

Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Violence

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What is Domestic Violence?



Domestic Violence

A **pattern** of coercive behavior in which **one** person attempts to **control** another through threats or actual use of tactics.

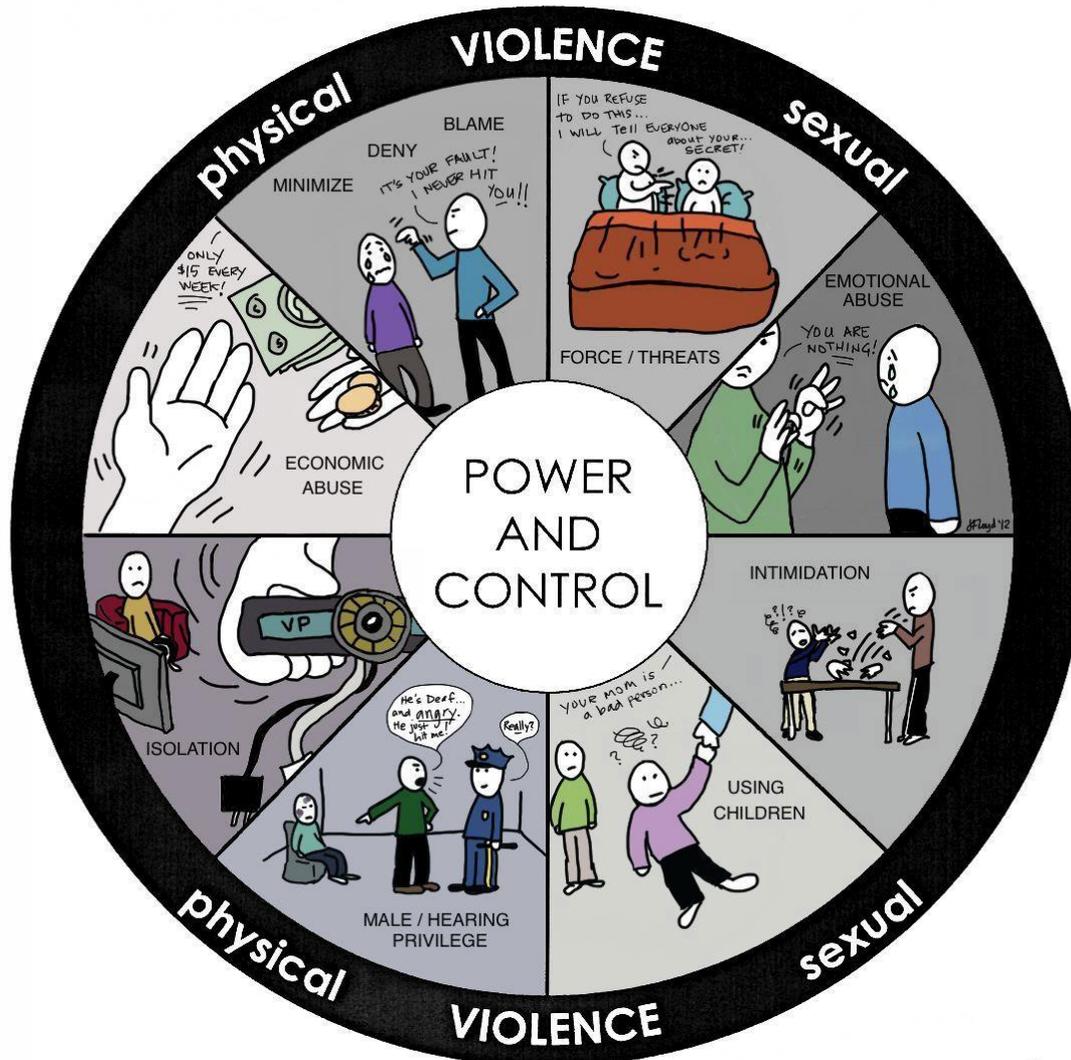
Tactics may include economic, verbal, psychological, physical and/or sexual abuse.

The behavior may occur **during** the relationship or **after** the relationship has ended.





UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



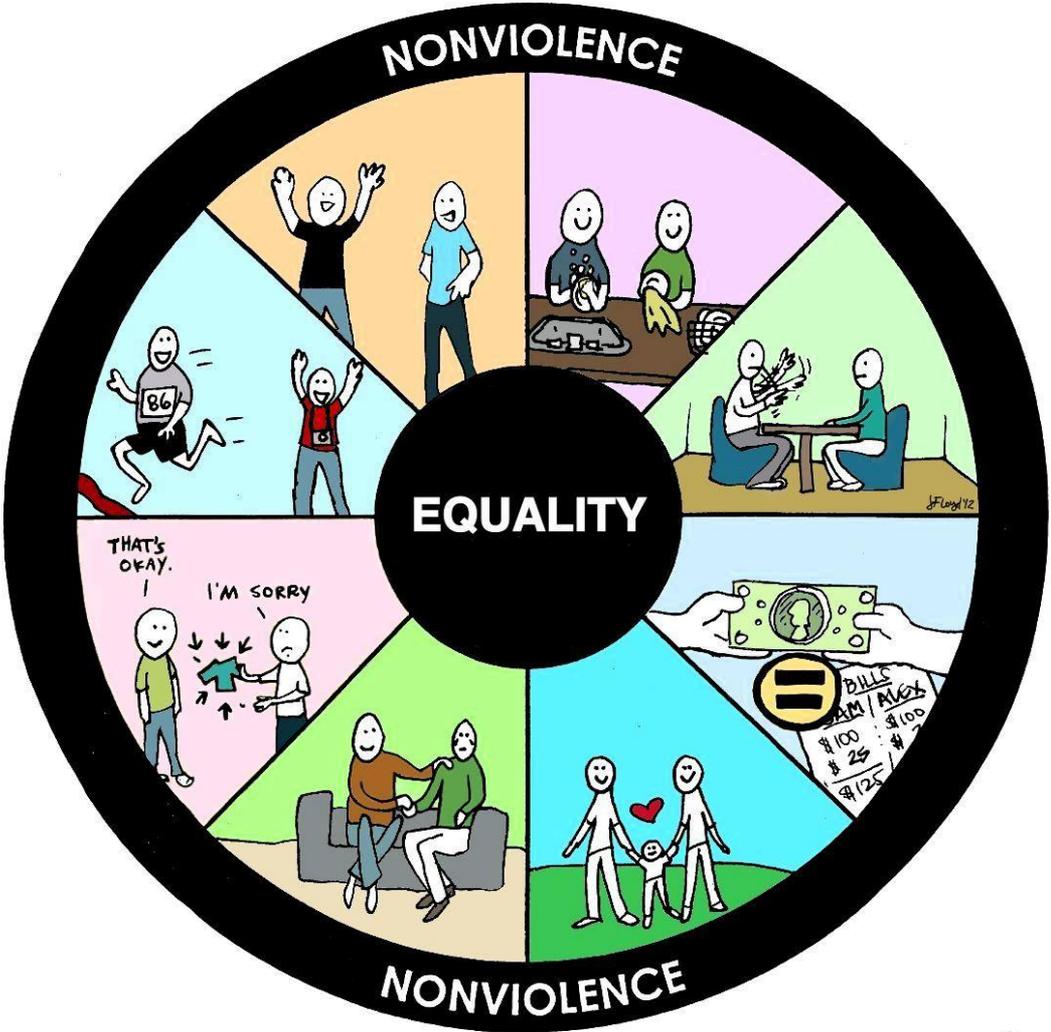
Developed by:
 Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
 202 East Superior Street
 Duluth, MN 55802
 218.722.4134

Adapted and distributed by:



Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services
 8623 Roosevelt Way NE
 Seattle, WA 98115
 Main Office: (206) 922-7088
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HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



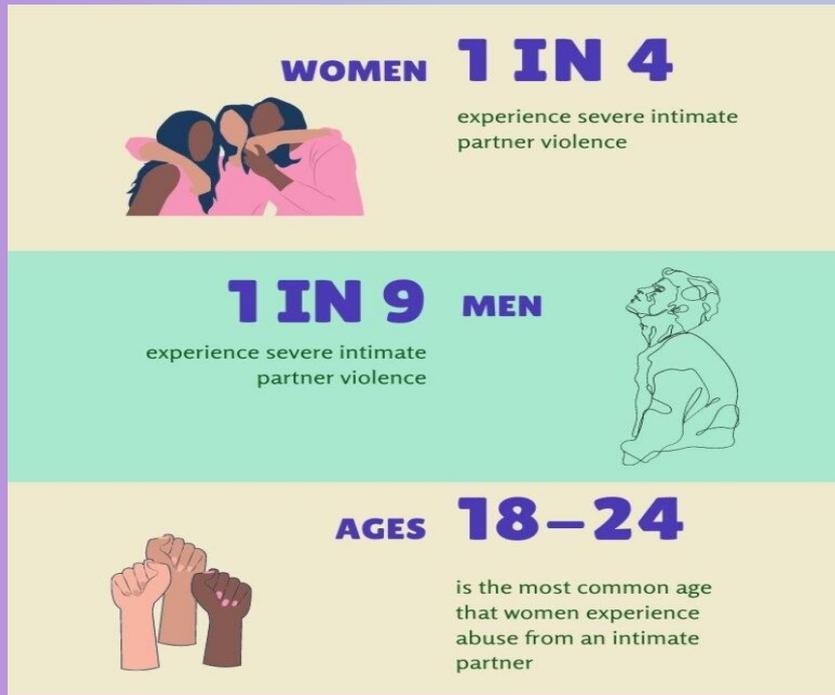
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Domestic Violence Statistics



[Domestic violence on the rise during pandemic - Spartan Newsroom \(msu.edu\)](#)

1/2 of trans/non-binary people experience intimate partner violence in their lifetimes.

