terrorizes married, divorced, and unwed mothers in non-measurable and unknown ways." (Chesler)

Scarcity of Available Services - Services for abuse victims are poorly funded by federal and state governments, and thus are not available everywhere, and are generally offered by networks of volunteers.

- In 1990, the city of Baltimore spent twice as much money to care for animals in the zoo as the state of Maryland spent on its 18 shelters for victims of domestic violence and their children. (Gibbs)
- In FY 2000, the advocates of Vermont's 16 domestic and sexual violence programs took 14,772 crisis calls, provided emotional support to victims 22,580 times, supported victims in Family Court 7,379 times, and provided 11,849 nights of shelter to 542 adults and children. That year, the State of Vermont allocated a total of \$587,230 to support the programs' services. At an average advocate salary of \$11.16 per hour, the State's \$72.63 per victim served paid for 6.5 hours of services for each victim. (Vermont Network)
- "There are no governmental protective services for battered women. Furthermore, over one half of all counties in the U.S. have no battered women's programs." (Jackson)

The Danger of Leaving - If his victim does succeed in escaping, the batterer often resorts to even more serious violence because he has lost the very people his abuse is aimed at keeping and controlling-his partner and children. As statistics show, ending the relationship does not mean ending the violence:

- A National Survey found the victimization rate of women separated from husbands was about 25 times higher than that of married women. (Bachman & Saltzman)
- In a Virginia study, 91% of attacks on legal or common-law female spouses (10 out of 11) were caused by their threat of leaving their partner. (Showalter, et al.)
- "[A]bout 75% of the calls to law enforcement for intervention and assistance in domestic violence occur after separation from batterers." (Langan & Innes)

Yet despite the danger, most victims make many efforts to escape.

- "[T]he majority of battered women eventually leave their abuser." (Campbella)

- Kirkwood's (1993) study of battered women who had recently left abusers found that the women went to enormous lengths to protect themselves, efforts that were not always successful. Women tried to create invisibility by removing all possibility that they could be tracked to their current addresses by the former partners: Family and friends were advised to claim that they had no knowledge of their whereabouts if asked. Women went to extreme measures to keep their names out of telephone directories and off post-boxes and door-plates. Women described how they paid phone, electricity and gas bills under aliases to remove any indication of their existence from all records which might reveal their addresses.
- While research on marriage (Gottman) shows that the divorce rate in the general population is typically from 2 to 5% over a two year period, Jacobson and Gottman found that, within two years, 38% of the women in the 140 couples they studied had left abusive husbands. (Gottman)

But some men would rather kill "their" women and/or themselves than see the women make a new life. "Homicidal husbands are often noted to have threatened to do exactly what they did, should their wives ever leave them, and they often explain their homicides as responses to the intolerable stimulus of the wife's departure." (Allen) Victims see these stories in the press and on television and recognize that escape may end in their death. Statistics verify that battered women's lives do indeed depend on their batterers. So, while ending the relationship doesn't mean ending the violence, it can mean ending your life.

- The number one risk factor in intimate homicides is separation. Recent separation rather than divorce per se is the crucial risk factor in lethal violence against the female partner. (Crawford & Gartner)
- "Approximately 70% of murdered women are killed by a husband, lover or estranged same." (Campbell)
- In a 10 year study of Vermont homicides, 54% of women slain by partners were tracked down and killed after having ended the relationship. (Martinez)
- The most common type of homicide-suicides, representing fully 50% to 75% of all murder-suicides in the U.S., typically involved a male between 18 and 60 who physically abused his girlfriend or wife, feared her infidelity or estrangement, murdered her, and committed suicide, usually by firearm. (Marzuk, et al.)

It is clear that ending the relationship does not necessarily mean ending the violence. So, the real question is not, "Why do women stay?" but "Why won't batterers let them go?"

2. The captive is isolated from outsiders so that the only other perspective available to her or him is that of the captor.

