

SOME IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN A DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM THAT CAN HELP PROMOTE REAL CHANGE IN A CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE MAN

1) THE “SYSTEM” WORKING TOGETHER AND THE IMPOSITION OF CONSEQUENCES FOR ABUSIVE AND VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

- **MANY MEN SAY THAT THEY ARE NOT EVEN AWARE THAT VIOLENCE AND THREATS IN THE HOME ARE ILLEGAL**
- **IN FACT, MEN ARE OFTEN REWARDED FOR THEIR VIOLENCE AND ABUSE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES BY FATHERS, FRIENDS, COACHES, PEERS, AND OTHERS**
- **IF HE IS ABLE TO AVOID CONSEQUENCES, HE IS GIVEN THE CLEAR MESSAGE THAT ABUSE AND VIOLENCE ARE “OKAY”**
...MANY MEN ARE ABLE TO AVOID SIGNIFICANT CONSEQUENCES FOR MUCH OF THEIR LIVES
- **CONSEQUENCES ARE ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO ENCOURAGE A WILLINGNESS TO LOOK AT HIS BEHAVIOR AND TO HELP HIM CHANGE:**
...FROM THE LEGAL SYSTEM: OFF, TIME IN JAIL, ASSAULT CHARGES
...WE NEED TO TREAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A CRIME!
...FROM HIS PARTNER: SEPARATION, DIVORCE
...HIS PARTNER IS OFTEN STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING TO “MOTIVATE” HIM TO ADDRESS HIS ISSUES AROUND CONTROL AND ABUSE
...ALTHOUGH SHE IS **NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR NOR FOR “MAKING HIM CHANGE”**

2) AN HONEST AND OPEN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE HE IS AT THIS POINT IN HIS LIFE REGARDING HIS DESIRE TO CONTROL SITUATIONS AND PEOPLE AROUND HIM, HIS ENTITLED BELIEF THAT HE HAS A RIGHT TO DO THIS, AND HIS ANGRY, CONTROLLING, AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD HIS PARTNER AND OTHERS

- **TO START, HE NEEDS TO ALLOW SOMEONE TO ASK HIM THE FOLLOWING KINDS OF QUESTIONS AND TO THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS AS HONESTLY AS HE POSSIBLY CAN:**
...DO YOU GET FRUSTRATED WHEN YOUR PARTNER, CHILDREN, OR OTHERS DON'T LISTEN TO YOU OR DO WHAT YOU THINK THEY SHOULD DO?

