



# Impacts of Coercive Control and Domestic Abuse on Victims

# Course Objectives

- Advocates learn to identify the reinforcing nature of abuse/coercive control and the impact on the survivor.
- Advocates develop an understanding of the issues survivors bring to relationships.
- Advocates learn how abusers' manipulation of these issues are used to continue coercive control and domestic abuse.

# Cracking the Code of the Abuser

## Motivations:

- **Entitlement-** belief that he is all knowledgeable, knows what's best for every member of the family, all family members should subjugate themselves to him.
- **Survival-** poor me, wants to be rescued and cared for over anyone else's needs in the family, helpless, unable to live/survive without his wife/partner.
- **Sadistic-** cold, calculated control, gains pleasure from seeing others in pain from his actions/behaviors.

(Stuckey-Halley, 2015)



# Impact of Abuser Motivations

- Twisting her reality
- Removing her autonomy
- Breaking her will to defend herself
- Inducing toxic stress responses
- Isolating her from support systems
- Restricting time and movement
- Depriving her of resources

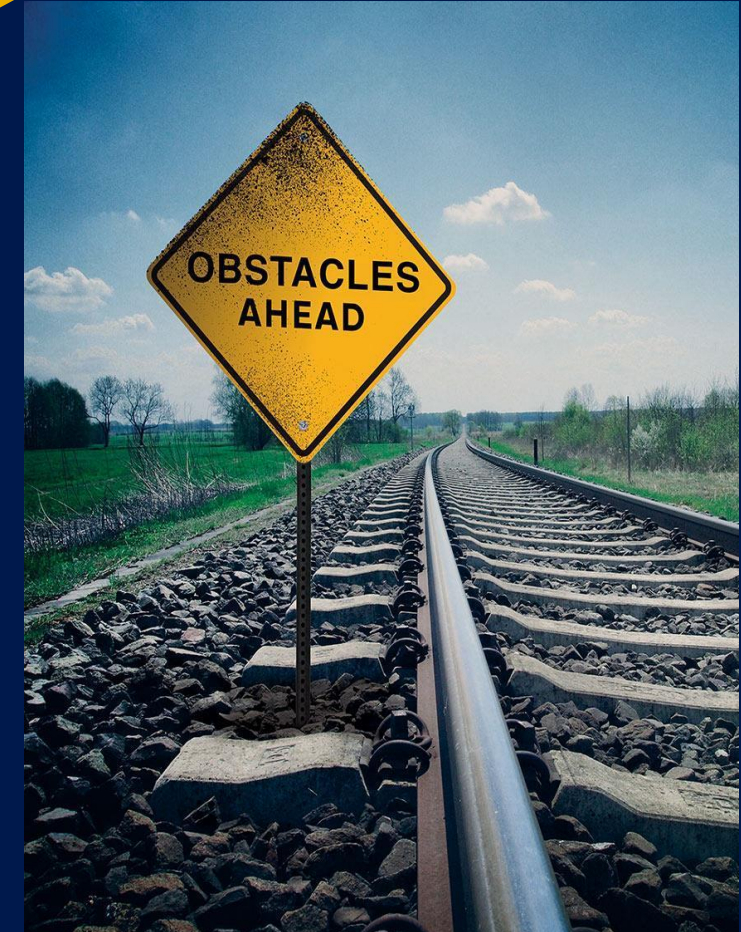


# Patterns of Verbal Abuse

- Evans (1993) identifies **10 patterns of verbal abuse**- see course website for handout
- Examples:
  - Interactions that upset, hurt, or confuse her...
    1. rarely if ever occur in public
    2. are unexpected
    3. occur when she is feeling happy, enthusiastic, or successful

# Obstacles & Indicators: Recognizing Verbal Abuse

- See course website for handout (Evans, 1993)
- Examples:
  - The partner has learned to overlook unkindness, disrespect, disregard, and indifference as not important enough to stand up to.
  - Upsetting incidents are denied by the abuser, and the partner thinks she's wrong.
  - The abuse can be very subtle-- with control increasing gradually over time so the partner gradually adapts to it.



# Impacts of Abusive Mentality

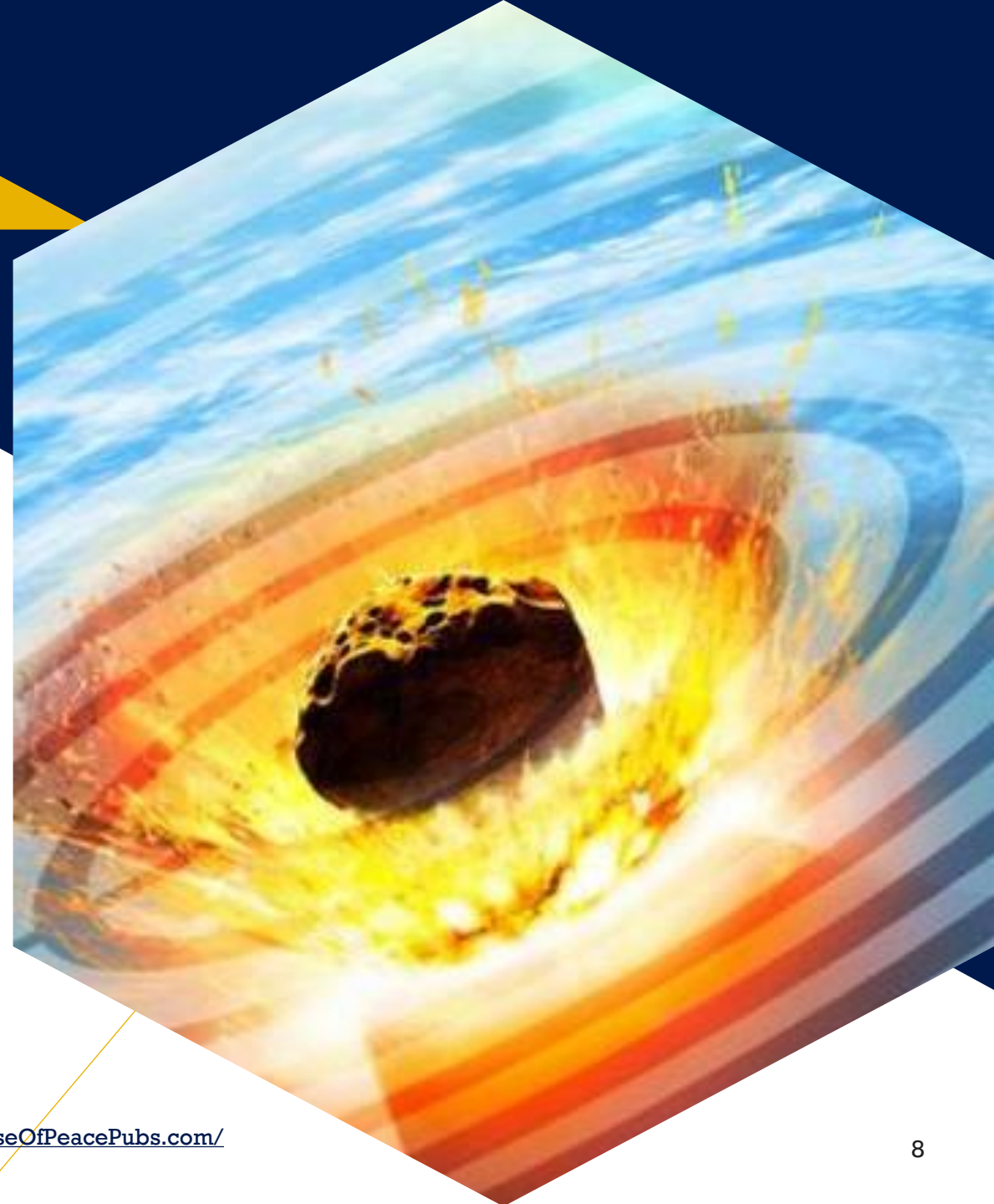
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- **Examples (Bancroft, 2002):**
  - His attitude toward her always seems to be: “you owe me.”
  - He manages to twist everything around so that it’s her fault.
  - She feels suffocated by him. He’s trying to run her life.
  - Everyone seems to think he’s the greatest guy in the world. She wishes they could see this side of him that she has to live with.
  - He says he loves her so much. So why does he treat her like this?

