



A Survivor's Handbook

Domestic Violence
Sexual Assault
Stalking



Working Against Violence, Inc.



Bill of Rights for a Survivor of Domestic Abuse

1. I will not be blamed or shamed for having been a victim.
2. I have the right to be happy.
3. I have the right to be free of all forms of abuse: physical, mental, emotional, psychological or sexual.
4. I have the right to feel my feelings.
5. I have the right to take care of myself.
6. I have the right to have my needs met.
7. I have the right to make choices.
8. I have the right to be loved in a healthy way.
9. I have the right to live without fear.
10. I have the right to express myself.
11. I have the right to forgive myself for things in the past.
12. I have the right to make a better life for myself.

From *Healing Your Life: Recovery from Domestic Abuse*
by Candace A. Hennekens

**"People hit and abuse family members
because they can."**

Richard J. Gelles, *Intimate Violence in Families*; 1997

ABUSE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE
UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE AND
IT IS AGAINST THE LAW!



*Perpetrators need to accept the fact
that they have a problem and take
responsibility for their behavior.*

This booklet is published as a service by:

Working Against Violence, Inc.

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Section 1: What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of **coercive** tactics perpetrators use to obtain and maintain **control** and **power** over their partners.

It is an **assault** or **threat** by one family or household member (current or former) against another.

Household members are **defined by law** as:

- 1) Spouses;
- 2) former spouses;
- 3) persons who have lived together or currently living together;
- 4) persons who have had a child together;
- 5) persons related by blood, adoption or law.



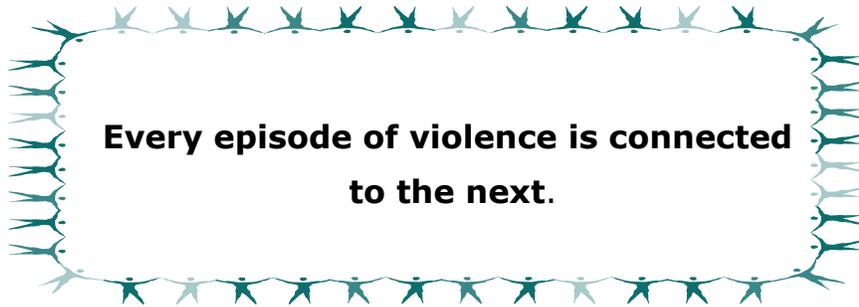
Tactics of **control** include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse;
- Emotional and verbal abuse;
- Isolation;
- Threats and intimidation;
- Sexual abuse and rape.



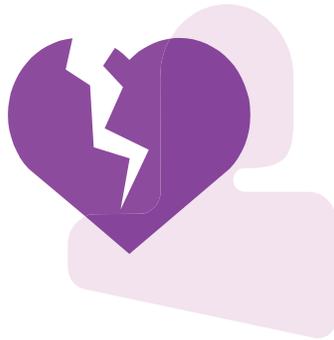
The existence of **emotional** and **verbal abuse, isolation, intimidation** and **threats** within relationships may indicate that **physical abuse** will follow. **Without intervention**, domestic violence never gets better and never stays the same. Domestic violence **ALWAYS** escalates over time.

Domestic violence is about the **power** and **control** your **perpetrator** has over you. **Acts of violence** are not random and are not initiated by people who are out of control or unaware of what is being done.



Every act is **terrifying** with a consequence. The **intent** of the perpetrator's assaulting behavior is **systematic terrorization**, resulting in **domination** over the victim.





Who is affected?

Families, children, and entire communities are affected. Victims can be anyone: young or old, rich or poor, men or women. Violence is not correlated with race, religion, income, education, profession or sexual orientation.



When does it occur?

Domestic abuse can occur at **any time, any place** and for **any reason**.

Perpetrators select the time, tactics, intensity and duration of assaults. This keeps victims off guard and at the mercy of their partner.

“Why do victims stay?”

This question **re-victimizes** the victim.

- ◆ It **avoids** looking at the **behavior** and **intentions** of the perpetrator.
- ◆ Some people believe if the victim really wanted to leave, he or she could just get up and go.
- ◆ This assumption **overlooks** the **barriers** that prevent victims from leaving.



Barriers To Consider

- **Economic dependence:** Lack of equality in pay between the sexes in our society; lack of housing and childcare; greater stigma attached to public assistance; and lack of financial resources (no money or no job).
- **Fear of greater physical danger:** To the victim and/or the children if the attempt to leave is made. Threats may also be made to friends and family.
- **Fear of emotional damage to children:** Social pressure to “stay together for the sake of the children” or “children need both parents”.
- **Fear of custody fight over the children:** Often threatened by a perpetrator - “I’ll take the children away” or “you’ll never see them again.”
- **Isolation** resulting in lack of support from family or friends.
- **Lack of information** about alternatives or no resources available in the area.
- **Cultural and religious** restraints.
- **Love of the person:** A strong commitment to marriage; a desire to make the relationship work.
- **Hope** that the perpetrator will change.
- **Fear that the perpetrator won’t be able to survive alone:** There may even be threats of suicide.
- **Guilt and humiliation related to the abuse:** Domestic abuse damages self-esteem and self-worth.
- **Lack of support and faith** in law enforcement.
- **Myths about abuse often blame the victim:** A victim may have accepted the blame.
- **History of family violence and acceptance of violence as a usual course in relationships:** Victims may not realize that they have the right of not being abused.
- **First time experiencing violence:** A victim may believe he/she is the only person experiencing this problem and may be embarrassed to talk about it.
- **A victim may doubt her/his own sanity:** Accepting the perpetrator’s reality.
- **Fear of Death:** A woman’s greatest time of risk is when she leaves her perpetrator. Her risk of death increases 7 times in the first 7 days.