Hostage-takers routinely keep information about the outside world's response to their kidnapping from captives to keep them totally dependent. Like terrorists, abusers isolate their victims. Isolation is the back-drop against which the entire drama is played because in isolation, all the victim hears is the negative messages of the abuser. Abuse victims are isolated in many ways:

Geographical Isolation - In rural areas, she may be isolated because she lives at the end of a road or in the back woods. There are few things more terrifying than living with someone violent, knowing that no matter how loudly you scream, no one will hear you. No one will come. No one will call 9-1-1 when the batterer rips out your phone.

Social Isolation takes many forms:

Family/Friends/Work - Many batterers control who the victim's friends are and who she spends time with, determining who the couple will socialize with, or whether they will socialize at all. If he is angry, threatening, violent, or is even merely argumentative in front of others, they avoid associating with the couple. Thus the woman is left even more alone so the abuser's demeaning messages become her reality because they are all she hears. Kept totally under his thumb, she cannot bond with anyone else. As Nicole Brown Simpson's sister said of her after her separation from O.J., "For the first time in her life, she was able to have her own friends." (Rimera)

Many abusers are obsessively jealous and possessive. They conduct surveillance on their partners, "following [them] around, interrogating the children, eavesdropping on telephone conversations, and making frequent telephone calls to monitor [their] activities. ... Closely related to this is extreme possessiveness which is often manifested by the abuser's unwillingness to accept the end of the relationship." (Adams)

- "David Bursin, a friend of Mrs. [Nicole Brown] Simpson's, ... said Mr. Simpson kept an eye on Mrs. Simpson after the divorce. 'It was common knowledge that he followed her,' Mr. Bursin said. 'He would show up at places. She would have to calm him down.'" (Rimera) According to witnesses, O.J. Simpson "once barged into an L.A. restaurant where [Nicole] was dining with five others. 'He said, "My name is O.J. and we're not divorced yet.'" (Turque, et al.)

"Women ... are subjected to ongoing harassment and pressure tactics including multiple phone calls, homicide or suicide threats, uninvited visits at home or work, and manipulation of children. ... Some abusers use their children as emissaries who are responsible for spying on mom's activities or for convincing mom to 'let Daddy come home.'" (Adams)

Often when a victim has left her abuser, his harassment leads to her losing her job.

- Batterers harass 74% of employed battered women at work, in person or over the telephone, causing 56% to be late for work at least five times a month; 28% to leave early at least five days a month; 54% to miss at least three full days of work a month; and 20% to lose their jobs. (New York Victim Service Agency; Schechter & Gray)

Religion - Most organized religions are based on the premise that suffering on earth is the prerequisite for eternal life in Heaven. Christians are taught, "God never gives you a burden greater than you can bear." They are told to carry the cross of their pain and suffering just as Christ did, that suffering on earth is the price you must pay to earn eternal life in Heaven. In the 1985 survey of Protestant pastors in the U.S. and Canada on domestic violence referred to earlier, "26% ... agreed that a wife should submit to her husband and trust that God would honor her action by either stopping the abuse or giving her the strength to endure it." (Alsdurf)

Romantic Relationships - The batterer repeatedly tells his victim, "If you leave me, no one will want you." Over time, she comes to believe that and, when thinking about leaving, she has to confront-and accept-the very real possibility that she will have to face life alone: never again to have another relationship, never to have a good male role model for her children, never to have someone to help push her car out of a snowdrift-all frightening options for someone who has been taught that she is worthless, useless and undesirable.

In 1986, Newsweek reported that single women were "more likely to be killed by a terrorist" than to marry. (Salholz) Though now known to be statistically inaccurate, this information was widely reported in the media and is remembered and believed by many women, thus forming another brick in the wall of isolation.

The Isolation of Stereotypes - Society's stereotypes reinforced by the abuser's psychological brainwashing form a powerfully effective section in the wall of isolation. In an effort to evade a realization of their personal vulnerability to being victimized, the public accepts victim-blaming stereotypes about crime victims in general (Bard & Sangrey), and abuse victims in particular. For example, living under the constant threat of violence is usually referred to as "being in a violent relationship"-as though the violence was due to the relationship rather than its being the batterer's choice.