*The Abusive Mentality:*  
**Controlling**  
**Entitlement**  
Twists things into their opposites  
**Disrespect of partner**  
Confuses love and abuse  
**Manipulative**  
**Good public image**  
**Feels justified**  
Denial & minimization of abuse  
**Possessive**

# Impacts of Abusive Mentality

- Chronic mistreatment gets victims to doubt themselves.
- Victims are unable to trust themselves.
- **Advocate's task:** *Advocates encourage, educate, and empower survivors to hold onto truth and find their true identity (hopefully in Christ).*





# Construction & Maintenance of Unreality

Impact of capitulating to an abuser's notion of reality rather than trusting one's own senses can have a **severe impact on psychological well-being and notions of self**

Impact of living within an unreality of someone else's making is that you **become paralyzed**

She internalizes the controls placed on her and learns to anticipate and avoid failure  
(Williamson, 2010)



# Reality Distortion

- Women can experience fear and anxiety some **10 years after** an assault or incident
- Living and negotiating coercion and control may trigger emotional and psychological responses that mimic symptoms of **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**
- Women become accomplices in the **redefining of the unreality** of the coercive controller- minimization of abuse

(Williamson, 2010)



"They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace."  
(Jeremiah 6:14)

*“Terror, intermittent reward, isolation, and enforced dependency may succeed in creating a **submissive and compliant prisoner**. But the final step in the psychological control of the victim is not completed until she has been **forced to violate her own moral principals and to betray her basic human attachments**. Psychologically, this is the most destructive of all coercive techniques, for the victim who has succumbed loathes herself.” (Herman, 1992, p. 83)*

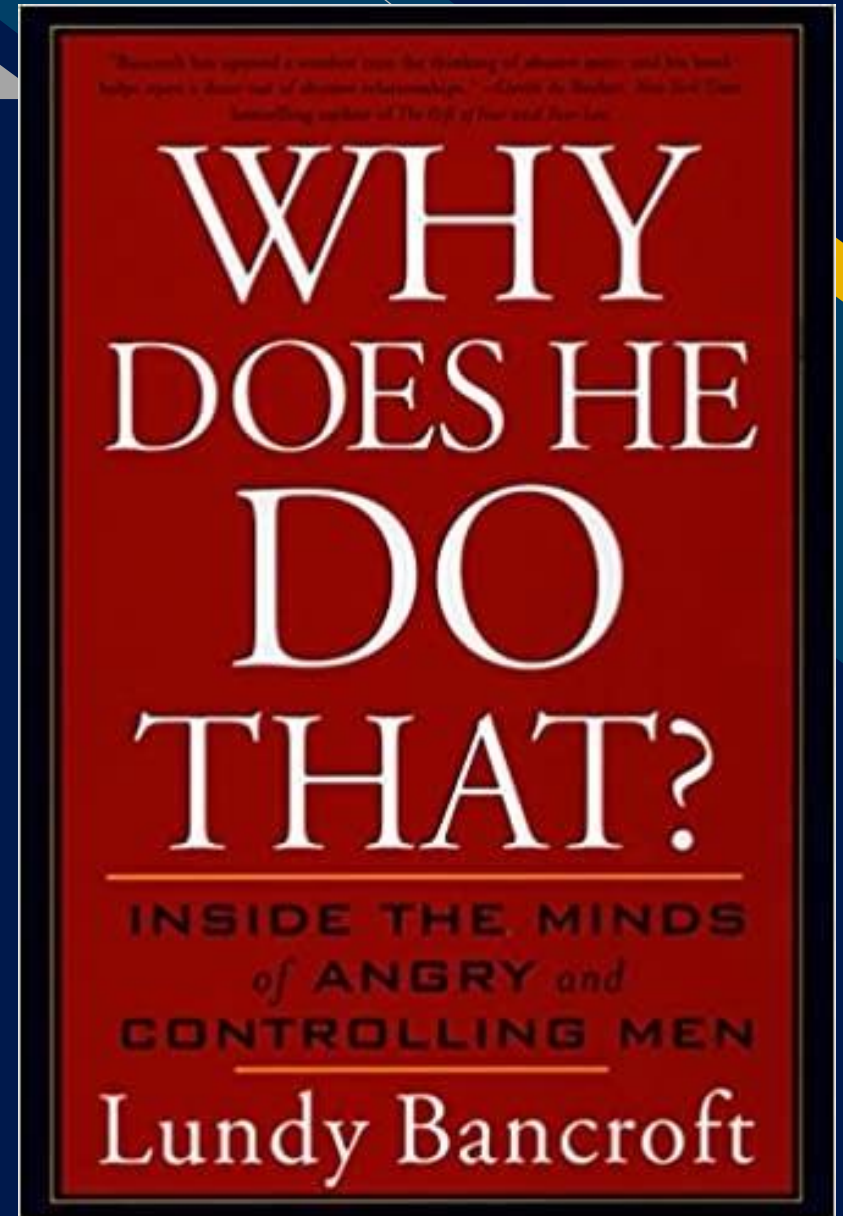


# Abuse Survival

# Grounding Break



# Lundy Bancroft's “10 Realities for the Abuser”





# Reality #1

## He is controlling.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #1: Controlling

Example- Glenn's story (Bancroft, 2002):

- *“Harriet had started yelling at me on Friday afternoon and told me she is going to move out soon. Then she left for the whole weekend and took my two-year-old son with her. She really hurt me. So I decided to hurt her too, and I wanted to go after something that was really important to her, to show her what it’s like. She had been working for a week on the college paper that she had put in a lot of hours into and was going to hand in on Monday. She left it sitting right on top of her dresser, just asking for it. So I tore it up into little pieces. Then I ripped up a bunch of pictures of the three of us, and I left it all in a nice pile on the bed for her to come home to. I think she learned something from that.”*
- **What is the abuser’s thought process, motive, and justification?**



# Reality #1: Controlling

## Examining Glenn's thought process, motives, justification

- Believed his right to control his partner's actions
- Considered it his right to punish her in the most severe way he could think of
- Talked proudly of how he had “allowed” her various freedoms
- Defended his right to remove her privileges

One of the prevalent features of life with an angry or controlling partner is that he frequently tells you what you should think and tries to get you to doubt or devalue your own perceptions and beliefs.

— Lundy Bancroft —

AZ QUOTES



# Advocate's Response

Helping her to understand:

***His problem is not that he loses control of himself, it's that he takes control of her. In order for him to change, he doesn't need to gain control over himself, he needs to let go of his control of her.***

*(paraphrasing Bancroft, 2002)*





# Reality #2

He is entitled.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #2: He feels entitled.

- Abuser's distorted beliefs: he has a special status in that it provides him with exclusive rights and privileges; the rights of his partner and children are diminished and his rights are greatly inflated. (Bancroft, 2002)
- **Advocate's task:** *Help her to see she has rights, and her children have rights, and the abuser needs to shrink their rights to the proper size and to shrink his view of his own rights down to where they belong.*



# Entitlement

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Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. **Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, **did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!** (Philippians 2: 3-8)



## Basic Rights in a Relationship

- To have your own view, even if your mate has a different view
- To live free from criticism and judgment
- To live free from emotional and physical threat
- See course website for handout (Evans, 1993)

# Rights as Christians

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**The “no rights” teaching “can be absolutely devastating in cases of domestic cruelty.” (Rebecca Davis)**

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## **Examples of rights in the Bible:**

**Proverbs 31:8-9** says, “Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

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**Psalms 82:3** says, “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.”

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**Isaiah 1:17** says, “Learn to do good; seek justice [setting things right], correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.”

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# Abuser's Distorted Beliefs About his Rights in the Relationship

**Physical caretaking**—sees his partner as an unpaid servant

**Emotional caretaking**—it is his partner's duty to meet his emotional needs

**Sexual caretaking**—it is his partner's duty to keep him sexually satisfied

**Deference**—entitled to have his tastes and opinions treated as edicts

**Freedom from accountability**—considers himself above criticism

(Bancroft, 2002)



# Abusers Outlook on the Woman's Anger

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Abusive partner doesn't have a problem with his anger; he has a problem with **your** anger.

**Nature of entitlement:** He isn't abusive because he is angry; he's angry because he's abusive.

(Bancroft, 2002)

Anger is not the problem, it's what you do with it.  
"In your anger do not sin" (Ephesians 4:26)





## **Reality #3**

He twists things into  
their opposites.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Abuser's Response

# DARVO

**Deny, Attack and Reverse Victim and Offender**

Used to deflect blame and responsibility

The perpetrator may:

Deny the behavior

Attack the individual  
doing the confronting

Reverse the roles of  
Victim and Offender

The perpetrator assumes the victim role and turns the true victim  
into an alleged offender.

(Freyd, 1997)

# Reality #3: He twists things into their opposites

**Abuser's account of his worst assault on his wife:** *"One day she went way overboard with her mouth, and I got so pissed off that I grabbed her by the neck and put her up against the wall." With his voice filled with indignation, he said, "then she tried to knee me in the balls! How would you like it if a woman did that to you? Of course I lashed out. And when I swung my hand down my fingernails made a long cut across her face. What the hell did she expect?" (Bancroft, 2002)*

**Advocate's response:** *Show her that he needs to stop bullying her, refuse to let him twist her words around. She may be accused of having said things that have little connection to his actual words. You may have to point out his double standards and that he should live by the same rules he applies to her.*

ALL DAY LONG THEY TWIST  
MY WORDS; ALL THEIR  
THOUGHTS ARE ON MY  
DEMISE.

- PSALM 56:5



# Reality #4

He considers himself superior.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #4: Superiority

He disrespects his partner and considers himself superior to her.

Depersonalizes or objectifies his partner

Never sounds upset

Sees his partner as less intelligent, less competent, less logical, and even less sensitive than he is

Hello I'm

BETTER  
THAN YOU

# Humility

Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them. Jesus told them, “In this world the kings and great men lord it over their people, yet they are called ‘friends of the people.’ But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant. Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:24-27)

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: **Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought**, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. (Romans 12:3)

For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. (Matthew 23:12)



## **Reality #5**

He confuses love  
and abuse.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #5

## He confuses love and abuse.

- Tries to convince his partner that his mistreatment of her is proof of how deeply he cares.
- Confusion of love with abuse is what allows abusers who kill their partners to make the absurd claim that they were driven by the depths of their loving feelings.

(Bancroft, 2002)

Abuse is impatient, abuse is unkind. It is envious, it boasts, it is proud. It dishonors others, it is self-seeking, it is easily angered, it keeps a record of wrongs. Abuse delights in evil but is miserable with the truth. It never protects, never trusts, never hopes, never perseveres. Abuse always fails...

Adapted from 1 Cor. 13:4-8

*#calledtopeace*



## Psalm 143

3 The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead. 4 So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.