Myths about Domestic Violence

Myth: Domestic violence is rare.

Fact: An estimated 3-4 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year. In South Dakota, over 6,500 individuals report being assaulted each year—this is 10% of the total population of South Dakota.

Myth: Domestic violence is confined to the lower class.

Fact: Studies of domestic violence consistently have found that domestic violence occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, religion, ethnicity or educational level.

Myth: Alcohol and/or drug abuse is the real cause of violence in the home.

Fact: Alcohol and drug abuse offer the perpetrator an excuse to evade responsibility for their behavior. Domestic violence and substance abuse are two different problems that should be treated separately.

Myth: Abused persons like being hit - Otherwise they would leave.

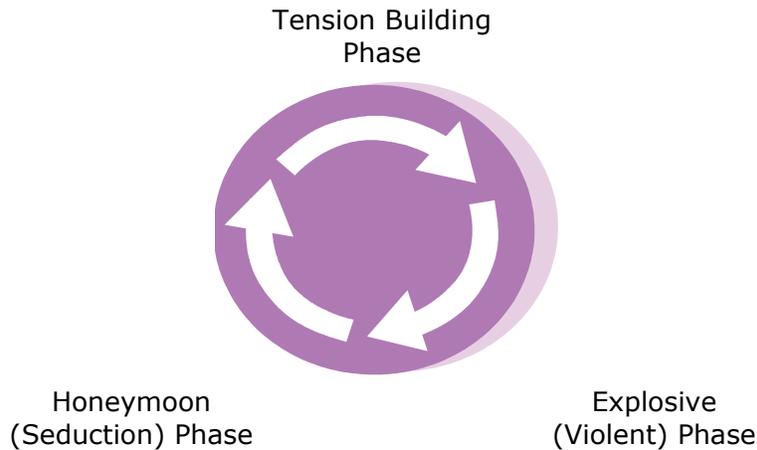
Fact: The most common response to domestic violence: "**Why don't they just leave?**" This question ignores economic and social realities facing many women and men. Perpetrators escalate their violence when the victims try to leave, show signs of independence, or have left.

Myth: Domestic Violence is usually a one time, isolated occurrence

Fact: Domestic violence is a pattern and includes the repeated use of numerous tactics. Physical violence is just one of these tactics. The various forms of abuse helps the perpetrator maintain power and control over their spouses and partners.

Power and Control

The cycle of violence (Three Phases)



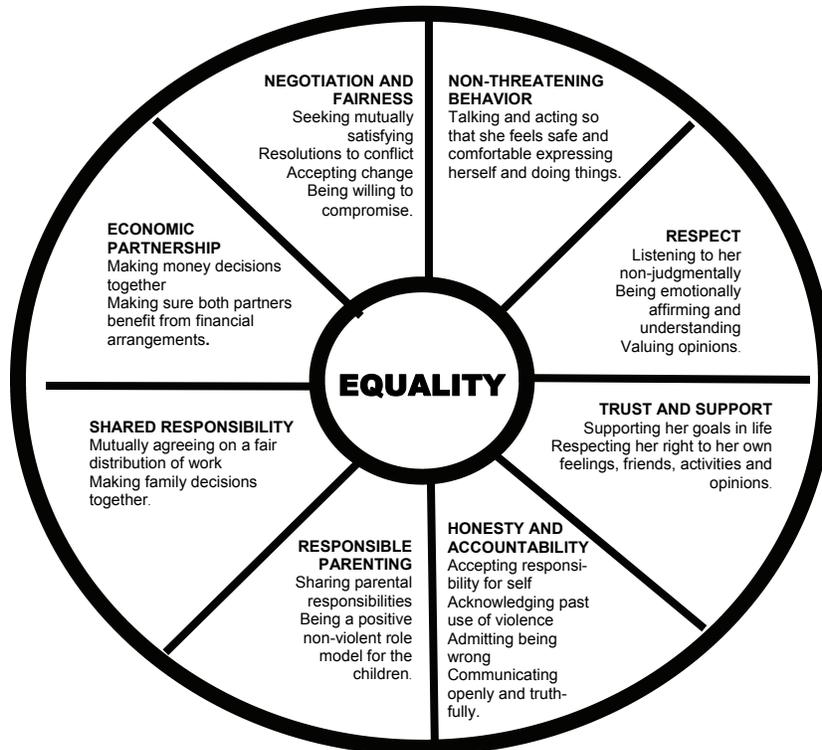
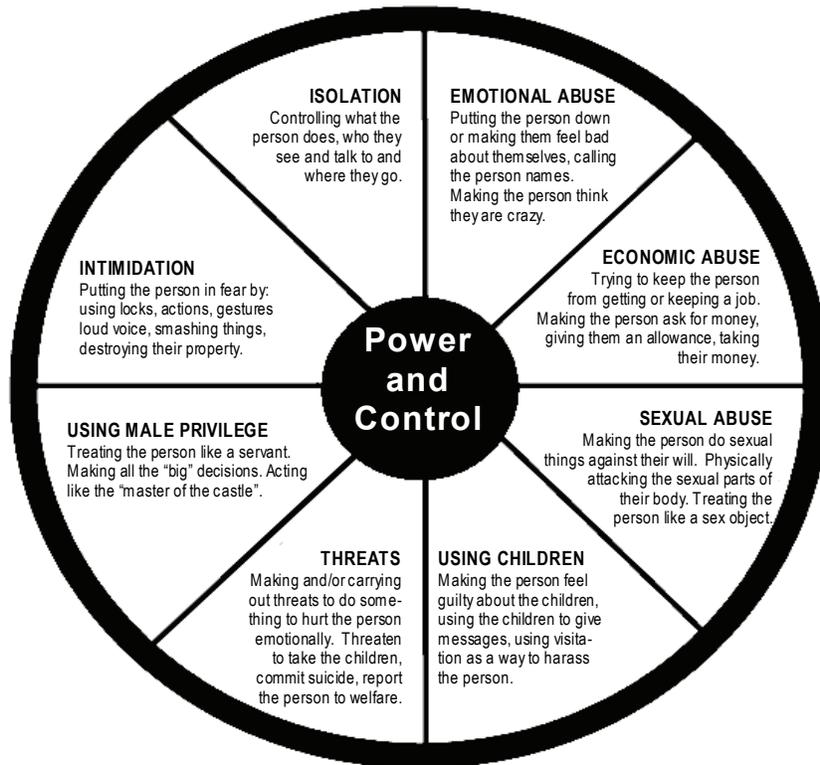
Domestic violence has a consistent pattern of behavior that continually repeats itself. As time goes on, and without proper intervention, the pattern repeats more frequently and the violence becomes more severe.

