

Deciding to Stay or Leave

At some point, a decision will need to be made regarding staying in the relationship or leaving. This decision is difficult and will be different for everyone. Regardless of the choice, healing is an option.

The options are as follows:

- Stay in the relationship and accept it as it is.** This may be a dangerous option. There is a possibility of someone getting seriously hurt or even death, if no changes are made.
- Stay in the relationship where change is occurring.** Abusers need to recognize that they need professional help and that abuse is wrong. Changes cannot be made for them. Nothing the victim does will stop the abusive partner's behaviour.
- Leave the relationship and move towards living in a healthy environment.** Deciding to leave is a painful decision. However, once away from the relationship, a clearer picture can be seen for the future and new decisions can be made.

If you are concerned about your safety, we urge you to contact a counsellor at one of our offices.

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| Weyburn | 306-842-8821 |
| Estevan | 306-637-4004 |
| Carlyle | 306-453-2405 |
| Oxbow | 306-483-5555 |

**No one deserves to be abused.
Help is available.**

| Helpful Resources | Phone Number |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 911 Immediate assistance in case of emergency. | |
| Police/RCMP Can help you assess your safety and take action against someone committing a crime. | Estevan City Police 306-634-4767 Estevan RCMP 306-637-4400 Weyburn City Police 306-848-3250 Weyburn RCMP 306-848-4640 Carlyle RCMP 306-453-6707 |
| Legal Information Can share general information about the law, the legal system, and your rights. | Pro Bono Law 1-855-833-7257 Family Law Info Centre 1-888-218-2822 Legal Aid 1-877-424-1903 |
| Victim Services Can refer you to counselling and inform you about programs and services for victims of crime. | Estevan 306-634-8040 Weyburn 306-842-4797 |
| Mental Health Office Can offer information or counselling on depression, stress, and mental health issues. | Estevan 306-637-3610 Weyburn 306-842-8665 Toll Free 1-800-216-7689 |
| Mental Health ~ ATV Program Can offer help for the abuser. | Weyburn 306-842-8665 Toll Free 1-800-216-7689 |



Envision is a non-profit, community-based organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors from Southeast Saskatchewan.

Envision helps individuals, families and couples embrace healthy choices to feel empowered, by providing therapeutic counselling, support, in-home services, groups, workshops and education.

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| Estevan Office Box 511 Estevan, SK S4A 2A5 P: 306-637-4004 F: 306-634-4229 | Weyburn Office 120 3rd St. S. Weyburn, SK S4H 2C2 P: 306-842-8821 F: 306-634-4229 | Carlyle Office Box 1017 Carlyle, SK S0C 0R0 P: 306-453-2405 F: 306-634-4229 |
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Oxbow Office: 306-483-5555

info@envisioncounsellingcentre.com
We do not subscribe to call display. Collect calls accepted.

Envision receives funding from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Services, United Way of Estevan, United Way Regina and the community.



Donations from private groups, organizations, corporations, or individuals are gratefully accepted to assist Envision in serving communities in Southeast Saskatchewan.



www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com

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Serving Southeast Saskatchewan since 1994

Abusive Relationships



What everyone needs to know.

What is Partner Abuse?

Partner abuse refers to any abuse committed by one partner against another with whom they have a relationship (usually intimate, sexual, or co-habiting).

It involves the intent of one partner to intimidate and/or control, another person and/or property, either by threat or by use of physical force. It can be **verbal, emotional, physical** or **sexual**. Abuse is a behaviour which is either repeated or threatened to be repeated to induce fear in the victim.

Many abusive relationships develop gradually and at first it might be tempting to write the behaviour off as harmless, perhaps just signs of love, jealousy or emotional insecurity. Abuse is **NOT** about jealousy or love – it is about power and control.

The most dangerous time for someone experiencing abuse is when they attempt to leave. The two best tools for ending violence are knowledge and speaking out.

Alcohol/Drugs and Partner Abuse

It's common for abusive partners to blame drugs or alcohol for their unhealthy behaviour. They often do not accept responsibility for their actions or address the real reasons for the abuse. Drugs and alcohol do affect a person's judgment and behaviour but they are not a reason for the violent behaviour, only an excuse.

Are You or Someone You Know Being Abused?