- ...DO YOU HAVE A STRONG NEED TO CONTROL OTHERS AND WHAT THEY SAY OR DO?**
- ...HAVE OTHERS COMMENTED ON HOW ANGRY YOU SEEM OR EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT HOW ANGRY YOU GET OR HOW OFTEN YOU GET ANGRY?**
- ...DO YOU NOTICE YOURSELF ESCALATING OR GETTING ANGRY AND CONTROLLING IN MORE SITUATIONS THAN YOU WOULD LIKE?**
 - ...E.G. WITH YOUR PARTNER AND CHILDREN, WITH OTHER DRIVERS ON THE ROADWAYS, WITH EXTENDED FAMILY, WITH YOUR BOSS OR CO-WORKERS, WITH NEIGHBORS**
- ...DO YOU FEEL ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED MUCH OF THE TIME?**
- ...DO YOU FEEL NEGATIVE, CYNICAL, AND HOSTILE ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE (INCLUDING YOUR PARTNER) AND THE WORLD AROUND YOU**
 - ...DO YOU EXPECT OTHERS TO “CROSS YOU” OR TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU?**
 - ...DO YOU EXPECT THAT YOU WILL HAVE TO “REACT” STRONGLY IN ORDER TO TAKE CONTROL OF THESE SITUATIONS?**
- ...DO FAMILY MEMBERS OR OTHERS SAY THAT THEY ARE AFRAID OF YOU OR DO THEY SEEM INTIMIDATED OR FEARFUL BY HOW THEY SEEM TO BE OR ACT WHEN THEY AROUND YOU WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY?**
- ...WHAT ARE YOU LIKE WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY OR HAVE CONFLICT WITH YOUR PARTNER, YOUR CHILDREN, OR OTHERS (SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE IMPORTANT)?**
 - ...DO YOU YELL, PUT OTHERS DOWN, USE CURSING AND SWEARING, SLAM DOORS, THROW THINGS, BECOME “PHYSICAL WITH OTHER PEOPLE?**
- ...HOW OFTEN DO YOU BECOME ANGRY, DISRESPECTFUL, AND ABUSIVE (WITH YOUR PARTNER, YOUR CHILDREN, AND OTHERS)?**
- ...HAVE YOU EVER USED ANY TYPE OF PHYSICAL FORCE IN CONFLICTS WITH YOUR PARTNER OR OTHERS?**
 - ...GRABBING, PUSHING, RESTRAINING, SLAPPING, PUNCHING**
- ...DO YOU EVER FEEL “BAD,” EMBARRASSED, REMORSEFUL, OR GUILTY AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN ANGRY, DISRESPECTFUL, AND CONTROLLING WITH OTHERS?**
 - ...DO YOU EVER WISH YOU HADN’T SAID OR DONE WHAT YOU DID?**
- ...HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED ANY LEGAL OR OTHER KINDS OF CONSEQUENCES AS A RESULT OF HOW YOU HAVE HANDLED YOUR ANGER?**
 - ...DISORDERLY CONDUCT OR ASSAULT CHARGES, RESTRAINING ORDERS, PROBLEMS AT WORK, LOSS OF PARTNERS, FRIENDS OR OTHER RELATIONSHIPS**
- ...HOW DO YOU HANDLE YOUR ANGER WHEN IT ARISES?**

3) A CLEAR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY HIM THAT DOMESTIC ABUSE IS AN ISSUE IN HIS LIFE AND THE PRESENCE OF SOME GENUINE DESIRE AND/OR MOTIVATION TO CHANGE HIS CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

- HOW WILLING IS HE TO ACTUALLY SEE CONTROL, ANGER, AND ABUSE ISSUES AS A PROBLEM OR AN ISSUE IN HIS LIFE (AND IN THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND HIM)?
- HOW MUCH RESPONSIBILITY IS HE WILLING TO TAKE FOR HIS CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS?
- HOW MUCH IS HE USING PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFENSES TO FOCUS ON HIS PARTNER AND AVOID TAKING CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIMSELF AND HIS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR?
 - **BLAMING:** FOCUSING RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS BEHAVIOR ON HIS PARTNER AND WHAT SHE SAYS OR DOES
 - ...*SHE STARTED IT/SHE HIT ME FIRST*
 - ...*SHE'S THE REAL ABUSER IN THIS DAMN RELATIONSHIP*
 - ...*SHE JUST KNOWS HOW TO "PUSH MY BUTTONS"*
 - ...*SHE MADE ME GET VIOLENT BECAUSE OF WHAT SHE DID (SAID) TO ME*
 - **MINIMIZING:** MAKING THE ABUSE "LESS" THAN IT ACTUALLY IS
 - ...*WHAT IT DID TO HER WASN'T REALLY ALL THAT BIG A DEAL*
 - ...*SHE BRUISES EASILY*
 - ...*SHE'S JUST EXAGGERATING WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED*
 - ...*I ONLY PUSHED HER ONE TIME*
 - **JUSTIFYING:** MAKING EXCUSES FOR WHAT HE HAS SAID OR DONE
 - ...*I WAS DRUNK/HIGH*
 - ...*I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA WHAT I WAS DOING AT THE TIME*
 - ...*I WAS JUST "SEEING RED"*
 - ...*I WAS "COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL"*
 - **DENIAL:** COMPLETELY REFUSING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ANY KIND OF PROBLEM EXISTS
 - ...*I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO HER*
 - ...*SHE'S LYING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED*
 - ...*I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ANGER AND ABUSE*
 - ...*THE POLICE REPORT IS "WRONG"*
- HE NEEDS TO HAVE SOME MOTIVATION TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES AND CHANGE THEM IF REAL AND LONG LASTING CHANGE IS ACTUALLY GOING TO OCCUR
- BE AWARE OF TRYING TO "SELL" HIM ON THE IDEA THAT HE "NEEDS" TREATMENT
 - ...*IN THE END, YOU WILL ONLY LOSE THAT "POWER STRUGGLE"*
 - ...*INSTEAD, TRY TO APPEAL TO HIS SELF-INTEREST (WHAT HE CAN LEARN AND HOW HE CAN BE DIFFERENT IF HE CHOOSES TO ADDRESS THIS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL ISSUE IN HIS LIFE)*

