

Understanding Intimate Partner Violence and How to Move Forward

Intimate partner violence (IPV) can happen among heterosexual and 2SLGBTQ+ partnerships. It occurs within all age ranges, ethnic backgrounds and economic statuses. Although it is more common for women to experience abuse, men also experience abuse. IPV affects everyone in the family. Children exposed to IPV may have difficulty coping with and managing their emotions. This may be observed as “acting out behaviours”. Unfortunately, children exposed to IPV may grow up to think that this type of violence is acceptable, if traumatic experiences aren’t addressed.

Abuse can be verbal, emotional, psychological, sexual, physical or financial. While physical injury is dangerous and scary, the emotional and psychological consequences of domestic abuse are also very serious. Emotionally abusive relationships can destroy one’s feelings of self-worth and self-confidence and possibly lead to anxiety and depression. Physical health problems can also develop from living with severe stress and anxiety that come from being in an abusive environment.

Intimate Partner Violence may occur on a continuum and may change over time.

Abuse is never acceptable.

Healthy Conflict	Situational Couples Violence	Coercive Controlling Violence
• Healthy boundaries are established, understood and respected • Communication occurs in a mutual manner • Ability to disagree without concerns of abuse, manipulation or negative consequences • Communication can result in compromise for both parties to feel satisfied • Both partners feel a sense of safety and are not fearful of one another	• Infrequent violent episodes occur when arguments escalate over specific situations • Either or both partners use abusive behaviours including name calling, putdowns, slapping or kicking to name a few • Generally, partners are not fearful of one another • Either or both partners have poor ability to manage their conflicts and their own emotions • Violence rarely continues after the relationship ends	• Situational couples violence can sometimes escalate to coercive control over time • The violence is one sided, where only one person in the relationship behaves abusively towards the other • The abusive partner’s actions are motivated by power and control • Coercive control includes behaviours associated with stalking • Threats of harm are viewed as real and have potential to be followed through with • Victims are highly fearful of their partner • Violence may occur frequently and increase in severity • Control tactics, such as threats or monitoring, are also used to maintain a baseline of fear in the victim • Victims often experience depression or PTSD and feelings of hopelessness

Signs you are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship

Inner Thoughts and Feelings

DO YOU:

- avoid certain topics to avoid conflict?
- justify abusive behaviour that occurs in your relationship?
- feel emotionally numb or helpless?
- not trust your partner?

Violent Behaviour or Threats

DO YOU OR YOUR PARTNER:

- have a bad and unpredictable temper?
- hurt or threaten to hurt or kill?
- threaten to remove the children or have them harmed?
- hurt or threaten to hurt or kill pets?
- destroy the other’s belongings?
- use technology to post false and/or hurtful information online?

Belittling Behaviour

DO YOU OR YOUR PARTNER:

- humiliate or yell at the other?
- criticize or put the other down?
- treat the other so badly you are embarrassed for friends and family to see?
- ignore the other’s feelings?
- put down the other’s opinions, values or beliefs?

