

TRAUMA

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I. Domestic Violence: A Traumatic Event

Domestic violence and abuse is a traumatic experience to have survived. Both women and children are affected and will deal with their injury in different ways. Children under the age of 11, for example, are uncomfortable with talking about painful feelings. They do not ordinarily tell their parents or other adults what is going through their minds unless they are asked.

Every survivor of a traumatic event can re-experience the trauma at anytime. Conversations, smells, touches can trigger an event or sequence of events that benchmark when the trauma occurred. Children especially have no way to control the intrusion of a flashback; it can happen at anytime or any place. This can make them and their parent feel as if they are not in charge of themselves. They could be experiencing terror, anxiety, helplessness, rage, or grief. Because talking these feelings through is not something that comes easily for children, they are stuck with a heaviness (imagine carrying a piece of luggage around with you everywhere you go) that they do not know what to do with. These feelings can end up coming out in their behavior.

Each survivor is recovering and may have little energy left for anything else. They may not be able to resolve disputes with others or even be able to give themselves the self comfort that they need. Survivors direct their energy to the trauma either by dealing with it or trying to block it. What remains is a human being in a fragile state that has little capacity to handle things in ways they used to.

It is important, especially with children, not to deny their experience or its' impact on them. This type of acceptance helps a survivor to deal with what has happened to them either directly or indirectly.

When the woman comes from a nondominant group, and especially when the man is from a dominant culture, any racist, sexual, ablest or class slurs may add to and intensify this abuse.

Like anyone who is systematically tortured, isolated, humiliated, and given highly contradictory messages the average woman who is subjected to extreme partner abuse has little sense of her own worth and is enormously confused and terrified.

I.

She stays because

- ... she still harbors some hope and/or because she does not know what else to do.
- ... she has bought the line that children need their father and because she cannot imagine raising them alone.
- ... family is central to her.
- ... she "loves" this man and because he "loves" her.
- ... not simply despite the jealousy, rage, scrutiny and violence, but also because of it. (Part of what she fell in love with may have been super-possessiveness, attentiveness to a fault, and the hint of violence. It is these qualities that underpin romantic love, and in Western society the romantic love tradition underpins extreme battery.)
- ... he hurts and says he is lost without her. (Women are supposed to take care of and stand behind their man.)
- ... her culture and community dictate wifely obedience and would blame her if she left.
- ... she has no money, no one to help her, no way to earn a living, and no place to go.
- ... he has threatened to kill her if she leaves, and she has every reason to believe that this is one promise he will keep.
- ... he always found her, dragged her back, and beat her whenever she escaped in the past.
- ... the alternative is loneliness and abject poverty.

II.

Whether she has an analysis of the larger situation or not, and whether she has many illusions or no illusions at all, she stays because she is stuck in a patriarchal society that creates and mystifies the problem of wife abuse and gives only token help to battered women and their children.

In the midst of a nightmare like domestic violence, it is difficult for anyone to remain focused and clear, let alone trust.

III.

The popular image of "the battered wife" is of someone subject to physical abuse that is not overtly sexual. This abuse ranges from slaps, to kicks, to being thrown against a wall, to being burned with cigarettes or being subjected to other obvious acts of torture. This popular image leaves out as much as it shows, and the assumption itself is naive. On the purely physical side, some subtler acts deeply harm because of their psychological impact. These include:

- . Subtle disfigurement of any part of the body that the woman takes special pride in , or identifies with.
- . Subtle disfigurement to any part of the body that the woman is already ashamed of.
- . Being held firmly by some part of the body.

Sexual abuses that commonly occur in extreme partner abuse include:

- . Pressure to have sex.
- . Pressure to perform sexual acts that she finds degrading or disgusting.
- . Being photographed in sexual positions against her wishes.
- . Being forced to have sex with others, with or without the partner watching.
- . Being called sexual names for purposes of degradation.
- . Being forced to have sex while hurting from battery.
- . Genital/breast mutilation

Common types of psychological abuse include being:

- . Constantly told that she is stupid, ugly, or incompetent.
- . Compared with women who are depicted as infinitely brighter, prettier, or more competent.
- . Told the details of affairs with other women.
- . "Punished" for "transgressions" committed by these other women.
- . Called degrading names, such as stupid, bitch, witch, whore.

- . Continually being accused of infidelity.
- . Told repeatedly that she provoked the battery and that what is happening is her fault.
- . Deprived of money.
- . Denied the opportunities to take courses or to go places.
- . Forbidden to see friends and relatives.
- . Locked in the house.
- . Given threats to leave, accompanied by assurances like, "You are so fucking ugly now that you will never be able to get another man."
- . The destruction of favorite objects.
- . Violence against loved others, including children and pets.
- . Continual threats of violence.
- . The cycle of violence itself.

IV.

Other devastating forms of abuse also occur including sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse. Overt sexual abuse, "emotional", and "psychological" abuse are particularly noteworthy. These may accompany battery or occur alone. We forget, to women's detriment, that women who are never punched, slapped, or kicked can still be survivors of extreme partner abuse. Women have shared again and again, it is not the slaps and the kicks that hurt most, it is the ongoing humiliation, the name calling, the isolation, the general degradation.

V. POINTS TO REMEMBER - Survivors of trauma respond differently.

Women/children may have:

- . difficulty talking about their feelings
- . difficulty having their feelings
- . flashbacks
- . trouble sleeping
- . loss of memory
- . acting out
- . acting in
- . controlling behaviors
- . out of control behaviors.
- . grief
- . low/no energy
- . inability to self nurture

- . lack of direction
- . fragility
- . feelings of being different
- . lack of information
- . illness

We must remember that routines are important. They provide safety, in that there is a reliability in their sameness. Talking also helps both women and their children. Children talk at times through their play. It offers a way to work out their experiences that gives them a sense that they are over what happened.

Talking and playing provide:

- . safety
- . reassurance
- . support
- . information
- . opportunities to regain some control in their lives.

Each of us have a role to share in these methods of healing.

(*footnote: In working out an exit plan with battered women and their children one must remember that this plan should be inclusive of the entire family unit. The preceding points could be shared with women and kept in mind in developing any future action.)

II. Possible Outcomes You Might Expect Following Trauma

- . Birth - 6 years
- . 6 - 12 years

- . Teens

- . Adults

The following outcomes may be what you could expect if your children have experienced/witnessed domestic violence or abuse.

Birth - 6 years:

- . Babies and small children have only their behavior to show their distress.
- . Babies may show more crying, irritability, need to be held for longer periods of time.
- . There are night terrors, fear of going to sleep, having bad dreams, fear of dark, etc.
- . Small children may be more dependent until they can feel safe and secure again.
- . A lack of security may lead your child to be unable to explore the world as before.
- . Children may fear being abandoned. The loss or threatened loss of grown-ups is terrifying.
- . The lack of security and fear of abandonment can show up in irritability, unusual outbursts and general out-of-control behavior.
- . The opposite behavior of withdrawal and rigidity to hold off the anxiety.
- . Some children may purposefully hurt themselves, their dolls, their siblings, or their pets. This is an attempt to show what happened to them. It is also a cry for help.

6 - 12 years

- . Children in this age range may show signs of regression.
- . Some children may show a decline in school. A lot might depend on their support system, their sleeping patterns, and if they are depressed.
- . Children may talk repeatedly about the trauma or they may not want to talk about it at all. The kids need to find their way of getting a handle on the trauma.
- . Children may feel guilty or feel like a failure because they believe they could have done more to stop everything from happening.
- . Reenactment of traumatic events may occur during play.
- . They may be angry at people whom they feel should have protected them and angry at themselves for being vulnerable.
- . They may be afraid of being separated or lost.
- . Some children may take chances to try to prove themselves invulnerable.
- . There may be more competition with siblings.
- . Children may be more rigid because they are trying to deal with the trauma by constricting what is coming into their lives. They want to stay with what's familiar.
- . Children may behave "spacey". Children may seem like they're ignoring you, but it's the trauma they're trying to ignore.
- . Feelings of smallness and of being unprotected come back and children panic. Smallness and helplessness bring about feelings of shame.

Teens:

- . Teens can think more about the trauma and how it has affected them.
- . Teens may be very hard on themselves, they believe they could always be doing more.
- . There might be signs of regression.
- . They may become antisocial - withdrawing from regular activities, depression, isolation.
- . They might begin acting out more, like drinking, sex, criminal activity.
- . Teens may want to be more grown-up so they can feel more in control, for themselves and for the grown-ups around them.
- . Sleeping problems and hyper-arousal.
- . Suicide is also an issue for some teens.
- . Some teens may feel immune because they have survived so much. They might do things they are afraid of in order to counteract the fear (e.g. reckless driving).

Adults:

- risk- . Trauma-driven acting out behavior: sexual acting out or reckless, taking behavior.
- . Efforts to distance from feelings of shame, guilt, humiliation.
- . Accident proneness.
- others . Flight into driven activity and involvement with others or retreat from in order to manage inner turmoil.
- . Wish for revenge and action-oriented responses to trauma.
- . Increased self-focusing and withdrawal.
- and . Sleep and eating disturbances, nightmares. Acute awareness of distress with intrusive imagery and memories of trauma.
- . Vulnerability to depression, withdrawal and pessimistic world view.
- relationships . Personality changes and changes in quality of important evident.
- of . Flight into adulthood seen as way of escaping impact and memory trauma (early marriage, pregnancy, dropping out of school, abandoning peer group for older set of friends.)
- . Fear of growing up and need to stay within family orbit.