*6 I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land.*

*7 Answer me quickly, LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me or I will be like those who go down to the pit. 8 Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. 9 Rescue me from my enemies, LORD, for I hide myself in you. 11 For your name's sake, LORD, preserve my life; in your righteousness, bring me out of trouble.*

**Song:** *Psalm 23 (I am not alone); Versions by Wind & Embers feat. Sarah Rijkogel or People & Songs*



# Reality #6

He is manipulative.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #6

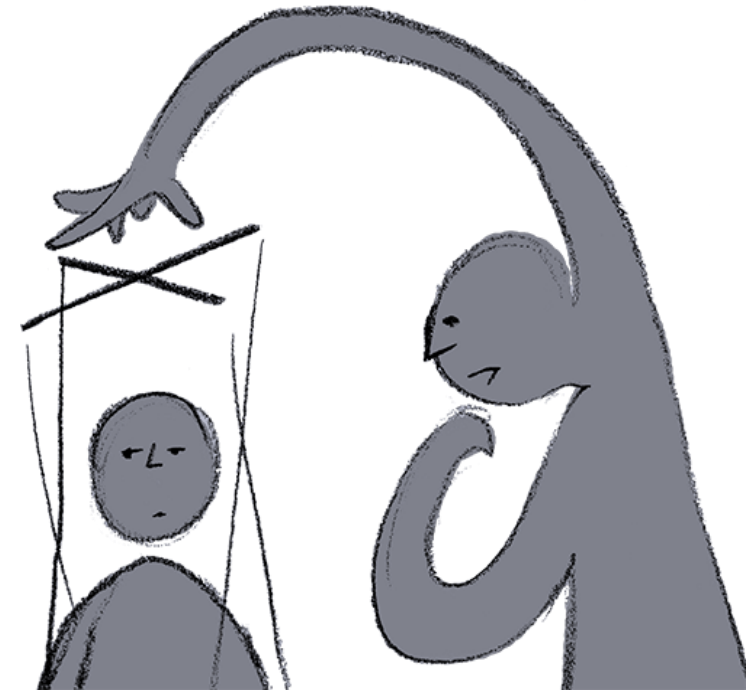
## He is manipulative.

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Few abusive men rely entirely on verbal abuse or intimidation to control their partners.

The abuser tends to switch frequently to **manipulating** his partner to get what he wants. He also uses these tactics just to get her upset or confused.

(Bancroft, 2002)



# Signs of Manipulation by Abusers

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Changing his moods abruptly and frequently

Denying the obvious about what he is doing or feeling

Convincing her that what he wants her to do is what is best for her

Getting her to feel sorry for him (Bancroft, 2002)

# Signs of Manipulation by Abusers

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Getting her to blame herself, or blame other people, for what he does

Using confusion tactics and arguments

Lying or misleading her about his actions, his desires, or his reasons for doing certain things

Getting her and the people she cares about to turn against each other (Bancroft, 2002)



## **Reality #7**

He desires a good public image.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #7: Good Public Image

- **He strives to have a good public image**
  - *Image management*- most abusive men put on the 4 C's faces for their communities, creating a sharp split between their public image and their private treatment of women and children.
  - Posturing for the court



# Reality #7: Good Public Image

## He may be:

- Enraged at home
- Selfish and self-centered with her
- Domineering at home
- Highly negative about females while on his own turf
- Assaultive toward his partner or children
- Entitled at home

**BUT**

- Calm and smiling outside
- Generous and supportive with others
- Willing to negotiate and compromise outside
- Vocal supporter of equality when anyone else is listening
- Non-violent and nonthreatening with everyone else
- Critical of other men who disrespect or assault women

(Bancroft, 2002)



# Reality #7: Good Public Image



**Advocate's response:** *Help her to recognize his abusiveness— to see the incongruency between how he behaves at home versus in public, and how the attitudes and tactics reserved for home are a problem.*

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. 28 In the same way, **on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.** (Matthew 23:25-28)



The Lord detests people with crooked hearts, but he delights in those with integrity. (Proverbs 11:20 NLT)

Watch out for false prophets. **They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.** (Matthew 7:15)

And no wonder, for Satan himself **masquerades as an angel of light.** (2 Corinthians 11:14)

# Grounding Break





## **Reality #8**

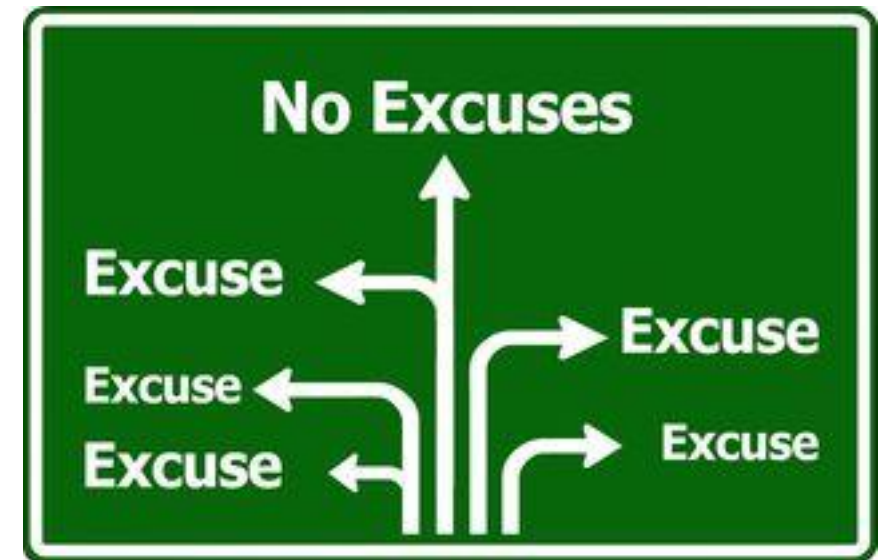
He feels justified.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #8: He feels justified.

- Abusers externalize responsibility for their actions, believing that their partners *make them* behave in abusive ways.
- Abusive men are masters of excuse-making.
- **Advocate's response:** *Help her reframe the situation to see how he is outside the family and ask how he would likely handle it if he were in public. Help her see that he has the skills to manage outside pressures. He needs to generalize back into using the same skills within the family system.*

(Bancroft, 2002)







## **Reality #9**

He denies and  
minimizes his abuse.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #9: Denial & Minimization

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## ▪ **Denial and cross accusation**

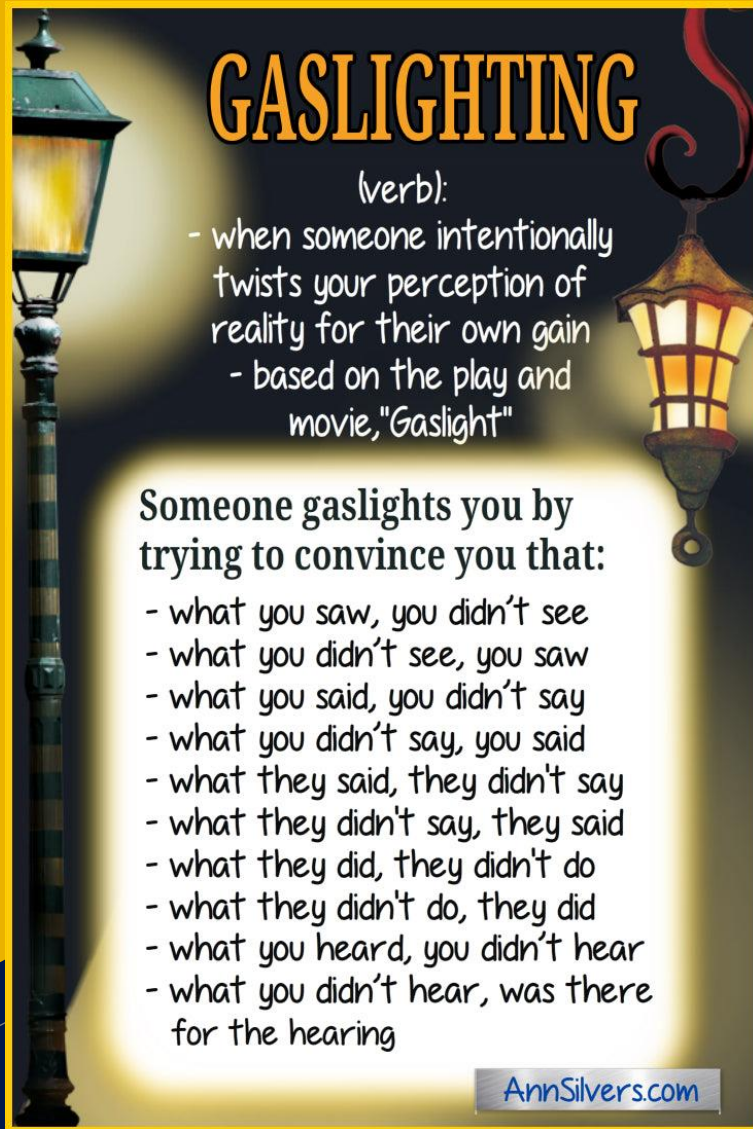
- His denial does not mean that she isn't telling the truth.
- If the man is abusive, of course he is going to deny it- for self protection and because of his distorted perceptions.
- If he were ready to accept responsibility for his actions and relationships, **he wouldn't be abusive.**

▪ **Advocates Response:** *Breaking through denial and minimization is one of the main tasks for advocates because he has brainwashed her to his point of view.*

(Bancroft, 2002)



# Abuser's denial sets his partner's head spinning



**GASLIGHTING**

(verb):

- when someone intentionally twists your perception of reality for their own gain
- based on the play and movie, "Gaslight"

Someone gaslights you by trying to convince you that:

- what you saw, you didn't see
- what you didn't see, you saw
- what you said, you didn't say
- what you didn't say, you said
- what they said, they didn't say
- what they didn't say, they said
- what they did, they didn't do
- what they didn't do, they did
- what you heard, you didn't hear
- what you didn't hear, was there for the hearing

[AnnSivers.com](http://AnnSivers.com)

Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, "I am only joking!" (Proverbs 26:18-19)

# Victim Impact of Denial

- The certainty and authority in his voice, with his eyes twisted up to show how baffled he is, leaves her questioning herself.
- She can feel as if she's losing her mind.
- The more serious the incidents he denies, the more her grip on reality can start to slip.
- She may develop actual psychiatric symptoms.
- If outsiders start to notice her instability, the abuser can use their observations to persuade them that her revelations of abuse by him are fantasies.