Tension building phase: Commonly described as feelings of "walking on egg shells." The victim knows that things are not going well. The perpetrator is edgy and easily agitated. The victim tries to manipulate his or her surroundings by being extra pleasing (cooking, keeping the house clean, making the kids behave) during this time to appease the perpetrator.

Explosive (violent) phase: This is when someone gets hurt. Verbal fighting has occurred, and the perpetrator uses some type of physical violence. When the victim is in crisis mode, the police are sometimes called.

Honeymoon (seduction) phase: The perpetrator is remorseful to varying extents; promises are made and sometimes gifts are given. The perpetrator becomes scared of losing control of his or her partner and will try whatever means necessary to keep the victim in the relationship.







Perpetrators

Men **or** women can be perpetrators.



Victims and perpetrators often have common characteristics:

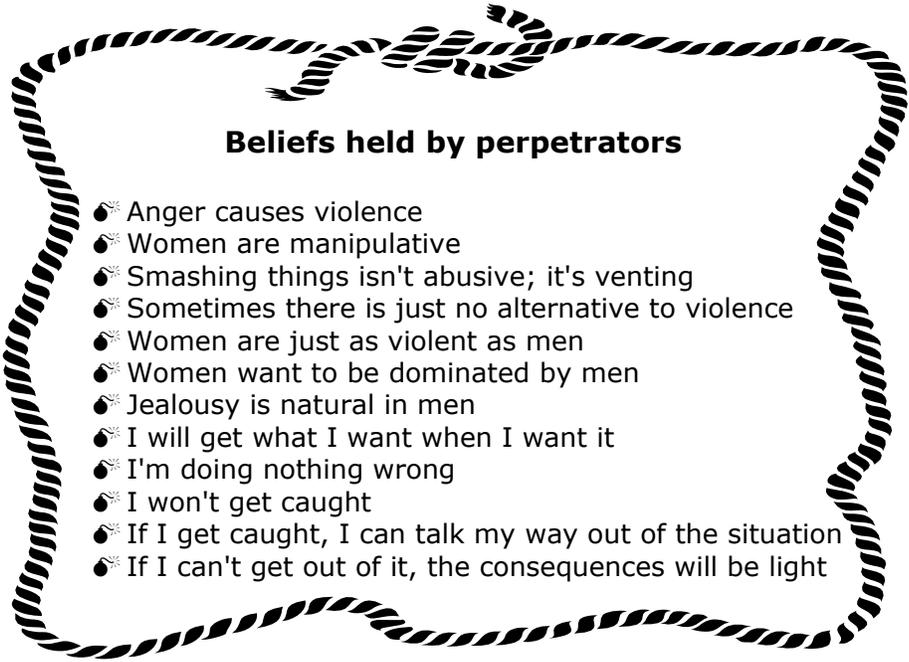
- Both may have been raised in abusive homes;
- Witnessed violence or been abused or neglected as children;
- Learned abusive behavior as a normal response to stress, relationships and lifestyles.

**Childhood trauma is NOT an excuse
for the perpetrator's behavior.**

Characteristics of perpetrators and "red flags"

- ⌘ Extreme jealousy, wants complete control
- ⌘ Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde personality
- ⌘ Violent temper, loses temper easily
- ⌘ Low self-esteem, poor self-image, feelings of insecurity or inflated ego, sense of entitlement over rest of human race
- ⌘ Preoccupation with weapons
- ⌘ Abuse of alcohol or other drugs
- ⌘ Dislike for authority figures
- ⌘ Isolation
- ⌘ Cruelty to animals
- ⌘ Breaking or striking objects
- ⌘ Past history of violence





Beliefs held by perpetrators

- Anger causes violence
- Women are manipulative
- Smashing things isn't abusive; it's venting
- Sometimes there is just no alternative to violence
- Women are just as violent as men
- Women want to be dominated by men
- Jealousy is natural in men
- I will get what I want when I want it
- I'm doing nothing wrong
- I won't get caught
- If I get caught, I can talk my way out of the situation
- If I can't get out of it, the consequences will be light

Typical Statements

Perpetrators

"She or he made me do it"
"If she or he would have..."
"It was just a little tap/push/shove..."
"You've got to keep them in line or they'll walk all over you"
"I just had too much to drink"



Victim

"When he/she isn't drinking, he/she is the nicest person"
"If I would have... I wouldn't have been hit"
"It's only when he or she has been drinking"
"I'm not really abused-it's just verbal"
"He/she is a good parent"
"But I love him or her"



If a victim's partner is abusive and the victim is not sure what to do about it, an excellent first step is to reach out to people who can help. No matter how alone the person may feel there are lots of people who have experienced what the victim is experiencing and are willing to help.