III. Recovering from Trauma

. Phases in Recovery

- . **Transitioning to Healing**
- . **Responding**
- . **Your Role as Advocate**
- . **Talking with Survivors**

PHASES IN RECOVERY

There are several phases a survivor might experience in recovering from the trauma of domestic violence and abuse. They include:

FIRST Crises response: a need to feel physically, emotionally and psychologically safe.

SECOND Remembrance and mourning loss of dreams, acknowledging the reality of the trauma and the impact on their lives.

THIRD Last phase of healing is a return of energy and engagement in ordinary life.

Healing is a Nonlinear Process

Healing does not run a straight path; it inevitably involves setbacks. For example, in recovering from the flu you may have several days of improved health, followed by a temporary relapse. This setback doesn't mean you won't recover; all it signifies is that the human body is not an inanimate object. It can not simply be repaired and then be expected to stay that way once and for all. Rather, it is delicate and complex, yet it has great ability to withstand stress.

Like the body, the human psyche is also not inanimate. You may find yourself taking three steps forward in the healing process, and then two steps backward. That is fine; you are still making progress. Sometimes you go backwards because you need to go backwards, for example when you have taken on more emotional material than you can handle at a particular time. At that point you may have to retreat so that you can absorb the emotional shock and otherwise make sense of the material.

TRANSITIONING TO HEALING

The healing process is lengthy and individual but your transition to the point of healing requires:

I. Transitioning to Healing:

- . Lots of comforting and reassurance.
- . Continual adjusting of expectations regarding how survivors cope and behave.
- . Being available to listen and accept the very real fears of survivors.
- . Actual reminders of the traumatic incidents can trigger the feelings and memories of the past.
- . We must hold on to the image of the strength of survivors during their healing process in order for actual healing to begin.
- . If someone has been severely or repeatedly traumatized or is currently coping with a great deal of stress, support for present-day concerns seems to be more beneficial than delving into the past.
- . Healing does not require remembering the past at all, at this time or ever.
- . One may have so much stress in the present that looking at the past is best saved for a later point in life.
- . One needs a supportive environment before they tackle the injuries of past or present events.
- . An individual needs to be in a safe, controlled environment in order to begin the healing process.

II. Points for survivors:

- . Remember that your entire family is impacted by the changes in the family. Some of the things you might expect:
 - . Everyone is going to be on constant alert.
 - . Everyone is attempting to recover and everyone has little reserve of energy for gracefully solving disputes.
 - . Most children under the age of 11 are not likely to talk freely or at length about uncomfortable or painful feelings.
 - . Everyone in the family responds differently to the experience.
 - . Some respond immediately
 - . Some have delayed responses
 - . The behaviors of all survivors offer signs of the inner struggle to come to terms with their experience.

III.

Your advocacy (support) is crucial to each survivor. It is part of your role at Harbor House and in our community because survivors' healing is a critical part of the community response to family violence and child abuse. Violence can shatter cherished beliefs in fundamental goodness and justice. Feeling raw and vulnerable to random destructive events disrupts basic feelings of safety in the world.

In responding to survivors our response could include the following:

- . Model positive coping.
- . Open discussion of the violence
- . Focusing on immediate needs in a one-day-at-a-time approach.
- . Respecting different coping skills.
- . Finding and using outside support opportunities/options.
- . Maintaining an image of the courage of survivors.
- . Time and distance from the violence, enhances safety within and without.
- . Recognizing the support that we offer must be solid, enduring and consistent.
- . Talking and dealing with the violence the women have witnessed in calm, matter-of-fact language.
- . Letting the women know they are not alone.
- . Expressing pride and gratitude that they have the courage to talk and share.
- . Reassuring them that the violence is not their fault.
- . Accepting their feelings about the violence and the abuser; including positive feelings.
- . Being available to talk.
- . Helping to re-establish their routines as soon as possible.

Routines:

- . Routines are particularly helpful when addressing major life changes.
- . For women who are experiencing changes in home life, routine is comforting.
- . When a woman's distress is most evident, it is crucial to avoid re-traumatizing with major disruptions.
- . Sameness of our routines have basic comfort.
- . Offering the woman safety on all 3 levels: emotional, psychological and physical.
- . Providing the woman opportunities to have time with others who understand.

. Learning how to respond to their need for comfort, reassurance, and support.

IV.

Some survivors find that talking about their feelings and writing about them are beneficial. One suggestion is to take several sheets of paper - one for each emotion they have felt during the day. At the top of each page, write a word or two describing the feeling. Next write about how that feeling makes them act and think. They may also write about why they think they have the particular feeling. They might write a poem or a short story that expresses their grief indirectly.

Sharing with survivors their right to their grief is very helpful; please feel free to share the following:

You can give dignity to your grief by remembering that the people, qualities, or values you are mourning are worthy of your grief. One way to both express your grief and give dignity to it is to create a memorial for it.

. Some people set aside a corner of their home or a special drawer where they keep mementos or writings about the trauma as a form of memorial.

. If your grief involves intangibles, such as the loss of certain qualities within yourself- your innocence for example, or the loss of certain mental or physical abilities-you may need to create a personal memorial service for yourself. You might want to invite a few select friends to your home one evening and ask them to be with you as you share about your losses. Alternatively, you may want to make a memorial for your grief by finding a survivor mission.

You have enough pain to deal with in your losses without also berating yourself. Instead, talk to yourself in the following way:

I am grieving now. I need to be grateful that I can grieve, but that doesn't make it any less painful. I hate grieving, and I hate the anger I feel too. I wish it would all go away and I could keep up my normal schedule like a normal person. But I am a normal person. Any normal person who saw what I saw and suffered the losses I suffered would be grieving too. I've worked hard to get in touch with my feelings, and this sadness is one of them.

Just think, I used to (go numb, overeat, space out, drink, do drugs, etc.) instead of feeling this grief. I can see now why I wanted to escape it. The pain is so bad and I don't know

when it will end. I feel trapped by it, like there is no way out. But I've made progress. I can face it all without running away. I must be very strong to be able to tolerate all this

suffering without trying to escape. I need to congratulate myself instead of putting myself down. Also, I need to stop thinking of this grieving as a sign of my emotional weakness or mental instability. I need to remember that my grief is a mirror of my love for the (people, qualities, values, abilities) I lost. They are worth my tears. My grief gives dignity to their death. It's okay if I grieve them over and over again. They are worth it.

V.

Occasionally, someone may get stuck in the grieving process. The following exercise can be helpful.

Grieving for a loved one takes a long time. However, for most of us we have been stuck in the grief process all of our lives. The loved one we lost was ourselves, sometimes lost before we had memory of the loss. This hole in our sole is the space that can be violated over and over again by a partner who is abusive or violent. It could be called "*the space where we have original pain*". Never being safe to mourn this pain or to give up the illusion that this pain never happened, we often feel a lack of vitality or creativity.

We get stuck!!

... So if I know that this is at the heart of how my partner reinjures me on an emotional, verbal, psychological and physical way - how might I be safe?

Exercise

Imagine that the space we referred to as "a hole in your soul" is a child. Close your eyes and envision what that child might look like - how old is the child? Think about the fact that every time your partner triggers the "hole in your sole" it is that child that receives the injury.

For example, if you and the child were standing together, side-by-side, and your partner struck out physically or verbally, it would be the child who received the blow or assault, not you. Imagine if you will what you might do to keep the child safe. How would you champion the child? You understand that the child is defenseless against this adult. You understand that the child does not know what

to do, what to say, how to think or how to be safe. You understand that you, the adult, must act ... that you, the adult, must never let this child come into contact, in any way with this abuser. You understand that you are the child's champion. You and the child have a right to be safe.

How do I Know When the Child is Present in my Life?

Imagine that you and this child are walking together preparing to get on a school bus and that school bus is your life. Everything is going beautifully. The day is calm and clear, you are both happy and content. As the bus (which is your life) is going down the street, it suddenly begins careening out of control; you look up and see that your child is behind the wheel trying to drive the bus. At that point, you, the adult, must go to the child and let her know that you are the adult, it is you that must drive the bus. You are the adult. You understand that she does not trust anyone, but that you are there now. You won't always have all the answers, but she can count on you. You will never abandon her. You will help her be safe.

VI.

Grieving can also express itself in a form that can be misinterpreted as anger - it is called rage - rage is pain and ends in feelings of shame. This is what you might do to head off your rage:

Time-outs do not resolve the underlying tensions, disappointments, hardships, or any other problems that make you feel as if you will explode with rage. Time-outs can be misused, therefore, if you are planning to use time-outs as a technique for controlling your anger, you need to consider the following suggestions:

Human beings do not suddenly "fly into a rage" with no warning. Usually there are indications that it is approaching, though you may not be aware of them. Your first task then, is to become aware of the emotional and physical feeling you have that generally precede an angry outburst, or the desire for such an outburst. For example, do you experience muscle tension, nausea, rapid heart rate, sweating, hot flashes, rapid breathing, headaches, body tremors, or other physical symptoms when you are beginning to get angry?

Notice when and where you begin to feel tension. For some people it is a tightness in the gut that signals the beginning of frustration. For others, the tension might be located in the neck and shoulders which might be an attempt to protect the neck, or even to cover the ears from hearing painful messages. Tension in the legs, calves, and thighs is often associated with the "Fight or Flight" syndrome. Tension in the jaw indicates an effort to stifle some response. A particularly telling sign is tension in the hands resulting in a clenching of the fists.