(Bancroft, 2002)



I didn't do anything wrong and  
I promise to never do it again.

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**There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community. (Proverbs 6:16-19)**

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**The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy. (Proverbs 12:22)**

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**For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. (Luke 8:17)**

# You're Mine

You are my rightfully  
owned property & only  
I decide if & when this  
relationship ends...

## Reality #10

He is possessive.

(Bancroft, 2002)

# Reality #10: Possessiveness

Sense of ownership is one reason why abuse tends to get worse as relationships get more serious.

Possessiveness is at the core of the abuser's mindset.

Because he feels he owns her, he has a right to treat her as he sees fit. (Bancroft, 2002)



# Abusive Mentality: Key Points to Remember

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Abuse grows from **attitudes and values**, not feelings. The roots are **ownership**, the trunk is **entitlement, survival, and sadism**, and the branches are **control**.

Abuse and respect are opposites. Abusers cannot change unless they overcome their **core of disrespect** toward their partners.

Abusers are far more **conscious** of what they are doing than they appear to be. However, even their less conscious behaviors are driven by their core attitudes.

Abusers are **unwilling** to be non-abusive, not **unable**. They do not want to give up power and control.

**Victims are not crazy.** They must learn to trust their perceptions of how their abusive partner treats them and thinks about them.

(Bancroft, 2002)

An open book with a bookmark is resting on a wooden surface. The book is open to two pages, and the bookmark is visible in the center. The wood grain is clearly visible on the surface.

Proverbs 18:14

The human spirit can endure in sickness, but a *crushed spirit who can bear?*

Proverbs 15:4

“The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a *perverse tongue crushes the spirit.*”

Proverbs 29:25

*Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.*

# “Trauma Bonding”

Originally called *Stockholm Syndrome*; beginning to see language of *Trauma-coerced attachment (TCA)* used



Dysfunctional attachments that occur in the presence of danger, shame, or exploitation. Trauma bonds occur when we are bonding to the very person who is the source of the danger, fear, and exploitation. (Dr. Patrick Carnes)

Undermines recovery and resilience

## Trauma Bonding

A cycle of physical or emotional abuse that creates a strong attachment between an abused person and their abuser, reinforced by periods of love and affection and then periods of devaluation and emotional abuse.

BlessingManifesting



**A psychological response sometimes seen in abducted hostages. Also seen with abused and coercively controlled women and children.**

Psychological shift that occurs to captives when they are threatened gravely but shown acts of kindness by their captors

Tend to sympathize with their captors and think of them highly because they believe that their captors are showing favor because of their inherent kindness and thus might not be as bad as they look



When subjected to these situations for a period of time, the captive develops a strong bond with the captor and in some cases (especially with a captor of the opposite sex) develops a sexual interest

**“Trauma Bonding”**

# Components of Trauma Bonding

Positive feelings by the victim toward the abuser/controller

Negative feelings by the victim toward family, friends, or authorities trying to rescue/support them or win their release

Support of the abuser's reasons and behaviors

Positive feelings by the abuser toward the victim

Supportive behaviors by the victim, at times helping the abuser

Inability to engage in behaviors that may assist in their release or detachment

I don't know why, but I want him back.

I know what he's done to me, but I still love him.

This doesn't make sense. He's got a new girlfriend and he's abusing her too...but I'm jealous.



# “Trauma Bonding”

Emotionally bonding with an abuser is actually a strategy for survival for victims of abuse and intimidation.

Reaction in hostage and/or abuse situations is so well recognized at this time that police hostage negotiators no longer view it as unusual

On the downside, assures that the hostages experiencing “trauma bonding” will not be very cooperative during rescue or criminal prosecution

Length of time one is exposed to abuse/control and other factors are certainly involved

# 4 Situations for Development of Trauma Bonding



**These can be found in hostage, severe abuse, and abusive relationships:**

- The presence of a perceived threat to one's physical or psychological survival and the belief that the abuser would carry out the threat
- The presence of a perceived small kindness from the abuser to the victim
- Isolation from perspectives other than those of the abuser
- The perceived inability to escape the situation

# 1. Perceived Threat to Survival

The perception of threat can be formed by direct, indirect, or witnessed methods.

## Direct

- Criminal or antisocial partners can directly threaten her life or friends/family.
- His history of violence leads her to believe that he *will* carry out the threat in a direct manner if she fails to comply with his demands.
- The abuser assures her that only her cooperation keeps her loved ones safe.

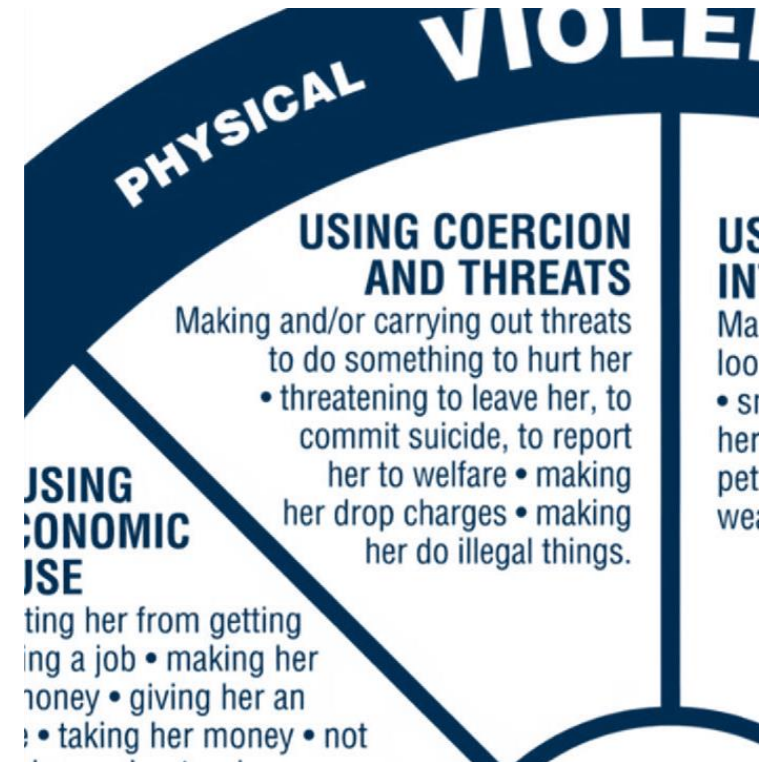
## Indirect

- He offers subtle threats that she will never leave him or have another partner, reminding her that people in the past have paid dearly for not following his wishes.
- He may give hints like, “*I know people who can make others disappear.*”
- Can come from stories he tells-how he has obtained revenge on those who crossed him

# Perceived Threat to Survival

**Witnessing violence or aggression is also a perceived threat.**

- Witnessing a *violent temper* directed at a TV, others on the highway, or a third party clearly sends the message that she could be the next target for violence.
- Witnessing *thoughts and attitudes* of the abuser is threatening and intimidating, knowing she will be the target of those thoughts in the future.



## 2. The “Small Kindness” Perception

- **In threatening and survival situations**, we look for evidence of HOPE — a small sign that the situation may improve.
  - e.g., a birthday card, a gift (usually provided after a period of abuse), or a special treat
  - These are interpreted as not only positive, but evidence that the abuser is not “all bad” and may at some time correct his/her behavior.
  - Abusers are often given positive credit just for *not* abusing their partner
- **Perception of a “soft side”**- the abuser may share information about their past (how he was mistreated, abused, neglected, or wronged), so the victim begins to feel he may be capable of fixing his behavior or that he may also be a “victim.” Sympathy may develop toward the abuser.



# Grounding Break



# 3. Isolation from Perspectives Other than those of the Abuser

In abusive and controlling relationships, the victim has the sense they are always “**walking on eggshells**” — fearful of saying or doing anything that might prompt a violent/intimidating outburst.

**Taking the abuser’s perspective** as a survival technique can become so intense that the victim actually develops anger toward those trying to help them.

In severe cases of Trauma Bonding in relationships, the victim may have difficulty leaving the abuser and may actually feel the abusive situation is their fault.

# 4. Perceived Inability to Escape

In romantic relationships, the belief that one can't escape is common (sense of till-death-do-us-part).

Controlling partners may have increased the financial obligations/debt in the relationship to the point that neither partner can financially survive on their own.

The controller often uses extreme threats including threatening to take the children out of state, threatening to quit their job/business rather than pay alimony/support, threatening public exposure of the victim's personal issues, or assuring the victim they will never have a peaceful life due to nonstop harassment.

Controllers often keep the victim locked into the relationship with severe guilt — even threatening suicide if she leaves.

# In Unhealthy Relationships and Trauma Bonding Relationships...

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There is a daily preoccupation with “**trouble.**”

- Trouble is any individual, group, situation, comment, casual glance, or cold meal that may produce a temper tantrum or verbal abuse from the controller or abuser.
- To **survive**, trouble is to be avoided at all costs.
- The **victim must control situations** that produce trouble.