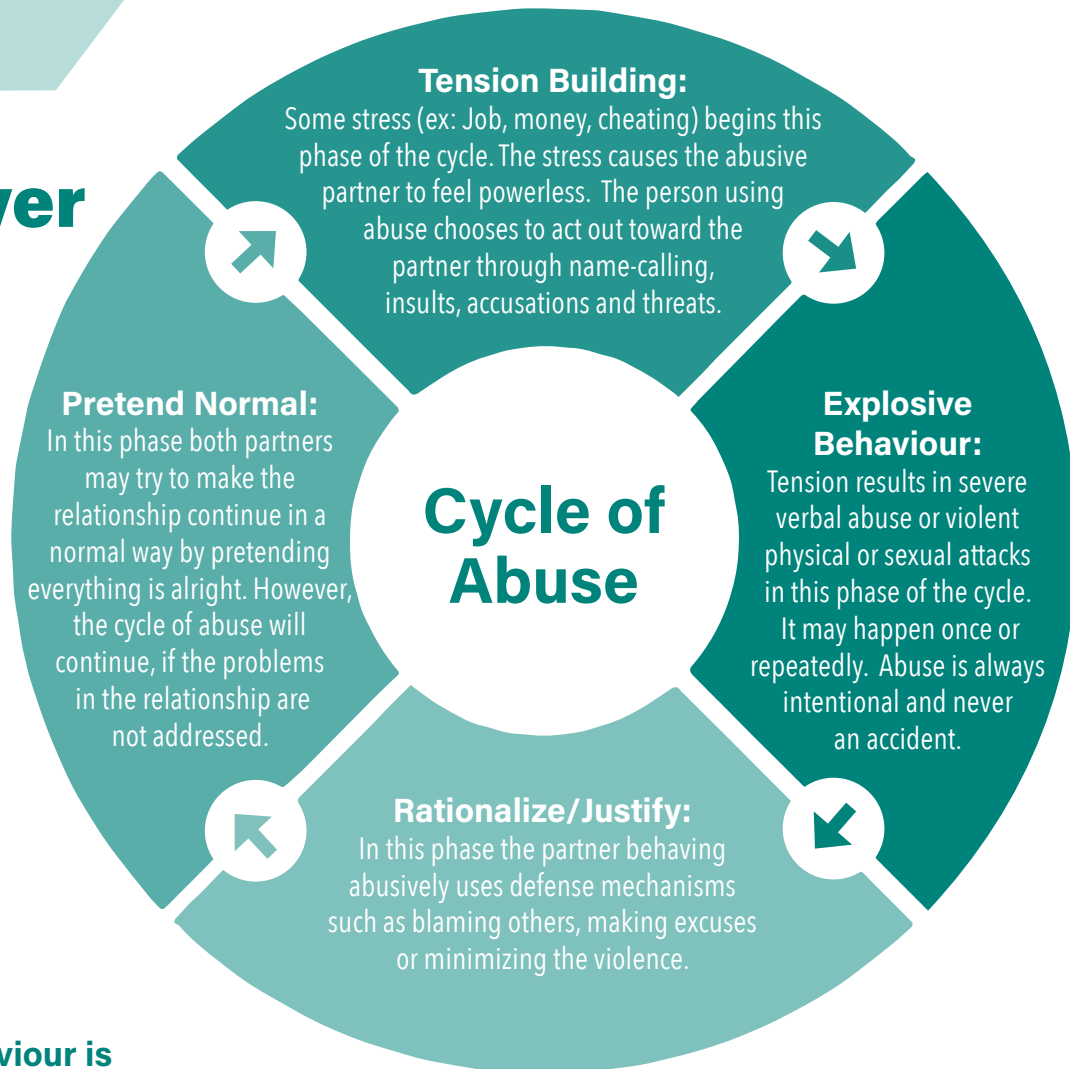
Controlling Behaviour

DOES YOUR PARTNER:

- act excessively jealous or possessive?
- keep you from seeing friends or family?
- limit your access to money, the phone or car?
- constantly check up on you?
- minimize the abuse?
- have rigid ideas of the roles of men and women?
- want control and access to your phone, email, social accounts, and/or bank account?

Abuse is never acceptable.

You deserve to feel valued, respected and safe.



Violence and abusive behaviour is a choice. This can include:

Intimidation: Threatening looks or gestures.

Threats: May be used to scare someone from leaving or in an attempt to get ones way. Threats may also be made in the heat of the moment during an argument.

Aggression: Can be towards an individual or object. Someone behaving abusively may push, hit, kick, and/or choke their partner. They may also break, punch or smash objects when angry.

Humiliation: Includes degrading and belittling. This can make someone feel worthless, powerless and alone. This behaviour can occur in private or public.

Isolation: This involves a person being limited from connecting with friends or family, or cut off from the outside world.

Manipulation: Using guilt or attempting to make a partner feel 'crazy'.

The choice to leave or remain in an abusive relationship is complex and personal due to various reasons:

- you love your partner
- you hope things change
- you don't believe your partner's actions are abusive
- you are financially or physically dependent on your partner
- you don't know where you would go or how you would function without your partner
- you are isolated from those who could help
- your cultural, religious or family expectations do not allow you to leave your relationship
- you blame yourself for your partner's abusive actions
- you are worried or fearful about what will happen if you leave your partner
- you are worried about what will happen to your children when they are in your partner's care if you are not there

Sometimes abusive behaviours present themselves gradually, over time and sometimes are hard to recognize as abuse. If you recognize yourself or someone you know in this situation, reach out. There is help available.

For More information Contact:

Manitoba Justice
Victim Services Branch
In Winnipeg: 204-945-6851
Toll free: 1-866-484-2846
Toll free province-wide Domestic Abuse Crisis Line
(24 hours): 1-877-977-0007