So, you are in a rage. You should

- . Ensure your safety and that of others.
- . Go to a quiet place if you're causing a disruption. It's OK to be frustrated, it's not OK to disturb others.
- . Keep a schedule of your raging. Schedule changes can set off rages.
- . Ask for help to find a way to calm down.
- . When quiet, sit with someone you trust and try to determine how you can deal with the problems that make you sad/frustrated.
- . Ask for help practicing words/actions to get your needs met without resorting to raging.

Can suggest "Deep Breathing" exercise pp. 65 - 66.

VIII. Tips for Self Nurturing:

Battered women are responding to their situations under a lot of stress. Their ability to self nurture is a fundamental skill of surviving.

As a survivor it is important to know your limits ... respect them and try not be put in situations that push those limits too far. Knowing what your limits are enables you to prepare yourself, by making a plan to handle the stressful situation in the best way possible.

Questions you might ask yourself in order to develop a plan to handle these stress filled situations.

1. What are my fears about this situation?
2. How have I usually reacted in the past?
3. What have been the costs of avoiding this situation or of handling the situation with fear, anxiety, anger or other emotions associated with the violence in my life?
4. How would I like to be pro-active in the future?
5. What do I stand to gain if I react in a way I feel would be more beneficial?
6. How can I break down this situation so that it is more manageable?

Sometimes even so called easy decisions are too difficult to manage in their entirety. If this is the case, break the decisions down into small parts. For example, if you need to find housing, make a list of places to call; make a call a day, checking it off your list; on day two make a second call, checking it off your list, etc.

Only after you are able to take the first step should you take the second. Whenever you are trying to overcome a fear or change, it is usually best to start with small, manageable steps.

VII. Other self-nurturing tips:

Planning Ahead - Before facing a situation you've chosen to confront, ask yourself these questions:

- . What is it I have to do?
- . What is the likelihood of anything bad happening?
- . If something bad does happen, what can I do?

Try to be as thorough and realistic as possible. Imagine possible eventualities, but don't get caught up in gruesome and unrealistic fantasies. If you become anxious, angry, or otherwise distraught trying to plan for the trigger, counter your anxious or otherwise upsetting thoughts with the following ideas (Vernon and Kilpatrick 1983):

- . It's okay if I'm anxious, angry, or have other feelings. All my feelings are okay. But I need to focus on what I need to do to confront the trigger.
- . I need to make a plan, but I do not need to make a plan alone. In fact, I don't have to do any of this alone. I have the support and encouragement of others. I can call on other survivors, my therapist, and friends for emotional support and guidance. There are people in the world who care about me and who are willing to help me.

IV. An additional thought on the issue of forgiveness and healing for women and their children:

Many survivors think that they ought to forgive the perpetrator - that they are somehow not okay if they do not forgive. Forgiveness is not the only viable response to injury, and it is not a necessary response at any time. By treating forgiveness as necessary we effectively close down the survivors' own process, pathologize her anger, and reinforce societal messages. We also reinforce the patriarchal pattern of ongoing female forgiveness and ongoing male transgression.

If we are to empower, the message that we need to give instead is that anger must come first. Although the survivor may come to forgive after going through extensive anger work, and this is just fine, it is also perfectly okay if she never forgives the perpetrator.

For other empowerment comes through forgiveness. It is possible both to forgive someone and still stay away from them. It also does not mean you are going to trust them, or have a close relationship with them again.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN I AM HEALED? (for women)

Healing from trauma does not mean that you and your children will never again remember the traumatic event or never again experience any symptoms. Some symptoms, for instance, sleep disorders, tend to persist for years--even after other symptoms have either disappeared or become relatively insignificant.

If you must measure your progress, try not to think in terms of outcome, but in terms of having made your best effort. Also, think less in terms of eliminating symptoms and more in terms of evidence that you are increasing your involvement in the present.

Mental health is sometimes defined as the ability to love, work, and play. If, due to the healing process, you regain or increase your ability to love and care for others (including yourself) and to work and participate in some activities you find meaningful--or you simply become better able to enjoy yourself--consider yourself a great success.

Never mind if you still have nightmares or choose to avoid people or places that remind you of the trauma. Never mind if on the anniversary of the trauma you have flashbacks or nightmares or just sit in a chair, numb or crying. If you are able to know and accept your feelings and not fight them, you are a very strong person. At least you know what you feel and why you feel the way you do. Many people don't know the what, much less the why, of their feelings.

Flexibility and the ability to distinguish present reality from the past are two other aspects of mental health. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) sufferers who have not received help are often quite rigid in their thinking and behavior. Because they feel so fragile inside, they may find it difficult to tolerate external changes, for example, changes in schedules. Furthermore, their understandably intense need to protect themselves and their families may lead to a dread of change. However, growth requires the ability to change and to adapt to change. The more you progress in your healing, the more flexible you will become.

Can use "Before the Trigger" exercise pg. 68-69 and "During the Trigger" pg. 70.

On Children:

HOW WILL I KNOW I'M NORMAL

Being "normal" doesn't mean that your child is never going to have another problem or a flashback or will never act out again. Symptoms, such as sleep disturbances may continue for years. Regression at different stages may appear and disappear throughout childhood.

As long as the child is doing the best that he/she can, that can be measured as progress. The symptoms may never be totally eliminated. The positive aspect to focus on is that your child is living in, and involved in the present. Whether that is through activities at school that are meaningful or spending time with family, the fact that your child is in the present is a success.

Don't worry if your child is still having nightmares or doesn't like to go to certain places because it reminds him/her of the trauma. It's OK if your child is having flashbacks and you begin to notice it in your child's behavior. You are able to acknowledge why your child is behaving that way. You understand that pain is part of the growth and simply allowing the feelings to come takes a strong child and a strong parent.

It may be hard to accept changing your views about your child and how you think about your child when you're both still fragile inside. Because you, as well as your child, are in a protection mode for yourself and your family, change will be difficult. Change can bring on uncertainty and at this point that can be extremely scary. However, growth requires the ability to change and to adapt to change. The more your child progresses in his/her healing the more flexible you and your child will become.

Can use "Imagination Vacation" pg. 73

IV. Families

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- . Handouts:**

MOTHER/CHILDREN FAMILIES

Whether covertly or overtly of the "Single-parent" variety, single-parent families need help being affirmed as a family. Despite their viability and their prevalence, they are continually treated as if they are deprived, dysfunctional and marginal. As advocates it is up to us to counter that message and to validate that family. We can also serve them by helping them explore/enjoy the more flexible female structures that are now possible. Help may be needed, as well, dealing with interference from social service agencies and accessing much needed resources.

Often families that appear to be single-parented or families with an involved mother and an uninvolved father are in reality families with two or more mothers. This womanly arrangement is generally very nurturing. It has worked well in many communities - the West Indian community, for example. It is important that we recognize what exists here and respect it. Good advocacy in these cases rarely means involving or further involving the man. It means validating the family that has been created, and helping them protect themselves and access resources.

In validating this family we can begin to understand that parental care has a primary influence on children's resilience. Children pay close attention to how we cope. When children see that we have strategies for dealing with the situation, they feel more empowered to do the same (view time at Harbor House as one of these strategies).

Children fare best when mothers can resume their role of authority and protection as rapidly as possible. Children find relief in anything that has not changed following like transforming events. And their wounds must first be acknowledged before healing can occur.

When responding to the trauma of domestic violence, mothers must be given every possible support to resume their roles of authority and protection as soon as possible.

Remembering that domestic violence and abuse is an extraordinarily frightening event(s). These events cause survivors to struggle with safety and trust on a daily basis. The violence survivors encountered lingers in their lives; throughout their lives. Survivors need to know that leaning on others is a way to take care of themselves and that safety must include a positive environment for recovery of self.

We can then understand any explanation, that we settle for, for a horrifying and violent event may help us cope with the sense of helplessness and the senselessness of the event. If we can, in some way, find ourselves at fault, it becomes possible to believe that further violence can be avoided. Guilt offers a kind of power, however illusory, over helplessness. The sense of helplessness, however, is the real devil that must be struggled with. Sharing these thoughts with survivors is a way of validating their struggle.

FOR WOMEN WITH THEIR CHILDREN

- . Talking and dealing with the violence the children have witnessed in a calm, matter-of-fact language.
- . Letting the children know they are not alone.
- . Expressing pride and gratitude that they have the courage to talk and share.
- . Reassuring them that the violence is not their fault.
- . Accepting their feelings about the violence and the abuse; including positive feelings.
- . Being available to talk.
- . Helping to reestablish their routines as soon as possible.

Routines:

- . Routine is particularly helpful when addressing major life changes.
 - . For children who are experiencing changes in home life-routine is comforting.
 - . When a child's distress is most evident, it is crucial to avoid re-traumatizing with major disruptions.
 - . Sameness of routine has basic comfort.
-
- . Offering the children safety - emotional, psychological, and physical
 - . Providing the children opportunities to have time with others who understand.
 - . Learning how to respond to their need for comfort, reassurance and support.

