



**MASARYK UNIVERSITY**  
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# **SPRb1161**

## **Social Work and Intimate Partner Violence**

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# Different types of violence in relationship



# Child Abuse

- Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and emotional abuse.

# Sibling Abuse

- Sibling abuse includes the physical, psychological, or sexual abuse of one sibling by another. A fourth category that brought attention from researchers during the first decade of the 21st century is sibling relational abuse, which derives from relational aggression. Almost all siblings fight. Abuse occurs when one sibling consistently intimidates, terrorizes or controls another. Sibling abuse occurs most often in dysfunctional, neglectful or abusive homes when parents fail to set boundaries or discipline abusive children.

# Elderly Abuse

- Elder abuse can be defined as "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person". Elder abuse can take various forms such as financial, physical, psychological and sexual. It can also be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect.

# Nature of Relationship Abuse

- **Physical abuse (violence):** deliberate infliction of physical harm by either partner on the other
- **Intimate-partner violence (IPV):** crimes committed against current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends
- Violence can come from either partner as argument escalates.

# Nature of Abuse

- One partner may attempt to control the other.
- Clear perpetrator and victim
- **Battered-woman syndrome:** general pattern of abuse that is defined in terms of frequency, severity, and injury
- **Uxoricide:** the murder of a woman by her romantic partner

# Nature of Abuse

## Emotional abuse:

- Also called psychological abuse, verbal abuse, or symbolic aggression
- Involves denigration of an individual
- Reduces the victim's status
- Increases the victim's vulnerability
- Involves criticism, isolation, accusation, demanding



# Nature of Abuse

- Some research shows that women and men experience abuse with equal frequency.
- Men are less likely to report being victims.
- Women tend to be striking back rather than controlling.

# Nature of Abuse

- **Stalking:** unwanted following or harassment that induces fear in a target person
- Most stalkers are heterosexual males following a former lover.

# Nature of Abuse

- **Cyber-victimization:** being sent unwanted e-mail, spam, viruses, or being threatened online
- **Obsessive relational intrusion (ORI):** the relentless pursuit of intimacy with someone who does not want it
- Intrusion includes: hyperintimacy, relentless electronic contacts, interactional contacts, surveillance, threat, and violence.

# Explanations for Violence and Abuse in Relationships

Some culture tolerates and promotes violence.

- Media
- Corporal punishment
- Gender inequality
  - **Honor crime (honor killing)**: killing a female who has supposedly brought dishonor to the family
- View of women and children as property
- Stress

# Explanations

Community factors that contribute to violence and abuse in families include:

- Inaccessible or unaffordable community services
- Social isolation
- Poverty



# Explanations

Personality characteristics associated with violence and abuse include:

- Dependency
- Jealousy
- Need to control
- Unhappiness and dissatisfaction
- Anger and aggressiveness
- Blaming others
- Alcohol and drug abuse

# Explanations

Family factors associated with domestic violence and abuse include:

- Child abuse in family of origin
- Parents who abused each other

# Sexual Abuse in Undergraduate Relationships

- **Acquaintance rape:** nonconsensual sex between adults who know each other
- **Date rape:** nonconsensual sex between two people who are dating or on a date
- 14 to 25% of college women experience repeat sexual victimization during an academic year



# Sexual Abuse



- **Rophypnol:** date rape drug that causes profound, prolonged sedation and short-term memory loss
- The effects of rape include loss of self-esteem, loss of trust, and the inability to be sexual.

# Abuse in Marriage Relationships

- Sexual abuse in marriage differs from other relationships in that the husband may feel “ownership.”
- **Marital rape:** forcible rape by one’s spouse



# Effects of Abuse

- PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)
  - Loss of interest in activities, feelings of detachment, irritability, relationship difficulties
- Children who observed parental violence are more likely to be depressed as adults