# Biderman's Chart of Coercion

1. Isolation



2. Monopolization of perception.



3. Induced debility; exhaustion



4. Threats



5. Occasional indulgences.



6. Demonstrating "omnipotence"



7. Degradation



8. Enforcing trivial demands

(Biderman, 1957)



# Betrayal Trauma Defined

**Betrayal trauma** occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person's trust or well-being (Freyd, 2008).

- Freyd's theory/initial discussions focused on childhood abuse- "...if the person who has betrayed us is someone we need to continue interacting with despite the betrayal, then it is not to our advantage to respond to the betrayal in the normal way. Instead, we essentially need to ignore the betrayal."
- Freyd expanded her research over the years to consider the impact of betrayal by unfaithful spouses, abusive authority figures, corrupt institutions, etc.

## Betrayal Blindness

Being unaware, unrecognizing or just forgetting about betrayal. We engage in this unseeingness to be able to preserve our relationships, our world views, our ideals and our social systems.

(From the great work of Dr. Jennifer Freyd)

@DoctorRamani



# Betrayal Trauma

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“We call it **betrayal** because it is *personal*.

The wounds are felt deeply within the soul. The trauma is experienced physically as well as emotionally, and the perpetrator is the same one we turn to for *comfort, love, safety and support.*” (Joi Allerton, LWCS)

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# Betrayal Trauma



Although betrayal trauma shares many of the same psychological, physiological and neurological symptoms associated with fear-based traumas....

***the perpetrator is in close relationship with the victim*** and therefore the violation of trust is experienced as a deeply personalized (versus random) offense.

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# Betrayal Trauma

Many symptoms arise immediately after a betrayal trauma, while other symptoms have a delayed onset, which may start months, and sometimes years, after the initial discovery of a betrayal.

## Common delayed reactions to betrayal trauma:

Depression

Grief  
reactions

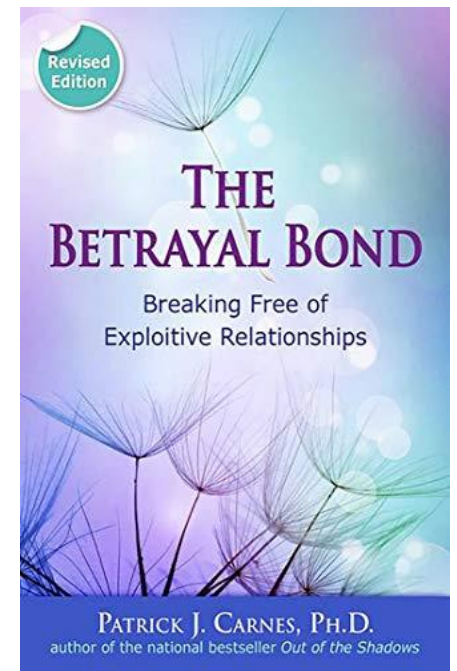
Skepticism

Shame

Dr. Jill Manning iamjallerton@gmail.com © Coach Joi All Rights Reserved

# Symptoms that Indicate a Betrayal Bond

1. Everyone around you has strong negative reactions, yet you continue covering up, defending, or explaining a relationship.
2. There is a constant pattern of nonperformance, and yet you continue to believe false promises.
3. There are repetitive, destructive fights that nobody wins.
4. Others are horrified by something that has happened to you, but you are not.
5. You obsess over showing someone that he or she is wrong about you, your relationship, or the person's treatment of you.



(Patrick J. Carnes, Ph.D., CAS, Trauma Bonds)

# Symptoms that Indicate a Betrayal Bond

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6. You feel stuck because you know what the other person is doing is destructive but believe you cannot do anything about it.
7. You feel loyal to someone even though you harbor secrets that are damaging to others.
8. You move closer to someone you know is destructive to you with the desire of converting him or her to a non-abuser.
9. Someone's talents, charisma, or contributions cause you to overlook destructive, exploitive or degrading acts.
10. You cannot detach from someone even though you do not trust, like, or care for the person.

(Patrick J. Carnes, Ph.D., CAS, Trauma Bonds)

# Symptoms that Indicate a Betrayal Bond

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11. You find yourself missing a relationship, even to the point of nostalgia and longing, that was so awful it almost destroyed you.

12. Extraordinary demands are placed upon you to measure up as a way to cover up that you've been exploited.

13. You keep secret someone's destructive behavior toward you because of all the good they have done or the importance of their position or career.

14. The history of your relationship is about contracts or promises that have been broken and that you are asked to overlook.

(Patrick J. Carnes, Ph.D., CAS, Trauma Bonds)

# Betrayal Trauma is the Result of Relational Abuse

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Abuse is **not** a marriage issue.

@betrayaltraumarecovery

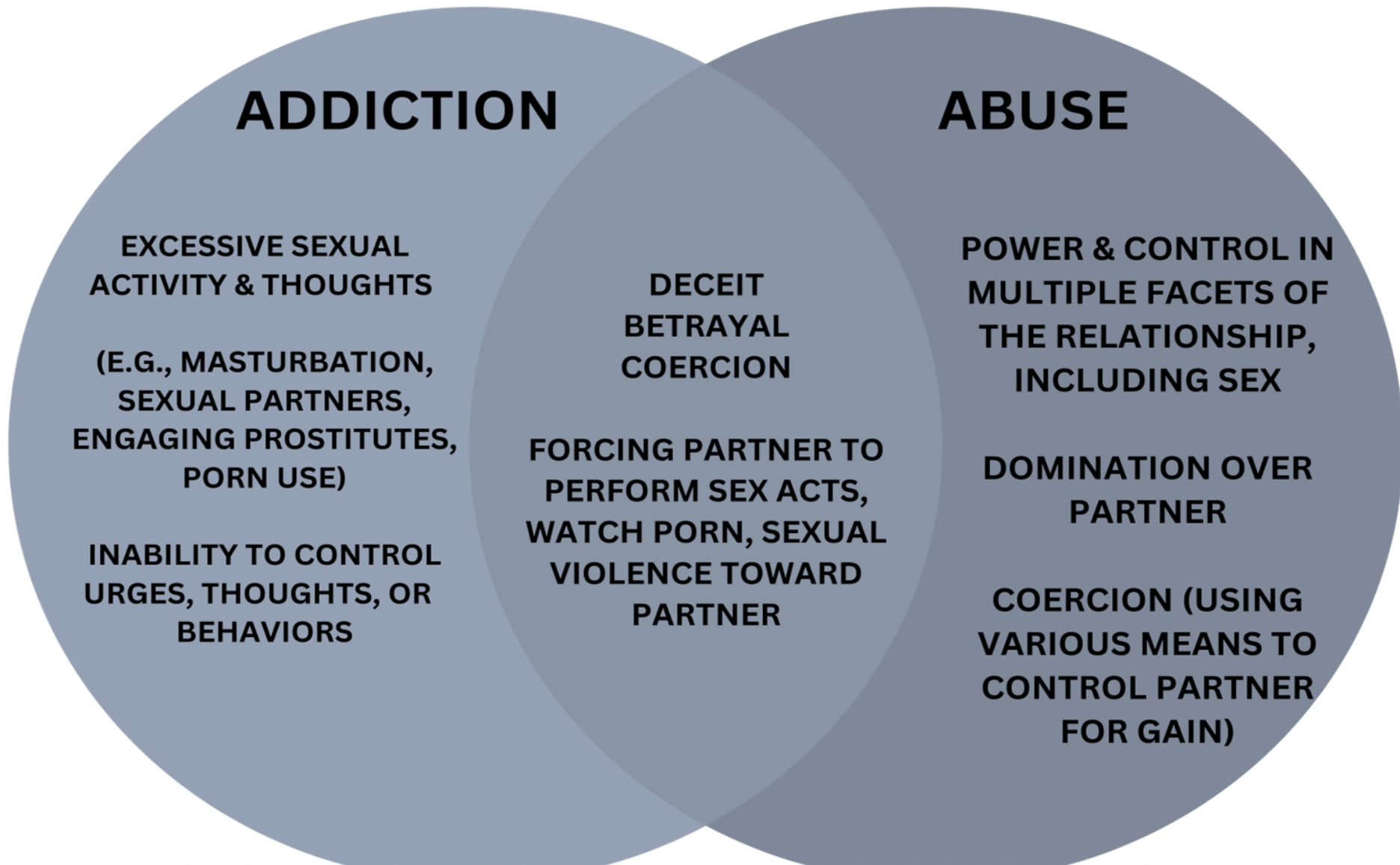
Pornography and abuse are linked.

btr.org

A relationship without full consent is an **ABUSIVE** relationship.

btr.org

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***ADDICTION DOES NOT CAUSE ABUSE, BUT ADDICTION DOES LEAD TO MORE FREQUENT AND A FASTER ESCALATION OF ABUSE***

“When you learn how your physiology changes after chronic stress and trauma, you learn that it’s not YOU, it’s your nervous system that’s responding this way. Anyone who has been through prolonged adversity could have changes to their neuroception system that makes them more alert to danger signals. You’re not choosing to move into fight/flight/freeze/fawn/[*flop/fatigue*] and it’s not your fault.”

[jessicamaguire.com-@repairing the nervous system](mailto:jessicamaguire.com-@repairing_the_nervous_system)  
<https://www.nervoussystemschool.com>

# Impacts of Long-term Trauma and Betrayal



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# Watching for Signs of Trauma

**Thoughts** – often offline,  
distorted, chaotic, and fragile

**Emotions** – cross the full  
spectrum of expression  
(elevated and sub-expressed)

**Body** – multiple physical  
presentations are experienced  
by women in trauma

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## When treating trauma...