One of the most widespread stereotypes is: Women are masochists-they ask for it-they stay because they like being beaten., a myth believed by people who know little or nothing about the reality of battering. Battered women who are still hiding the violence of their home lives hear this "common wisdom" from friends, family, co-workers and the public so often that many become convinced of its truth, and believe that people will look down on them and be unwilling to help. Taught first by batterers and then by society that the violence is their fault, shame and fear keep victims silent. So, many stay in the relationship, afraid to turn to anyone for help for fear of being rejected and despised, and afraid that the batterer will learn about their reaching out and that the violence will get worse.

"The propensity to fault the character of the victim can be seen even in the case of politically organized mass murder. The aftermath of the Holocaust witnessed a protracted debate regarding the 'passivity' of the Jews and their 'complicity' in their fate. But the historian Lucy Dawidowicz points out that 'complicity' and 'cooperation' are terms that apply to situations of free choice. They do not have the same meaning in situations of captivity." (Herman)

Another common stereotype about battered women is the "Bad Faith" scenario. This stereotypical woman is described by members of the justice system as using and abusing the abuse prevention process to manipulate and punish her male partner.

The danger of this stereotype is shown by the case of Tracey Thurman. Because the Torrington police saw Ms. Thurman as a stereotype-one of those women who abuse the system instead of as an individual, they were blinded to her real danger-and she was disfigured and partially paralysed for life-and they had to pay her \$1.9 million in damages.

While some women, abused and not abused, certainly do "abuse" the system, and while one finds evil among some members of any group, the generally held stereotypes about battered women, like all other stereotypes, are not true of the vast majority of victims.

Isolation strengthens and enforces batterers' use of the following tactics, tactics defined as psychological torture by Amnesty International, to demoralize and brainwash victims because victims have no one to whom they can turn for a "reality check." Yet while world opinion can be mobilized and sanctions imposed on countries using these tactics on prisoners and dissidents, batterers, who use the same tactics against women, are rarely given meaningful sentences. These tactics form the cornerstone of the brainwashing used on POW's, political dissidents and hostages as well as battered women:

Verbal Humiliation and Degradation - Each of us forms our self-image from how others respond to us. The more important a person is to us, the more we value and rely on their opinion of us. So when our partner, the person we want most to value and love us, offers criticism of what we do, we take the criticism to heart. Since none of us is perfect and we want to please our partner, we don't recognize that, as his/her criticism becomes constant and increasingly personal, it becomes verbal abuse.

Women in our society are taught to believe that their partner's love is supposed to be the most important thing in their lives. Success, wealth and prestige are secondary to finding a partner and keeping his love. So, when her abuser rejects her, the victim has to admit to herself that she has failed in making what society taught her was the single most important choice in her life, that of a husband or lover. Thus, she has to overcome the socialization of a lifetime as well as her love for her partner, in order to discount his opinion of her.

Verbal humiliation and degradation is not simply foul language. It is unrelenting criticism and attacks on the victim's worth as a human being. Who she is and what she does are never good enough. It is not only the viciousness of these attacks that makes this tactic so effective-it is the constant repetition of the batterer's denigrating messages. Repeated humiliation is the batterer's strongest weapon. The messages that she is utterly worthless, and the cause of his rage and violence become part of the victim's self-image due to his constant repetition of the same theme-delivered verbally and reinforced with his fists.

The children, who dare not confront their father and who hear his constant refrain that the victim made him violent, often blame their mother for not avoiding the violence that terrifies them: "Why did you do that, Mom? You knew it would make him mad." Having no safe release for their fear, they may take the side of the parent they see as stronger, wanting to be on his side to escape his violence themselves.

Self-blame is a common reaction to being traumatized-whether through assaults by a loved one or by a crime committed by a stranger. (Bard & Sangrey) But in addition to a victim's natural feelings of self-blame (it is easier to cope with feelings of guilt than the fear of reoccurrence [Miller & Porter]), the abuse victim's self-blame is actively stimulated by her abuser, and her suffering minimized:

- "If we had a problem, it's because I loved her so much. ... Like all long-term relationships, we had a few downs and ups. ... All this press talk about a rocky relationship was no more than what every long-term relationship experiences. ... At times I have felt like a battered husband or boyfriend but I loved her." (Simpson)

Threats of Harm - The abuser threatens to harm the victim, the children, her family, pets, treasured personal belongings; he threatens to further isolate or abandon her and the children; to snatch the children or to kill her, the children or himself. These threats often include detailed descriptions of how he will harm or torture her loved ones.