[Violence Against Trans and Non-Binary People \(vawnet.org\)](#)





Deaf individuals are 150% more likely to be victims of assault, abuse and bullying in their lifetime.

#whowillanswer

Domestic Violence

- Occurs within a current or former intimate relationship
- Patterned behavior
- **Is about Power and Control**



Domestic Violence

- Rarely an isolated incident
- Increases and worsens with time
- **A learned behavior**
- Related to other oppressions in society



Domestic Violence

- Is used to intimidate, humiliate or frighten victims as a systematic way of maintaining power and control over them
- Is caused by the perpetrator, not by the victim or the relationship
- **Is likely to present increased risk to the victim and children at the time of separation from the abuser**
- Can evoke survival behaviors



Domestic Violence Impacts



EVERYONE

It can happen to anyone regardless of:

- Race or ethnicity
- Socioeconomic status
 - Education level
 - Age
- Religious beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
 - Ability

Stereotypes & Myths

- Survivors can stop the abuse by leaving or changing their behavior
- Abusers are mentally ill
- Abusers just need anger management
- Substance abuse causes domestic violence



Abusive Tactics



Characteristics of Batterers

- Aggressive
- **Controlling**
- Blaming
- Low stress tolerance
- Past abuse/neglect
- Morbidly **jealous and possessive**
- Denies and minimizes violence
- Unrealistic demands and expectations
- Impulsive acts, without regard to consequences
- Uses force to gain results
- Dependent upon partner
- Different **public and private** personas
- **Deceptive and manipulative**
- Substance abuse is often a factor
- Unable to accept and maintain intimacy
- **Disallowance of partner's autonomy**
- Inability to compromise
- Self-isolating
- **Role rigidity**
- Lacks verbal skills in problem solving
- Cause/effect fallacy (“you made me do it”, “you made me mad”)
- Some abusers feel guilt and shame for abusive behavior

Tactics: Isolation



- Abusive partner may attempt to isolate partner from friends, family or services
- Attempt to control communications
 - Disconnect video phone or Wi-Fi
- Preventing survivor from participating in conversations or social situations, especially with hearing people

• [Abuse in Deaf Communities - The Hotline](#)

• [The Deaf Endure Domestic Violence More Than Hearing \(domesticshelters.org\)](#)

Tactics: Intimidation



- Signing in an exaggerated manner or close to the face
- Stomping feet/slamming doors
- Hitting or destroying items
- Speaking poorly about Deaf community
- Displaying weapons
- Threats, including to pets and/or children

- [Abuse in Deaf Communities - The Hotline](#)

Tactics: Manipulation

- Tries to exploit survivors' insecurities about ASL skills or communication abilities
- Intentional mis-interpretation
- Uses small community to spread negative rumors
- Excluding survivor from important conversations
- Gaslighting (crazy-making behavior)

- [Abuse in Deaf Communities - The Hotline](#)

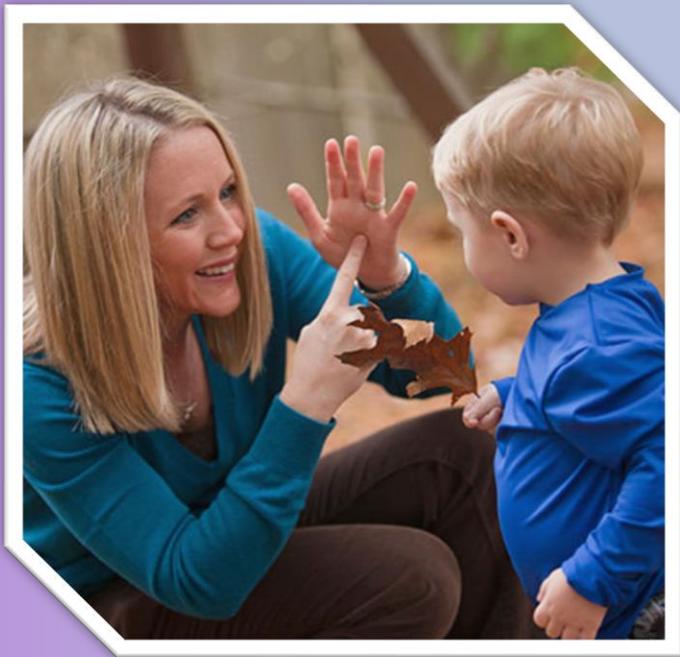


Tactics: Financial Abuse

- Take control of SSI checks or other financial resources
- Require approval before survivor spends their own money
- Limit access to transportation to prevent survivor from working
- Sabotage work
- Destroy property
- Put titles/deeds in abuser's name only
- Intentionally damage credit