"We work with **three** levels of information processing – which goes along with the three levels of the brain.

We work with **cognitions** and belief systems that are formed after trauma, which involves the cortex.

We also have to work with the **emotions**, like rage and terror – that has to do with the limbic system.

Then, we also have to work with **the body** because that's where trauma impacts."

-Pat Ogden, PhD





# Guilt and Shame

**Helpful guilt** is a feeling of psychological discomfort about something we've done that is objectively wrong.

**Unhelpful guilt** is a feeling of psychological discomfort about something we've done against our irrationally high standards.

**Shame** is an intensely painful feeling of being fundamentally flawed.



(The National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine)

# Supporting Betrayal/Relational Trauma Survivors

**Assessing safety** should always be the *first* concern when working with women experiencing betrayal trauma/relational trauma and intimate partner violence

Encourage women to **share their story** as often as necessary - this is a critical part of processing and **validating** their lived experience

In the beginning stages of discovery, many of these wives blame themselves, even to the point of seeing themselves as having been abusive – it is important to **educate** with care as we slowly help them accept coercive control is *not* a relationship problem – it is a person problem.

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# Relational Betrayal and the Church

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- In a fallen world, a covenant union is not always expressed and lived well; the union of “one-flesh” can be violated by various forms of persecution/evil ([Matthew 10:23](#)). Leaving these relationships may be necessary.
- Leslie Vernick, Christian counselor and author of [The Emotionally Destructive Marriage](#), teaches there is biblical support for sons and daughters of God to experience consequence for sin ([1 Corinthians 5:9–12](#); [James 5:19–20](#); [Galatians 6:7](#)). Vernick also submits safety may be more important to God than unconditional loyalty to one’s spouse ([1 Samuel 18–31](#); [Matthew 2:13–15](#); [Luke 14:5](#)).
- Physical abuse, and as we see in our work, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse may mean that it is time to consider abandoning the marriage ([Malachi 2:16](#)) for a man “covering himself with violence” is not a loving a spouse as Christ loved and cared for the church.

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# Impact of Trauma on Faith

*“In situations of terror, people spontaneously seek their first source of comfort and protection. Wounded soldiers and raped women cry for their mothers, or for God. When this cry is not answered, the sense of basic trust is shattered. Traumatized people feel utterly abandoned, utterly alone, cast out of the human and divine systems of care and protection that sustain life” (Judith Herman).*

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# Trauma and Restoring Faith

Learn to do good. Seek justice:  
help the oppressed; defend the  
orphan; plead for the widow.  
(Isaiah 1:17)



For I was hungry and you gave me  
something to eat, I was thirsty and  
you gave me something to drink, I  
was a stranger and you invited me  
in, I needed clothes and you  
clothed me, I was sick and you  
looked after me, I was in prison  
and you came to visit me. (Matthew  
25:35-36)

Carry each other's burdens,  
and in this way you will fulfill  
the law of Christ. (Galatians  
6:2)

Rejoice with those who rejoice;  
mourn with those who mourn.  
(Romans 12:15)

# Victim Assessment

- Coercive Control History
- Checklist of Controlling Behaviors
- Abuse Questionnaire
- Power and Control Wheel (<https://www.theduluthmo del.org/wheels/>)
- Definitions of Coercive Control (use checklists in “Eyes Wide Open: Help! *with* Control Freak Co-Parents”)



# Intimate Partner Homicide / Femicide



# Intimate Partner Homicide / Femicide

***92% percent of female victims knew their male killers.***

***Of these, 61% were killed by an intimate partner.***

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Compared to a man, a woman is far more likely to be killed by her spouse, an intimate acquaintance, or a family member than by a stranger.

---

Recent studies suggest that at least half of female homicides are perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner.

---

Between 1996 and 2020, a total of 7,663 women were shot and killed by their husbands or intimate acquaintances in single victim/single offender incidents during an argument.

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Multiple studies have shown that female intimate partners are more likely to be murdered with a firearm than other weapons, demonstrating “the importance of reducing access to firearms in households affected by IPV.

(Violence Policy Center, 2023)



# Intimate Partner Homicide

Men can also be victims of intimate partner homicide. In recent years, about **4.9% of male murder victims were killed by an intimate partner** (Cooper & Smith, 2011).

There is reason to believe that the motivation for female perpetrated crimes may be *self-defense or retaliation*, as the majority of women who use violence against their male partners are battered themselves (Das Dasgupta, 2001).

# Intimate Partner Femicide (IPF)

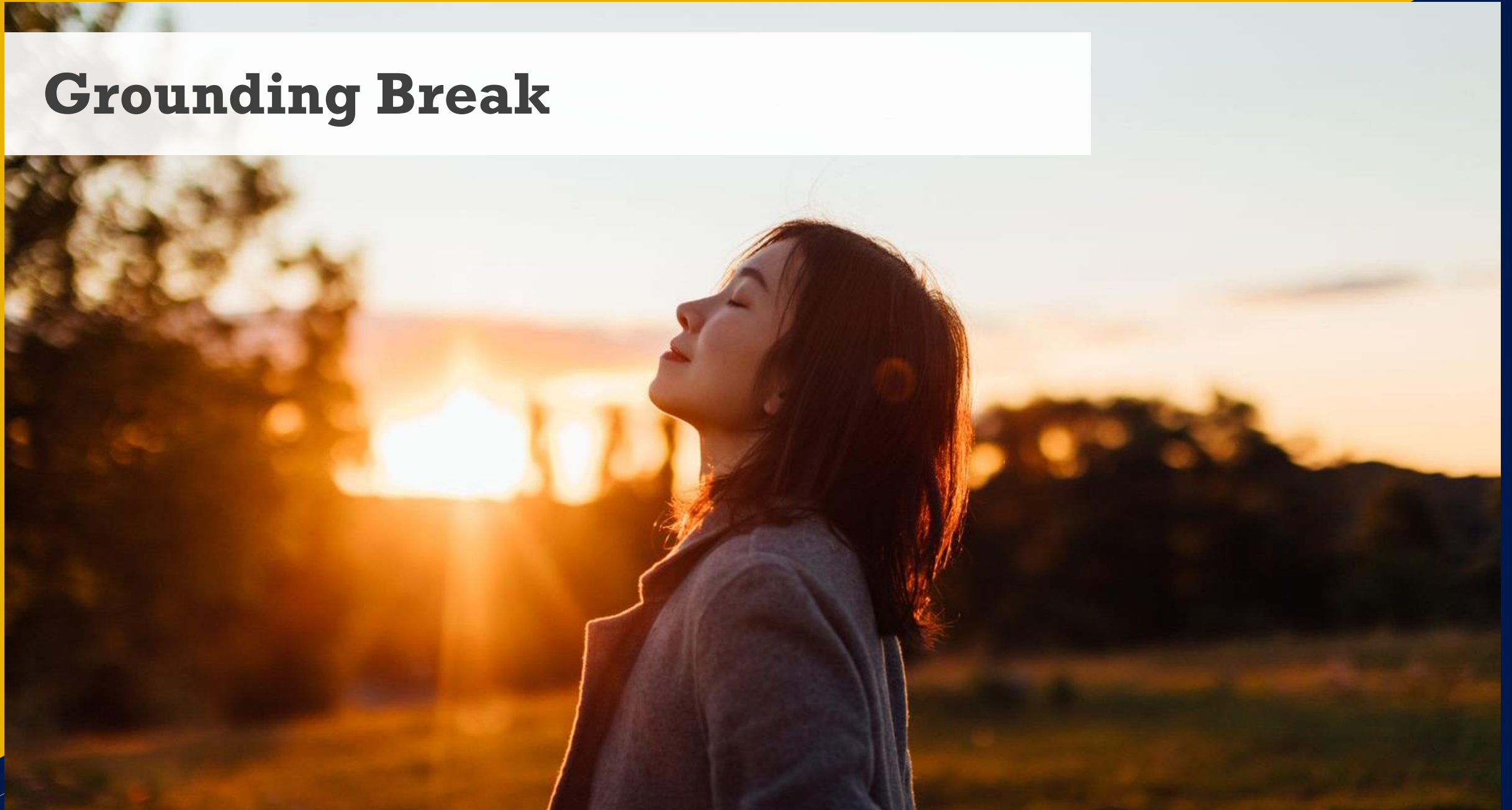
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IPF was preceded and motivated by a **breakdown in the control** the perpetrator has of the relationship (and which they may feel **entitled** to) and their perceived loss of status or stability as a result.

