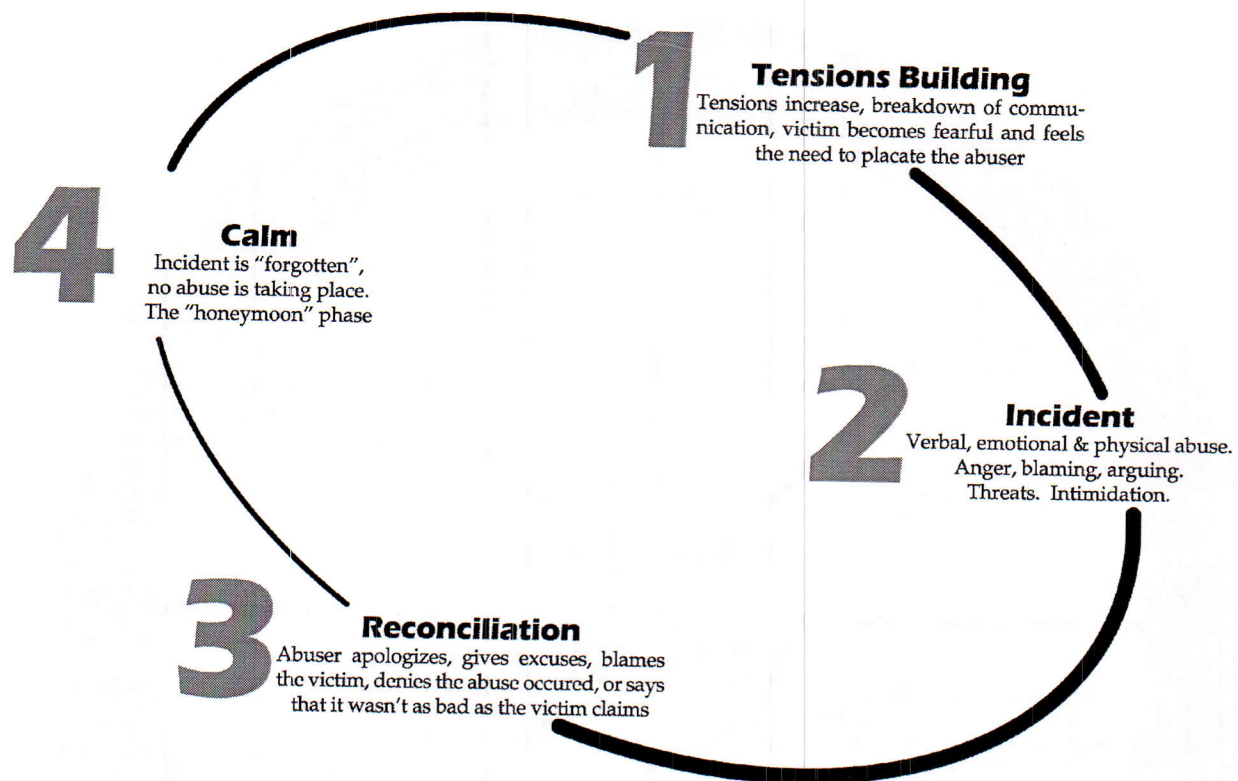


Cycle of Abuse



Phase One: Tensions Build

- The victim can sense tension mounting.
- Struggle for dominance and control increases.
- Warning signs appear (i.e. words, glances, intimidating gestures).
- Victim may avoid or prepare for the violence; especially if there have been previous attacks.
- Victim may become compliant or nurturing or provoke the attack.

Phase Two: Incident of Abuse/Violence

- An explosion leads to a violent incident (including physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse).
- Phase 2 can be the shortest phase.
- Abuser (and sometimes victim) may minimize the extent of the injury or abuse.
- Violent incident followed by feelings of embarrassment, shock, confusion, numbness or disbelief.
- This is the most dangerous time for a victim.
- This pushes the victim away from the relationship.

Phase Three: Reconciliation (or Honeymoon Phase)

- The calm after the storm
- Courtship behaviors return
- Batterer may express contrition, guilt, and/or show extreme kindness.
- This phase is designed to pull the victim back in to the relationship.
- This phase is the safest time to leave for a victim, however, it is also the most difficult time to leave

Phase Four: Calm (or "Back to Normal" Phase)

- Batterer and victim behave "normally" – no extreme behavior on batterer's part (either violent or non-violent)
- Strong motivation for the victim to remain in the relationship, because it provides hope for a normal life
- Eventually, old habits and behavior will begin to resurface
- In the distance, another storm looms.

** Unless non-abusive/healthy behavior is learned the abuse, dominance, control of the abusive cycle continues.

** Over time, Honeymoon and Normal Phases may disappear, with behavior swinging from Tension to Violence with rapid intensity.

The Power and Control Wheel:



DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT

202 East Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-722-2781
www.duluth-model.org