

III. The Cycle of Violence

Domestic violence is never one assault. Many women who have been in an abusive relationship have identified a pattern of violence. You may recognize a pattern in *your* partner's behavior.

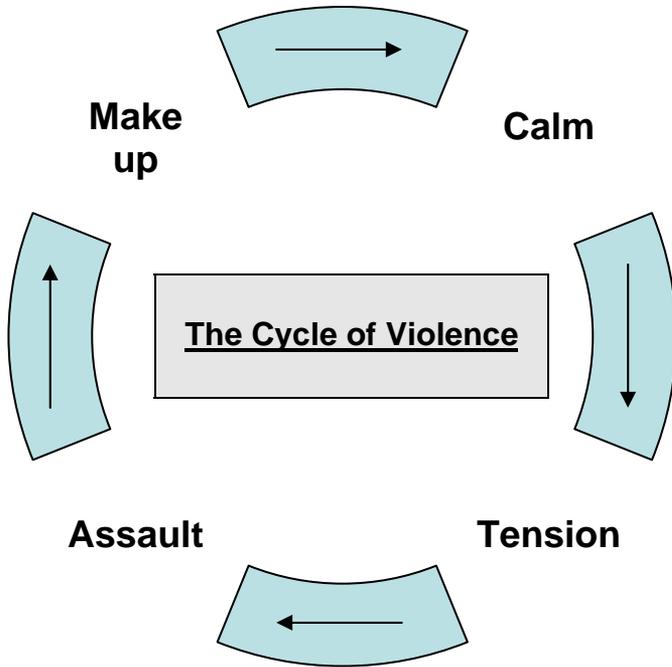
Not all abusers are aggressive all of the time. They can be very charming and do things to make you feel that the relationship is going well. This may be the side of your partner that attracted you to him in the first place.

Over time, you may feel a sense of tension building within the relationship. During this period, you might feel a lot of anxiety or feel as though you are walking on eggshells. Some women have said they feel that their partner is like a "ticking time bomb". This tension usually happens right before an assault.

After an assault, it is common for the abuser to apologize for his behavior. He may try to make it up to you by giving you gifts, doing nice things for you and promising that it will never happen again. He may also choose to deny the abuse or try to minimize the abuse by saying that it was not that bad. All abuse is wrong and feeling confused, depressed and angry after being hurt by someone that you love is normal.

After this period of reconciliation or making-up, things may be calm for a while. Eventually, the tension begins to build and the cycle begins over again. This cycle of violence might happen over a period of days or weeks OR it could happen all in one day.

The Cycle of Violence



IV. Myths about Domestic Violence

Myth #1: Domestic Violence is a private problem. People should not interfere with another person's relationship.

Truth: Domestic Violence is society's problem. Everyone is responsible for making sure that abuse is not tolerated in his or her community. As a country, we **MUST** begin to recognize and acknowledge that hitting, choking, pushing, scaring and threatening your partner is a crime.