ON YOUR CHILD

- . A child looks like a child but has the capability to act like a child or an adult.
- . A child at times can show incredible sensitivity, and maturity yet possess the innocence, openness and wonder of a child.
- . No matter who we are, we want to be understood. Children want that also.
- . Children want adults to acknowledge how they feel. They also want adults to share their feelings with them.
- . When the kids are screaming and are driving parents crazy, its easy to lose it. This is the time when we need to look at the bigger picture and hold tight to our insight.
- . One of the greatest things a parent can have is insight.
- . Insight begins with understanding and respect, the knowledge of equality and individuality and granting of personal space.
- . The potential for a child to be an adult is there. Waiting inside the child is an adult who wants to be understood. Likewise, inside of the adult is a child that wants to play. The connection point is that parent and child are both human beings.
- . By relating to each other as human beings it's a chance to learn and share from each other. If we learn to appreciate the life in all of us insight will be a natural result.

WHAT ABOUT DISCIPLINE?

Discipline - Punishment - Instruction - A subject that is taught - Training the corrects, molds or perfects the mental faculties or moral character - Control gained by enforcing obedience or order.

When we look at the word discipline, it originates from disciple. Most of the information that we have about child rearing comes down from a patriarchal point of view. Discipline is about control over and power struggles with children. Why don't we want our children to have control? As women there are many parts of that philosophy that may not feel right.

Children are often viewed as being manipulative creatures that never listen and simply want to cause problems for the parents. As parents we are taught to demand respect from children at all times regardless of how the child may be feeling. Order must be kept.

As women, when we see someone in pain, our first reaction is to help that person with their pain and provide comfort. But does discipline allow us that flexibility? Discipline tells us to shut the child down from his/her feelings because it isn't appropriate to act that way. (e.g. throwing a tantrum because a toy wasn't bought at the store, and to go and think about what has wrong. Are we shutting the child down because the behavior isn't appropriate or because we are uncomfortable with the feelings?

Wouldn't it be unique to allow the child to feel what he/she needed to feel and to act in a way that he/she needed to act in order to feel better, as long as the child wasn't hurting him/herself or anyone else? We all know that it is through pain that we learn and grow, yet we make every effort possible to keep children from their pain. Pain for children may be something as simple as wanting to play with the ball instead of coloring and not being allowed to do so. It may also be as complex as violence and abuse. If we as parents offer guidance and support to children walking through their pain and teach them tools to champion themselves with, they are going to learn how to deal with anger, disappointment, frustration, etc., on their own without having to rely on another person to get their feelings "under control". What a powerful gift to give to a child.

How do we do this? By giving our children:

- . acceptance**
- . support**
- . validation**
- . consistency**
- . respect**
- . patience**
- . love**
- . negotiation**
- . creativity**

These are attributes that every human being deserves and can flourish from.

BEDTIME ROUTINE

- . Sleep is a biological process - children sleep if they are tired. If they are not tired, sleep does not come easily.
- . The child must be given the opportunity to comfort him/herself, to become quiet, and to fall asleep.
- . Sleeping alone in a bed is a learned behavior.
- . If kids aren't falling asleep easily it's rarely their fault. They are lacking the skills to put themselves to sleep.
- . Children are looking to their parents to teach them those skills.
- . The key work for bedtime is RITUAL - children need to know what to expect each night. The ritual may be set by parent and child together.
- . The bedtime and bedtime ritual should be the same each night.
- . When a child awakens during the night and isn't having a nightmare, the protests to going back to sleep are pleas for help.
- . Bedtime doesn't necessarily need to be a struggle between parent and child - "If John stays in bed you win; if John stays on the couch he wins".
- . The child needs the parent to teach those skills, (how to sleep or comfort oneself for sleep), so that the child can, in turn, give that to him/herself.

QUARRELING

- . A certain amount of tension between siblings is healthy to establish uniqueness and a role in the family.
- . When children are frustrated, for whatever reason, it's easy to vent on a sibling.
- . Helping children decrease quarreling involves understanding why kids fight.
- . Underlying problems support the fights.
- . The fight is only a symptom.
- . When parents demand the fighting stop - the underlying cause stays alive and will continue to fuel future quarrels.
- . Children need attention, feel pressure, need close friends, and need support.
- . The child needs the parent to help him/her come up with ways to better handle these issues. This can be done with the child and parent brainstorming together.

TANTRUMS

- . One of the most important things we can do for a child having a tantrum is to find out what caused the outburst.
- . Tantrums occur most often when a child is tired or frustrated.
- . A specific circumstance may also bring on a tantrum. (e.g. Larry wants to sit in his red chair at dinner. He doesn't want his sister to sit there, she does one evening, and that drives Larry crazy!) We have a tantrum.
- . Adults have peculiar little hang-ups that are important to them, sleeping on the left side of the bed, wearing cotton socks, etc. These are perfectly reasonable to the adult who has them.
- . Children have hang-ups too, that are very meaningful to them. Larry isn't upset about the chair, he wants to be accepted. Through his tantrum he is saying to his family, "*Why can't I have what's important to me. Do you even really care about me?*"
- . Parents can help a child with a tantrum by:
 - . providing outlets to express feelings
 - . set reasonable expectations
 - . observe carefully. When the child appears frustrated step in and do problem solving with him/her. Do only enough for them to gain skill and to become self-sufficient.
- . Children are entitled to their own peculiarities within reason.
- . If children are permitted a few consistent indulgences they won't demand many.
- . When a tantrum occurs, the following could be options:
 - . Ignore the behavior except to ensure physical safety.
 - . If the child is causing a disruption, move him/her to a quiet place away from people.
 - . Watch to observe when the tantrums occur.
 - . Help the child find a way to calm down without resorting to a tantrum.
 - . When the child is quiet, brainstorm with him/her to determine how to deal with problems that cause anger and frustration.

HEADING OFF YOUR CHILD'S RAGE

Time-outs do not resolve the underlying tensions, disappointments, hardships, or any other problems that may cause your child to explode with rage. Time-outs can be misused, therefore, if you are planning to use time-outs as a technique for controlling your child's anger, you need to consider the following suggestions:

Human beings do not suddenly "fly into a rage" with no warning. Usually there are indications that it's approaching, though you may not be aware of them. Your first task then, as a parent is to be aware of what happened before the outburst. Did the child have a bad day at school, get into a fight with a sibling or friend, not understand a homework problem?

Perhaps if your investigating talents pay off and you notice where the anger is originating from you may be able to head it off before it turns into an outburst. There will be times, however, that you won't be able to head it off.

So, your child is in a rage. You should.....

- . Ensure your child's safety and that of others.
- . Move your child to a quiet place if he/she is causing a disruption. Let your child know it's OK to be angry and frustrated, it's not OK to disturb others.
- . Keep a schedule of the raging. You may be able to track a pattern to discover the underlying issues.
- . Let your child know it's OK to ask for help to find a way to calm down.
- . When your child quiets down, brainstorm with him/her on how he/she can deal with the problems that cause a lot of sadness and anger.
- . Brainstorm with your child about ways that he/she can get his/her needs met without resorting to rage.
- . Be aware of any behaviors that may indicate an outburst is coming. Does your child throw toys on the floor, throw or kick at things, make certain facial or body gestures?

Something to think about.....

Constructive expressions of anger focus on the behavior rather than the worth of the person. Expressions of anger toward the child distracts the child's attention away from what is being said to how it's being said. The child is so concerned about whether he/she will be struck or verbally destroyed that he/she no longer has the energy to think about what he/she has done.

Can use "Bounce Back", pg 75

Fit In?

Shelter

Environment

Teachers

**for Use When
with Battered/
Battered**

**A Word of
Working with**

V. Where Do You

. A Positive

. Mothers as

**. Guidelines
Working
Formerly
Women**

**. Advocates:
Caution in**

Survivors

YOU PROVIDE A POSITIVE SHELTER ENVIRONMENT

Provide exposure to the greatness of humanity... **YOU**.

Exposure to good things that fill the air and take up space.

Make a list of all the things that you value (If you had only today to do so).

Make a list of personal thoughts/ideas that you would want to offer others...
"This is a Personal Guide for Living".

Make a list of things you like to do.

List two ways in which you can enhance all nurturing and inspiring experiences for yourself and others.

- . Let others know how much you treasure these experiences.
- . Repeat these experiences often.
 - . for example, if you enjoy looking at clouds, point them out - say something like: "*Look at those beautiful clouds! Aren't they gorgeous.*"

SEEING AND SUPPORTING MOTHERS AS TEACHERS

There can be no mistake that great literature, a great painting, a piece of powerful music, or a visit to a faraway land can be tremendously inspiring, but these things can't talk back. They cannot see you struggling over a period of time to improve in a certain area; they don't say "*You're doing great!*", or "*I care about you.*" Teachers, however, are alive. They speak your language, for they are learners just like you. Do your part to surround your children with the greatness of humanity. Surround them with good teachers. (Support their mother as a teacher.)

Most of the time in school, teachers are chosen for your children and you can only hope they will be some of the best. Outside of school, however, you can go out of your way to ensure that children have extraordinary experiences with great teachers whom they will see for several years and get to know personally. Prepare to encourage study in fields that will expand their horizons as human beings. As they grow in their abilities, a special relationship will develop between teacher and student; a bond of shared knowledge and love of learning.

Remember that the greatness of humanity is great only if it is appreciated. A person can be exposed to the very best, but its positive effect can be minimized or lost entirely if even one of these two things happens. First, if it is presented in a negative manner; or if an individual is not receptive to its benefits.

