

ABUSE

CHARACTERISTICS OF ABUSERS

is very jealous, has a short temper
reacts physically: hits the wall, kicks the dog, etc.
was raised in an abusive home (was abused or witnessed abuse)
is a macho type, must always be the one in control
may or may not also batter children
believes he/she has the right to beat other people
thinks victims enjoy or need the abuse

CHARACTERISTICS OF A VICTIM OF ABUSE:

was raised in an abusive home (was abused or witnessed abuse)
has low self-esteem, is insecure, feels he/she deserves the abuse, feels guilty
is isolated--not allowed to form close relationships with others
resists giving up on marriage, doesn't want to feel he/she has failed,
wants to help the abuser change
is fearful of leaving the abuser or of other family members being hurt

STATISTICS

Wife abuse is the biggest danger to women. More women are physically attacked in their own home by their husbands than are assaulted by strangers or are injured in auto accidents!

Ninety-five percent of physical battering is done by the male. However, when the female does the battering, she is more likely to kill.

No statistics are available on emotional abuse. It is largely unreported and hard to prove.

Most abuse goes unreported, but it is estimated that 20-50% of couples suffer violence regularly.

Twenty-five percent of all murders in the U.S. happen within the family (and domestic disturbance calls are among the most dangerous for policemen).

AVOIDING/RESOLVING MARITAL ABUSE

The more quickly you avoid or get out of an abusive relationship, the safer you are. If you allow it to go on, you may very likely get to the point where you cannot leave.

1. Avoid getting involved with someone with abusive characteristics.
These characteristics are usually observable while dating, but people do not recognize them or ignore them. Many people think it will end after marriage, but it only escalates. If your date ever abuses you in any way, get out of that relationship immediately.
2. Don't let it start. Let your partner know it absolutely will not be tolerated.
3. If it happens once, tell your partner, in no uncertain terms, that you will leave if he/she doesn't get therapy; then do it.

4. If it has happened many times, call the police and ask them to get you to a safe house. Let them help you get out of the situation.

It is amazing how quickly anger can turn to danger. Be aware of your partner's level of tolerance and protect yourself.

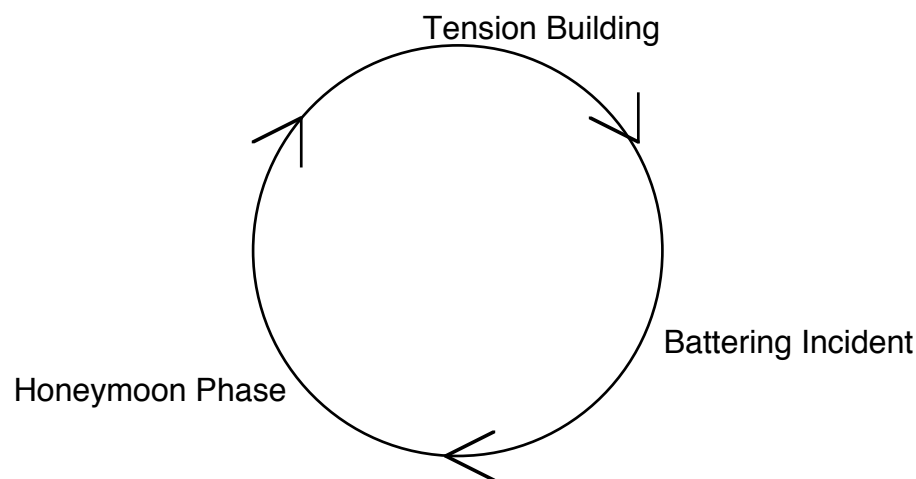
GETTING HELP FOR SOMEONE ELSE

1. If you are aware that battering is going on, call the police. (It is too dangerous to try to intercede.)
2. Offer emotional support and information about safe houses to the victim; however, unless you can convince the victim to leave, you cannot prevent further abuse.

VIOLENCE CYCLE

There are three phases in the Cycle of Violence. The first phase takes place as the tension builds between the two people and continues until an explosion of violence or a battering incident occurs. The final phase of the cycle is often referred to as the honeymoon phase. The couple will apologize and peace will be restored.

The cycle works like this:



The violence in their relationship has actually been rewarded because it ended their argument and led the couple into a honeymoon phase where intimacy could be restored.

Because the battering incident seems to have solved their problem, they will be very likely to turn to battering in the future to solve other problems they may encounter.

Unfortunately, as this cycle is repeated over and over, the violence will continue in both frequency and severity. Most battering incidents will begin on the mild side of the continuum, but will escalate further and further toward the fatal side of the continuum unless intervention to stop the abuse is utilized.

An abusive incident might fall anywhere along this continuum.