Tactics: Using Children



- Refusing to allow children to learn ASL
- Making threats regarding child custody
- Using children as messengers
- Undermining survivor's parenting
- Threatening children if survivor does not comply

Impact: Lethality Risk Factors

- A person is at higher risk of being murdered by a partner if:
 - You believe that your partner wants to kill you
 - **Your partner has threatened to kill you**
 - Your partner has threatened to kill themselves
 - **Your partner has access to lethal weapons**
 - The violence you are experiencing has becoming increasingly more severe
 - **Your partner has avoided arrest for domestic violence**
 - Your partner has episodes of rage and/or extreme anger
 - Your partner abuses any substances
 - Your partner has raped you or someone else
 - **Your partner has choked you**
 - **You have a child that is not biologically related to your partner**
 - Your partner seems to view you as their only hope in life
 - Your partner seems to be obsessed with you and/or your whereabouts and activities
 - **Your partner is unemployed**
 - **You have/are leaving your partner**



Survivor Impacts



Warning Signs of Abuse: Survivor Behaviors

- Seems afraid or anxious to please their partner
- Goes along with everything their partner says and does
- Checks in often with their partner to report where they are and what they're doing
- Receives frequent, harassing communications from their partner
- Talks about their partner's temper, jealousy, or possessiveness



Warning Signs: Physical Abuse



- Has frequent injuries, with the excuse of “accidents”
- Frequently misses work, school, or social occasions without explanation
- Dresses in clothing designed to hide bruises or scars (e.g. wearing long sleeves in the summer or sunglasses indoors)

Warning Signs: Isolation



- Is restricted from or made to feel guilty for seeing family and friends
- Rarely goes out in public without their partner
- Has limited access to money, credit cards, or the car
- Partner controls communication and prevents survivor from participating in conversations

Warning Signs: Psychological Abuse

- Has very low self-esteem, even if they used to be confident
- Shows major personality changes (e.g. an outgoing person becomes withdrawn)
- Becomes depressed, anxious, or suicidal



Physiological Impacts

- **Injury**—more likely to have multiple injuries than accident victims
- Increased risk for **disease** and **reproductive health problems**
- Increased risk for **chronic health problems**—headaches, IBS and other GI complaints, pelvic pain, anemia, fibromyalgia, dizziness, sleep & appetite disturbances, fatigue, hearing loss, arthritis, high blood pressure

Hope

Support

Friends

Expectations

Stability

Sobriety House

Pets Car Record

Faith

Self

Children

Dream

Job

Community Dignity

Confidence

Health

Family

Safety

Emotional Impacts

- **Fear**—survivors live in constant or cyclical terror
- **Anger**—many internalize this emotion which leads to shame and self-blame
- **Shame**—survivors believe “I’m getting what I deserve”
- **Embarrassment**—social norms cause survivors to feel shame & they often blame themselves for “allowing” the abuse to occur
- **Grief**—mourning the loss of the life they hoped to have



Impact: Shame/Guilt

- Everyone experiences shame
- Trauma survivors can carry heavier shame load because of societal messages that can be blaming
- The most effective response to feelings of shame include empathy for others and self-compassion
- Unresolved feelings of shame and a lack of self-compassion can make PTSD symptoms worse and longer-lasting, including:
 - Re-experiencing
 - Triggers and avoidance
 - Emotional numbing
 - Hyperarousal (including insomnia, anger, concentration difficulties, exaggerated startle response)

Impact: Guilt vs. Shame

- Guilt:
 - “you’ve done something bad” or
 - “you’ve made a bad choice.”
- Shame:
 - “you are bad.”



There is a big difference between “you made a mistake”
and “you are a mistake.”

Fight, Flight, Freeze/Appease

- Fight: Respond with aggression: in the moment, preemptively, or as a reaction



Fight, Flight, Freeze/Appease

- Flight: “Fleeing” is not the same as “leaving.” Most survivors flee multiple times before leaving. Fleeing can lay groundwork for leaving.



Fight, Flight, Freeze/Appease

- Freeze/Appease: Tonic state OR Please/appease. Doing whatever it takes to negotiate and calm the situation. These decisions often mis-judged when looked at later by outsiders.