...IDENTIFY AND BE CLEAR ABOUT THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES THAT HE COULD EXPERIENCE (EVEN IF HE HAS HAD FEW SIGNIFICANT CONSEQUENCES UP TO THE PRESENT TIME)

...WITH A PARTNER AND HIS FAMILY

...EMOTIONAL DISTANCE, LOSS OF TRUST/INTIMACY/ SAFETY, LOSS OF THE RELATIONSHIP, SEPARATION, DIVORCE, DECREASED TIME WITH HIS CHILDREN

...LEGALLY

...THE POLICE BEING CALLED, RESTRAINING ORDERS, ARRESTS, SPENDING TIME IN JAIL, BEING PUT ON PROBATION

...SOCIALLY

...LOSING FRIENDSHIPS, ESTRANGEMENT FROM EXTENDED FAMILY, HOLDING GRUDGES AND HAVING “FEUDS” WITH OTHER PEOPLE

...FINANCIALLY

...REPLACING BROKEN ITEMS, PAYING ATTORNEYS’ FEES, PAYING COURT FEES/FINES

...ON THE JOB/IN HIS CAREER

...BEING SUSPENDED OR PUT ON PROBATION FOR ACTING OUT AT WORK, QUITTING JOBS ABRUPTLY, MOVING FROM JOB TO JOB, GETTING FIRED

...EMOTIONALLY

...FEELING GUILTY, REMORSEFUL, DEPRESSED, SHAMEFUL, ANXIOUS, EMBARRASSED

...SPIRITUALLY

...FEELING ALONE, ALIENATED, ISOLATED, LOST, ADRIFT

...HEALTHWISE

...HEADACHES, BACK PAIN, STROKES, HEART ATTACKS

4) SEPARATING CHEMICAL USE/DEPENDENCY ISSUES FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE AND ADDRESSING THESE ISSUES DIRECTLY IF THEY EXIST

- **THERE IS A HIGH CORRELATION BETWEEN ALCOHOL/DRUG USE AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR**
 - ...A 60-70% CORRELATION BETWEEN CHEMICAL USE AND BATTERING**
- **IT IS IMPORTANT TO ASSESS WHETHER CHEMICAL USE IS AN ISSUE IN HIS LIFE; THERE ARE THREE MAJOR ISSUES TO LOOK FOR:**
 - ...A HISTORY OF CHEMICAL USE WHEN ABUSE AND/OR VIOLENCE HAVE OCCURRED**
 - ...A HISTORY OF CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY TREATMENT AND/OR ALCOHOL OR DRUG-RELATED CONSEQUENCES**
 - ...E.G. DWI’S AND INVOLVEMENT WITH THE LEGAL SYSTEM, LOSS OF JOBS**

- ...A HISTORY OF EXTENSIVE CHEMICAL USE WHERE ALCOHOL/DRUGS HAVE BEEN USED AS A PRIMARY WAY TO RELAX AND ADDRESS EMOTIONS AND THE STRESS IN HIS LIFE
- A CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY EVALUATION OR TREATMENT PRIOR TO A DOMESTIC ABUSE GROUP CAN BE RECOMMENDED WHEN APPROPRIATE AND A MAN CAN ALSO BE ASKED TO SIGN AND LIVE BY A "SOBRIETY CONTRACT" DURING HIS GROUP INVOLVEMENT (WHERE HE AGREES TO REMAIN SOBER DURING THE TREATMENT PROCESS)
- CHEMICAL USE/DEPENDENCY DOES NOT "CAUSE" DOMESTIC ABUSE ...AND IT IS ALSO NOT AN "EXCUSE" FOR CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR
- AN IMPORTANT ISSUE TO KEEP IN MIND: CHEMICAL USE AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR ARE TWO SEPARATE AND FREESTANDING ISSUES AND **BOTH** NEED TO BE ADDRESSED AND TREATED IF CHANGE IS ACTUALLY GOING TO OCCUR

