What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a **pattern** of behaviors used by one partner to maintain **power and control** over another partner in an intimate relationship.

Abuse can be:

Physical

- hitting, kicking, slapping, or choking
- abandonment
- preventing eating or sleeping
- denying access to medical care

Verbal

- Yelling aggressively
- Using obscenities
- Name-calling, belittling, and put-downs
- Constant criticism

Emotional

- isolation from family and friends
- constant monitoring
- threatening you or your children or pets
- damaging your self-esteem

Sexual

- demanding sex when you are unwilling
- asking for sex when you are sick, tired, or injured
- sexual coercion
  - threats/manipulation
  - persuading
  - "wearing you down"

Financial

- monitoring spending or giving an allowance
- denying bank access
- limiting hours worked
- refusing to contribute financially

Psychological

- gaslighting
  - "crazy-making"
- playing mind games
- denying mental health treatment
- forcing drug use

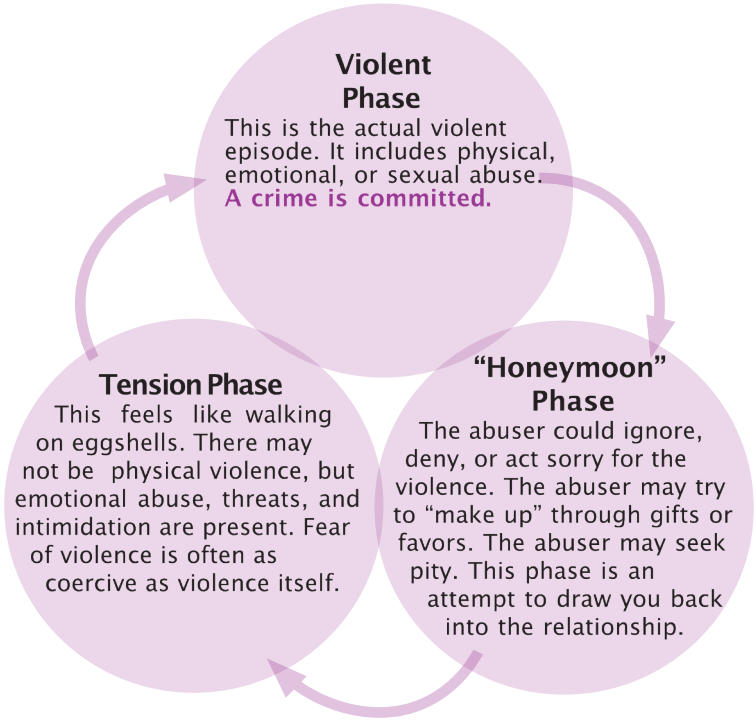
Domestic violence is most commonly perpetrated by men against women. **However, it can effect anyone,** regardless of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, race, or ethnicity.

The Cycle of Abuse

The **"Cycle of Abuse"** model is used to describe the environment and patterns experienced by domestic violence survivors

The model consists of 3 phases that cycle in an abusive relationship. Even the nonviolent phases are abusive, as manipulation and emotional abuse are utilized to keep a victim under the abuser's control.

Regardless of what the abuse looks like, **the victim is never at fault.** To be abusive, whether physically, verbally, or emotionally, **is a choice made by the abuser.**



Domestic Violence Services

Counseling & Service Coordination: 979-775-2255
24/7 Emergency Hotline: 979-775-5355

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