(Monckton Smith, 2020)



# Grounding Break



# Intimate Partner Femicide

## Dominant pre-relationship themes:

- perpetrator has history of domestic abuse, controlling patterns, or stalking

## Relationship themes:

- presence of domestic abuse, controlling patterns, and monitoring/stalking behaviors

## Post-relationship themes:

- separation instigated by the victim, stalking, threats to kill, or a threat to control or status (like illness or financial ruin)

## Risk markers were:

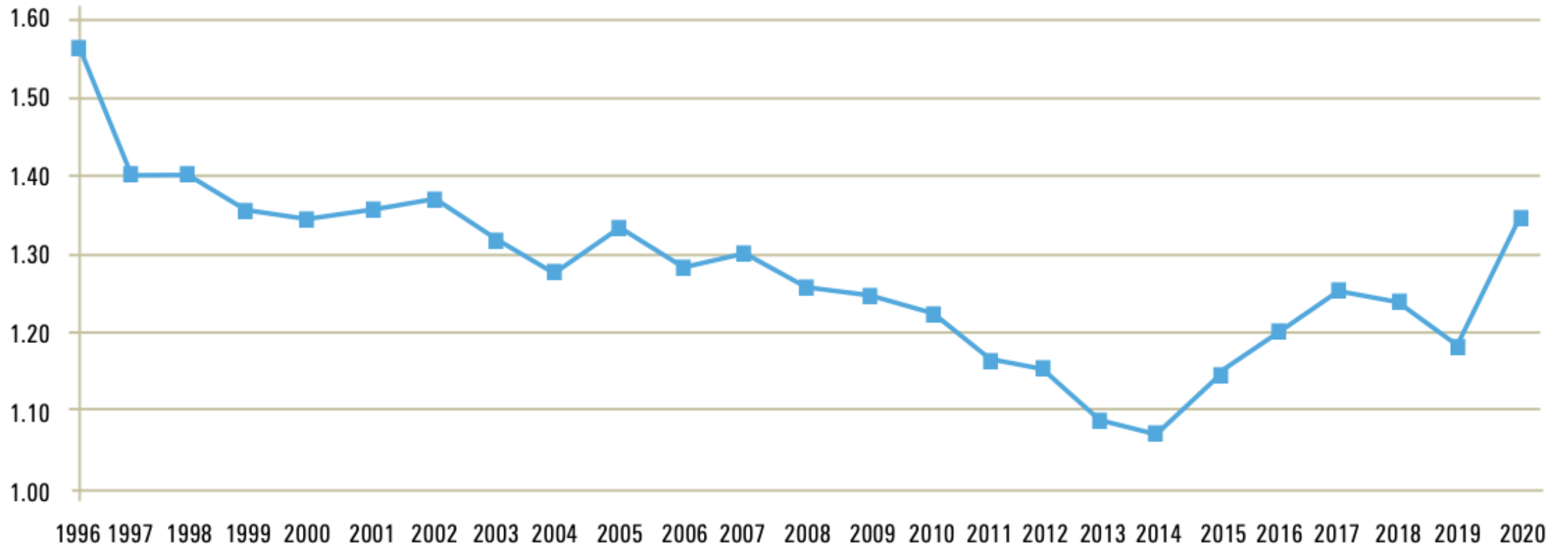
- history of abuse or stalking, possessiveness, control, monitoring, violence, sexual violence, isolation, threats to kill, threats to suicide, stalking, separation, escalating control, or violence

(Monckton Smith, 2020)

# Eight Stage Progression to Homicide/Femicide

Stage 1	<b>Pre-relationship-</b> history of controlling patterns, domestic abuse, or stalking
Stage 2	<b>Early Relationship-</b> how relationship started was different from what it would become; started with the perpetrator being attentive and progressed to possessiveness and control
Stage 3	<b>Relationship-</b> giving of commitment seemed to coincide with rights to control
Stage 4	<b>Trigger/s-</b> withdrawal of commitment, or separation; real or imagined, or just threatened
Stage 5	<b>Escalation-</b> increase in frequency, severity, or variety of abuse, control, or stalking; attempt to reestablish control or status
Stage 6	<b>A change in thinking/decision-</b> perceived irretrievable loss of control and/or status; idea that homicide may be a possibility
Stage 7	<b>Planning-</b> indicators showed written plans around how the killing would happen; evidence of creating opportunities for the killing to happen
Stage 8	<b>Homicide</b> (Intimate Partner Femicide/IPF)- may involve extreme levels of violence (even in previously nonviolent people) where the level of violence used appears to have no direct relation to the level of violence evidenced in the relationship.

### Rate of Women Murdered by Men in Single Victim/Single Offender Incidents 1996 - 2020



***When Men Murder Women*** is an annual report prepared by the Violence Policy Center detailing the reality of homicides committed by males against females in single victim/single offender incidents. Source: Homicide Report (SHR) data submitted to the FBI. This is the most recent data available (2020).

# We Now Understand Why Chris Watts Confessed To Killing His Wife

## View the Video:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbOF1KRzZ9A>

## Read the Story:

- <https://www.nickiswift.com/137854/the-untold-truth-of-the-chris-watts-case/>

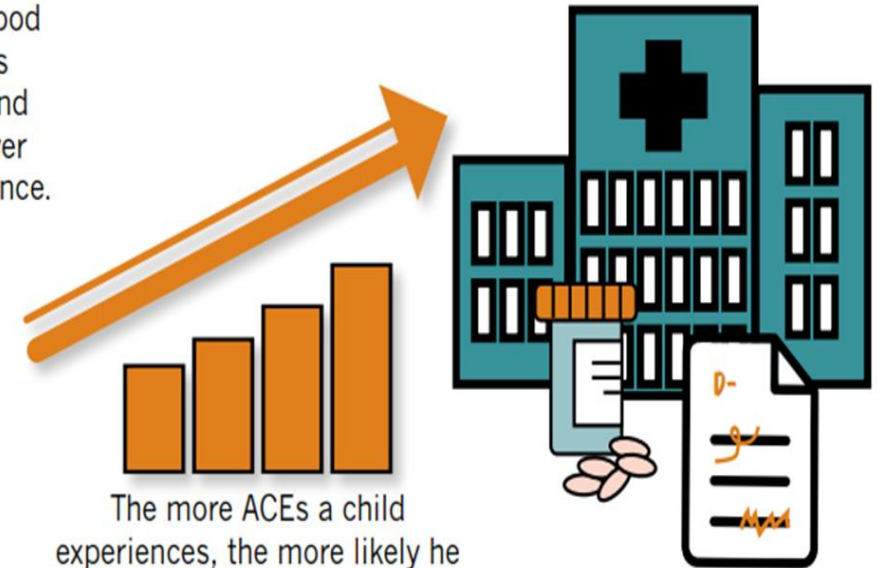
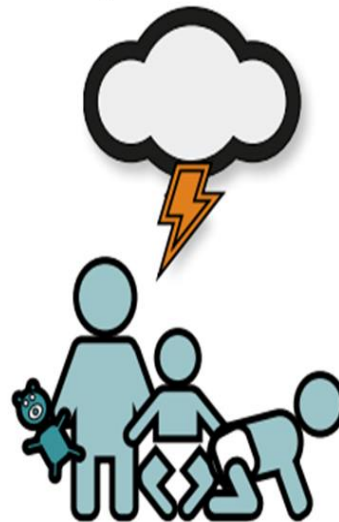


# Importance of ACE Study for Work with Survivors

## What are ACEs?

And how do they relate to Toxic Stress?

“ACEs” stands for “Adverse Childhood Experiences.” These experiences can include things like physical and emotional abuse, neglect, caregiver mental illness, and household violence.



The more ACEs a child experiences, the more likely he or she is to suffer from things like heart disease and diabetes, poor academic achievement, and substance abuse later in life.

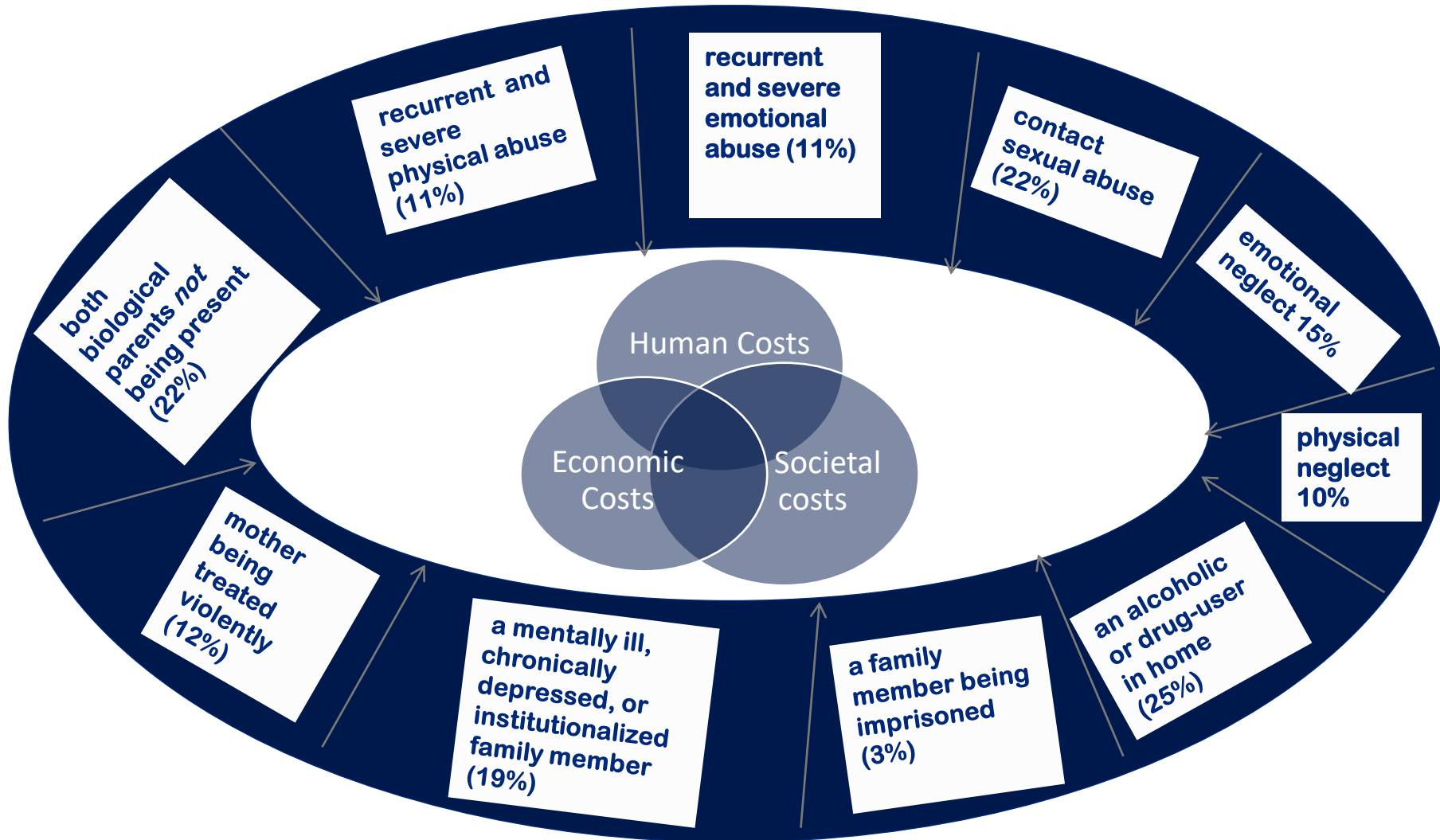
Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

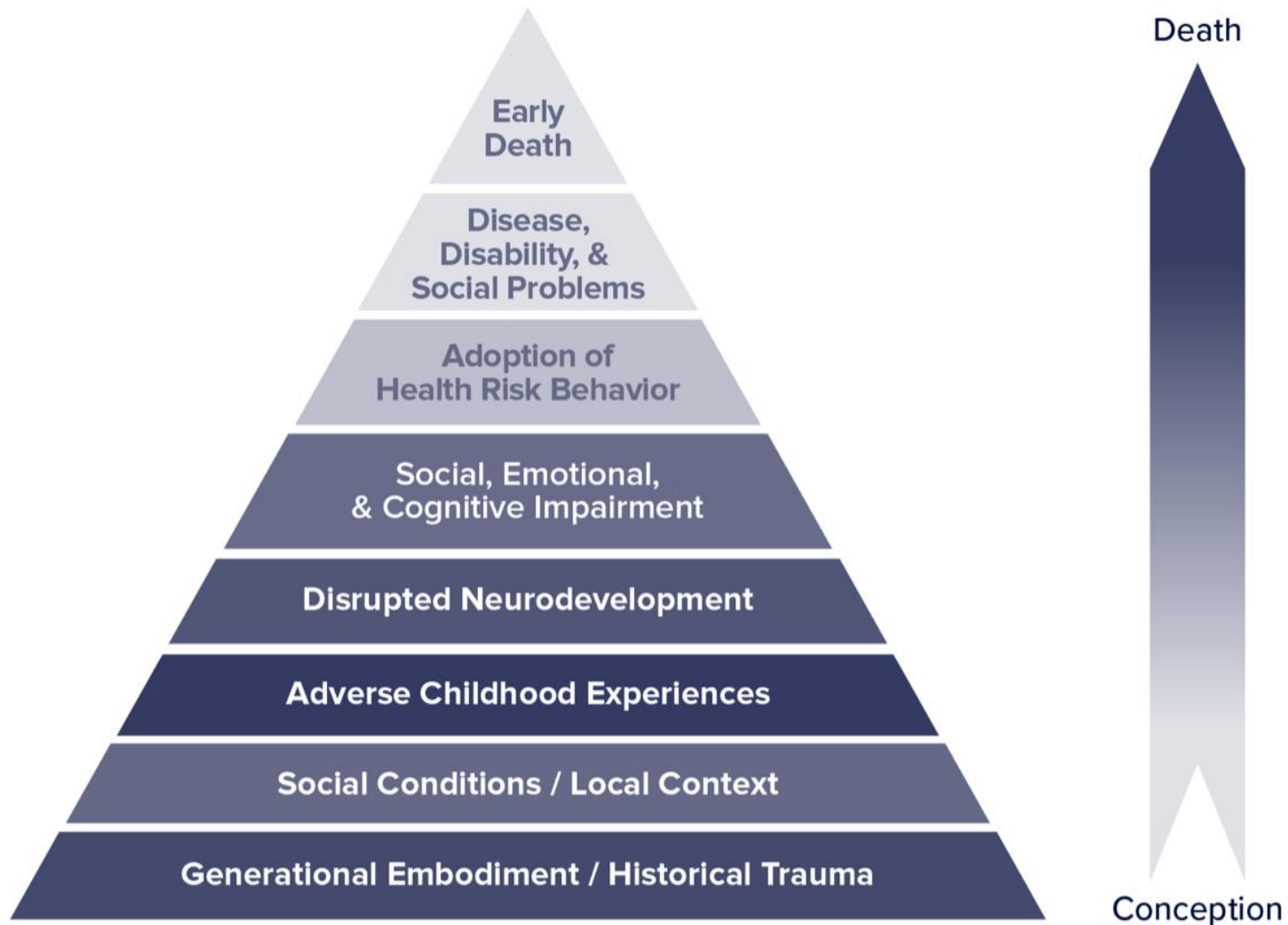
Learn more about ACEs from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/ncjrs/ce4/aces/index.html).

For more information: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/ACEs>



# ACE Factors Intersect All Areas of Life





Mechanism by which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>



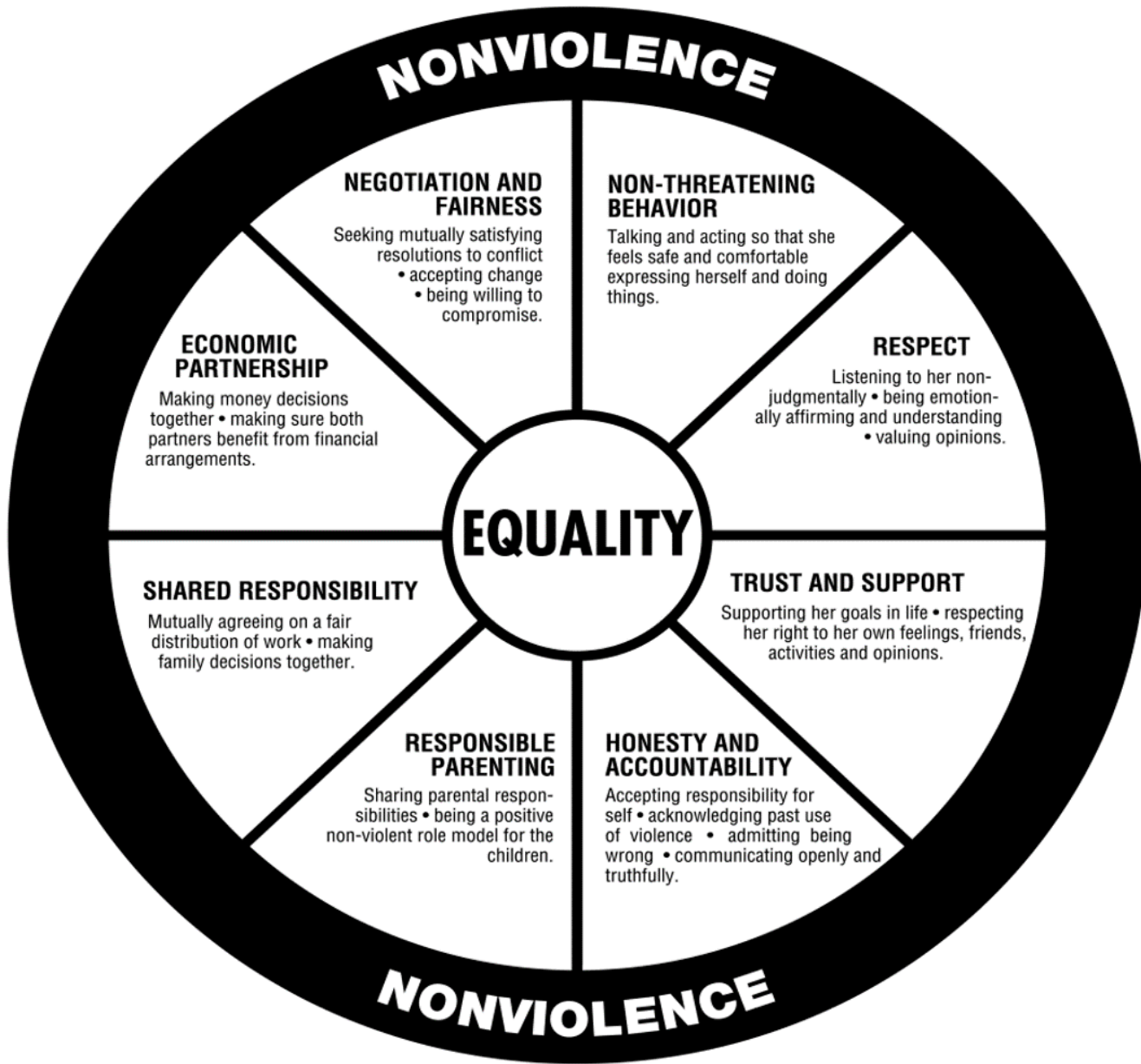
# to do list

- Self-Love and Inherent Strengths
- Healing as a Journey and Process
- Importance of Social Support
- Leaving the Abusive Relationship Behind
- Focus on Self-Care
- Guidance for New Relationships
- Practical Issues and Resources
- Recommendations for Children
- Religious and Spiritual Support
- Obtaining Education about IPV
- Advocacy and Social Action

(Flasch, Fall, Stice, Easley, Murray, & Crowe, 2019)

## Messages To: New Survivors By Longer-Term Survivors





# Equality Wheel

## DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT

202 East Superior Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
218-722-2781  
[www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)

# God Hates Double Standards

“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But *do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. Everything they do is done for people to see...*” Matthew 23:2-5



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