Supporting survivors in a mutual learning experience involves a positive outlook which comes from positive perception, the ability to see things favorably. The word positive implies reality - the actual existence and presence of that which is sought; the affirmation of life and influence for good. Positive perception affects the quality of an individual's life, including relationships.

GUIDELINES AND GENERAL EXPECTATIONS TO SHARE WITH BATTERED WOMEN IN DESCRIBING THE HARBOR HOUSE ROLE IN THEIR LIVES

1. Deciding to work together is dependent on our both sensing that a fit exists between what we can offer and what you need. Please feel free to ask any questions that you may need to ask to arrive at a decision. I will do the same.
2. Deciding not to take advantage of our advocacy is a perfectly respectable decision. It is an option.
3. This time is for you. Our one-on-one advocacy offers options that we hope provide the support you need to develop goals. These are your goals, not ours, that are ultimately the most meaningful. Please come in with your own agenda and feel free to change the agenda. If you disagree with something that we have said or have suggested, don't just go along with it. If you feel uneasy about how we respond to something, please give us feedback. Disagreement is not a sign of resistance, it is the reality of being separate human beings.
4. If we say or do anything that is oppressive, whether it be ethnocentric or ablest, please let us know about it so that we can shift. Nothing of this nature is insignificant or "too small to mention".
5. Except when conferring with other advocates, and/or except when someones' life is in danger, these one-on-one times are absolutely confidential. That is, we will not divulge to anyone that you are seeing us. We will not discuss you with your family or friends unless you explicitly ask us to do so. We will not testify against you in a court of law even if required by law to do so.
6. It is important that we be able to rely on each other.
7. If you are having trouble and wish to talk with us between appointments, feel free to come and talk or call.
8. People sometimes get stuck working through their goals so we'll meet periodically to evaluate.
9. When it comes time for you to leave the shelter, we're hoping we can work with you to give this part of the process its due. As with any kind of important relationship it will be an opportunity to have closure to this time.

ADVOCATES

The temptation to rescue, the frustration, and the disrespect are the principal internal problems that advocates encounter when working with battered women. Although other dynamics are involved, the desire to rescue comes at least partially from caring, and it is perfectly understandable. No caring human being wants to sit by while another is being brutalized. No women-identified woman wants to bide her time while yet another woman is being pulverized. Whatever may be needed in the short term, however, in the long term rescuing simply does not work. Not having gone through their own process, rescued women end up right back where they began. And the advocate ends up exhausted, disempowered, and frustrated.

Frustration comes from caring, over-involvement, and oversimplification. It easily turns into disrespect and gets leveled at the battered woman. I have known workers of phone hot lines to exclaim, "*But how can you stay with a man who treats you like that! Don't you have any self-respect?*" I have known workers to berate battered women for returning to their abusive partners. Most, of course, are careful not to say anything so overtly oppressive. Even when advocates say all the right things, however, all too often their tones and looks convey the message, "*This is not good enough. You have let us down again.*"

The underlying expectations here are unrealistic. If we are to work really well with battered women, we need to appreciate what these women are up against and how very difficult leaving is. And--what is absolutely bottom line--we need to respect battered women more.

We can make progress here if we take in the truly formidable strengths that these women have. They are women who are surviving daily surveillance and torture. They are not simply submitting, even where submission is key and even though submission is expectable and blameless. They are deciding to duck. They are deciding NOT to duck. They are each in her own way also resisting. They are actively and passively resisting violation, whether that resistance takes the form of numbing themselves so that they will not feel the pain, finding ways of avoiding the abuser's ire, or saying no.

SUGGESTIONS TO OFFER

The long-range objective with battered and formerly battered women is to help our brutalized sisters become more empowered and better able to prevent and counter brutalization. Short-range goals vary in accordance with the situation. Common short-range goals include helping the client:

- A. alter a brutalizing situation that she desires to alter;
- B. exit from a brutalizing situation;
- C. protect herself from the abuser, and'
- D. start a new and independent life.

Subsidiary goals and means that typically figure in empowerment include:

- A. nurturing and validation;
- B. addressing internalized oppression and myths, and;
- C. co-addressing the very real obstacles in the way.

Although some women are fairly clear about the abuse and primarily need empathy, validation, and practical help, for most, work on internalized oppression is critical. The monitoring stage is a good time as well to help women begin imagining and thinking through a life without their partners. The types of questions that we might encourage women to consider here are:

- . Where would she live?
- . What kind of job does she want in the long run? What are her current skills?
 - What new skills does she need? How could she acquire these new skills?
 - What kind of job might she get in the short-term?
- . Which relatives or friends might be relied on for what kind of help?
- . What financial and other help does she need? What specific financial and other resources can she access and how?

Again we need to go slowly, for it can be frightening for a woman to imagine a life without her partner. It becomes less frightening, of course, the more she imagines and plans. Cultural difference may make it important for us to back off or to modify.

Few women actually leave permanently the first time they exit.

EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES

IDENTITY AND ACTION

Oppression, lies, and isolation serve to alienate, confuse, and disempower women. Awareness/emotional work helps women cut through the lies, become less confused, and rid themselves of internalized oppression. It is equally important to help women forge links with other members of their oppressed communities (women, Black women, women with disabilities, etc.) and take action, whether individually or collectively. Joining with and dialoging with multiple others who are similarly situated, on equal footing, and intent on empowerment help forge a positive identity and cut through the alienation in ways that dialogue with a single advocate cannot. It also facilitates common analysis and common action.

Questions that help identify the oppressive situation and eliminate internalized oppression and facilitate action include the following:

- . You describe yourself (your community) as the loser in this situation. What would a good situation look like?

- . What needs to be changed here? What would you like to see changed?

- . What concrete tasks would have to be done for this change to occur?

- . What, if any small steps can you see taking that would begin moving things in that direction?

- . What help would you need if you were to try this?

- . Whom or what might you turn to, or ally with?

UNRAVEL THE OPPRESSION --

(her experience isn't the exception, her experiences have values).

Ways in which we can be of help here include:

- . Familiarizing her with the different stages of the battery cycle and helping her identify the battery in her own life.
- . Problematizing the notion of romantic love and gradually uncovering/helping her uncover its relationship to partner abuse generally and to her own battery specifically.
- . Problematizing beliefs around wifely obedience and duty.
- . Problematizing notions like "needing a man" and "children need their father" and looking at the impact of such beliefs.
- . Providing her with relevant literature that addresses these issues--personal accounts in particular.
- . Encouraging her to talk to other women who have been subjected to extreme partner abuse, especially women who are similarly situated culturally and otherwise.
- . Familiarizing her with, and encouraging her to attend support groups for battered women or consciousness-raising groups.
- . Encouraging her to go to Take-Back-The-Night marches or other relevant events.

OPPRESSION + LIES + ISOLATION = ALIENATION

ACTION + AWARENESS + CONTACT = POWER

Can use "Taking Stock", pg. 71.

IDENTITY AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Oppression and lives, confuse and disempower, not only women but children as well. Information and awareness are tools that children need to help free themselves of oppression. Children need to know that there are children all over the world that are being oppressed. It is crucial that they make connections with other children to get support, validate each other, and to know that they are on equal footing with each other. Through those connections, children will be able to talk through, with each other, what they see and hear, what troubles them about oppression, and together develop a plan of empowerment.

Children need teachers to help them identify oppressive situations and to eliminate the internalized oppression. Some questions that can be asked to help in this process are the following:

- . You describe yourself (your community) as the loser in this situation. What would a good situation look like?

- . What needs to be changed here? What would you like to see changed?

- . What concrete tasks would have to be done for this change to occur?

- . What, if any small steps can you see taking that would begin moving things in that direction?

- . What help would you need if you were to try this?

- . Whom or what might you turn to, or ally with?

UNRAVEL THE OPPRESSION --

(the child's experience isn't the exception, the experiences have values).

How to begin to unravel the oppression--the child's experience isn't the exception, the experiences have values.

Ways in which we can be of help here include:

- . Familiarizing children with the different stages of the battery cycle and helping to identify the pattern in their family life.
- . Problematizing notions of how children are viewed by adults and how that affects their role in their family.
- . Problematizing beliefs around wifely obedience and duty and how that fits with their family life.
- . Problematizing societal beliefs about a "man's role" and a "woman's role" and the impact of those beliefs on relationships and families.
- . Problematizing societal beliefs about the nuclear family and the impact of those beliefs on children.
- . Encouraging children to talk to other children that are living with domestic violence.
- . Encouraging children to be aware of consciousness-raising groups and to participate in those events, as an individual or as a family.

Can use "Shining Knight" or "Trust List", pg. 76, 77.

I recently heard a story on the radio. It happened in Bosnia, but I think it has meaning for all of us. A reporter was covering that tragic conflict in the middle of Sarajevo, and he saw a little girl shot by a sniper. The back of her head had been torn away by the bullet. The reporter threw down his pad and pencil, and stopped being a reporter for a few minutes. He rushed to the man who was holding the child, and helped them both into his car.

As the reporter stepped on the accelerator, racing to the hospital, the man holding the bleeding child said, "*Hurry, my friend, my child is still breathing.*" A moment later, "*Hurry, my friend my child is still warm.*" Finally, "*Hurry. Oh my God my child is getting cold.*"

When they got to the hospital, the little girl had died. As the two men were in the lavatory, washing the blood off their hands and their clothes, the man turned to the reporter and said, "*This is a terrible task for me. I must go tell hr father that is child is dead. He will be heartbroke.*"

The reporter was amazed. He looked at the grieving man and said, "*I thought she was your child.*" The man looked back and said, "*No, but aren't they all our children?*"

Aren't they all our children?