Impact: Traumatic Stress Response

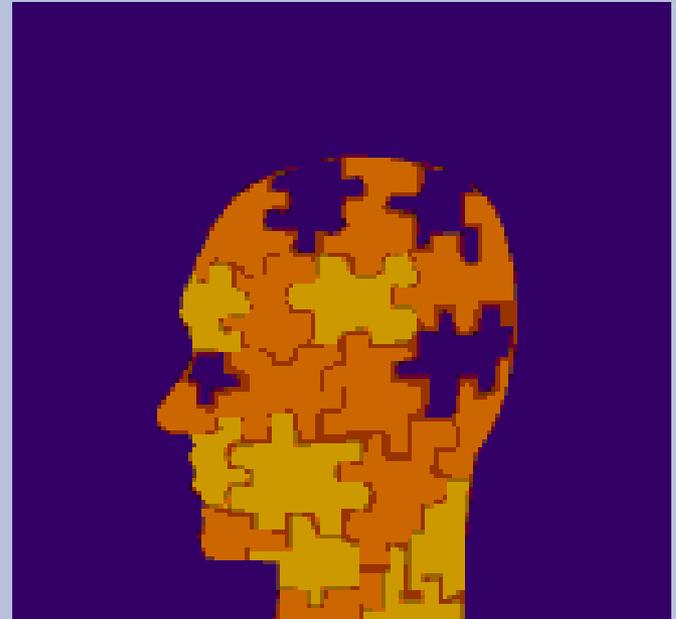
“At the core of traumatic stress is a breakdown in the ability to regulate internal states. This concept of self regulation is critical for understanding trauma and its impact.”

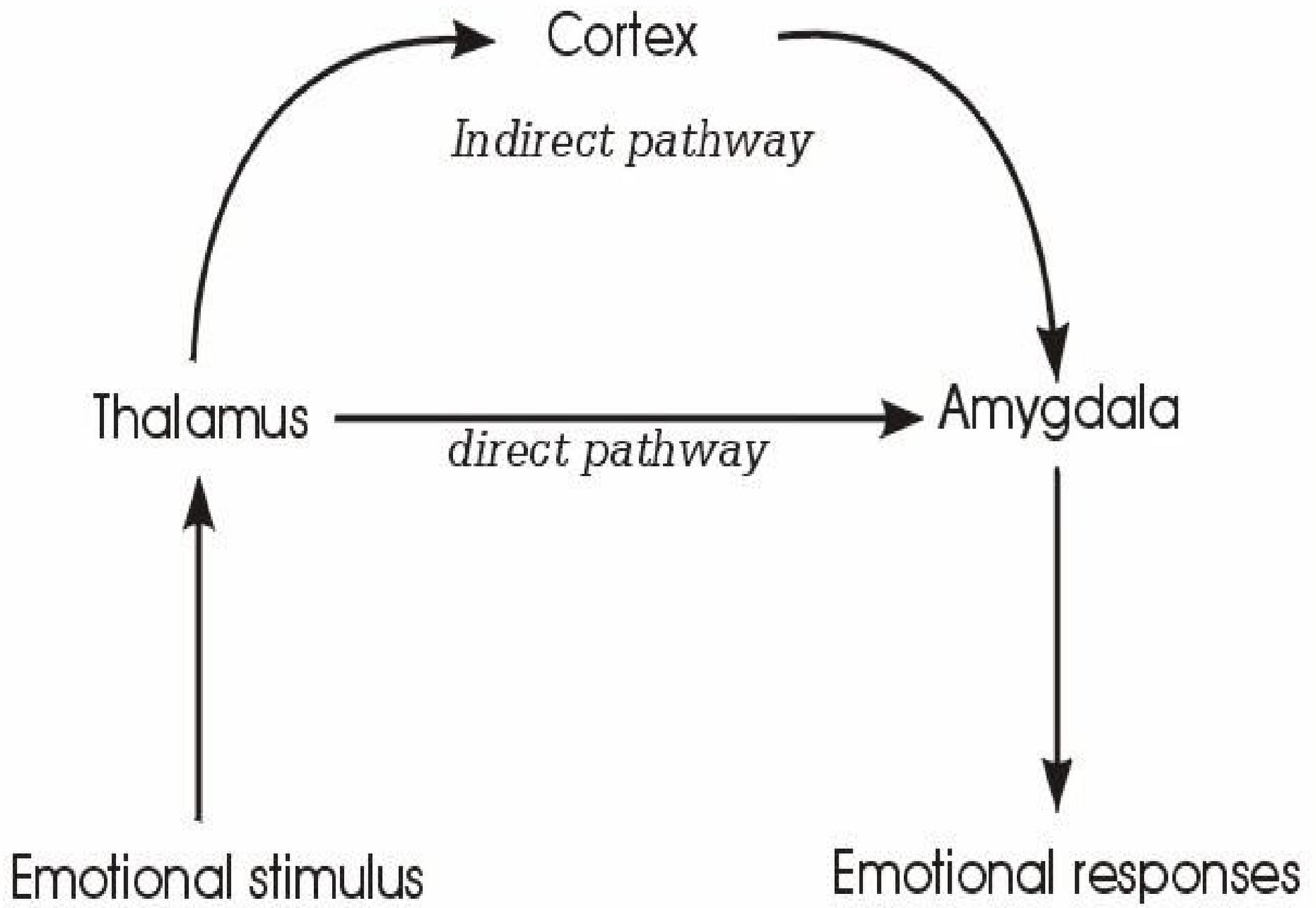
- Chronic hyperarousal and threat perception
- Chronic alterations of neurochemistry and fear pathways