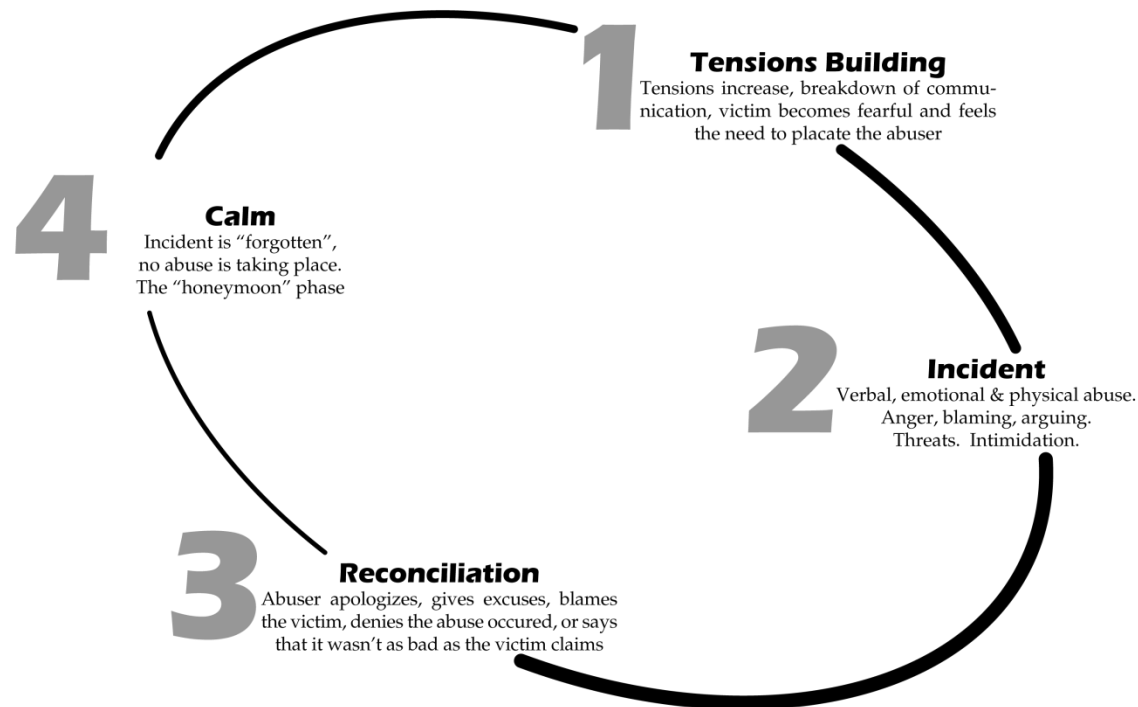
# The Cycle of Abuse



- The cycle of abuse reflects the pattern of behaviors common in abusive relationships.

# The Cycle of Abuse

## Cycle of Abuse



# Tension Building Phase

- This phase occurs prior to an overtly abusive act, and is characterized by poor communication, passive aggression, rising interpersonal tension, and fear of causing outbursts in one's partner. During this stage the victims may attempt to modify his or her behavior to avoid triggering their partner's outburst.

# Acting-out Phase

- Violence erupts as the abuser throws objects at his or her partner, hits, slaps, kicks, chokes, abuses him or her sexually, or uses weapons. Once the attack starts, there's little the victim can do to stop it; there generally are no witnesses.

# Reconciliation/Honeymoon Phase

- Characterized by affection, apology, or, alternately, ignoring the incident. This phase marks an apparent end of violence, with assurances that it will never happen again, or that the abuser will do his or her best to change. During this stage the abuser feels overwhelming feelings of remorse and sadness, or at least pretends to love the victim.



# Calm Phase

- During this phase (which is often considered an element of the honeymoon/reconciliation phase), the relationship is relatively calm and peaceable. However, interpersonal difficulties will inevitably arise, leading again to the tension building phase

# Cycle of Abuse

## Why people stay in abusive relationships

- Entrapped: stuck and unable to extricate oneself
- Fear of loneliness
- Love
- Emotional dependency
- Hope
- Fear
- Commitment

# Cycle of Abuse

- Leaving the relationship is often very dangerous.
- Safety plans include:
  - Identifying a safe place
  - Telling friends or neighbors
  - Storing an escape kit

# Cycle of Abuse

## Prevention strategies focus on 3 levels:

- General population
  - Public education
  - Media campaigns
- Groups at risk
- Abusive families
  - Successful therapy requires men to acknowledge their actions and move forward.

# Summary

- Intimate-partner violence refers to crimes committed against current or former spouses.
- Violence may be symmetrical or reflect an attempt on the part of one spouse to control the other.
- Abuse can be physical or emotional
- Stalking and cyber-stalking involve unwanted pursuit.

# Summary

- Cultural factors related to abuse include: violence in the media, corporal punishment of children, and gender inequality.
- Community factors related to abuse include: social isolation and inaccessible services.
- Individual factors include: jealousy, unhappiness, and drug abuse.
- Family factors related to abuse include child abuse in the family of origin.

# Summary

- Acquaintance and date rape are fairly common.
- Marital rape refers to forced sex within marriage.
- Effects of abuse include PTSD and repeat violence.
- The cycle of abuse refers to a pattern of repeated behaviors in violent relationships.

# Chapter Review

1. What is intimate-partner violence?
2. What is emotional abuse?
3. What are the other forms of abuse?
4. Discuss the cultural, community, individual, and family factors related to abuse.
5. Discuss the problem of abuse in dating and marriage relationships.



# Chapter Review

6. What are the effects of abuse?
7. What is the cycle of abuse?
8. What are the strategies for preventing abuse?