- On Mother's Day, 1991, 3 year old Poppy Tinsman was shot in the head by her father, Peter Tinsman, in retaliation for custody being awarded to his ex-wife, whom he'd abused during the marriage. (Martinez)
- One study of battered women found that, of the women who had pets, "80% had experienced their partners' maltreatment of pets." (Arkow) In another, 18% of the women with pets reported that concern for their animals' welfare had prevented them from coming to the shelter sooner. (Ascione)
- Battered women report that, prior to separation, their abusers destroyed an average of \$10,000 in family property, including furniture, clothing, photographs and toys. (Harta)

Threats can also be non-verbal, as in the case of batterers who smash their fists into the wall next to their victim's head, a clear threat that "you'll be next." Victims also report that their batterers take out and clean their guns during arguments. Of course, it is extremely rare for a court to see these actions as justifying the grant of an order of protection.

In the beginning, the abuser's threats are usually ominously vague, and he may not carry them out. But gradually, "mere" threats alone become insufficient to maintain control over partner and children, so he begins to carry out his threats. When he does act on his threats of physical violence, studies show that his victim's likelihood of injury is great:

- Women suffering violent victimizations were almost twice as likely to be injured if the offender was an intimate (59%) compared to a stranger (27%), and almost twice as likely to receive injuries requiring medical care if the attacker was an intimate (27%) compared to a stranger (14%). (Bachman)
- "Domestic violence is the largest single cause of injury among women seen at hospital emergency rooms...." (Stark & Flitcraft)
- As many as half of domestic 'simple assaults' actually involved injury as serious as or more serious than 90% of all rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults. (Langan & Innes)

Because she never knows whether or when he will act on his threats, the victim is kept constantly off balance—a key factor in brainwashing.

Enforcement of Trivial Demands - This tactic forces the victim to develop the habit of complying with whatever demands the abuser chooses to make. Her life is governed by long lists of demands and rules: how clean the house must be, how the children are to be disciplined or dressed or fed, having to account for how she spends her time, where she goes, who she sees, etc. Whatever a batterer's demands, when they are not met, he demonstrates his power with a variety of physical and psychological punishments. The victim lives in a continual atmosphere of impending doom.

Monopolizing Perceptions - The abuser creates an environment so dangerous that the victim becomes totally focused on remaining safe here and now. Monopolization of perception is the psychological state which results from living in an atmosphere of fear and impending punishment created through the use of the psychologically manipulative tactics discussed above by themselves or in combination with physical assaults.

Because his rage is so unpredictable, the victim protects herself and the children by managing the home in accordance with his ever-changing demands. She focuses her time and energy on efforts to control the home environment to pacify him: controlling the children, pets and visitors; attempting to anticipate his whims and assuage his frustrations; and suppressing her fear and rage, which, if revealed, will lead to violent punishment.

Taught that they can be punished for virtually anything they say or do, the victim and children become afraid to make choices, to do anything on their own. For abuse victims and their children, as well as POW's and hostages, all aspects of life relate only to how the batterer/captor will react. They "walk on eggshells," constantly trying to read the captor's mind to anticipate his wishes and deflect his anger. Victims become totally absorbed in arranging every aspect of their lives to keep him calm, a life in which planning for escape can become almost impossible. "It's hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel when your eyes are swollen shut." (Brown)

Since abusers use precisely the same techniques as terrorists, it is completely logical that battered women suffer the same psychological effects as hostages.

Subject to these tactics on a daily basis, victims also isolate themselves out of shame, believing they have failed their partner and thus are failing at what society has taught them are the most important roles a woman can assume-wife, mother and homemaker. Trying do better, but never succeeding in ending the beatings, filled with despair, they become depressed and apathetic. Abusers tell them the abuse is their fault, and they hear from both families, "You've made your bed, now lie in it." Even the children, who may only understand that Dad is always right and Mom is always wrong, and who dare not confront the abuser, release their tension and fear by blaming their mother for not pleasing him and avoiding the violence that terrifies them.