Impact: Traumatic Stress Response

- Can mask emotional expression
- Confusing to survivors and advocates
 - **Decreased ability to...**
 - Manage feelings
 - Self-soothe
 - Thoughtfully plan
 - Develop empathy
 - Utilize feelings
 - Connect with others
 - **Increased...**
 - Tension, anxiety, emotional lability
 - Need for control, aggressive behavior
 - Avoidance, constriction, dissociation
 - Use of drugs, alcohol, other addictions to manage feelings





Cortex

Indirect pathway

Thalamus

direct pathway

Amygdala

Emotional stimulus

Emotional responses



- They just want violence to stop
- They need **economic support** for themselves and their children
- They **fear losing children** in custody battles
- They and their children may be in greater danger of violence following separation
- Cultural values, religious beliefs or family pressures not to leave the abuser
- Batterer promises to change, **victim loves them**, hopes they can and will change
- Batterer is very influential or powerful in society
- Victim does not have support (isolated from family and friends, shelters are full, prior police intervention ineffectual or limited criminal justice remedies deter victim)

Why Do Survivors Stay?

- Hope

- They won't kill me.
- Things will be the way they used to be.
- Promises will be kept.
- Love conquers all.
- My community will protect me.

- Fear

- They will kill me.
- I will lose my kids.
- I won't be able to meet my family's needs.
- Everyone will know what's been happening and I'll be ashamed.

Promises, Promises...

I WILL:

Be a better partner

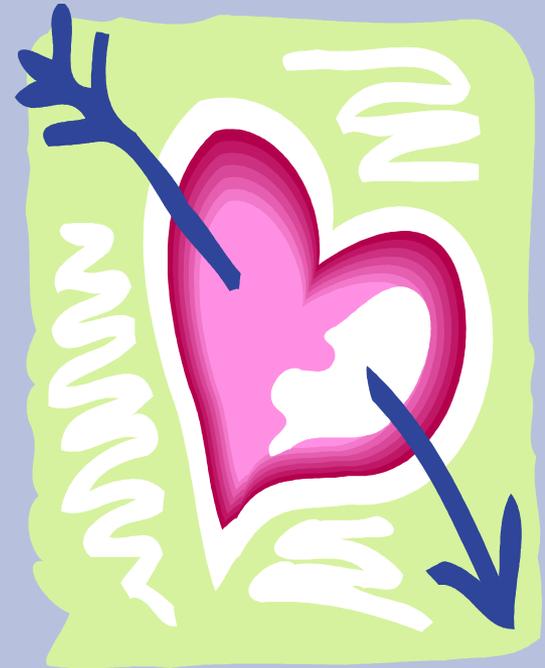
Stop drinking

Practice faith

Be a better parent

Go to counseling

Move and start all over again

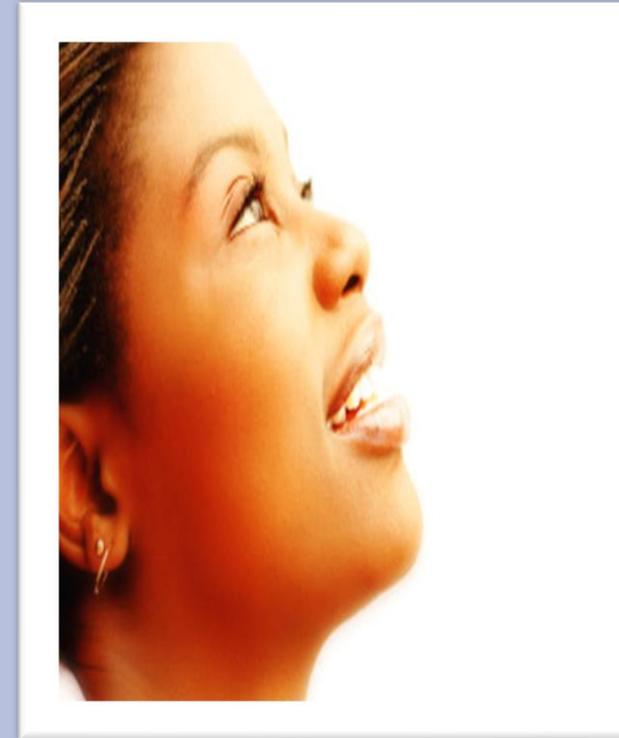


Supporting Survivors



Things to Do With a Survivor

- Listen, learn, believe
- Ask what they need
- Offer resources and information
- Respect their choices, feelings and pace



Things to Do With a Survivor

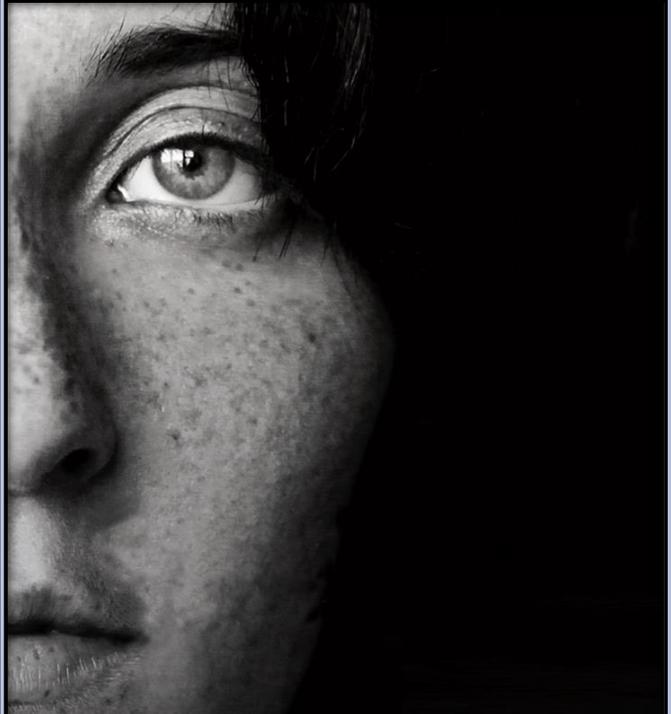
- Make a safety plan
 - When in the relationship
 - When leaving the relationship
 - When separated
 - For children
- Encourage their success and help them learn from what they may perceive as failure
- Tell the truth, even when it is hard
- Refer to a domestic violence program.
 - www.nccadv.org



Domestic Violence Victim Service Providers

- 24 hour hotline
- Safety planning
- Victim advocacy/case management/service navigation
- Counseling
- Support groups
- Court advocacy
- Emergency shelter
- Survivor outreach
- Prevention programming

• www.nccadv.org/get-help



eNOUGH
Domestic Violence is not tolerated in our community.

Visit buncombecounty.org/enough or call 211.

If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence, please call the Helpmate Crisis Hotline at 828-254-0516. Learn more at helpmateonline.org.

Helpful Interventions: Logistics and Boundaries

- Ask about preferences
 - “May I close the door, or would you prefer it open?”
 - Always ask about touching
- Ask about triggers
 - Survivor may not have considered
 - Invite multiple conversations
 - Consider all senses



Empowerment Advocacy

- Recognizes that people have the **ability and the right** to make decisions affecting them.
- **Self determination** and safety are paramount.
 - Sometimes, self determination is a precursor to safety.
 - Services should be chosen, not mandated.

Empowerment Advocacy

- Role of support person is to **provide information** about resources
 - Include pros and cons of accessing resources
 - Support survivor's decisions.
- Honors a person's success
 - Helps survivors see **patterns** in their life
 - Uses previous success and struggles as a springboard.



Disempowering Actions

- An empowering advocate does NOT:
 - Re-establish **control** dynamics by telling a survivor what to do
 - Make moral **judgments** about a survivor's actions
 - **Classify** some victims as “real” victims because of the type of violence experienced, the survivor's reactions to the violence or other factors
 - Use children to **manipulate** survivor's actions
 - This is not the same as working to ensure safety of children