Domestic Violence Effects on Children

Children who **witness** the beating of their mother or father may demonstrate significant **behavioral** and/or **emotional** problems.

This may include:

- Stuttering;
- Anxiety;
- Fears;
- Sleep Disruption;
- Excessive Crying;
- School Problems;
- Psychosomatic Disorders.



Domestic violence even affects the fetus. Abused women have an increased risk of:

- spontaneous abortions;
- pre-term labor;
- fetal injuries;
- low birth weight babies.

Studies have shown that children do not have to be hit in order to suffer the effects of violence.

Witnessing violence in the home has **detrimental** effects.

- ✓ Children who **see** or **hear** violence live in **fear**.
- ✓ A child's **brain** may develop **differently** from the brain of a child raised without fear.
- ✓ Part of the brain that **controls** learning, logic, empathy, sympathy and remorse (all the finer thinking processes) does not develop normally because a **fearful** child is developing a brain that **reacts** to fear.
- ✓ The child goes into a "**fight or flight**" mode of thinking, with the brain cueing the body to elevate heart rate, respiration and blood pressure.

The Way They Feel...

All children are affected in some way by family violence. Even if they have not seen the violence, or if they have not been physically hurt themselves, they "feel" what is going on. Below is a look at some of the feelings that children have shared.

SCARED

I lie in bed feeling real scared. I can hear them fighting in the next room, and it's getting louder and louder. I'm just waiting until I hear the smack of his hand and my mom's cries. I hear it again and again. I put the pillow over my head. I want to run away.

GUILTY

If me and my sister Jenny didn't fight so much, then Dan wouldn't fight with Mom because Mom tells us to be quiet, so it must be us who set him off. It's our fault.

AMBIVALENT

I love Daddy-he's fun to be with, he calls me his 'special girl', but he scares me when he hits and yells at Mommy. I sometimes hate him for hurting her so much and making her cry.

TAKING CARE OF EVERYONE

Mommy and Daddy had a terrible fight last night. I know what I can do. I'll make breakfast for my little brother and straighten up the house before I go to school, so at least Mommy won't have to worry about that.

ASHAMED

I don't want anybody to know what's going on in my house, so I don't bring my friends here. I go to their houses where people don't yell and scream all the time.

UNABLE TO CONCENTRATE

I'm failing in school. I keep wondering what's going on at home, and wondering what will happen tonight when Daddy comes back. I can't keep my mind on much anymore and I don't care.

WANTING TO ESCAPE

Right now a joint or a beer would look real good. When I get high, I feel okay.

ANGRY (Modeling Father's Abuse)

Mom's dumb. No wonder he beats her up. She shrunk my sweater in the dryer. What the hell does she do all day? Why can't she get it together?

UNPROTECTED

Mommy knows Daddy is being a stinker. Why doesn't she stand up to him? She's waiting for him to beat the crap out of me again before she does anything.

"Children of Domestic Violence: Healing the Wounds"
By Judith McDermott, MSW & Frances Wells Black

Helping Your Children

Your children's behavior may be different than usual. Remember that their lives have changed too. It is normal for them to be afraid, upset or angry. Even if they become extra quiet or try to please you all the time, they still need that little bit of extra attention and explanation about what is going on.



Guidelines

- ♥ Assure them that you love them. Give them lots of hugs and cuddles. It is important for them to have physical contact, and in hugging them you will also be receiving hugs.
- ♥ Tell them as much as you can without name-calling. It is better that they know and feel part of the decisions than if you say nothing or lie. It is important for them to trust you.
- ♥ Listen to their feelings and know it is okay to have them. They may be angry with you for taking them away from their friends and home. If they tell you this, it means that they feel safe enough with you to share their feelings. If you show them that you understand their feelings and share some of them, you will help them.
- ♥ They may have confused feelings about you and their father. You can let them know that they can still love their father and he is still their father, even if you decide not to live with him again. They do not have to choose one parent. They can love and hate both parents at the same time.
- ♥ They may test you by misbehaving. Do not be afraid to tell them their limit of behavior in a firm, loving manner. They may be more insecure and confused, and test for your control even more than usual. They need to know that you are there to take care of them.
 - ✓ **Tell them** clearly what they can and cannot do.
 - ✓ **Tell them** what will happen if they misbehave. Make the discipline fit the behavior, and be prepared to carry it out as soon as possible.
 - ✓ **DO NOT HIT YOUR CHILDREN.** They have come from a violent situation and they need to feel safe. Children who grow up with violence often become violent adults.

- ♥ You have needs, too. You need your friends, you need time alone. If your children try to make you stay in, tell them you have needs and that you are sorry if it makes them angry or sad. Go ahead with your plans. If you are giving them quality time, you do not need to feel guilty about taking time for you.



- ♥ It is important that you take a little time every day to have fun with your children. You can learn new, inexpensive ways to have fun with them. For example, going to parks, to a museum or just going for walks. You don't have to have money to spend time with your children.
- ♥ Children need to feel loved, accepted and safe in their family. This means living in a home where there is no violence is better for them than living in a home where they never know when violence will erupt.
- ♥ Accept that you are not perfect. Don't feel guilty about it. Keep doing your best and be open to changing what doesn't work and learning new ways.
- ♥ Remember your children depend on you. Don't depend on them to act as your best friend or partner. Let them be dependent.
- ♥ Encourage them to have friends in the community as soon as you settle. Friendships can help them regain security.
- ♥ If you feel that you need help dealing with your children, explore parenting and children's support services in your community (i.e. parent's association, parenting courses, Big Brothers/Sisters, etc.). Also talk to other women. They have probably felt the same as you at times and could share ideas.



