



OHLONE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence – Part 2

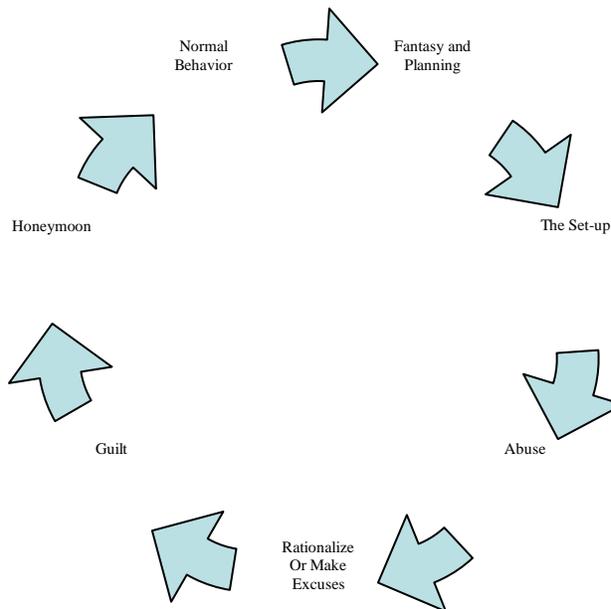
Definition of Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence

Domestic Abuse and Violence is a deliberate pattern of assaultive, controlling, and intimidating behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, that one intimate partner does to another to gain power and maintain control.

Domestic violence is not a marital conflict, a lover's quarrel, or a private family matter. It is a serious social and personal problem. The batterer may be a husband or wife, ex-husband or wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, partner (including same sex) or ex-partner. Abuse and violence are usually learned behaviors. Everyone must learn and understand that Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence are unacceptable.

Cycle of Domestic Violence

There are several models used to describe the cycle of domestic violence. There is a pattern that is recognizable and repeated until that cycle is broken. The following is one model that describes the cycle of domestic violence.





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Initial Relationship Behavior/Normal Behavior – The abusive person does everything he can to establish and gain control of the victim and keep the victim in the relationship. He can be charming, humorous, even romantic and gentle.

Fantasy and Planning – The abuser begins to fantasize about abusing his victim and begins to spend time thinking about what she has done wrong and how he is going to make her pay and how he is going to punish her for any transgressions, real or imagined. He begins planning on how to turn the fantasy into a reality. *I don't know how many times I have told her not to do that. I told her that it makes me angry. She is pushing me to the limit. If she does it again, I don't know if I can control myself any longer. She will deserve what she gets.*

Set-up – The abuser sets up the victim, creating a situation where he can justify abusing her for something that she has done wrong. It can be something minor, such as forgetting to purchase an item at the store or forgetting to make a telephone call. It is not the degree of the “wrong”; it is the fact that it occurred that is used as the justification for the abuse. *You know that I don't eat that brand. I have asked you over and over to buy the other brand. I have told you that a hundred times! How can you be so stupid and forgetful?*

Abuse – The abuser lashes out at the victim in an aggressive or violent manner. The abuse is a power play designed to show her “who is the boss.” *Maybe I should do all of the shopping and handle all of the finances since you are so stupid and forgetful. You can't do such a simple thing without screwing it up. You don't deserve to be with anyone.* (Verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse)

Rationalization – The abuser rationalizes what he has done to himself and to the victim. He justifies his abuse by coming up with excuses for his behavior or blames her for his abusive behavior. He will do anything to shift responsibility from himself to the victim. *You're lucky that I tolerate your stupidity and forgetfulness. Someone else would have left you already. You're lucky that you have me because I am the only one that cares about you. You should be grateful that I am still in your life! If you wouldn't be so stupid and forgetful then you wouldn't make me so angry and this wouldn't have happened.*

Guilt – Once the abusive episode is over, the abuser feels guilt and sometimes embarrassment. This is not over what he has done to the victim. This is due to fear of being caught or facing possible consequences for his actions.

Honeymoon – The abuser is apologetic and begs forgiveness. He will say anything, promise anything, and do almost anything to regain the trust of the victim and to regain control of the victim and the relationship or he may act as if nothing happened and minimize the episode to make the victim feel as if she is overreacting or exaggerating the incident. He gives the victim hope that he has changed and that the abuse will not reoccur.



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Then the cycle starts again!

Warning Signs

Here are some signs and symptoms of domestic abuse and violence that you can look for:

- Frequent signs of injuries, bruises, cuts, abrasions, or swelling and discoloration with excuses of an accident or being clumsy
- Frequent or sudden absences from work or school
- Frequent phone calls from the partner that are harassing or the partner is always checking up on the victim and wanting to know where she is, who she is with, and what she is doing
- Fear of the partner, references to the partner's anger or volatile temper
- Changes in personality (i.e., an outgoing woman suddenly becomes quiet or withdrawn)
- There is an excessive fear of conflict or excessive avoidance of any confrontation
- Submissiveness and/or an excessive lack of assertiveness
- Isolation from family, friends, and coworkers
- Insufficient financial resources to live without being given money or permission to use credit cards by the partner (financial dependence even if the woman works and earns a good salary)
- Depression, low self-esteem, emotionally fragile

What can you do to help?

It is always difficult to determine what to do and whether the victim wants or is willing to accept help. Giving emotional support to the victim is important and that the victim is told that she is the victim of a crime and that her partner does not have the right to abuse her. Referring the victim to counseling services or to her church priest, minister, rabbi, or pastor may be helpful.

You must decide whether the law enforcement authorities are contacted. The victim may be unwilling or afraid to contact the police or sheriff for fear of what her partner may do after the police leave or she may feel that she "got what she deserved." She may be unemployed and afraid that the partner will be arrested and he is the only source of financial support.

Keep in mind that domestic abuse and violence is a complex issue that is not easily solved. What you might tolerate and what you might do does not mean that others would do the same or feel the same. The cycle of domestic abuse and violence can only be broken by some type of intervention. Whether that intervention is the abuser being arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned, the couple attending counseling and the abuser changing his ways, or the victim and abuser separate permanently and the abuser finds a new victim, the cycle will continue until it is broken.



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If the victim is a coworker, you can contact the victim's supervisor or manager and inform him/her of what you have observed and your suspicions. The supervisor or manager can speak with the victim and take measures to protect the victims. If the victim is a student, the student can be referred to Rosemary O'Neil in the counseling office. The student and Rosemary can discuss the situation and work on a solution together.

Remember, Domestic Violence is a **CRIME!** If you suspect that someone is the victim of domestic abuse or violence and you do not want to get directly involved, you can contact the local law enforcement authorities and make an anonymous report.

For additional information, the following websites can provide assistance and information:

Ohlone Community College Student Health Center
(ohlone.edu/org/healthcenter/sexualassaultinfo.html)

Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV.com)

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV.com)

Bay Area Women Against Rape (bawar.org)

Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments (save-dv.org)