5) SEPARATING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES FROM THE ABUSE AND EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING THESE ISSUES IF NECESSARY

- THIS MEANS IDENTIFYING DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, BI-POLAR DISORDER, AND OTHER EMOTIONAL CONCERNS AND TREATING THESE WITH MEDICATIONS (ANTI-DEPRESSANTS, MOOD STABILIZERS, ANTI-PSYCHOTICS) WHEN THIS IS APPROPRIATE
- DEPRESSION/ANXIETY/OTHER EMOTIONAL DISORDERS ALSO DO NOT "CAUSE" BATTERING AND ABUSE ...AND THEY ALSO SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN "EXCUSE" FOR THE CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR
- BUT THEY DO NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN ORDER TO GET THE MOST OUT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT IF THEY ARE PRESENT
- PERSONALITY DISORDERS ARE ALSO OFTEN PART OF THE CLINICAL PICTURE RELATED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE ISSUES:
 - PERSONALITY DISORDERS INVOLVE LONGSTANDING STABLE PATTERNS OF INNER EXPERIENCE AND BEHAVIOR THAT LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT DISTRESS OR IMPAIRMENT IN IMPORTANT AREAS OF LIFE FUNCTIONING AND THERE ARE FOUR THAT ARE MOST RELEVANT TO THE ISSUE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE
 - ...NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY DISORDER**
 - ...A PERVERSIVE PATTERN OF GRANDIOSITY AND ARROGANCE
 - ...AN EXAGGERATED NEED FOR ADMIRATION
 - ...A LACK OF EMPATHY FOR THE NEEDS AND FEELINGS OF OTHERS

...A STRONG SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT, I.E. UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS OF FAVORABLE TREATMENT OR AUTOMATIC COMPLIANCE WITH HIS WISHES

...ANTI-SOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

...A PERVASIVE PATTERN OF DISREGARD FOR AND THE VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS SINCE AGE 15

...FAILURE TO CONFORM TO SOCIAL NORMS THAT HAS LED TO ACTS THAT ARE GROUNDS FOR ARREST

...IRRITABILITY AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR THAT HAVE LED TO REPEATED PHYSICAL ASSAULTS

...A LACK OF REMORSE AND INDIFFERENCE TO HURTING AND MISTREATING OTHERS

...A TENDENCY TO BE IMPULSIVE AND REACTIVE

...PARANOID PERSONALITY DISORDER

...PERVASIVE MISTRUST OF OTHER PEOPLE

...SUSPICION THAT OTHERS ARE EXPLOITING, HARMING, OR DECEIVING HIM

...A BELIEF THAT THERE ARE "HIDDEN" DEMEANING OR THREATENING MESSAGES IN BENIGN REMARKS OR EVENTS

...PERCEIVED ATTACKS ON HIS CHARACTER THAT ARE NOT APPARENT TO OTHERS AND A TENDENCY TO QUICKLY REACT ANGRILY WHEN THIS OCCURS

...BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

...A PERVASIVE PATTERN OF UNSTABLE AND INTENSE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

...EXPERIENCING IMPULSIVITY IN AREAS THAT ARE POTENTIALLY SELF-DESTRUCTIVE

...EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY DUE TO A MARKED REACTIVITY OF MOOD (INTENSE DEPRESSION, IRRITABILITY, OR ANXIETY)

...INAPPROPRIATE INTENSE ANGER OR DIFFICULTY CONTROLLING ANGER (FREQUENT DISPLAYS OF TEMPER, CONSTANT IRRITABILITY, AND RECURRENT PHYSICAL FIGHTS)