This information was compiled by Laura Hotson, Victoria Women's Transition House. Parts of the article are reproduced from Fresh Start...Is This Book for You, by Joan LeFruvre, YWCA, Peterborough, Ont. 1982. Reprinted by Windspeaker; 15001—112th Ave.: Edmonton, Alberta T5M @V6: (403) 455-2700: published every other Monday

Danger Assessment

Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD, RN, FAAN

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Several risk factors have been associated with increased risk of homicides (murders) of women and men in violent relationships. We cannot predict what will happen in your case, but we would like you to be aware of the danger of homicide in situations of abuse and for you to see how many of the risk factors apply to your situation.

Mark Yes or No for each of the following. ("He" refers to your husband, partner, ex-husband, ex-partner, or whoever is currently physically hurting you.)

Yes	No			
			1.	Has the physical violence increased in severity or frequency over the past year?
			2.	Does he own a gun?
			3.	Have you left him after living together during the past year? 3a. (If you have never lived with him, check here ____)
			4.	Is he unemployed?
			5.	Has he ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a lethal weapon? 5a. (f yes, was the weapon a gun? ____)
			6.	Does he threaten to kill you?
			7.	Has he avoided being arrested for domestic violence?
			8.	Do you have a child that is not his?
			9.	Has he ever forced you to have sex when you did not consent?
			10.	Does he ever try to strangle you?
			11.	Does he use illegal drugs? By drugs, I mean meth, "crystal", "ice", amphetamines, speed, angel dust, cocaine, "crack", PCP, LSD, street drugs or mixtures.
			12.	Is he an alcoholic or problem drinker?
			13.	Does he control most or all of your daily activities? (For instance: does he tell you who you can be friends with, when you can see your family, how much money you can use, or when you can take the car? (If he tries, but you do not let him, check here: ____))
			14.	Is he violently and constantly jealous of you? (For instance, does he say "If I can't have you, no one can.")
			15.	Have you even been beaten by him while you were pregnant? (If you have never been pregnant by him, check here: ____)
			16.	Has he ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
			17.	Does he threaten to harm your children?
			18.	Do you believe he is capable of killing you?
			19.	Does he follow or spy on you, leave threatening notes or messages on answering machine, voicemail, destroy your property, or call you when you don't want him to?
			20.	Have you ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
				Total "Yes" Answers

Thank you. Please talk to your nurse, advocate or counselor about what the Danger Assessment means in terms of your situation.



Developing a safety plan

Every individual in an abusive relationship needs a safety plan. These plans should be individualized, but still contain common elements.

- ◆ Develop a support system.
- ◆ Keep a journal and document the behavior. (Store it in a safe, secret place).
- ◆ Think about all possible escape routes.
- ◆ Choose a place to go.
- ◆ Pack a survival kit (money for calls or carfare, clothing, extra keys, birth certificates, legal documents, medications, address book and any valuables such as jewelry).
- ◆ Try to start an individual savings account. (Have statements sent to friends or relatives).
- ◆ Avoid arguments with the perpetrator in areas with potential weapons.
- ◆ Review your plan monthly.

Personalized Safety Plan

Safety Before and During a Violent Incident



1. I will avoid confrontation in rooms where weapons are stored or rooms without access to an outside door such as bathrooms, kitchen, or garage.
2. I can tell _____ or _____ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
3. I will use _____ as my code word with family and friends so they can call for help.
4. I will have important phone numbers available to myself and my children:

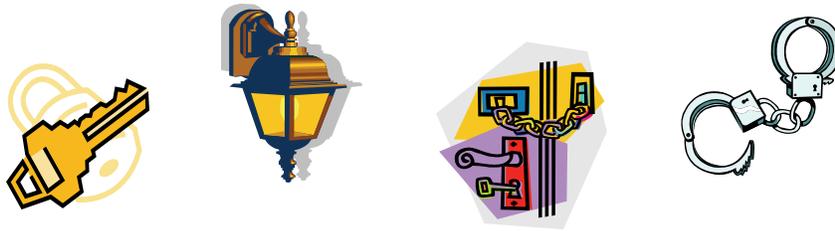
Important Phone Numbers

Police _____ **Crisis Line** _____

Family _____ **Shelter** _____

Safety if I ask my partner to leave home

1. I can change the locks on the doors and windows.
2. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
3. I can install an outdoor lighting system that illuminates the yard when people approach my house.
4. I can install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers on each floor of my home.
5. I can inform _____ that my partner no longer lives with me and ask them to call the police if he/she is observed near my home.



Safety When Preparing to Leave

1. I will check to see what doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escape routes I might use and practice getting out safely.
2. I can keep my keys and wallet/purse _____ in order to leave quickly.
3. If I have to leave home, I will go to _____, _____, or _____.
4. I will leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents (SS cards, birth certificates, etc), and extra clothes with _____.
5. I will open a savings account in my own name.
6. I have a cell phone that I will keep charged and ready, keep change for phone calls, or obtain a 911 phone.



Safety in Public

1. I can obtain a protection order from _____.
I can keep it on or near me at all times as well as leave a copy with _____ or _____.
2. I can ask _____ to screen my calls at work.
3. When leaving work, I will have someone walk me to my car or public transportation stop.
4. If problems occur while I'm driving, I will: _____.
5. I can use different grocery stores, shopping centers, restaurants, or banking locations from those I used when I lived with my partner. I could also go on different days or at different times if it is not possible to utilize other providers for these services.



