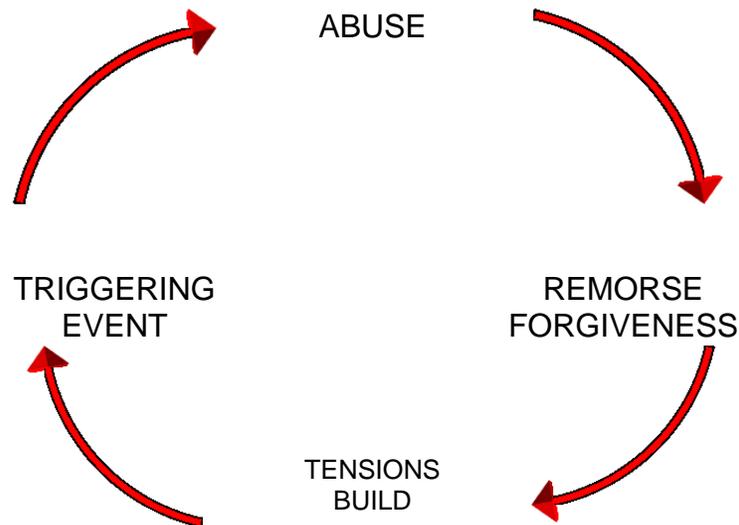


## THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE



## LENORE WALKER'S THEORY OF VIOLENCE

### PHASE ONE

#### *Step One:*

- Minor battering
- Victim's denial of anger helps them to cope with a situation they desperately believe will change
- Victim blames outside factors; takes guilt for battering incident; apparent passive acceptance spurs on the abusive behavior and batterer doesn't have to find control

#### *Step Two:*

- Batterers don't want behavior made public, causing fear in them the victim will tell, thus increasing the oppression
- Batterer's brutality keeps victim captive
- Learned helplessness syndrome

#### *Step Three:*

- As Phase 1 progresses, batter incidents increase, anger escalates, victim realizes Phase 2 is coming and works hard to control external situations: keeping children quiet, no phone calls
- Soon coping techniques fail

#### *Step Four:*

- Batterer increases possessive smothering and brutality; victim less able to defend herself against the pain and hurt

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- Victim withdraws; batterer moves in more oppressively
- Unbearable tension builds up
- Victim sometimes triggers Phase 2 in order to break the unbearable tension, to just “get it over with”

## **PHASE TWO**

*Two characteristics of Phase 2:*

1. lack of control
2. lack of predictability
  - acute battering with major destructiveness
  - lasts usually from 2 to 24 hours, with some reports of a week or more of terror
  - only batterers can end Phase 2
  - there’s an element of overkill and victims express extreme futility of trying to escape
  - victims suffer emotional collapse 22 to 48 hours after acute battering; they seek isolation; thus doctors often do not see them until a natural healing time has passed
  - extreme sexual abuse also during this time

## **PHASE THREE**

*Unusual period of calm*

- batterer is extremely loving and kind and contrite
- they are sorry and promise to never do it again
- they believe they can maintain control
- also believe they have taught victim a lesson so that they won’t have to beat them again
- promises to give up drinking
- convinces victim they’re needed, makes them feel guilty for leaving; makes victim feel the responsibility
- promises they will get help if victim just stays

The victim sees batterer being sincere and loving. Victim chooses to believe this is what they are really like, this is everything they wanted in a partner. Victim believes that if only they help the batterer they will change. A Symbiotic Pair: each dependent on the other. During Phase 3, when loving kindness is most intense, symbiotic bonding takes hold.

Phase 3 is a time when almost all of the rewards of being married or coupled take place; thus making it extremely difficult for the victim to leave or end the relationship.

**CALM LOVING BEHAVIOR GIVES WAY TO LITTLE BATTERING INCIDENTS AGAIN. PHASE 1 TENSION BUILDING RECURS. A NEW CYCLE OF VIOLENCE, OF BATTERING, BEGINS AGAIN.**