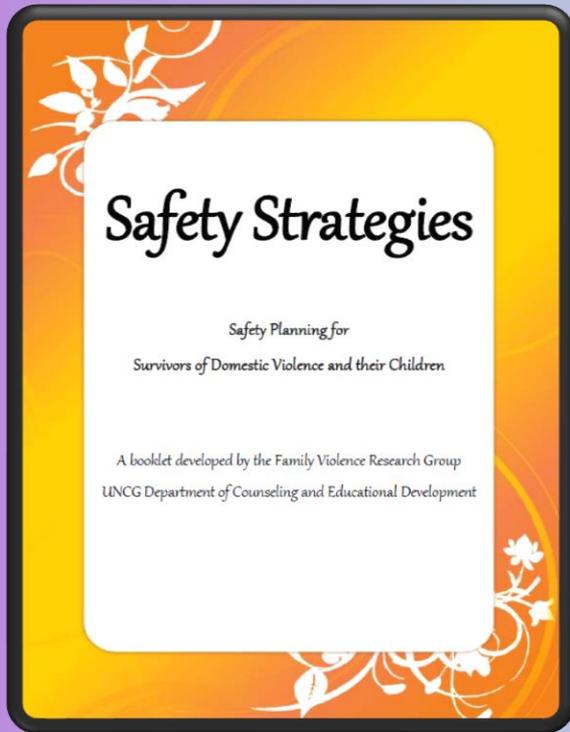


Protecting Victim Safety

- **Any** breach of confidentiality could place victim at risk for serious physical injury or death
 - Be aware of duty to report child maltreatment and abuse of disabled people.
 - Be sure victim knows these restrictions on confidentiality up front.
- Victim may disclose information that perpetrator will use against them
- Service provider may be at risk
- Time during and after separation is most dangerous
- **Victims need to be fully informed of their right to opt out of sharing information and any limits on confidentiality**



Lethality Risk Assessment and Safety Planning



- www.dangerassessment.org
 - Evidence based lethality assessment model developed by Dr. Jacqueline Campbell
- <http://www.dvsafetyplanning.org>
 - Safety Planning Booklet developed by Dr. Christine Murray/Family Violence Research Group, UNC-G

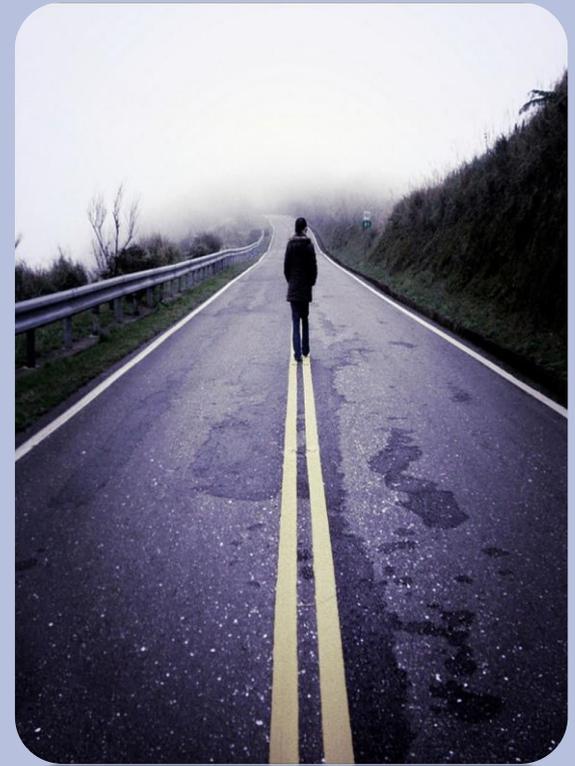
Basic Safety Planning

- Consider how to exit home
- Plan for where to go
- Identify safe support person
- 911 phone
- Turn off cell phone location
- Pack a go-bag
 - Medications
 - Children's items
 - Documents
 - Keys
- Financial resources
- Call a domestic violence victim service provider



Risk Analysis and Safety Planning

- Identify staying, leaving, and protection (from physical injury) strategies
- Identify the time frame for a survivor's current plan
- What personal and public resources have they identified?
- How do they think their partner will react to their strategies?



◦ Safety Planning With Battered Women, Complex Lives/Difficult Choices by Jill Davies and Eleanor Lyon, Sage Publications, 1998.

A medium shot of Marlee Matlin speaking. She has long, light brown hair and is wearing a dark blue or black t-shirt. Her hands are clasped in front of her. The background is dark with some green foliage on the right and a warm light source on the left. The text 'MARLEE MATLIN' is overlaid on the left side of the frame.

MARLEE MATLIN

Love is Trust. Love is Dignity. Love is Respect.

Resources

- NC Council for Women Services Directory
[DV/SA Grantee Programs | NC DOA](#)
- North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCCADV):
www.nccadv.org
- North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCCASA):
www.nccasa.org
- National Deaf Domestic Violence Hotline
855-812-1001 (Voice/VP)
- Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services
www.adwas.org
- National DV Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 | 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)
<http://www.thehotline.org/> (hosts on-line chat)
- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 | 1-866-331-8453 (TTY)
<http://www.loveisrespect.org> (hosts on-line chat)