ITEMS TO TAKE WHEN I LEAVE

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification for myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Passport (s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's birth certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My birth certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Bank books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School/vaccination records | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other important papers | <input type="checkbox"/> House deed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/rental agreement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Checkbook, ATM card | <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license & registration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Address book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keys – house/car/office | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medications | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare identification | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's favorite toy/blanket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green card | <input type="checkbox"/> Work permits |

Transition: Leaving an Abusive Relationship

Separation is not easy. Though you have made a positive choice for you and your children, the process is still painful.

This article outlines some common feelings and experiences of women who leave their relationships, common experiences of children, and some things you can do to help yourself through the process. Knowing what to expect may not take away the pain, but will help you in maintaining your independence.

Separation—How Will It Feel?

Separation is not easy. It will take several months to work through the steps, and a couple of years to become freshly established. Knowing what to do and what to expect does not stop you from having feelings. You will probably feel all your emotions more strongly than ever. You may feel betrayal, grief, anger, joy and freedom, weakness and strength, often at the same time. You may feel that you are going crazy because of all the emotions you have, which are sometimes overwhelming, contradictory, and unexpected. You are not crazy. This is a normal process. Remember that your emotions are just a part of you, a changing part, and they are not “you, the whole person.”



Let yourself feel your emotions fully. Do not judge yourself for having them. You will pass through each one in time.

Grief:

Grief is a large part of the process of letting go of a relationship. When you feel grief, let yourself cry. You may feel like you will never stop. You are facing a death, the death of your relationship. You will stop crying when the mourning is over.

You may not understand why you are sad, especially if you were badly abused. There were probably some good things that you will miss. This is the reality. Remember you did have to pay a price for more good things—a very high price.



Euphoria:

You may experience a great euphoria when you leave the relationship. This may last for weeks or months. This is usually felt if you have made a clear decision. This euphoria can help give you energy to get yourself on your feet again.

Don't be surprised if a month or a year later, you feel grief or anger or depression. This is normal and part of the process of change and separation. You will have to work through all the stages at some time. The timing may vary with each individual.

Anxiety and Loss of Control:

You are probably accustomed to judging your safety by predicting your partner's mood and picking up the signals from him, so you could anticipate and react. When you leave, the absence of your partner may feel frightening. You may feel you have lost control. Your feelings of safety are gone when you lose your signals.

The feelings of loss of control are normal in transition. You are moving the center of control from your partner to yourself. It can be frightening as it is freeing and it just takes time.

Disorientation:

Changed memories can create a feeling of disorientation, disbelief in yourself, and betrayal from your partner. You are not crazy if you see your past, yourself, and your partner differently. You may remember only the good times with your partner or only the bad times.

It's normal to look at yourself, your partner, and the world in a new way. Your situation is different now and you will have a different perspective.

Loneliness:

Your friends may change over time. Your situation may now be different than their situation. Your interests and concerns may become different, and they may feel threatened. They may take sides with your partner. It may hurt you a great deal if your former in-laws reject you. Family blood is often thicker than you want to believe. It may take you a while to trust, or to have energy for anyone else. This is normal and self-protective.

You may want to isolate yourself, but friendships are very important. Friends of your same gender are especially important at this time. Reach out! Even though it may seem less painful to isolate yourself, in the long run it is not.

New Relationships:

New relationships may trigger memories of our old relationship. It takes hard work, a great deal of commitment and communication to be in a relationship.



A second relationship has different problems from a first. Be sure you feel strong enough to live dependently again. This way, when you have a choice, you will not be as likely to make the same mistakes. You will be better able to stand up for your rights.

It is important to remember that life is up and down. You will have good days, when you are feeling strong and capable, and bad days when you are feeling depressed and vulnerable. Know that feeling bad will not last forever and there are things you can do to help yourself through the down time.

Anger:

You may feel more anger after separation than you have ever felt before. You may suddenly feel all the anger that is stockpiled and denied during your relationship along with the built-up frustration at not getting your needs met, and the powerlessness of your position.



It is safe to feel angry now. Accept that your anger is normal. Anger can give you power and motivation. Use it to your advantage. The goal of letting yourself feel anger is to express it constructively so that you become free of it.

Do not use it for revenge. Acting in revenge may destroy your self-respect in the long run. Fantasize about revenge instead and then let it go.

Grieving Symptoms:

While you are going through the separation, it is normal for you to experience, sleep disturbances, diarrhea or constipation, nausea, changes in weight loss or gain.

Psychological symptoms may include: sadness, hopelessness or feeling of futility, edginess and being easily irritated, crying often, poor concentration, great difficulty making decisions and poor memory.

Good physical health will help you cope.

Feelings of Failure:

You may feel that admitting “failure” in your relationship confirms your inadequacy. This is not true. You have probably done all you could to make it work and it is not your fault that your efforts failed.

Relationships take a toll on people. Working together make it a success. Also, remember that your decision to leave was a painful and difficult one. Recognize your success in making that decision. Give yourself credit.



Your Identity:

You may have identified yourself with your relationship. Your role as wife or mother may be the way you see yourself, and how you are known in the community. When you leave the relationship you will experience a real sense of loss of your self-identity.

The process of moving from a role, a job of wife and mother, and private status of victim to a single, competent person is painful and not always as fast as you might want it to be. It involves getting to know yourself in a new way. Now you can become your own boss and your own person. Being on your own is a wonderful feeling as well as a scary one. It maybe the first time you have had the freedom to experience this responsibility. It sometimes takes many trials to discover who you are and what you want.



Anniversaries:

Many women find that the first anniversary of their leaving is particularly painful. It is important for you to be aware of that and plan for it. You may arrange to spend that time with close friends. You may also get in touch with the shelter in your community to get reinforcement and support (WAVI).

This information was compiled by Laura Hotson, Victoria Women’s Transition House.
Parts of the article are reproduced from Fresh Start. Is this Book for YOU, by Joan LeFruvre, YWCA, Peterborough, Ont. 1982.
Reprinted from Windspeaker; 15001 –112th Ave.; Edmonton, Alberta T5M2V6; (403) 455-2700; published every other Monday.



Why me?

If you have been raped, one of the questions you may be asking is how could this have happened? Will the pain and suffering ever end? If you have been raped, what can you do to support your recovery?

REMEMBER, regardless of what others think, you know whether or not you have been raped.

- ◆ If a sexual act was committed against you ***in any way***, **WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT**, you were raped.
- ◆ Do not let what others think or say confuse you. You know if you have been raped.

What is Rape?

Rape occurs any time a ***sex-related act*** is **forced** on another person.

This includes:

- ⊙ Acts of fondling, oral sex, forcing a person to disrobe, voyeurism, photography, as well as intercourse.
- ⊙ Any sex act imposed on a person who **cannot give consent** (whether they are too young to give consent or when a person takes or is given alcohol or a drug that causes her to lose consciousness).
- ⊙ Rape involves the **use of force or threat of force**. Anytime a survivor is forced or coerced to the point of physical or emotional powerlessness, rape has occurred. Even if the survivor does not fight back, force or threat of force is all that is necessary for rape to occur.
- ⊙ Rape includes **attempted** as well as **completed** acts. Simply being placed in the position of fearing rape, even if the rape is not carried out for some reason, constitutes the crime of rape.
- ⊙ Rape is **violent sexual abuse against another person**, regardless of who that person is or what that person does with her or his life.

Recovering from Rape

You will recover in your own way and at your own pace. Your long term response will follow no set pattern or time schedule.

It is okay for you to resume your regular routine as much as possible. Try as much as possible to resume the business of running your own life. Proving to yourself that you are back in charge will help you recover sooner. You made decisions prior to the rape, you can do so after. Trust your instincts.



Other People in Your Life

It is important for you to share your feelings. Feel free to tell important people around you what has happened and how you feel. Talk about your feelings, fears, strengths, and perceived weaknesses. It may seem surprising, but often the act of simply talking to your family and friends can be of tremendous help.

Many communities today have trained advocates to assist you. An advocate may help you to learn about the services that are available in your area.

Professional counseling is available to you. You will find counseling beneficial as you work through your reaction to the rape.

Remember, You Are In Charge. Your feelings are most important. You have the privilege of deciding what should be said, what advice to accept or reject. Don't let well meaning family and friends "pressure you". Remember only you get to decide what is best for you and you make the decisions.

You have the right to be safe. You are NOT to blame for a rapist's behavior.

Section 2: Rape/Sexual Assault

RAPE MYTHS

IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT!

Myth: Rape is about sexual gratification.

Fact: Rapists are seeking to satisfy a need to degrade another person, to have ultimate power over them or to make them fear him. It has nothing to do with sex. Rapes are a crime of violence and sex is the weapon.

Myth: Women provoke rape by the way they dress or act.

Fact: Women are not responsible for the behavior of a rapist merely by being in any given place at a certain time or with certain clothing.

Myth: Strangers commit most rapes.

Fact: Approximately 60-80% of all sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows (i.e. The attacks occur frequently in the victim's home or car and 85% of child sexual assaults are by someone known and trusted.)

Myth: A husband cannot rape his wife.

Fact: If a spouse forces his or her mate to have sex, then it is a rape and it is a crime. Studies show that 1 out of 7 women are raped by their husbands.

Myth: Only women are assaulted.

Fact: While women do compose the majority of sexual assault survivors, men are also victims of rape. Studies report that men commit 98% of all rapes. Therefore, when men are raped it is usually by another male.

Myth: A rapist is easy to spot in a crowd.

Fact: A rapist could be your neighbor, relative, boyfriend, cable man, husband or stranger. The fact is they can be of any race, color or socio-economic class.

Myth: Rape could never happen to me.

Fact: Every individual is a potential rape victim, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, occupation, education, or physical description. Studies report that **1 out of every 3 women** and **1 out of every 10 men** will be a victim of some type of sexual assault in their lifetime.

Myth: If a victim doesn't scream or fight it's not rape.

Fact: The rapist's primary weapon is fear. Through threats of bodily injury or death, a person is terrorized into cooperation or immobilized by fear. A victim does not have to have bruises, cuts or any other physical injury to prove that they have been raped. Submission is not consent; it is against your will.

Myth: Women "cry rape" to get back at men.

Fact: Less than 5% of reported rapes are false accusations.

Section 3: Stalking

You have the right to be safe. You are NOT to blame for a stalker's behavior.

Every situation is different and every stalker is different; but often, stalking leads to violence. Stalking can lead to injury and can even lead to death. It is vital to devise a safety plan to address your specific circumstances.

A stalker may be someone you know well or not at all. Most have dated or been involved with the people they stalk. About 75% of stalking cases are men stalking women but men do stalk men, women do stalk women, and women do stalk men.

Stalking is unpredictable and dangerous. No two stalking situations are alike. There are no guarantees that what works for one person will work for another, yet you can take steps to increase your safety.