Yes, they are all our children.

STATISTICS

- . An estimated 34,000 children under age five die daily from hunger and preventable diseases - 24 children every minute, the equivalent of more than three 747 airliners, each holding 430 children, crashing every hour, every day, year round and leaving no survivors.
- . More than one in four U.S. children under age 12 is hungry or at risk of hunger.
- . Children make up almost half of the population in poverty in the U.S.
- . A child living in a wealthy U.S. family is, on average, better off financially than the typical wealthy child in any other country. At the same time, the average child in a low-income U.S. family is worse off than the average poor child in 15 other industrialized countries.
- . The U.S. already has the highest child poverty rate of any industrial country.
- . Even short periods of undernutrition can affect children's behavior, cognitive development and future productivity.
- . Children who are hungry are more likely to have frequent headaches, and are four times more likely to suffer from fatigue and have difficulty concentrating.
- . Children who are hungry have a hard time learning, are often sick and absent from school and have a much harder time paying attention in class.

STATISTICS

- . Domestic Violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children. A 1990 Ford Foundation Study found that 50% of homeless women and children were fleeing abuse. More recent estimates range around 53%.
- . Single mothers and children make up the largest group of people who are homeless in rural areas.
- . In 1995, approximately 24% of all requests for emergency shelter by families with children went unmet.
- . Children account for 27% of the U.S. population but represent 40% of all poor people in the U.S.
- . Over one-fifth of the children in the U.S. are poor, almost twice the share of any other age group.
- . There were 744,266 homeless children in 1993 and this is a conservative estimate because many states only counted children in shelters.
- . Children represent the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, and states, schools, and service providers do not have the resources to meet their needs.
- . Last year children constituted 25% of the homeless population.
- . Poor children, homeless children, experience worse health, more developmental delays, more anxiety, depression and behavioral problems, and lower education achievement.

-The

National Coalition For The Homeless-

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- . Women are violently reduced to bodies that are for men, and those bodies are then further violated.
- . Violence is absolutely integral to our experience as women.
- . Extreme violence is the context in which other violence occurs and give meaning to other forms, with which it inevitably interacts.
- . All women are subject to violence at some time, or live with the threat of extreme violence.

THE POWER TO FORCE SUBMISSION

In the book, *Anatomy of Power*, John Kenneth Galbraith identifies three forms of power which allow groups or individuals to force the submission of other individuals or groups to the will of the more powerful. The three forms are physical or coercive power; conditioned power, which is the ability to rely on the social or individual conditioning of a person to force submission to the will of another; and economic power. All three forms of power are exercised by abusers against women to force their submission.

We must remain mindful of how deeply ingrained many of our responses to male power have become. We cannot expect that the ways we give diffidence to men will change instantly nor can we ignore the reality that stripping those things away may endanger us. Obviously if an abuser cannot gain a woman's submission through compensatory or conditioned power, then he can use coercive power. Therefore, actions on all these levels must be planned with safety in mind. Below are actions women have discussed to fight the ways we are forced to submit to violence and other abusive control.

Personal:

1. Keep a daily journal of all the ways he tries to get me to submit to his will so I recognize when it is happening.
2. Start seeing some of the things I'm doing behind his back such as saving money, planning to go to school, talking to a lawyer, and coming to women's groups as acts of resistance.
3. Face the fact that I may have to be poor for a while to get out of this situation.
4. Stop teaching my daughters to take care of, and submit to men. Stop teaching my son to expect a woman to be there for his every need.

Usually several examples of using the courts, filing for divorce and using the shelter are also brought up.

Institutional:

1. Single parents need an adequate guaranteed annual income, not welfare.
2. Continue the efforts to eliminate sexism and racism from the curriculum and from the attitudes of teachers - get action in the school system.
3. Work with women's groups on resisting the men's right groups proposing legislation on custody, visitation and child support payments. This legislation pushes back twenty years the gains women have made in these areas.

Cultural:

1. Work toward changing attitudes on spanking children.
2. Make efforts to point out the pervasiveness of conditioning girls to be caretakers and boys to not take care of others in emotional ways. (This is not to say taking care of someone is bad. However, women/girls often are given too much caretaking responsibility, while men/boys have no emotional responsibility to their family and friends.)

Can use "The Mirror", pg. 78.

WOMEN'S VISION

Women's vision may be seen as an act of resistance in its own right. Seeing out of our own eyes is itself disobeying the patriarchy. Women also resist more concretely. As women we are beings who act and whose actions can be our own. We can, and to some extent always do, wage a war of active/passive resistance.

The resistance that is action similarly varies in degree, effectiveness and scope. Some women's acts are limited, individual, and border on resignation. But even here is a core of resistance that is poignant and meaningful. In this category we find the housewife who stops cleaning up and just sits there unhappy and "unable" to do anything. In the past psychiatry would have said that she is having a nervous breakdown. Today it would say that she is "chronically depressed". These "diagnoses" are not so much wrong as horrendously limited. She is clearly "sick to death" of the endless repetitive chores that befall her as a woman. She is fundamentally exhausted, worn out, bored; she "cannot take it anymore", and her being if rebelling. Her exhaustion is not phoney but absolutely genuine.

Toward the end of the continuum is more consistent, deliberate, and systematic action. On the personal level, every day throughout the world women engage in decisive acts of resistance. We protect our daughters from incestuous fathers. We leave unsatisfactory relationships. We dress and talk in ways that repudiate sexual objectification. We refuse to paint or mutilate our bodies. We force our way into male-dominated professions. We demand non-sexist division of chores.

If woman's vision - all women's vision - is the guide to concrete resistance, woman-woman relating is at once an act of resistance and the space in which woman's vision and action flourishes. It is, as it were, the basic building blocks from which liberated zones are created.

We turn to one another. We hear each others secrets. We share our innermost thoughts with each other. Physically and emotionally we comfort one another in times of distress. We explore together. We take joy in each other. We co-mother together. In all of this, whether we are fully aware of it or not, we are engaging in a pivotal act of resistance. We are disobeying the patriarchal "prime directive" to be a body for man and are ignoring the order to disperse.

By relating to each other personally and intimately, no matter what form this relating may take, women are reaffirming the essential bond between women that patriarchy so brutally violates and on whose violation patriarchy so fundamentally depends. By coming together correspondingly we are creating

room for women's vision, for feminist analysis, and for action.

Power comes from the word posse, meaning "to be able". People have power insofar as they are able to realize their goals...insofar, that is, as they are able to define/change the world.

All oppressed groups have dual vision because all must keep moving between their own understanding and the oppressors if they are to survive. Women's dual vision leads to confusion because we keep losing whatever and whoever we are.

"We need pride - not further humility. We need empowerment - not a further relinquishing of our power."

Can use "Change Lists", pg. 72

REFERENCE MATERIALS COMPILED FROM:

- . "Radical Feminist Therapy" - Bonnie Burstow

- . "The Family" - John Bradshaw

- . "Life's Little Miseries" - Diane Lynch-Fraser

- . "I Can't Get Over It" - Aphrodite Matsakis

- . "Children & Trauma - A Parents Guide to Helping Children Heal"
-
Cynthia Monahon

- . "Aftermath" - Mariann Hybels-Steer

What is a support system? It's a system of trusted people who provide support when needed and congratulations when deserved; it's people you have fun with.

Children's Group at Harbor House consists of two groups. The first group is for children ages 9-12. This age group will have an educational meeting with the children's advocate for approximately one hour. The meeting will be composed of information about trauma/shock, domestic abuse/violence, self-nurturing techniques, and breaking the cycle of generational violence. The kids will then join the younger children for the structured play activities. Before the children can come to the educational group, mothers need to fill out a "Group Needs Survey" sheet. If the sheet isn't filled out, the children will join the younger group for the play activities for the entire period.

The second group will be for children ages 4-8, who will be participating in structured play activities.

STRUCTURED PLAY GROUP ACTIVITIES

Play for children is very important. Play gives children the opportunity to express themselves, have some control over their environment and to work things through. In play, the children can act out an event that perhaps bothered them and repeat it in a way that gives them some resolution and closure. They don't necessarily need adults for this to happen. Many times this process goes on within them and adults are simply observers. We need to trust that process.

Children's group consists of structured play activities. These include finger painting, water colors, drawing, puppets, craft activities, dolls, dress-up clothes, music, and a sand and water table.

There will be volunteers with the children during their play. The volunteers are trained to give the children the space they need to find their resolutions. The play may be non-directive or directive. Non-directive, meaning the children decide what and how they are going to play, the volunteers are there as observer/participant. Directive play meaning the volunteers taking more of a lead with the play, perhaps doing a skit with the puppets about trauma or a skit using the dress-up clothes.

The children are the experts about what they need to play out. We, as adults are not there to judge or shame them, simply to be available for support and information.

The children's advocate will be available for meetings to share information with mothers as to what occurred in group the previous week.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE

The Women's Circle offers a safe space for battered/formerly battered women to network and receive information about how domestic violence and abuse has affected their lives and the lives of their children. It offers opportunities to explore the global impact of violence against women and children and the support, advocacy and creative strategies for change that are needed to improve the quality of women's lives.

Child care exchange is available.