- MEN WHO ARE ABUSIVE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE SHAME-BASED AND RIGID, WITH LOW SELF-ESTEEM

6) EDUCATION AND SKILL-BUILDING ARE AN ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL PART OF THE GROUP TREATMENT PROCESS

- UNDERSTANDING THE VERY REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANGER (A NORMAL AND NATURAL HUMAN EMOTION) AND ABUSE (DISRESPECTFUL AND DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS)

- UNDERSTANDING WHAT ABUSE IS AND ITS EFFECT ON OTHER PEOPLE
- UNDERSTANDING HOW HIS MALE ENTITLEMENT AND HIS DESIRE TO CONTROL AND PUNISH UNDERLIES ALL HIS ABUSIVE AND VIOLENT BEHAVIOR
 - ...UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTING THAT THE INTENTIONS BEHIND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR ARE TO:
 - ...HURT, PUNISH, DEMEAN, HUMILIATE, INTIMIDATE, AND CONTROL OTHER PEOPLE (NO MATTER WHAT HE CLAIMS HIS INTENTIONS ARE TO HIM)
- UNDERSTANDING THE VERY REAL POWER DIFFERENTIAL THAT EXISTS BETWEEN MOST MEN AND WOMEN IN A HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIP ONCE THREATS, INTIMIDATION, AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BECOME PART OF A RELATIONSHIP
- UNDERSTANDING THE “PAYOFFS” AND “CONSEQUENCES” THAT ARISE FROM HIS BEING CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE WITH OTHERS
 - ...THE PRIMARY “PAYOFF” IS **CONTROL (BUT SHORT-TERM ONLY)**
 - ...THE PRIMARY “CONSEQUENCE” IS **LOSS (E.G. RELATIONSHIPS)**
- AN INCREASED AWARENESS OF:
 - ...THE NOTION THAT “ACTING OUT” OR “VENTILATING” HIS ANGER IS NOT HELPFUL IN ACTUALLY DISCHARGING THE ANGER THAT HE EXPERIENCES
 - ...THIS PROCESS ONLY INCREASES THE PHYSICAL AROUSAL LEVEL (THE “FIGHT OR FLIGHT” STRESS RESPONSE) AND THE INTENSITY OF THE ANGER HE EXPERIENCES
 - ...AND ALSO “TRAINS” HIM TO STRIKE OUT AT OTHERS AND OFTEN “SETS THE STAGE” FOR ABUSE AND VIOLENCE DIRECTED AT REAL PEOPLE
 - ...E.G. A DOMESTIC ABUSE CLIENT WHO SAW HIS WIFE’S FACE IN THE PILLOW HE WAS PUNCHING THAT ANOTHER COUNSELOR HAD RECOMMENDED TO HIM TO HELP HIM “DISCHARGE” HIS ANGRY IMPULSES (THIS WAS NOT ACTUALLY “HELPFUL” TO HIM AS HE CONTINUED TO BE ABUSIVE WITH HIS WIFE AND WAS EVENTUALLY COURT-ORDERED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT)
 - ...UNDERSTANDING THE NOTION THAT HE IS NOT “OUT OF CONTROL” AND IS, IN FACT, MAKING CLEAR CHOICES (THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY “CONSCIOUS CHOICES” PRIOR TO HIS TREATMENT) AND THAT HE CAN MAKE DIFFERENT CHOICES REGARDING HIS ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL, HIS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR, HIS VIOLENCE, AND HOW HE RESPONDS TO WHAT IS HAPPENING WITHIN AND AROUND HIM
 - ...WHAT A MAN IS OFTEN THINKING TO HIMSELF:
 - ...AM I DOING SOMETHING THAT OTHER PEOPLE COULD FIND OUT ABOUT, SO IT WOULD MAKE ME LOOK BAD?
 - ...AM I DOING ANYTHING THAT COULD GET ME IN “BIG TROUBLE” (LEGAL OR OTHERWISE)?