Behavior of Stalkers:

- Follow you and show up where you are.
 - Repeatedly call you, including hang-ups.
 - Damage your car, home or property.
 - Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards or emails.
 - Drive by or hang out at your home, work or school.
 - Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends or pets.
 - Monitor your phone calls or computer use.
 - Other actions that control, track or frighten you.
 - Use technology like hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS) to track where you go.
 - Find out about you by using public records or on-line search services, hiring investigators, going through your garbage, or contacting friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers.
- Cyber stalking** - targeting through chat rooms, message boards, discussion forums, and email; forms of this are threatening and obscene emails, spamming, live chat harassment, posting improper messages on message boards, sending viruses, tracing another person's computer and internet activity and electronic identity theft.



What You Can Do:

- ☎ Call 911.
- ☎ Develop a safety plan.
- ☎ Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are.
- ☎ Don't communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you.
- ☎ Ask anyone who witnesses to write down what they saw.
- ☎ Contact the police and report everything, no matter how trivial it may seem.
- ☎ Consider getting a protection order that tells the stalker to stay away from you.
- ☎ Take threats seriously. Danger generally is higher when the stalker talks about suicide or murder, or when a victim tries to leave or end the relationship.
- ☎ Keep evidence of the stalking. (Write down the time, date and place that the stalker contacted you). Keep emails, phone calls, phone messages, letters or notes. Photograph anything of yours the stalker damages and any injuries the stalker causes.
- ☎ Tell family, roommates and co-workers about the stalking and seek their support. Tell security staff at your job or school. Ask them to help watch out for your safety.



Common Reactions to Being Stalked:

You might:

- ◆ Feel fear of what the stalker will do.
- ◆ Feel vulnerable, unsafe and not know who to trust.
- ◆ Feel nervous, irritable, impatient or on edge.
- ◆ Feel depressed, hopeless, overwhelmed, tearful or angry.
- ◆ Feel stressed, including having trouble concentrating, sleeping, or remembering things.
- ◆ Have eating problems, such as appetite loss, forgetting to eat or overeating.
- ◆ Have flashbacks, disturbing thoughts, feelings or memories.
- ◆ Feel confused, frustrated or isolated because other people don't understand why you are afraid.

Section 4: Resources & How They Can Help

Protection Orders

South Dakota statute allows victims of domestic violence or stalking to file for an order of protection against a perpetrator or stalker. The order is signed by a judge and delivered to the perpetrator by a sheriff's deputy. If the perpetrator violates the order, he or she may be arrested and charged with a Class 1 misdemeanor.

The judge can order the perpetrator:

- ◆ To stay a certain distance away from your home, workplace, and children;
- ◆ To have no contact with the you in person, by phone, in writing, or through a third party;
- ◆ To leave the home.

A victim can file a protection order without the assistance of an attorney. Forms are available at the Clerk of Court's window or at Working Against Violence, Inc. WAVI staff can assist you through the process.



SD Crime Victims' Compensation Program

You may file a claim for reimbursement of certain expenses if you have been a victim of a violent crime or have suffered physical injury as a result of a criminal attack, a collision with a drunk driver, trying to stop a person committing a crime, trying to help a law enforcement officer, witnessing a crime or trying to help a victim of a crime.

Awards of compensation of up to \$15,000 may be made from the SD Crime Victims' Compensation Fund. Funded through a court surcharge on criminal perpetrators, compensation is available only to the extent that funds are generated from the surcharge. No compensation can be awarded when money is not available.

To apply, you must be one of the following:

- 1) An innocent victim of a violent crime who has suffered harm;
- 2) A dependent of a deceased victim;
- 3) A person authorized to act on behalf of a victim;
- 4) A dependent or a parent or other family member of a victim (under limited circumstances).

To be eligible:

- ◆ The crime must have occurred on or after July 1, 1992;
- ◆ The crime must have been reported to law enforcement within five days;
- ◆ The claim for compensation must be filed within one year of injury or death, unless good cause for delay is shown.

Eligible expenses include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ medical or counseling bills | ✓ funeral costs |
| ✓ lost wages | ✓ rehabilitation |
| ✓ childcare | ✓ dental expenses |
| ✓ homemaker replacement | ✓ mileage for treatment |

The fund will not compensate for stolen or damaged property. WAVI staff or the Victim's Assistant may assist in helping a victim file a claim.

Counseling Resources

Survivors of violence should receive counseling to help sort out what has happened, why it happened and how to prevent it from happening again. In addition to individual counseling, support groups can be of benefit to the victim. It is recommended that children receive counseling as well.

The Rapid City area offers a multitude of counseling services. Survivors may look under "Counselors" in the Yellow Pages of the local phone book. Before choosing a counselor, a survivor should ask:

1. Whether the counselor or agency accepts insurance or Medicaid, Title XIX.
2. How much the service costs.
3. Whether there is an intake fee.
4. What licenses the counselor holds—Social Worker, Professional Counselor, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist.
5. Areas of expertise—i.e. Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Grief, Anger Management, Alcohol/Drug/Addictions, etc.

Working Against Violence, Inc. in Rapid City provides a support group for adult victims of domestic violence. The group is free and childcare is provided.



Break the Silence!





Working Against Violence, Inc.

**527 Quincy Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
Administration: (605) 341-3292
FAX: (605) 718-7582
wavi@wavi.org**

WAVI provides comprehensive services to victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, including Case Management, Emergency Shelter, and Community Education.

WAVI has been providing services in the Rapid City Community since 1978. In 2004, we moved into our current facility, which greatly expanded our programming as well as our client base.

WAVI fosters close working relations with the local Law Enforcement, Victim's Assistance, State's Attorneys Office, and many of the social service agencies in the area. These unique partnerships provide individualized, comprehensive advocacy for every client.