VI. Assorted Group/Individual Activities to Offer Battered/Formerly Battered Women & Their Children

This is an assesment tool to use in determining needs for your child. This is not a mandatory requirement for shelter stay or services.

WOMEN'S ASSESSMENT TOOL

(To be used with age appropriate Behavior Sheet)

My child's name:

My child's age:

Grade my child is in:

I know my child likes the following:

I know my child dislikes the following:

What I don't understand about my child is the following:

What I do understand about my child, is the following:

I would like more information about:

_____ effects of violence in our lives

_____ what changes can I expect from my child?

_____ what methods might I use in response to those changes?

_____ what is my role?

_____ family units & developing as a family

_____ referrals to other agencies

My greatest concern for my child is:

My greatest concern for my family is:

This is an assessment tool to be used to determine your childs needs. This is not a mandatory requirement for shelter stay or services.

In your view, what is the main issue that your child is dealing with right now?

What is an issue your child is consistently talking about or acting out?

In your view, what causes your child the most stress?

How does your child respond to stress?

What behaviors do you notice in your child when he/she is dealing with stress?

What tools do you identify your child needs to deal with his/her stress?

What are some of the ways that you help your child get these tools?

When your child is not dealing with stress, what behaviors do you notice?

In your view, what does your child need to comfort him/herself?

What are some of the ways that you help your child find comfort?

What is your routine with your child at bedtime, dinner time, etc?

What elements of that routine do you want to keep, or get rid of?

What elements, if any, of that routine did your child help you to develop?

What new routines do you wish to develop?

Deep Breathing

Your degree of body tension is reflected in the way you breathe. When you are under stress, your breathing is shallow. Conversely, you can learn to calm yourself by practicing deep breathing exercises. Deep breathing increases the oxygen flow to your brain, which increases your capacity to think and concentrate and helps rid your body of many toxins.

The following exercises will be useful to you not only in dealing with triggers, but in other efforts and in any life circumstance in which you want or need to calm yourself. Two forms of deep breathing exercises are offered here: abdominal breathing and calming breath. (Bourne 1990).

Try to practice one of the following techniques regularly. Five minutes a day for two weeks is recommended. Once you have become comfortable with one of the forms, you can use it to combat stress, anxiety, and other PTSD symptoms. Continuing to practice either of these techniques will make it second nature. You will naturally breathe more deeply, which will promote feelings of relaxation and well-being.

Abdominal Breathing Exercise for Tension

1. Note the level of tension you are feeling. Then place one hand on your abdomen right beneath your rib cage.
2. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose into the "bottom" of your lungs--in other words, send the air as low down as you can. If you're breathing from your abdomen, your hand should actually rise. Your chest should move only slightly while your abdomen expands. (In abdominal breathing, the diaphragm--the muscle that separates the lung cavity from the abdominal cavity--moves downward. In so doing it causes the muscles surrounding the abdominal cavity to push outward.)
3. When you've taken in a full breath, pause for a moment and then exhale slowly through your nose or mouth, depending on your preference. Be sure to exhale fully. As you exhale, allow your whole body to just let go (you might visualize your arms and legs going loose and limp like a rag doll).
4. Do ten slow, full abdominal breaths. Try to keep your breathing smooth and regular, without gulping in a big breath or letting your breath out all at once. Remember to pause briefly at the end of each inhalation. Count to ten, progressing with each exhalation. The process should go like this:
 - Slow inhale...Pause...Slow exhale (count "one")
 - Slow inhale...Pause...Slow exhale (count "two")
 - Slow inhale...Pause...Slow exhale (count "three")

and so on up to ten. If you start to feel light-headed while practicing

abdominal breathing, stop for 30 seconds, and then start up again.

5. Extend the exercise if you wish by doing two or three "sets" of abdominal breaths, remembering to count up to ten for each set (each exhalation counts as one number). Five full minutes of abdominal breathing will have a pronounced effect in reducing anxiety or early symptoms of panic.

Some people prefer to count backwards from ten down to one on each breath. Feel free to do this if you prefer.

Calming Breath Exercise

1. Breathing from your abdomen, inhale slowly to a count of five (count slowly "one...two...three...four...five" as you inhale).
2. Pause and hold your breath to a count of five.
3. Exhale slowly, through your nose or mouth, to a count of five (or more if it takes you longer). Be sure to exhale fully.
4. When you've exhaled completely, take two breaths in your normal rhythm, then repeat steps 1 through 3 in the cycle above.
5. Keep up the exercise for at least five minutes. This should involve going through at least ten cycles of in-five, hold-five, out-five. Remember to take two normal breaths between each cycle. If you start to feel light-headed while practicing this exercise, stop for 30 seconds and then start again.
6. Throughout the exercise, keep your breathing smooth and regular, without gulping in breaths or breathing out suddenly.
7. Optional: Each time you exhale, you may wish to say "relax", "calm", "let go", or any other relaxing word or phrase silently to yourself. Allow your whole body to let go as you do this.

Assertiveness

You are your own best friend. You do what you want to do because you want to do it--as long as no one else will be hurt. You don't do what you do not want to do and you feel comfortable about this.

You are a good communicator with family, friends, or strangers. You tell the truth, express feelings, and are a good listener. You give others the freedom to be themselves, and this lets you be yourself. Your communications denote love, caring concern, and respect. You solve problems effectively without always giving in. Problem solving is a form of communication.

You pursue what is important to you. You don't sit back and just hope that you will get a new job; you pursue it. You don't just hope that your new acquaintance will become a friend or lover; you take the initiative, extend a welcome to the relationship, and follow up on it. You take an active part in all relationships. With your children, you stay involved as a non-judgmental friend, in combination with parental responsibilities, to provide information and guidance.

You are able to consider the needs of others but do not let their needs run your life. You make your wishes known. You feel comfortable with the decisions and choices you make, and realize that you cannot always get what you want.

You make certain that the consequences of inappropriate behavior are understood and carried out. This teaches the child to hold back before striking out or saying things that may require discipline. This pattern gives the child the message that certain behaviors are not acceptable to you and there is a price to pay. It puts the responsibility on the child. The parent, however, is the teacher--the one who establishes the consequences and carries them out. Certain consequences can be negotiated with older children ahead of time, but the parent must follow through, by cutting the allowance or making sure the child doesn't watch TV, for example.

Before the Trigger

As you anticipate your encounter with the trigger event, try to talk to yourself like this:

Soon I will face a trigger event. In the past, this event has made me extremely anxious. Sometimes my anxiety has turned into rage, sometimes into depression. Either way, I find the situation distasteful, if not unbearable. I am also aware that I tend to react with more anxiety to this situation than other people would. This makes me feel abnormal, deviant, and different in a negative kind of way.

But I need to remember that, though anxiety happens to everyone, to trauma survivors like me, it happens very easily, very quickly, and more intensely than to others.

Because of what I have been through, my system quickly responds to certain situations as if an emergency were going on. What for other people sounds like an alarm clock, sounds like a fire engine's siren to me. That's because I was traumatized.

My head knows there is no real emergency, but the rest of me, my emotions and body, don't know. That's why I have to keep telling myself over and over again, "This is not [the original trauma]. Nothing terrible is going to happen. It might feel like something terrible is going to happen, but the reality is that I am not in danger.

Yet, in a sense, there is an emergency going on and it's caused by the way my brain reacts to a trigger because I was traumatized. My anxiety creates that emergency. When I get very anxious I can't think well, I don't act the way I want, and I make poor decisions to boot. When people get too anxious or afraid, there are changes in their brain that do not allow them to solve problems as well as usual. The brain just doesn't work as well, and emotions, like fear, anger, panic, and hopelessness, take over.

I hate it when I feel I might become out of control with one of these emotions. What if I get so mad I hurt someone, or myself? What if I become so anxious or scared I act in a foolish or stupid way? Others will think poorly of me. Or what if I get so hopeless and depressed that it shows, and others think of me as needy? That's why I stay away from trigger events-- because I fear losing control and can't predict how I will act.

The bad news is that when I confront a trigger, most likely I will react with fear, anxiety, rage, or depression right away. But that's okay. My crazy way of reacting is perfectly rational for a PTSD sufferer like me. Because I was in a

trauma, the neural connections in my body are set up for these kind of emotional reactions.

But the good news is that I can build a new history. I can learn that the anxiety, the anger, the panic, or whatever strong emotion I am having will pass. At first it might take two or three hours to pass. The next time, one-and-a-half hours to pass. The time after that, a half hour. Each time I will progress until the trauma reaction becomes shorter and shorter.

I can build a new history in my brain if I keep practicing my coping techniques. Eventually, the new history will be more familiar and powerful than the old history.

In the past I've panicked, then I've panicked at the panic. I don't have to do that anymore. I can use my muscle relaxation and deep breathing techniques. I can take time out from the situation in order to center myself, call a friend, or do something that will help take care of me emotionally. If the situation becomes unbearable, I should permit myself to leave it entirely and try again another time, if that's possible.

I need to be patient with myself. I need to remember that it only takes a few minutes to become traumatized, but years to get over that trauma. I also need to congratulate myself for trying. At least I am trying. So many trauma survivors isolate from others and from life. They are too afraid to try what I am doing. I understand why they are afraid, but I also need to applaud myself for having the courage to try not to let my past strangle my present.

During the Trigger

When confronting a trigger event, try to speak to yourself as follows:

I need to take this one step at a time. I can't think about the entire event I have to endure. I have to break it down into small segments.

I need to be aware of my fears, anxieties, angers, and other feelings. But I need to focus more on what I am doing than on what I am feeling.

If I am afraid or angry, this does not mean I am a failure. I need to expect to be emotionally uncomfortable. After all, I'm in a trigger situation. Instead of getting mad at myself for my feelings, I need to view these feelings as signals that I need to use one of my coping exercises. For example, it may be time to do some deep breathing exercises, call a friend or sponsor if possible, take time out, or whatever makes sense. I also need to remember the plan I made for handling this trigger and stick with it.

*Whenever I become overwhelmed with fear, anxiety, or anger, I need to tell myself, "**This too shall pass. Eventually I can go somewhere where I feel safe.**"*

Nurturing for Women

Finding actual existence and presence of the positives in your life. Think BIG!!!

Do 3 things: Visualize our best selves, our true selves: Become the person that we imagine.

Imagine posing for a picture of yourself at your best: Choose clothes that make you feel and look great, fix your hair.

Keep for yourself, you Imagine yourself to be even better than you are (every detail). that image constant in your mind..if you don't choose will have no choice.

never Be gentle with yourself - accepting who you are - what you are give up your desire to improve.

TAKING STOCK

You have had the courage to look at your traumatic experiences and the equally traumatic secondary wounding experiences that followed. As the results of these experiences, you learned that your psyche is attuned to triggers--situations that remind you of the original trauma. Since you have identified not only the traumas, but the triggers that flowed from them, you are no longer in the dark about these important aspects of your life.

You have also had the willingness and courage to examine yourself for any possible depression or addiction. If you have discovered that you indeed suffer from depression or that your "little habits" are, in truth, addictions that could ultimately kill you, you may at first have been shocked, then wanted to deny your feelings. However, if you are indeed clinically depressed or addictive in some aspects of your life, and you have been willing to accept these truths rather than run from them, applaud yourself vigorously.

"But why?" you might be asking. "Look at me, I'm a mess. First I went through a trauma and a series of secondary wounding experiences. Then, instead of coming out a hero, I emerged damaged--depressed or addicted and full of triggers that can send me into a rage, a crying jag, or a state of numbing that makes me feel half dead, all of which alienate me from others."

Do not despair. Healing is possible. But without the insights you have gained about yourself it probably wouldn't be. You must know what your problems are before you can begin to solve them. The time and emotion you spend gleaning the truths about your life are not spent in vain.

CHANGE LISTS

Change lists can also be helpful at this stage, as well as at other stages. The most effective change lists include:

- . specific behaviors that she wants her abusive partner to change, and
- . at least some means that she sees as necessary, and
- . time frames for each

We can err badly, of course, by pushing for concreteness and decisions that the woman does not want, or is not ready to make.

At the time that she makes a list, the woman may or may not begin to raise some of the issues on her list with her partner and to negotiate, depending on safety, self-confidence, feasibility, and other issues. Whether she raises them or not, she is empowered by the very acts of formulating and monitoring and by the knowledge so generated.

Group Activities for Kids

IMAGINATION VACATION

Imagine that you have all the time and money that you need to create an ideal vacation for yourself. Where would you go? (This could be a real or imaginary place.) Who and what would you take along? How would you get there? What activities would fill your days? How long would you choose to stay? If you stayed forever, what would you miss about your former life? If you chose not to stay forever, what would bring you back?

CREATIVE VALUE

Reawakens one's appreciation for the meaningful and rewarding things of life through the power of Imagination-Visualization-Dreaming.

DEARNESS SCALE

What are some things that people value? Cut out pictures or diamonds, paintings, gold, antiques, coins, collectibles, race horses, cars, etc. Mount them on small cardboard shapes. Now gather photos of loved ones in your life, including yourself. Draw or construct a balancing scale and label it "Scale of Love/Scale of Values" or simply "Dearness Scale". Put the cardboard pictures on one side, the photos of loved ones on the other side. Then tip your scale to show the obvious: that even one loved one is infinitely more valuable and thus "carries more weight" than any material goods ever would or could.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Makes clear the priceless value of each human being. Accordingly, each of us must try to show greater appreciation for the Individuality-Originality-Expression of all human beings just as we openly esteem the valuable uniqueness of our many material possessions.

BOUNCE BACK

With your children, gather several different balls. Drop or bounce each one on the floor. Observe which ones bounce back more quickly with less effort. You will notice that these balls have strong exteriors and firm interiors. Now think about how people are like balls in their ability to "bounce back" from stress, hardship, and trauma. Help your children to think of several relatives or friends who have faced personal difficulties and "bounced back" through Flexibility-Versatility-Resourcefulness is an important part of creativity and self-survival; practice it faithfully in order to learn how to bounce back in the game of life.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Assists member of your family in personal crises by helping each of them focus on bouncing back through the inner strength of Flexibility-Versatility-Resourcefulness.

SHINING KNIGHT

In the age of chivalry, each knight was willing to live and die for an ideal or a ladylove. Do you think this is foolish or gallant? What ideal or person would you be willing to give your life for, if necessary?

CREATIVE VALUE:

Shows that Courage is often motivated by an ideal of the heart, namely love, which can be held for a principle as well as for a person.

TRUST LIST

Whom do you trust? Why? Write a list of the reasons why you trust other people, including your friends, co-workers, and loved ones. Now study the list. Are these the same reasons that you trust yourself? Add to the list and cite all the reasons why you can, in the paraphrased words of Goethe, trust yourself to know how to live.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Increases awareness of self and the value of Trust.

THE MIRROR

Look at the following drawing of a mirror. Imagine that you are seeing yourself. "See" your face and all that it reveals. Sense your expressions. Are you pleasantly relaxed--even smiling? If you see yourself frowning or tense, watch your face carefully. It will change to a more pleasant expression if you simply allow it to do so through the power of your imagination. The exercise will actually help get rid of negative feelings.

STRANDED

Imagine you are stranded in a life-threatening situation. Choose and describe the circumstances. Brainstorm a list of things you would do to help yourself stay positive and persevere in a desperately trying time. Example: singing a favorite song while afloat after you were forced to abandon ship. Your imaginary experience could act as the inspiration and reminder to use Discipline-Dedication-Perseverance in a real-life crisis or any everyday situation.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Allows one to develop an attitude of fortitude and Perseverance which, when combined with Discipline and Dedication, increases love of life and will to survive.

BABY BOOM

Imagine the time when you were an infant who couldn't even walk or talk. In fifteen minutes, begin to list the skills and abilities acquired thus far in your life to make you the versatile, creative human being that you are today. Admittedly, fifteen minutes is inadequate time to realize all of the wonderful abilities you have gained since birth, especially when you consider that you have time remaining -- whatever length it will be -- to continue learning, to keep growing, to become more aware of your tremendous capabilities as a living, spiritual, creative human being. Flexibility-Versatility-Resourcefulness is only the tip of the iceberg in helping you to realize just who you are, for it is not the number or kinds of skills you have acquired that is important, it is what they indicate and represent about you.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Lets you realize vitality of the Spirit, creative intelligence of the self, and independence of the life essence within yourself, and within each individual on this earth, to make life a glorious expression of Light and Love.

FREE ASSOCIATION

Ready, set, go! Write down ten objects that come to mind. Stop. Now develop a short plot using all ten objects as part of the story.

CREATIVE VALUE:

Develops the ability to see hidden relationships, a truly creative trait that uses Flexibility-Versatility-Resourcefulness.

ALOHA

Human beings have the incredible ability to adapt to new situations. Imagine you went on vacation to a faraway land and stayed there for an indefinite period of time. List five ways you would help yourself adjust to the new culture and surroundings through Flexibility-Versatility-Resourcefulness.

VII. Glossary of Terms

Abandonment -	to give up with the intent of never again claiming a right or interest
Advocate -	to plead in favor of, support
Alienate -	to make unfriendly, hostile
Classism -	prejudice based on class
Coercive -	to dominate, restrain or control forcibly
Compensatory -	to make up for something, to correct
Covert -	disguised - secret
Detriment -	injury, damage
Diagnosis -	the act of identifying from signs and symptoms
Disfigurement -	harm
Dysfunctional -	abnormal
Empower -	to give (to enable or permit)
Flashback -	sudden memory
Homophobia -	irrational fear of homosexuality
Hyper-arousal -	excessive stimulation or action
Internally -	occurring within
Manipulative -	clever
Nonlinear -	not a straight line
Objectification -	to be related to as an object
Oppression -	a sense of being weighed down in body or mind
Outcomes -	something that follows as a result or consequence
Overt -	open to view
Pathologize -	caused by disease (emotion, suffering)
Patriarchal -	father
Perpetrate -	to bring about or carry out
Problematizing -	difficult to solve, decide
Psyche -	to analyze or figure out
Psychological -	directed toward the will or toward the mind (soul or spirit)

PTSD -	post traumatic stress disorder
Racism -	prejudice based on race
Resolution -	develop clearness
Self nurturing -	self support, self train, self educate
Sexism -	prejudice based on sex
Societal -	relating to society
Submission -	to yield to the control of others
Submit -	to yield to authority
Survivor -	to pull through, to carry on, to continue, to endure
Systematic - or	relating to, or consisting of a system; methodical in procedure plan
Transgression -	misbehavior
Trauma -	intense mental, emotional disturbance resulting from stress
Validation -	acceptance