

Domestic Violence - What can we do?

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Domestic Violence is serious social and public health issues and affect especially women in intimate relationships. It may range from : physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse and intimidation, economic and social deprivation, damage of personal property and abuse of power.

"Domestic violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. Living with domestic violence has a profound effect upon children and young children and constitute a form of child abuse." [Snapshot Report 3 & 4 November 2006 NSW + Health](#)

Here are some quotes:

The Victims

- One in 4 women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime.
- Women experience more than 4 million physical assaults and rapes because of their partners, and men are victims of nearly 3 million physical assaults.
- Women are more likely to be killed by an intimate partner than men
- Women ages 20 to 24 are at greatest risk of becoming victims of domestic violence.
- Every year, 1 in 3 women who is a victim of homicide is murdered by her current or former partner.

The Families

- Every year, more than 3 million children witness domestic violence in their homes.
- Children who live in homes where there is domestic violence also suffer abuse or neglect at high rates (30% to 60%).
- A 2005 Michigan study found that children exposed to domestic violence at home are more likely to have health problems, including becoming sick more often, having frequent headaches or stomachaches, and being more tired and lethargic.
- A 2003 study found that children are more likely to intervene when they witness severe violence against a parent – which can place a child at great risk for injury or even death.

The Circumstances

- Domestic violence is most likely to occur between 6 pm and 6 am.
- More than 60% of domestic violence incidents happen at home.
- **The Consequences**
- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, domestic violence is the third leading cause of homelessness among families.
- In New York City, 25% of homeless heads of household became homeless due to domestic violence.
- Survivors of domestic violence face high rates of depression, sleep disturbances, anxiety, flashbacks, and other emotional distress.

- Domestic violence contributes to poor health for many survivors. For example, chronic conditions like heart disease or gastrointestinal disorders can become more serious due to domestic violence.
- Among women brought to emergency rooms due to domestic violence, most were socially isolated and had fewer social and financial resources than other women not injured because of domestic violence.
- Without help, girls who witness domestic violence are more vulnerable to abuse as teens and adults.
- Without help, boys who witness domestic violence are far more likely to become abusers of their partners and/or children as adults, thus continuing the cycle of violence in the next generation.
- Domestic violence costs more than \$37 billion a year in law enforcement involvement, legal work, medical and mental health treatment, and lost productivity at companies.

Source: [SafeHorizon](#)

Violence, especially domestic violence needs to be stopped at any costs.

Women who are usually the victims of violence should be informed as to what can be done when they are caught up in domestic violence. They should be aware of the various agencies and women's refuges that are available. Their escape should be meticulously planned with the help of special counsellors, police or perhaps Probation and Parole Officers dealing with these issues.

As a retired Probation and Parole Officer I am familiar with domestic violence and its devastating effect on partners and their children.

Of course, my perspective had to deal with the perpetrators of domestic violence, who attended my rehabilitation groups if they showed enough motivation to do so. Most available advice on domestic violence is for victims, but there is not much in the way of advice for offenders who eventually may be released into the community.

Motivation is essential.

Motivation for rehabilitation and reform usually emerges after an offender has reached "rock-bottom", that is to say that his logical arguments as to why he justified his violent actions is not making any sense to him anymore either. He has reached the point where he cannot explain his own actions anymore. He has now arrived at a point, where it is impossible to escape the consequences of his behaviour and personality. And when he asks himself the question, "why?" he has just about reached sufficient "insight", where he could possibly benefit from "treatment". He may be ready to seek help.

But for therapy to be successful he needs more than just negative motivation - that is avoiding an unfavorable situation - but rather having a vision of a positive goal in his life. For motivation to work he needs a positive motivation.

If one wants to assess one's motivation in life, the chapter in my book "[Values Clarification](#)" or the [article](#) may give some understanding of how important our values constitute motivation. Some clients became motivated to embrace therapy after mastering the principles of values clarification.

In nutritional psychotherapy it is a cardinal principle to treat an underlying physical or biological imbalance in a person affecting his personality, BEFORE embarking on "psychological" treatment. No amount of talk-therapy will help a person overcome a physical illness! It applies equally to a violence-prone person. Most people with anger-management problems can be shown to have an underlying malady, that may be responsible for uncontrolled outbursts. See references below

Fortunately, not all people with this illness finish up in prison, but if they could be treated like any other person with this kind of illness, a large proportion of them may avoid jail. The use of alcohol is very much associated with violent behaviour, but this is not to say that alcoholism is the cause of violence. [Alcoholism](#) is a symptom and not a cause of an domestic violence, it is an illness that can lead to violent behaviour including family violence.

Anger management is at the root of not only trivial disputes in intimate relationships, but may lead to the most extreme forms violent behaviour, murder or mass murder and family violence. It inexorably involve a negative self-image turned inside-out, where a person cannot stop himself hurting people he professes to love. In fact, a person with an unacknowledged low self esteem will unwittingly create a situation, that will show to him that is NOT loved, in accordance with his expectations of life or the rules of self-fulfilling prophesy. And tragically many people with a low self-esteem tend to be attracted to people with similar ilk.

See: [Treatment of a Low Self Esteem](#)

Hence the importance of following up any psychonutritional therapy with a [course in psychotherapy](#) equipping a person with the necessary, self-confidence, social skills to handle and recognize unstable personalities.

One way of explaining an uncontrollably violent person is by reading:

[Anger Management: Nutrition and Psychotherapy](#)

References:

[References for violence](#)

[In Research Evidence](#)

[Defining Domestic Violence](#) by ABS