*...COULD I END UP GETTING HURT MYSELF BY DOING THIS?
...AM I DOING ANYTHING THAT EVEN I MYSELF CONSIDER
TOO CRUEL, GROSS, DISTASTEFUL, OR VIOLENT?*

**...BELOW ARE SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF THE CHOICES THAT
MEN MAKE REGARDING THEIR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR:**

1) WHAT HE SAYS WHEN HE IS ABUSIVE

**...MANY MEN USE THE WORD “BITCH,” BUT DO NOT USE
THE TERM “CUNT” TO DESCRIBE THEIR PARTNERS
WHEN THEY ARE ANGRY WITH HER**

**...NOT TAKING GOD’S NAME IN VAIN, I.E. SAYING “GOD
DAMN IT” IF THEY HAVE STRONG RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

2) HOW HE WAS VIOLENT

**...PUSHING, SHAKING, OR RESTRAINING RATHER THAN
HITTING OR KICKING**

**...HITTING IN THE ARM, THE BACK, OR THE LEGS RATHER
THAN HITTING A PARTNER IN THE FACE (WHERE
OTHERS WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO SEE IT)**

**...I.E. SO BRUISES WILL NOT BE VISIBLE TO
OUTSIDERS**

...SLAPPING RATHER THAN PUNCHING WITH A CLOSED FIST

...WHICH GENERALLY CREATES LESS DAMAGE

**..THREATENING WITH A WEAPON BUT NOT ACTUALLY
USING ONE**

3) WHERE HE WAS VIOLENT

...IN PRIVATE (E.G. AT HOME) RATHER THAN IN PUBLIC

...NOT IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN

...NOT IN FRONT OF A POLICE OFFICER

4) WHEN THE DECISION TO BE VIOLENT WAS MADE

**...E.G. A MAN RECEIVED DIVORCE PAPERS AT WORK IN THE
MORNING, PLOTTED WHAT HE PLANNED TO DO ALL
DAY, RETURNED HOME AFTER WORK, ASSAULTED
AND TIED UP HIS WIFE, AND THEN KIDNAPPED THEIR
CHILDREN**

5) HOW HE STOPS IF AN OUTSIDE PARTY INTERVENES

**...E.G. A MAN WHO WAS DRUNK/IN A “BLACK OUT” AND ON
TOP OF HIS WIFE IN ALLEY NEXT TO BAR WHEN HE
WAS ANGRY WITH HER; A FRIEND OF HIS TOUCHED
HIM ON THE SHOULDER DURING THE ASSAULT; HE
IMMEDIATELY STOPPED BEING VIOLENT WITH HIS
PARTNER AND DID NOT THEN DIRECT HIS VIOLENCE
TOWARD HIS FRIEND WHO INTERVENED**

- **ADDRESSING THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL MESSAGES ABOUT WHAT IT
MEANS TO BE A “REAL MAN” AND THE SENSE OF MALE ENTITLEMENT
THAT ARISES FROM THESE MESSAGES**