The tremendous isolation in which the victim lives causes her to derive too much of her identity and self-esteem from the batterer, so when he rejects her with verbal degradation and beatings, the entire foundation of her self-esteem is demolished. Her learned belief in her unworthiness and her blame for the violence makes her isolate herself from family and friends who may fear him and blame her for not keeping the violence in check. "Outsiders who don't want to 'get involved' because they fear the batterer nonetheless expect the battered woman to stand up to him." (Graham, et al.a)

Walled in by outsiders' attitudes, victims learn that there is nowhere to turn for support, much less assistance. The victim is forced to adopt the abuser's perspective of her because she has found that when she reaches out for a different viewpoint, she is too often rebuffed.

Eventually, the mental cage the abuser has erected around the victim becomes as strong as the walls which confine and isolate the hostage.

3. The captor threatens to kill the victim and is perceived as having the capability to do so.

Threats of death are a nearly invariable feature of life with an abuser. And the almost universal threat of batterers who kill their victims is the chilling: "If I can't have you, no one will." Because we see this threat repeated over and over in media reports about domestic murders, victims are well aware of the danger represented by such threats-and abusers recognize the power they can gain by making the same threat. For example, advocates in Vermont found that within a week of O.J. Simpson's being charged with the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, abuse victims were reporting that their abusers were threatening to "O.J." them. Yet attorneys and judges disparage the level of danger:

- "I find references as bland and vague as 'I am afraid that if my husband finds out about this hearing that he will kill me'; a popular idiom used by many without regard to its seriousness...if indeed [the threat] was made at all and amounts to anything more than the recitation of a popular idiom by the petitioner...." (Detora)
- In response, a Supreme Court Rules Committee proposed to deny ex parte relief to victims whose abusers have attorneys, saying that, although giving defendants advance notice may increase the risk of harm to the plaintiff, "the same cannot be said of granting the defendant's counsel the opportunity to be heard, particularly if the notice to counsel is by telephone and occurs immediately prior to or during the court's hearing on the abuse petition. This will give counsel the opportunity to argue against the request or against those aspects of the requested relief which appear unwarranted...." [Underlining in the original.] (Reporter's)
- One study found that "among assaultive men arrested, convicted and sentenced, less than 1% (0.9%) served any time in jail. Yet judges who dispense 'justice' so lightly to assaultive men have been known to castigate women for wasting the court's time, to order battered women to make up with their husbands and to laugh women out of court. They have been known to set free on minimal bail men who have already attempted to kill their wives or girlfriends, and then to say when the murder is done 'There's just no way of predicting these things.'" (Jonesb)

But statistics show the reality of these threats:

- In the U.S. in 1993, of homicide victims slain by spouses or boy/girlfriends, 72% (1,531) were women murdered by husbands or boyfriends. (U.S. Dept. of Justice)
- Law enforcement authorities believe that 100% of the women murdered in Vermont in 1993 died at the hands of a current or former husband or boyfriend. (Martinez)

- In Vermont, from 1990 through 1999, of the adults killed in solved homicides in domestic situations, 85% (28) of 33 women died at the hands of current or former husbands or boyfriends. (Martinez)
- "In six states studied, male domestic killers comprised slightly less than 12% of death-sentenced males, while female domestic killers comprised almost half of all women sentenced to death in the United States from 1978 to 1989." (Rapaport)

So victims may decide that it is safer to stay and endure an occasional beating than to leave and be murdered-an entirely reasonable choice. As one victim of abuse told a Vermont audience in 1982, "Telling me to just leave is like asking me to turn my back on a loaded gun."

The victim's focus narrows to her and her children's short-term safety rather than long-term security through escape. At this point, the victim is her batterer's prisoner.

4. The threatening person is perceived as showing some degree of kindness to the victim being threatened.

Perceived acts of kindness are the keystone of Stockholm Syndrome. The Syndrome does not develop unless the captor acts in ways that victims interpret as kind. If the captor/batterer is "just" violent, victims respond with hatred. But if the captor/batterer shows some kindness, in the midst of fear the victim submerges the hatred s/he feels in response to the terror, concentrating on his/her captor's good side in order to protect him/herself. "Having found some hope that the abuser will let her or him live, the victim tries to enlarge upon and intensify any perceived caring felt by the abuser toward the victim, and thereby to turn the abuser into someone who cares too much about the victim to continue the terrorization." (Graham, et al.a) Like other hostages, abuse victims concentrate on pleasing their captors in hope of the same effect.

In many abusive relationships, the abuser is genuinely contrite and apologetic after an abusive incident. This is called the Honeymoon Stage of the Cycle of Violence. (Walker, L.E.) Following a period during which the tension between the couple builds to a violent explosion, the abuser, filled with remorse, promises with genuine sincerity to change. Because she knows him so well, when she looks into his eyes, she can see the sincerity of his repentance. Wanting to believe him, and convinced by his very real sincerity, the victim convinces herself that he will change. So the abuser convinces the victim and everyone else (including himself) that he will stop being violent. He excuses his violence by blaming stress or alcohol or drugs. At the same time he denies full responsibility, he also justifies his wrong-doing-primarily by blaming the victim for provoking him: "If you were a better wife, I wouldn't lose my temper."

Often, the psychological confusion and shock of the traumatic incident cause both victim and perpetrator to minimize, deny or suppress the details of the violence. The couple rebonds in warmth and intimacy. It is at this time that the victim is most thoroughly victimized psychologically because his manipulation of her emotions leaves her feeling responsible both for him and for her own victimization.

It must be remembered that, like most relationships, when it began, the relationship was probably satisfying. Since no one is 100% bad, or 100% good, even despite the battering, there may be many facets of the relationship which remain rewarding, and with many batterers who never progress beyond the stage of moderate assaults, the attacks may come to be seen by the victim as "minor," and may occur infrequently.

Rebuffed on every side as she sought assistance from outsiders, the victim grasps at the abuser's promises like a life raft. She may have nothing else.

The bonding between captive and captor called the Stockholm Syndrome "is no longer considered unusual by professionals who negotiate with hostage-takers. In fact, they encourage its development, for it improves the chances of the hostages surviving (Kuleshnyk; Ochberg), despite the fact that it means the officials can no longer count on the cooperation of the hostages in working for their own release or in later prosecuting the hostage-takers. (Kuleshnyk)" (Graham & Rawlingsb)

As shown above, all four of the conditions which cause Stockholm Syndrome in hostages are recreated by abusers within intimate relationships. Although the Stockholm Syndrome is induced in both hostages and battered women by virtually identical treatment, the way these two groups are treated by the outside world is very different:

- Public authorities sympathize with hostages, seeing them as having little control over their situation, and media coverage generates public sympathy. In contrast, abuse victims are blamed for their situation: "She deserved/provoked it." "Why doesn't she just leave?" "She stays because she likes it."
- Authorities negotiate for the release of hostages. Hostages are generally released from captivity or rescued by the State. Battered women, however, must find a way to leave captivity more or less on their own, and batterers are far more rarely imprisoned than stranger kidnappers and hostage-takers.
- Negotiations for the release of hostages are not dependent on their proving that they are targets of physical violence nor that they did not desire or provoke it. But unless a battered woman can prove she was subject to life-threatening violence, the legal and criminal justice systems are often unwilling to intervene.
- Governments attempt to capture and punish hostage-takers while abusers are rarely punished, even for decades of abuse, unless the woman or children are killed. (Graham, et al.b)
- Hostages know that their government will work to rescue them. Battered women often report being urged by their children, family members, friends and clergy to remain in the situation out of sympathy for the troubled abuser.

In talking about Flight 847, we saw how the businessmen's attitudes changed in seventeen days. The bank captives in Stockholm became their captors' allies in only six days. In contrast, a batterer has months or years-sometimes decades-to use precisely the same tactics to terrorize a victim made infinitely more vulnerable because from the beginning she loves him.

One woman eloquently described the victim's dilemma when she said, "It's hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head."

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