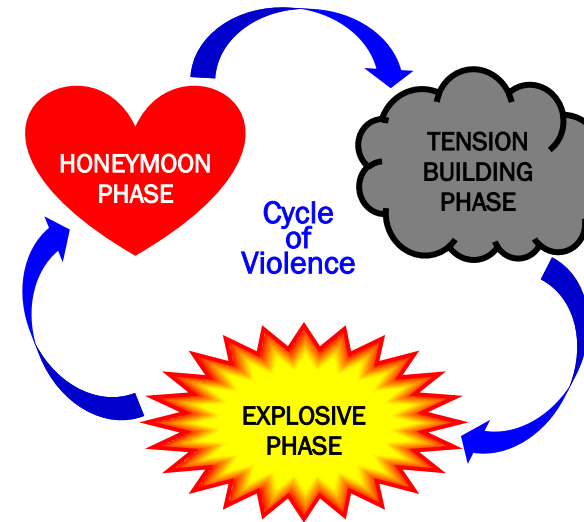
Has one partner ever:


- Called you names, made jokes at your expense or humiliated you in private or in front of others?
- Insisted you have sex when you didn't want to or insisted you take part in sexual activities you dislike or that caused pain?
- Refused to let you work or forced you to work?
- Refused to let you leave the house?
- Constantly demanded to know where you are, what you are doing and who you are with?
- Monitored your phone calls, text messages, emails, social media, etc?
- Refused to let you phone your friends or family?
- Told you whom you can and cannot talk to?
- Constantly questioned your spending or taken control of your money?
- Followed you in a way that made you fearful?
- Used physical force (push, punch, slap, strangle, shake, used objects/weapons, etc.)?
- Physically harmed others (children, pets, family members, friends, neighbours, etc.)?
- Threatened to use physical force?
- Threatened to kill you or others if you leave?
- Threatened to kill themselves if you leave?
- Blamed you for their abusive behaviour and told you it was your fault?
- Destroyed your possessions?
- Showed up unexpectedly, when they were not invited and not welcome at social events or work?
- Insisted you use drugs or alcohol against your will?


If you answered **YES** to any of these questions it may be an abusive relationship. Consider talking to someone who can help.


Facts About Abusive Behaviour

Abusive relationships deal with complex emotions and each relationship is unique. However, abusive relationships follow a pattern, which is recurring and appears to have three distinct phases. This pattern is commonly referred to as the **Cycle of Violence**.



The first phase is the “**HONEYMOON PHASE**”. This phase is how the relationship starts. The abusive individual creates a safe space filled with love and a sense of security in the relationship. The abusive person acts in ways they know their partner will desire and appreciate. 

The second phase is the “**TENSION BUILDING PHASE**.” During this stage the tension in the relationship is increasing. The abusive partner may give the victim the ‘silent treatment’. Every attempt is made by the victim to keep the peace in the relationship. 

Even so, the tension continues to grow and the “**EXPLOSIVE PHASE / ABUSE**” occurs. The explosive phase may include physical, verbal, emotional or sexual abuse. There is **nothing** the victim can do to prevent the abuse. **THE ABUSIVE PARTNER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR.** 

After the abusive event, the abusive partner tries to get the relationship back to the “**HONEYMOON PHASE**” by becoming the partner the other fell in love with. The abusive partner is often sincerely sorry for the abuse and many promises are made, saying “I’ll never do it again.”, “I’ll go to counselling.”, “I’ll quit drinking.” However, in time, the tension begins building again and another explosion occurs.

This cycle of violence **will** repeat itself. In most abusive relationships the assaults become more frequent and severe and the **HONEYMOON PHASE** becomes shorter and shorter. The longer the cycle continues the more dangerous it becomes for the victim. Over time, this phase disappears and the cycle moves back and forth between the **TENSION BUILDING PHASE** and the **EXPLOSIVE PHASE**.

Eventually, the cycle will turn into a seemingly **continual state** of violence.

Why Does My Partner Do This to Me?

Abuse is about power and control not love.

Many excuses are made for abusive behaviour—they work too hard, something has provoked them, they have had too much to drink, etc. Abuse is a learned behaviour and is the number one reason for why it occurs. Abusive individuals often grow up in homes where they have witnessed abuse.

How to Get Help

There is help available for individuals in abusive relationships. Trust yourself and your own experiences. Believe in your own strengths. Remember that you are your own best source of knowledge and strength. You already have the tools you need to survive.

Find a counsellor you are comfortable with and who is familiar with the dynamics of abusive relationships. A counsellor can help you understand why people abuse, why people stay and help you to begin to increase your self-esteem and self-worth.



NO Excuses