- **DEVELOPING A STRONG AND POSITIVE MALE IDENTITY THAT LEADS TO “PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT” AND SELF-CONTROL RATHER THAN ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE “POWER AND CONTROL” OVER OTHERS**
- **HE NEEDS TO LEARN ABOUT HIS EMOTIONS AND DEVELOP “EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE” SKILLS**
 - ...E.G. REGARDING HIS EMOTIONAL REACTIONS AND STRESS AROUSAL
 - ...BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND HIS PERSONAL ESCALATION PROCESS (I.E. NOTICING HIS ANGER CUES AND TRIGGERS THAT PRECEDE OR SIGNAL THE POTENTIAL FOR CONTROLLING OR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR)
 - **LEARNING DE-ESCALATION AND CALMING SKILLS, TOOLS, AND STRATEGIES (DEVELOPING HIS “ANGER TOOLBOX”)**
 - ...DEVELOPING AND THEN ACTUALLY USING AN *ESCALATION PREVENTION PLAN*
 - **USING RESPECTFUL TIME-OUTS WHENEVER THIS IS NECESSARY (DEVELOPING AND THEN ACTUALLY USING A *TIME-OUT PLAN*)**
 - ...AN EXPECTATION REGARDING AEROBIC EXERCISE DURING HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM TO DECREASE THE OVERALL STRESS THAT HE CARRIES IN HIS ONGOING LIFE
 - ...A DEEP BREATHING EXERCISE TO CALM HIM THAT IS DONE EACH WEEK IN GROUP
- **HE NEEDS TO LEARN AND USE COGNITIVE TOOLS**
 - **HE NEEDS TO BECOME AWARE OF THE NEGATIVE, ENTITLED, HOSTILE, AND VINDICTIVE SELF-TALK THAT CONTRIBUTES TO HIS VOLATILE ANGER, ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR, AND A DESIRE TO CONTROL PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS AROUND HIM**
 - **HE NEEDS TO LEARN BASIC INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**
 - **HE NEEDS TO BECOME MORE ASSERTIVE IN ALL AREAS OF HIS LIFE (AND WITH PEOPLE BESIDES HIS PARTNER) VS. BEING PASSIVE, PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE, OR AGGRESSIVE IN HIS INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS**
 - **HE NEEDS TO LEARN AND USE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
 - ...INCLUDING ACTIVE LISTENING
 - **HE NEEDS TO LEARN AND USE EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**
 - ...SEEKING “UNDERSTANDING” RATHER THAN “AGREEMENT” IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS
- **HE NEEDS TO ADDRESS FAMILY OF ORIGIN ISSUES RELATED TO HIS OWN VICTIMIZATION (IF THAT WAS PRESENT), MALE ENTITLEMENT AND TOXIC SHAME**
 - ...THERE IS SHAME EDUCATION AND A *FAMILY OF ORIGIN* TASK THAT CAN ASSIST HIM IN DOING THIS
 - ...HE NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND THAT CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIORS ARE LEARNED

- ...THE “SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY” (ALBERT BANDURA)
WHICH STATES THAT AGGRESSION OCCURS BECAUSE:
- 1) IT HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED BY IMPORTANT ROLE MODELS
...E.G. PARENTS/CARETAKERS, SIBLINGS, PEERS
 - 2) PEOPLE ANTICIPATE OR RECEIVE SOME SORT OF “REWARD” AS A RESULT OF THEIR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR
...MEN USE IT BECAUSE IT “WORKS”
...TO CONTROL PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS AROUND THEM (BUT ONLY SHORT-TERM)
 - 3) THERE ARE SPECIFIC SOCIAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL CUES THAT TRIGGER THE AGGRESSION
...MEN ARE ASKED TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC CUES AND TRIGGERS IN THEIR *ESCALATION PREVENTION PLAN*

7) AN INTERACTIVE GROUP THERAPY PROCESS TO PROVIDE BOTH ACCOUNTABILITY AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR CLIENTS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM

- THIS ADDRESSES SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ISOLATION AND HIS EMOTIONAL OVER-DEPENDENCY ON A PARTNER
...AN EXPECTATION THAT A MAN WILL MAKE PHONE CALLS TO OTHER GROUP MEMBERS EACH WEEK
- CLEARLY-DELINEATED STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS THAT CAN BE ADAPTED TO INDIVIDUAL MEN’S NEEDS, ABILITIES, LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND LEVELS OF MOTIVATION
...INDIVIDUAL TASKS THAT ARE NECESSARY TO WRITE OUT AND PRESENT IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM
...THESE BEGIN WITH HIS TAKING CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS BEHAVIOR
...THROUGH THE *ESCALATION PREVENTION PLAN*, THE *TIME-OUT PLAN*, AND THE *ABUSE INVENTORY*
...LATER, HE ADDRESSES HIS OWN VICTIMIZATION AND HOW HE LEARNED TO BE ENTITLED, CONTROLLING, AND ABUSIVE
...LOOKING AT HIS FAMILY OF ORIGIN AND CHILDHOOD
- THIS GIVES A MAN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACTUALLY LEARN AND PRACTICE IMPORTANT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:
...THE SAME ONES HE NEEDS TO DEVELOP AND THEN ACTUALLY USE WITH HIS PARTNER AND OTHERS IN HIS ONGOING LIFE