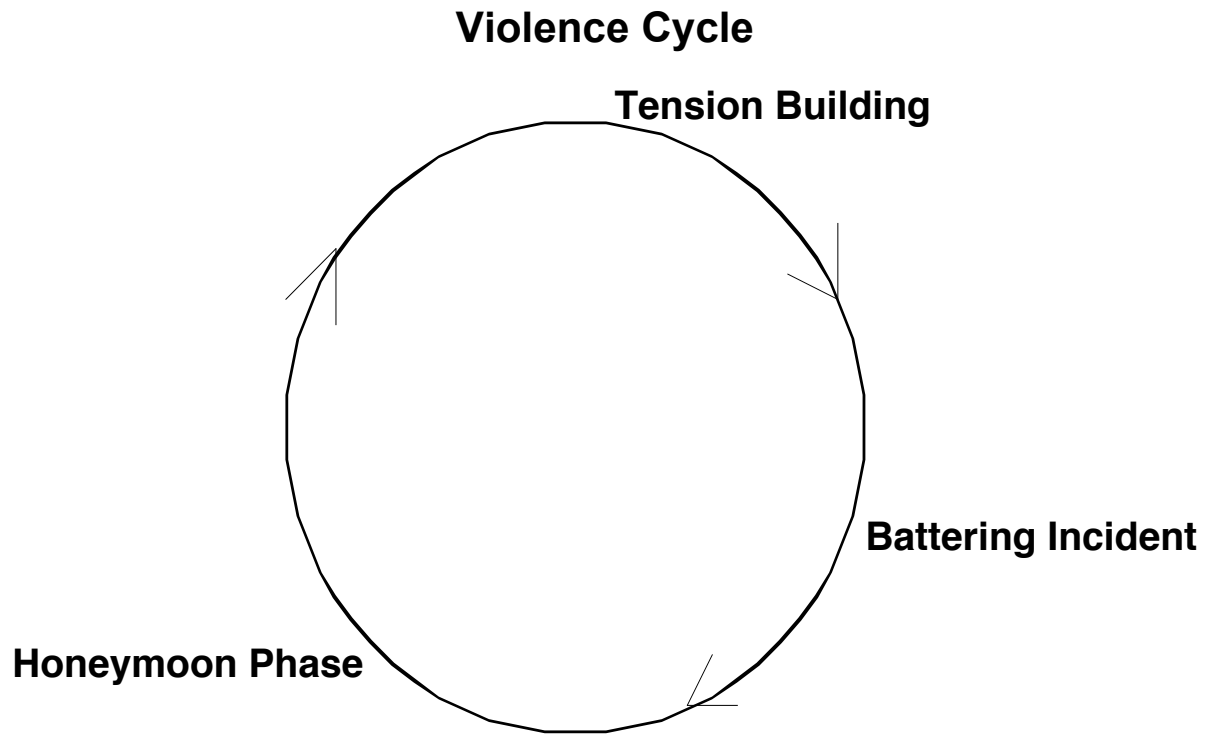
Mild	Moderate	Severe	Fatal
shoving	punching	threatening with a weapon	strangling
pushing	kicking	battering	stabbing
slapping	choking	stomping	shooting

Anyone who thinks that marriage will solve the abusive behavior needs to think again--it will only worsen after marriage.

You might be asking yourself why anyone would want to remain in an abusive relationship, either physically or emotionally. Here are some reasons that are frequently given:

1. Financial Dependence
Where else would I go?
She/He buys me nice gifts.
2. Social implications:
Who else would I date?
We have been going together for so long, I hate to give it all up.
She/He's not always like this—she/he's a lot of fun at parties.
3. Fear
She says she will commit suicide if we break up.
He says he will come after me if I leave.
4. Belief that he/she is the cause of the violence:
If I would just keep my mouth shut, it would never happen.
If I would just give her what she wants, we'd be okay.
5. Belief that the violence is temporary.
I love her. She will never do it again.
He promised he'd never do it again.
6. Belief that she/he should understand her/his attacker.
I can help her control her temper.
I need to be more understanding of his feelings.
7. Belief that all men (women) are violent.
It means he loves me.
Everyone fights—it's no big deal.
8. Feelings of personal incompetence.
It would probably be the same with someone else.
I probably couldn't get someone else.
What would I do without him/her?

Students need to understand that spouse abuse begins in the dating period. If a girl or guy is ever physically assaulted by someone they are dating, they should discontinue the relationship immediately. The problem will only escalate after marriage.



Abuse Continuum

Mild	Moderate	Severe	Fatal
shoving pushing slapping	punching kicking choking	threatening with a weapon battering stomping	strangling stabbing shooting