- ...HANDLING ESCALATIONS AND RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN THE GROUP
 - ...WITH THERAPISTS AND OTHER GROUP MEMBERS
 - ...AND IT IS ALWAYS OKAY TO TAKE TIME-OUTS IN GROUP (IF THIS IS NECESSARY)
 - ...BEING ASSERTIVE AND NEGOTIATING WITH OTHER MEMBERS
 - ...E.G. FOR THE TIME HE NEEDS TO TAKE IN ORDER TO PRESENT THE REQUIRED TASKS
 - ...LISTENING TO FEEDBACK AND HANDLING CONFRONTATION, NEGATIVE FEEDBACK, AND CRITICISM FROM OTHERS
- THIS IS A NON-SHAMING AND NON-PUNITIVE INTERVENTION APPROACH
- BUT:
 - IT IS AN APPROACH WITH REAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE EXPLICIT EXPECTATION THAT HE WILL TAKE CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR:
 - ...HIS PAST ABUSE AND VIOLENCE;
 - ...HIS CURRENT ENTITLED, CONTROLLING, AND ABUSIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS;
 - ...HIS CURRENT THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS (AND INACTION!)
 - ...THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE EXPECTED GROUP TASKS
 - ...E.G. THE *ESCALATION PREVENTION PLAN*, THE *TIME-OUT PLAN*, THE *ABUSE INVENTORY*, THE *MID-GROUP EVALUATION*, THE *AMENDS LETTER*, THE *AFTERCARE PLAN*)

8) AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME IN TREATMENT (30+ WEEKS IN THE DOMESTIC ABUSE GROUP TREATMENT PROGRAM)

- A MAJOR GOAL IS TO DIRECTLY ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING “POWER AND CONTROL” AND MALE ENTITLEMENT ATTITUDES THAT FUEL HIS CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR:
 - ...THE RIGID BELIEF THAT *“I, AS A MAN, HAVE BOTH THE RIGHT AND THE OBLIGATION TO TELL MY PARTNER AND MY CHILDREN WHO THEY SHOULD BE IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO ME AND EVERYONE ELSE”*
 - ...GETTING AT AND CONFRONTING THIS ATTITUDE TAKES TIME AND AN OPENNESS TO THE THERAPEUTIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROCESS
- ANOTHER IMPORTANT GOAL IS TO DEVELOP AND TRULY EXPERIENCE A SENSE OF EMPATHY AND COMPASSION FOR HIS VICTIMS AND A SENSE OF GENUINE REMORSE ABOUT WHAT HE HAS DONE TO THOSE WHOM HE SAYS HE LOVES; THIS IS DONE THROUGH:
 - ...THE *ABUSE INVENTORY*
 - ...THE *AMENDS LETTER(S)*

- **A FINAL GOAL IS TO GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW HIS OWN EXPERIENCES IN HIS FAMILY OF ORIGIN AND HOW THE CULTURAL MESSAGES HE HAS RECEIVED HAVE INFLUENCED HIS CLEAR CHOICES TO BECOME CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE WITH OTHERS**
...THIS AGAIN SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN “EXCUSE” FOR HIS PAST AND CURRENT CONTROLLING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR

9) AN AFTERCARE PLAN AND A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE THE RECOVERY AND HEALING PROCESS IN AN ONGOING WAY AFTER HE HAS COMPLETED THE DOMESTIC ABUSE PROGRAM:

- **TO CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AND INTERVENE IN HIS CONTROLLING, ENTITLED, AND ABUSIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR**
- **TO CONTINUE TO USE THE TOOLS AND STRATEGIES HE HAS LEARNED IN THE TREATMENT PROCESS TO BECOME NON-ABUSIVE AND NON-VIOLENT IN HIS ONGOING LIFE MOVING FORWARD**
- **A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT CHANGING CONTROLLING, ENTITLED, AND ABUSIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS IS “A DAY AT A TIME” FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE**