

BHAngerManagement.com

Online **ANGER** Program

**A Self Help Anger Course for Today's World to help You
Understand Your Anger,
so You don't let it get the best of YOU.**

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Remember:

- Anger Management, does NOT mean you will never be angry
- Rage is Anger Out of Control
- Anger and Violence costs Lives, Dollars, Time
- BOUNDARIES are broken in anger.
- We ALL have the right to be safe in our own bodies...
our homes... our relationships..

Anger is a natural reaction, a secondary emotion, and can be prompted by many things. Our actions when we are angry are Learned Behaviors. And the ultimate Anger reaction, violence, we learn from observation and society.

Much of Violence comes as a result of the failure "to be able to control" our Environment - including people around us, as well as the situation. Violence and it's consequence - Destruction - become the last and ultimate "control tool" for our bruised **EGOS!**

Welcome to our Online Anger Courses. Some of you are here by choice, and some by court order or request of you employer. You may also have someone close to you who has issues with Anger. For whatever reason you may be here, by completing this program, you are taking a step toward making some positive changes in you life.

Anger is normal, having Anger is normal. Working out your Anger is good, Acting OUT your Anger is NOT! Anger leads to Rage and to many more things, including - ulcers; back pain; and, for those who go to extremes, legal problems with a night in jail, or two.

We've primarily put together this program and workbook based on the needs of the folks in our Beverly Hills office Court Ordered Anger Management Groups. We've learned from people who have struggled through the same things you have. There is no sense in reinventing the wheel, so take the time to review the materials, learn from other's experiences, and have a great life. A little more Anger free!

Each topic has information explaining and defining it, interspersed with Study Questions accessible on the website. These Study Questions are there for you to push your growth, and present a discussion of the points presented and help prepare you for the Exam at the end of the program. I hope that by using the information in this workbook you will find creative and helpful solutions to some of your problems and issues that have kept you on the edge or created some anger issues for you.

Healthy folks get Angry, then reach an Equilibrium quickly BEFORE Anger becomes DANGER. Good luck on your Journey.

Sincerely, Dr. G.



First of ALL - HOW THE COURSE WORKS

There are THREE LEVELS of our **Anger Courses**. You may be taking the '**Basic**', '**Mid-Level**' or '**COMPREHENSIVE**' course, depending on the number of hours you are required to take. To simplify things, this PDF work book is set up in THREE Levels.

If you are taking 'Basic', you only need to read the "Basic" part of our book, though you will RECEIVE a PDF of the full book - Read the sections indicated for BASIC certificates, review the STUDY QUESTIONS. Then take the Level 1 Exam on the website. Pass it and congratulations, You are Done!

If you are taking Level 2, you will need to read the Basic and Mid-Level parts of our book. Read the sections, review the Study Questions. Then do the Mid-Level Exam on the website. Pass it, and you're done.

If you are taking full COMPREHENSIVE course, you will need to read the entire book, review ALL the Study Questions, and do the COMPREHENSIVE Exam on the website. Then you can go out and face the world with your new found knowledge.

Needless to say, the different Level Exam Questions & pertaining Study Questions are based on the readings provided for that level only.

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SECTION I - Anger 101

"Anger is one letter short of Danger! Remember that. It is a very destructive emotion. No decision or action should ever be made based on Anger. When Danger lurks, back off and chill out"

Gordon

Some General Thoughts-

First and Foremost - Remember that *Anger is a normal human emotion*. You are not a BAD person, or a loser if you get angry. Everyone gets angry and has angry feelings from time to time. Anger is a normal response and thus, not in itself a problem. In fact, in some situations anger gives us the power to challenge injustice or to make necessary changes in our lives. Anger at a disease helps us fight it. However, at other times anger becomes aggression, AND anger/aggression out of control becomes RAGE. Anger with aggression is usually in response to what is perceived (consciously or unconsciously) to be either a life-threatening situation, or a need to dominate and control a situation.

Anger for some people is not a problem. They get angry, sort it out relatively quickly and then return to equilibrium and to what is their normal state of viewing the world. Usually, these folks have developed simple techniques to quickly calm themselves down by self-talk or other strategies. These are skills which can be learned and practiced in our everyday lives and are addressed in Anger Management Classes. How? Well, think of the cheerleaders at a football game. They are there to get you riled up, energized, with threats and chants to "kill the other team, stomp them, beat them and trash them." They don't shout things to the crowd and fans like, "Wow, folks the other team is nice, so be kind cuz they're your friends." They arouse, incite and get you and your team up ready to fight. But don't you cheerlead yourself into rage by riling yourself up to rage, take the opposite tactic, go the opposite direction by telling yourself calming, de-escalating things like - "I'm better than this hassle, I don't need to get into a frenzy over little things." Calm yourself down with reverse cheerleading.

For some people though, dealing with angry feelings and their possible consequences is MORE of a problem than the situation that caused them. They try to suppress their feelings, or only allow them out in covert ways such as passive aggressive behavior and misplaced anger. Then there are some folks who are constantly on the lookout for conflict situations, consciously or unconsciously, hoping they result in angry or aggressive exchanges so they can vent and release their own anger. WITH AN EXCUSE. This way they have a target, and rationality for their behavior, at least in their own minds. These adversarial types of people do not process out their anger and emotions, they just Act it out. Because of this, they may be highly stressed inside, which in time may cause health problems and depression. They often make comments after getting angry that they feel better, less stressed but, in reality, they are still angry frustrated people in inside.

Anger is a signal, and one worth listening to. Our anger may be a message that we are being hurt, that our rights are being violated, that our needs or wants are not being met, or... simply that something is just not right in our lives. It can just be that we feel hurt and not appreciated, in reality or just perceived, and such feelings lead to problems. Anger is a Secondary Emotion - which means that there is always something else that comes before the Anger. Something that promotes, prompts or instigates our Anger. Often in relationships, folks tend to blame someone else for making them angry. At work, we often blame the 'idiots, the stupid customers' etc, but in reality, it is OUR reaction to them (yes, they may be idiots or not, but they still are our customers) and that REACTION is the problem. For instance, when agreeing to work with the public, taking a job in a service industry, one of the given factors is to realize that there will be folks of varying degrees of intelligence, attitude and social consciousness to deal with. All will not be perfect, and on the days when you personally feel bad, are having a bad day, or the air conditioning in the restaurant or store isn't working, those are the times the REALLY difficult customers seem to show up!!!

When we work on Anger, the first thrust is to work on the emotionally painful events that keep us riled up and angry, and to learn to talk about, and to express our frustration and anger about having that pain. By focusing on the cause of our anger, and understanding how it has taken us over, eventually we will defuse and 'defang' that anger. There is a comparison, and direct connection, between our physical health and our emotional health. Think of this, when the body experiences a cut or wound, if it is left unattended, it will get infected. Eventually, it will fester and may even turn into gangrene, a life threatening condition. If instead we clean the wound thoroughly, protect it and allow it to heal completely, normally all that would be left is a painless scar to remind us of the situation. No pain, just a blip on the skin.

If we keep emotional wounds in us, and 'stuff them' rather than process them, they will fester just like a physical wound and make us and our lives 'sick'. Emotional stuff, anger primarily, eventually starts to affect other parts of our lives, just as infection would spread to other parts of our body. Unfortunately, abusive, aggressive, angry people are part of our everyday lives and a certain amount of emotional pain gets experienced routinely, so if a person does not learn to deal appropriately with their own anger and the feelings, those feelings will build and build and eventually incapacitate you. If, however, the emotional stuff is addressed, and processed, all that is left is a memory. This memory, like an old scar, does not hurt. It can be kept in a safe place in your mind, to be addressed as needed, but does not have to run your life and control it. Or ruin it and buy you jail time for an aggressive act. And remember, often those feelings come out when we have had a 'drink or twenty' and our inner control is lacking, so we over react to things, and can go too far.

Here are some helpful specifics, to toss out for thought and your perusal...

Often, stress, depression, fear, anxiety and other feelings come before and

trigger anger so:

- Ask yourself, is there another way that I may interpret this situation?
- What would make me feel better right now that I can control?
- Attempt to take action that would change the way you feel about the situation.

Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; BUT you end up getting burned by not letting go and moving on fast enough, or at all.

- Often the source of our anger is a situation or event, which occurred in the past and is transferred to someone or something else inappropriately.
- Ask yourself, is this the real source of my anger? If the answer to this question is No, then try to think of five ways you can use this energy to do something special for yourself or for someone else. Use the energy constructively.
- Tell yourself that it is okay, that you cannot rewrite history but you can influence your role in future situations.

When angry, count to ten before you speak. If you are very angry, count to one hundred.

- When we are angry, our brains are like a car engine revolving at a very rapid rate. By slowing the process down or taking a "time out", we permit ourselves to think more clearly.
- It is not necessary nor always feasible to remove yourself from a situation physically. However, you can remove yourself psychologically.
- If we can calm ourselves down, generally we can come up with a solution that avoids our anger from making a bad situation worse.

The best remedy for a short temper is a long walk.

- When possible, walking away from a situation is the best response.
- Exercise is useful in calming us down when we are angry.
- In taking a time out, use the time to question what you told yourself about the situation that caused your anger. Challenge your assumptions.

One of the best remedies for anger is delay.

- While we cannot control our feelings, it is important to control our actions.
- By delaying our response to our anger, we can often assure that the outcome will not lead to aggression.
- Tell yourself that it is best, AND Okay, to wait until your anger subsides before attempting to resolve the situation.

Remember, there is nothing wrong with anger provided you use it constructively.

- After examining the source of your anger, if you determine that it is the result of injustice, consider organizing a response that may lead to changing the

situation.

- Think of two thoughts that may lead to a constructive use of your anger.
- Imagine a response to your anger that will lead to a win-win situation for you and the source of your anger.

A reminder, whatever is begun in Anger often ends in Shame!

- Think of a situation in which your anger resulted in making a bad situation worse and what you could have done to change that result.
- Ask yourself if a negative outcome is in your best interest.
- Remind yourself of how you felt when your anger led you to an unfortunate conclusion.

Depression is often the source of our anger. Angry outbursts, irritability and a short temper can also be symptoms that mask depression.

- Ask yourself, have I lost something? A dream? My support system? A relationship? A family member?
- Ask, what can I do right now that would make me feel less depressed?
- After answering these questions, move to accomplish the things, which you can do to reduce your depression.

Anxiety is often a source of anger.

- First try to identify your upsetting feelings.
- Usually your upsetting feelings are a signal to slow down, reflect and de-brief.
- Counteract your upsetting thought with a positive self-message.

Stress is the mismatch between the demands made on us and our resources to meet those demands. Stress reduces our capacity to tolerate intense negative feelings such as anger.

- When impatience caused by stress appears to be the source of your anger, consider steps to reduce your stress and your anger will likely dissipate.
- Focus on the changes in your work or home environment rather than the angry situation.
- Ask yourself, is this a situation I can really change or influence? If the answer is yes, move to take action. If the answer is no, then attempt to develop acceptance skills to reduce the intensity of the feelings.

Work place pressure can cause anger.

- Contact your company's Employee Assistance Program for assistance.
- Attempt to influence the person or situation by using emotional intelligence.
- Emotional intelligence is the capacity to create positive outcomes for yourself and others.



"Sometimes the difference between the degrees of Anger is in how you say it - there's an old Irish Saying, 'Being Irish is to be able to tell somebody to go to Hell, and have them turn and say - Thank You.'" A. Smith

Mis-communication often leads to hurt feelings, embarrassment and anger.

- Listen to the other person attentively and allow them the space to either confirm or modify your frame of reference by feeding back to them what you understand the situation to be.
- Use "I" statements and tell the person just what it is that is making you angry, without blaming them and escalating the conflict.

Anger is one of the most misunderstood and overused of human emotions.

- Anger is a reaction to an inner emotion and not a planned action.
- Anger is the easiest emotion to show, pretty much every one gets angry.
- The feelings underlying the anger reaction make us feel vulnerable and weak, they challenge our ego, AND the Angry reaction or outburst, at least for a moment, makes us feel strong, powerful and in control.
- Anger reactions and behaviors ARE learned over our life time, and thus could be UN-learned, and replaced with healthier ways of coping.
- Anger can be an immediate reaction to an isolated event, a one time problem, OR it can be a response after numerous events have built up your 'anger savings bank' so you get p'o'd very quickly.
- To repress anger is not healthy and can often bring on illness and stress, and yet to express it impulsively as most often happens, may give 'immediate' relief but can carry long term consequences.

To alter our angry responses/habits, we need to understand where that anger comes from, what keeps it festering inside of us.

Chances of being an angry person increase if:

- You saw your parents get angry first and resolve issues later. You will use the same approach that you learned.
- You are frustrated, stressed, and often not aware of how frustrated and stressed you are until you blow.
- You are tired! Or even hungry. Or had that drink - or twenty!

How to decide if Anger work is needed

There are different types of 'angry' folks. One realizes they are angry and that they need to find some constructive way of resolving their feelings, 'work them out' and get rid of them. The second group is made up of folks who say they are not angry, and who don't feel angry, but struggle with relationship and work problems that can often

be linked back to, or traced to, personal anger issues. There are some folks who aren't angry, but they tend to make folks around them angry! Or at least, they bring out anger in friends, family, and colleagues. Often for these folks, there are some early life experiences that they keep in their craw and it keeps festering. They have neither addressed or acknowledged those issues, just stuffed them, or ignored them. For the third group, we have folks who have sorted out their past issues, but are interested in finding healthy ways to handle future aggravating situations that will come up.

The first group knows they are angry, but they are not sure what to do with it. However, just having the awareness is a good start. Often they might have been mistreated or abused as a kid, or earlier in life and realize they have some pain from that. They may be in touch with the feelings of their anger, but have not yet started expressing them in a healthy way, or they may be well known for often "giving people a piece of their mind." They might have been told they have a temper, and/or many might actually have some pride in that reputation for a temper. At times their anger seems to have control of them, rather than them being in control of their anger.

People who describe themselves as having a "temper problem" are generally people who have had some very negative experiences in the past. They have not yet worked through their feelings about an earlier issue and walk around harboring resentment. Stuff leftover from situations that happened a long time ago. The extremes here are the sociopaths, who feel they have been wronged early in life and have the 'right' to get back at society for the wrongs they have been dealt in the past. These folks have no remorse at getting back at people and they justify their actions by their earlier pain.

There are the temper tantrum folks who bring their baggage with them everywhere. They are 'primed' with anger, and ready to go from 0 to pissed off in 6 seconds or less. They are already pretty angry before anything even happens. So when someone does something that might normally be a minor source of irritation, the person with the anger baggage really gets into it fast. Often folks around, or at the receiving end of the anger, are shocked and say, "Where did that come from?" These folks over react to situations that would normally make them feel genuinely angry, and for good reason, but they go beyond that and become explosive. For instance, instead of assertively asking someone to stop the offending behavior, they may haul off and slug the person or scream at them with obscenities.

They may be experiencing problems because of angry outbursts they have had, and now are dealing with the consequences. Sometimes they haven't gotten into much trouble, but are heading for it in a domestic violence situation, road rage, or anger in the workplace problems. They need to learn how to channel their anger and aggressive feelings in positive way. Over time they can, or may, work out some of their residual anger and get past the pissed off attitude. It is possible to process out anger, and get out of the anger cycle without giving in and becoming a doormat.

For those who don't feel angry but do have past issues, there are many things that can be done. They often don't need to be mad at anyone in particular; they can simply be mad about the situation, mad at the world. Mad at things in general.

Exercise can be used as a tool to bring the anger issues to the surface as the person begins to feel more empowered.

Some of folks don't get angry because they feel guilty when they get mad. Perhaps they have been taught by their family, teachers, or church that it was wrong to get angry. With church folks, they likely were told to go from anger directly to forgiveness. Forgiveness is good, but not in lieu of processing out the anger and what is causing your issues. Forgiveness with out understanding and process is just Stuffing Anger.

And if they have forgiven someone, but still get angry with them, they feel guilty and just add to their issues. There is nothing wrong with feeling angry, when someone hurts you deeply, but its not a reason to become abusive yourself, in retaliation. Anger is there for a reason. Learn to make it a clue or cue to prevent further problems.

For many, Anger... is scary stuff. If someone saw mom or dad go into a rage, or if they were the objects of the wrath of someone, they might feel they should never get angry because they don't want to be like that person. Some folks feel they might go over the deep end if they get angry, not realizing they do have some control over their anger, and they need not have to let it go to rage. Afraid they will lose control. And even if they have identified some specific experiences in their lives that were traumatic such as physical, sexual or emotional abuse, they don't process those experiences or hold on to the pain.

Lastly, there are those who live quite emotionally healthy lives, but recognize that there are daily challenges in dealing with the difficult people and aggravating situations. We all run into people constantly who would like to control us, hinder our progress, or who just are jerks! Every life contains a certain amount of pain and suffering. Conflict and pain are often the greatest tools in teaching us how to survive, live and actually enjoy life. Without conflict and opposition, we would all live a very 'beige' and bland existence. If you check my website, in the section 'poems, quotes, and stories', there is a great picture of the Grand Canyon, with the quote, "To shield the canyons from the wind, would erase half the beauty." It's the wind, and the rushing water that has cut and shaped the canyon into the beauty we observe. Often too, when we meet older folks who might be wise sages, we note the cragginess, or sculpting of their brows, and we note that those features usually come with wisdom and knowledge.

A number of years ago, my life partner died after a few years of living with a terminal disease. Following his death, I did a many lectures about death and dying. After one lecture which happened to be to a group of therapists, one of the people came up to me and spoke for a bit. She remarked that she was impressed that I had been able to talk about such a difficult subject with sensitivity, and yet include humor. She mentioned that I had the majority of my audience members in tears at some point. She said she understood what I was saying, because her younger brother had come to live with she and her husband and kids during his final months of his life. She felt the pain but also said, "Isn't it a wonderfully immense growing experience for those who are around someone who is going through the dying process, it's a shame someone has

to die to teach us so much about living.” Amen, and yup. It is a humbling experience, and you really learn to appreciate Life, when you experience the death of a loved one. It shakes you into the realization that you are mortal, and that you don’t have full control of everything. And... that it is okay, to not be a little ‘god’.

Sometime back, a very controlling and ANGRY man who was fairly new to my group, came up after class and told me he was p’o’d at me for being so mellow while I was leading the group. He was a large man, well over 6 feet tall, largely built, and had a booming voice, but he said he was intimidated by me, all 5’8” of me. My ‘peace’ bothered him. Here we were in a group of 10 angry men, mostly Domestic Violence Batters, and I was being cool and chilled. He said he had 26 folks working under him at the hospital. He said he had to yell at least 2 or 3 times a day at them to maintain control and yet how could I have control over these 10 angry perps (as in perpetrators) and be so mellow. I suggested that in my years with hospice groups, working 7 years at a stroke rehabilitation unit, 5 years as the first HIV/AIDS counselor giving results out for the state, and losing my own partner as well as hundreds of friends to death, that, yes, that might have something to do with my actions. After all those things, I had learned what to deal with in life, what to get mad at, what to love and when to chill. Dealing with death is a humbling, but reality based learning experience.

For instance, what do you tell Bessie, who was 91 years young. She had a stroke and fell off her lawn tractor in 100 degree heat. She ended up in our Rehab Unit. When she looks at you with her big blue eyes, which matched her shock of bluish hair!, and then she asks if she is gonna be okay. Well, one day, I was the one who got to tell her, “Bessie, here’s the situation, your body is shutting down, your kidneys are failing, and I’m sorry dear, but maybe seven days to ten... not much more dear, sorry.” People say it is hard to watch their loved ones with Alzheimer’s and dementia die, but those patients don’t know what’s going on. Bessie did. She was mentally alert, sharp, but had 10 days, and I got to tell her. At that point, it really sucks to be human, and not able to ‘fix or control’ things. Yup, there are things that are more of an issue, than others, and part of our life is to choose the right things to fight with and deal with, and set aside the little crap.

How some folks AVOID anger

Many people have troubling thoughts that return to them whenever they slow down enough to have quiet time to think. They probably know someone who will tell them he doesn’t like to be alone, or a friend that says she likes to keep busy because otherwise she “thinks too much.” In actuality, of course, the quantity of their thoughts is not the problem... Surely everyone can afford a free hour or two of thought each week without any harmful effects.

Weirdly enough, many of the Domestic Violence perpetrators are in this category. They are addicted to long term, destructive cyclic relationships. The partners may fight passionately, make-up, and then love passionately, only to start the cycle

over again. Whenever things start to calm down one of the partners will introduce some new, troubling behavior to ensure that things remain consistently tumultuous. Regardless, the two feel inexplicably drawn to one another. An ordinary, long term relationship with a stable partner will not do, because such a relationship is not consuming enough to serve its purpose. It is deemed "boring" because it does not provide adequate distraction from whatever they are running from. They need to live in a crisis management situation, and alternate from perpetrator to victim in the relationship. There is lots of, "look what she did to me, she made me angry, she put me in the DV class."

One therapist coined the phrase 'Busyism' as one alternative to dealing with anger and what makes us angry. 'Busy' addicted folks are like workaholics, but instead of being productive, they spend their time doing things that don't pay the bills, but things that do keep them occupied whether it be volunteer work, yard work, running errands, or just being a 'good friend' who never seems to have time for themselves as they take care of everyone else. They are constantly being involved in someone else's life that is messed up and it can be very distracting from the problems of their own life. Busy-addicts bring praise from the outside world for their devotion and many many hours of service, but in the long run, it does little to help the person grow personally.

Along the lines of staying busy and avoiding our issues, I like to point out that watching and listening is not a bad thing either. Rather than just be 'busy' doing things, you can be busy watching and learning from others. We don't have to re-invent the wheel. Probably someone has already gone through what you've gone through, experienced pain like you have, or enjoyed some of the same things. They have learned to deal with things in a way. And you CAN learn from them.

I suggest you read Fulghum's poem "All I Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten", about the wisdom of youth, and innocence. For now though, I will share one of those annoying things that went around the internet a bit ago, but actually makes some sense. And note the two lines with the asteriks!



"If a dog was your teacher, you would learn stuff like:

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.

Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.

*Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure
ecstasy.*

When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.

Let others know when they've invaded your territory.

Take naps.

Stretch before rising. Run, romp, and play daily.

Thrive on attention and let people touch you.

*** Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.*

On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.

On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.

When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.

No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing

*and pout... run right back and make friends.
Delight in the simple joy of a long walk. Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.
Stop when you have had enough. Be loyal. Never pretend to be something
you're not.*

If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.

*** When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them
gently. Unknown author*

That internet gem really does have good points about anger, and life. For instance, don't over react, i.e., don't bite when a growl would have made the point. Wow. We take too much personally and add our own anger to the situation. And learn that sometimes silence is all you need to help someone chill and get past their anger.

And we can learn from kids... YES, kids! They also are good at getting through stuff faster. They might fight one minute and an hour later, are best friends. Kids seem to stick with two simple reactions to bad things, ANGER and SADNESS. And voila, most of our adult anger, rage and violence, can be traced back to earlier anger and sadness. Much of the anger work I do in the therapy office is based on sadness from life, often from childhood. Things that were not said, things that didn't happen (i.e., a dad who was not able to say to his son that he loved him.)

Kids also are good at getting mad at toys, stuffed animals and other inanimate objects rather than at their peers or their family. The more they follow this guideline the more emotionally healthy they become. If they direct their anger inappropriately by becoming abusive to others, the expression of anger does not have the same healing effect for them.

When Is Depression a Good Sign?

In the last section we were talking some about sadness, which brings me to the thought - can DEPRESSION ever be a Good Sign? Depression is usually regarded as a horrible thing. Something only associated with craziness, something that no matter how many beers or pills it takes, we need to avoid sadness and the resulting depression. Again, learning from kids, being sad is okay, and acknowledging depression is not bad either, if you are ready to work!

One time I heard a lecturer state that Depression is a good sign. It stopped me in my tracks and started me thinking that there was no way at all that such a negative thing as Depression, that takes so much of our productive life away, and costs so much to treat, could ever be a positive asset.

I was wrong! I was able to see how it could apply to my domestic violence batterers' and anger management perpetrators in my groups, as well as to other parts of our lives.

HOW DOES DEPRESSION EARN THE TITLE OF A GOOD SIGN?

Go back to our Psych 101 classes and Kubler-Ross' discovery of DABDA. We can remember how Kubler-Ross defined D.A.B.D.A. as a process of stages that people go through in dealing with terminal illnesses... but... it can be applied very well to the stages in a destructive violent relationship, as well as changes in our lives that we avoid as well as to the anger management perpetrator who is sure they never get angry or the alcoholic who 'knows when to quit.'

We'll use couples who are destined for DV classes as the sample... Domestic Violence Perpetrators are in **DENIAL** for years that the relationship is either not functioning well, violent (emotionally, verbally, sexually or economically) even if not physically violent, or that the relationship is OVER!

DABDA stands for-

D enial
A nger
B argaining
D EPRESSION
A cceptance

And they should move on. As long as the person is getting their needs met - whether sexual, or the need to be in a dysfunctional situation - they will deny it's over. Yet when it really is over, they are the first ones to say, "Every one told me our relationship was doomed." Or, "I should have left 6 months earlier."

Anger Management perpetrators are always sure they can handle their tempers and are in denial of their true anger, and rage. Rage is anger out of control.

PLEASE NOTE: WHEN WE ARE BUSY DENYING, WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO WORK ON OUR ISSUES AND WE AVOID SEEING THE ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE WORKED ON. No growth at that point!

The **ANGER** stage is ultimately what brings me most of our clients by way of court. Blame, accusations. Arguing over little things that take them away from the REAL issues in the relationship or in the way they handle confrontation. AND when you are mad, you don't think clearly. No place for growth here!

BARGAINING is next, when the couple starts to offer options, like... 'you can go bowling 2 nights a month, and I will go out with my friends 2 nights a month'; or lighting a few extra candles at church; bargaining with God to bring the relationship back to a comfortable spot... Again, not a time of clear thinking and positive work on the relationship, or on personal issues, just busy looking at options, diversions.

But, when we get to **DEPRESSION**, and all seems lost, when every avenue has

been pursued - denial, fighting, trying options to save the relationship - then, and ONLY then, will **GOOD STUFF, good positive work**, start to happen! THEN the person will have to think about what has happened. Let their feelings come out, deal with the reality of the situation. So Depression IS a good sign because now there is the chance the person will start to work on their issues and not just blame, deny and bargain! They will start looking at real options, and take some real action. Reading a self help book, asking for help and guidance/counseling, recognizing something has to be done.

ACCEPTANCE does not mean someone embraces and loves the results, but does mean accepting the reality of the situation. In best case scenarios, this is when the couple decides to separate and recognize they were not made for each other, and leave as friends. Its when the individual seeks help for the answers to the cause of their rage and anger. Its when each person in a relationship starts to own their own issues and what they 'bring to the table'. And the individual starts to finally 'hear' what everyone has been telling them about their attitude and demeanor.

Bottom line, when we reach **Depression**, it really is a good sign, because it means it is now time to deal with reality and not stay clouded in Anger, Denial, and desperate attempts at Bargaining as we try to save an unhealthy situation, but now it is a time to Grow and Move ON.

SECTION II - Anger 102

An-ger (ang' ger): Feeling of extreme hostility; rage; wanting to fight back.

Synonyms: exasperation, fury, ire, passion, rage, resentment, temper, indignation, animosity, irritation, wrath, displeasure, infuriate, arouse, nettle, annoyance, exasperate.

Emotional neglect is similar to physical neglect. If we eat high fat foods, smoke, and do not exercise for most of our life, then we are taking great risks with our physical health. We may deceptively appear to be in good health for a while, but our body systems are slowly deteriorating. Eventually we will probably develop health problems like cancer, stroke or heart disease.

Likewise with our emotional health, if we repress our anger during our lives, we may not feel the pain for awhile, but the problems will be there. These problems could include: hostile, adversarial dysfunctional relationships; depression; obsessive-compulsive behavior; anxiety; psycho-somatic or stress-induced illnesses; phobias; addictions; or a general dissatisfaction with life. If we do not take the time to work out our issues they will make our lives become increasingly dysfunctional.

Martin Luther King Jr. (See his Violence Speech in the appendix) and Mahatma Gandhi were non-abusive people who wielded of great power but wielded it with a gentle hand and voice. Far from being doormats, they earned worldwide respect and

changed the course of history. Power. Influence. But they did not stoop to engaging in violence or abusive behavior, and yet they stood up for their rights. Well, you may not have any desire to change world history, or stand up to your boss, but not letting others push you around can be done without being abusive. We can have some control, have a good life, and not be rude or cruel.

It is very important to stand up for yourself. You have a right to set boundaries which don't allow others to abuse you. Saying to someone, "I don't want to talk about it right now; we are too upset. Let's talk about it when we've had a chance to cool down," is setting a boundary. Sometimes people will not back down, so you may need to ask them to leave, or leave yourself. In extreme cases, when a person will not leave, or allow us to leave, the cops might get involved causing even more distress. And remember, when drinking or doing drugs, the boundaries DO change, usually NOT for the better. Folks lose impulse control and will do things that they would never do sober.

Working on Guilt is not about going into denial about what you did was wrong, but acknowledging the fact that you might have blown it, and then getting beyond it. Refusing to give that mistake the power to decide what kind of person you are. Guilt wants you to be a bad person with a miserable life, but you can choose to be a good person who made a bad decision and then learned from it.

After you have done this, even though you can't make amends with the original person who you hurt, ask yourself if there is something you can do to help make up for your mistake. Find a way to forgive yourself for your own bad behavior. This may include spiritual or psychological guidance.

Anger is often a reaction to people pushing boundaries and making us uncomfortable. Anger produces a 'fight or flight' reaction. When someone pushes our boundaries, we most often FIGHT because FLIGHT is often seen as defeat rather than what is often really is the WISE thing to do! We'll talk Boundaries first, then how we can build ourselves up to having better self esteem and thus better boundaries, and LESS need to argue, fight and defend our self worth.

SECTION III -Causes

Please note: From here-on in this Online PDF version of our WorkBook (available in hardcopy on Amazon.com, and through Ebooks at DrGLifeCoach.com) , we'll explore Anger Issues and provide Study Questions for you to complete which should help you understand Anger better. The Study Questions are available on our website to complete and review ONLINE. They are presented HERE for you perusal and review, but fill them out ONLINE please. If there are questions you have concerns about, feel free to take the option to email them to us for our comments, OTHERWISE, use them strictly for self study. No one will see your thoughts that way, except YOU.

"Anger is the most IMPOTENT of passions. It effects nothing it goes about, and hurts the one who is possessed by it more than the one against whom it is directed" Clarendon

Boundaries and Anger

We all have the right to have safe space, to be safe in our own bodies and not to fear others violating our space, physically and emotionally. Secure boundaries allow trust. Trust in ourselves, how far we will go, what our limits are, and trust in others not hurting us emotionally or physically. Children learn from parents, family and the extended family (TV, movies, school, friends, internet) what boundaries are. The boundaries learned as a child are carried into adulthood, many times with little modification. If a child learns it is okay to hit and push, or yell and ridicule, the child will carry that learned "lesson" with them.

Boundaries are always present, yet most people never talk about them or are even aware of them. A boundary can be that little 3" white painted line on the freeway "keeping" the 16 ton truck that is speeding next to you at 65 miles per hour from hitting you. That boundary is certainly based a lot on trust! Your front door at your home is a boundary. Sometimes we have to reinforce that boundary by locking the door. If the initial boundary isn't respected, then we add a dead bolt, and maybe a sticker from an armed response security company, emphasizing our boundary. Intrusive phone calls from telemarketers, car alarms going off near our homes, homeless people leaning over our table at an outdoor restaurant, relatives snooping through our checkbook or desk drawers are all examples of boundary breaking. Some boundary breaking just requires verbal or visual reminders to clarify and quantify. Other violations require more assertive (not aggressive) action, letting others know what we need, expect and want.

Remember, these Study Questions are presented HERE for your information and perusal, you can fill them out as part of the ONLINE Study Question section if you wish.

Exercise:

Name three boundaries or limits in your life that you are aware of:

How do you tell others what your boundaries are?

Do you ever feel people push you to your limit too often? How?

Do you feel your boundaries are not respected?

How does boundary crossing make you feel? How do you react?



Dr G. says:

Remember, self esteem plays a major part in defining boundaries, and feeling that we the have right to boundaries. People with low self esteem often allow boundaries to be pushed with little resistance from them because they are not "OK" enough to deserve better. They allow things to happen that aren't okay. If you feel your boundaries are weak, check out the sections in the workbook covering self-esteem.

When we feel we are reaching our limit, or feel that we are not being respected and our boundaries are being crossed, we often are afraid to speak out or ask for help. For many, seeking outside help is felt to be defeating or embarrassing. The truth is that we all need assistance at times in our lives, and knowing when to ask for help and guidance is a measure of strength and a wiser one than going down with the ship. If you are having a difficult time, its okay to ask for some help. You wouldn't remove you own appendix if it were inflamed and infected, or would you? So feel okay about asking other experts for some help.

"There is nothing so strong as Gentleness. It takes great Strength and Reserve to be Gentle." Valentin

Our ego affects our reactions

Responsibility means behaving in such a way as to fulfill your own needs and yet not deprive others of the ability to fulfill theirs. It is understanding your abilities, wants, desires, weaknesses, accepting them, then setting up your boundaries and limits based on them, respecting other's boundaries at the same time. Everybody redefines their lives from time to time, and with the redefinition, the boundaries and limits change. But for the moment, if everyone would respect each others space, own up to their own responsibilities, go after their own dreams and potentials without having to sacrifice or impinge on other's boundaries, a person can be the person they want to be.

True success is being able to spend your life in a way that makes you happy, that follows your passions, utilizes your skills and enhances those in relationships with you. And when things do go astray, the healthy person will take the situation under advisement with their inner self, recognize what went right, and what went wrong, then take responsibility for their own actions and consequences. In my practice, too often, I have had outwardly successful people reach an older age and then they ask, "Is that all there is?" They missed the personal growth, the love, affection, and impact others could have had on them, striving to make the "external" success show, while neglecting the inner person. Take time to look at yourself, where you are going and how you plan to get there. Make peace with yourself.

Being able to be Gentle enough to calm someone down, takes strength and power and a healthy EGO. Think of the ER at a hospital. You've just been rushed in from a car accident. You feel totally physically crushed. You need support. You ask the nurse as you roll in, "Will I be OK?" Do you want an aggressive nurse to yell at you and say, "I'm in charge, don't question our abilities to help you." Or the gentle one who puts their hand on your shoulder and just quietly says "You'll be fine."

What kind of a person do we want to be?

The purpose of a life is to survive and achieve. We all want to survive and be nurtured in society. We also want to do well - to thrive, succeed, grow. To do this, we need to possess three important qualities.

1. SELF-ESTEEM OR COURAGE

Courage allows an individual to try, fail, and try again, until they succeed. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses helps to understand your limits. Believing in yourself, you can learn whatever you need to learn. It is the foundation upon which the personality rests. We give ourselves and others confidence.

2. TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

We make decisions and choices and then must take responsibility for them. Some decisions can be life and death, success and failure: i.e., the choice to use drugs, have unprotected sex, suicide, drop out of school, quit your job, etc. If you have courage and self-confidence, you will make the right decisions and stand by them.

3. WORKING TOGETHER

In our society, competition is sometimes seen as "the road to success", in relationships, as well as in our jobs. However, the most successful use teamwork and cooperation. We are not totally dependent upon others, nor do we stand alone. In a society or relationship of equals, cooperation skills have high value.

Exercise:

What kind of a person do you want to be?

What do you want out of life?

What 3 personal (or life) values are most important to you?

What are three personality characteristics that make YOU who you are, that define you?

Name three skills you feel you possess, things that come easy for you, talents you have.

What are three "roles" you now play in your life, and three roles you want to play? These can be permanent roles, passing roles, chosen roles, or roles you feel stuck with.

Now:

And, what you want:

Do your actions and life or lifestyle today reflect your values, personality and skills? Why or Why not?

Where are your present responsibilities in life?

Were you ever afraid you weren't 'strong' enough? Were you ever pushed around and treated improperly? How?

As a kid, were you ever hit by an adult? Injured by another person? Physically injured, and hid the pain or kept it to yourself?

If you are a male, were you ever worried you were not tough enough?

Were you called a wimp, queer, or fag? Worked out to make yourself "tougher", more of a man? Were you ever forced to fight to prove you were a man? Describe.

Were you ever told to stop crying because you were a man? Were you ever hit as a child or teen, to make you stop crying?

If you are a female, have you ever used tears as a control tool? Or cried and felt embarrassed?



Dr. G. says:

Men and women are expected by society to do certain things. Men are reminded to "take it like a man" (whatever that means) and not express feelings of pain, hurt, loneliness, or embarrassment, and often reinforced to express anger, and be aggressive.

Women are reminded to "act like ladies" (whatever that means), and be sensitive and demure. Society allows women to express feelings, but often labels them "the weaker sex" for it.

As kids, we learned how to behave from watching their parents and other adults in their environment. The stereotypes we learn, we learn from adults. Kids feel they are expected to behave in a certain manner at all times, but they often see a double standard being established by the very people who preach to them "proper" ways to behave. It is no wonder kids, and us, as adults, later on, are often confused and get mixed messages.

A big step in working on yourself, understanding yourself and making changes is to understand and identify your feelings. These are the clues and cues to what is going on inside and what is in need of help or work.

"Pride slays thanksgiving, but an humble mind is the soil out of which thanks naturally grow. A proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves." Henry Ward Beecher

What do I want for myself... for my Life?

A simple and safe definition of Success - **to live your life in a way that makes you happy, but NOT at the expense of folks around you.** As we know from the TV commercials and print ads, happy contented cows make great cheese and

milk. In the commercial, we are shown how those cows hang out peacefully in the meadow and are able to ignore the flies and bugs, and not overreact because they ARE contented, 'at peace'. You and I may not be cows, BUT we need to work on that simple wisdom. The more we are 'at peace', the better the chance we have at not getting angry at little things that lead us into DANGER, rage and violence. And now a-days, with the stricter laws, and others driving with guns, we can either get put into jail for our angry reactions, or we get shot for road rage! The latter is so permanent, so be careful!

Think about it. What makes you happy? What makes you feel good about yourself? For complete understanding, you must know about the following, and define yourself in the following ways:

(1) Your Values; (2) Your Personality style; (3) Your Skills, Strengths and, importantly, Your Weaknesses; (4) The Roles you play in life and in relationships

VALUES

"Values help people identify and express their core beliefs!," says Dr. G.

What we decide on and adopt as our "values" that we are most comfortable with, we reflect our own personal values. These are often things we learned as a kid, or just accepted and carried on as our own values. Sometimes they are values we adopt when we take on a new religion, move to a new part of the city, lose our job and have to downsize. Sometimes the values we have, or want, are not always clear. Clarifying and justifying values helps make you more secure, increases your confidence and self-esteem. The **introspection**, that often comes from growth in life, allows us to justify and solidify our personality and ideas, as well as our ideals.

Values are usually what we care most about in life, and what we use to judge ourselves, our success. Examples are: family, loyalty, cultural ideals, security, religion.

Exercise:

What do YOU value most in life?

List three personal values you feel you have now.

Do you stick by your values? Why/why not? What would it take to allow you to set your values aside?

To whom or what are you responsible for in your life? Name three at least.

How can you get your needs met, yet still not interfere with other people's rights and needs?

I would tell everyone, the best thing about me is:

I am glad everyone knows that I am:

The things I have to take care of in my life include:

I take very good care of:



Dr. G. says:

Responsibility is often given as a personal value and a unit to measure us by others. For instance, "Susan is a very wonderful gal, so responsible!" Responsibility fulfills our needs, but how do we meet our needs and not deprive others of the ability to fulfill theirs? To the extreme, if a person is robbing a store to feed their children, they are fulfilling their responsibility to their children. However, they are depriving someone else.

Sometimes we get caught up in responsibilities to others, and become "co-dependent", meaning that we put others ahead of our own lives to the detriment of our health, wealth and self-esteem. It is good from time to time to inventory our responsibilities and values.

Do a check-up and put things in perspective.

PERSONALITY: Aspects of you that make YOU what you are, and what people perceive as YOU.

Examples: Tactful, bold, sociable, thoughtful, energetic, funny, intelligent, stubborn, angry, close-minded.

Exercise:

What are your three major traits?

SKILLS AND APTITUDES: What comes easy for you? What are your talents?

Examples: Problem solving, working with people, working with your hands, music, etc.

Exercise:

Name three skills you feel you possess:

ROLES: These are different parts you play in your life, think of life as a script, what roles do you play? Most are temporary, and we change them as we feel the need. Some

are permanent. Examples: "nurse", listener, "judge", little league coach. We decide what roles we want to play and how.

Exercise:

What are three roles you play in your life? Are they temporary or permanent roles?

As a kid, I used to say the kind of adult I wanted to be:

As a kid, my hero was (and why)? Explain how you found this hero, TV, friends, books, movies? What was special about this hero?:



Dr. G. says:

We have spent a lot of time in this section talking about values and responsibilities because they help define and set the pace for your personality. They are impacted by your skills, and the combination of all of the above defines the roles you play in life. Judging success is often elusive. Hopefully, as you worked through this exercise you got to know yourself better: challenged a few old values your mother told you that you had; you purged responsibilities that cause you stress but no gain; recognized your skills, your partners and kid's skills; and finally justified and clarified the roles you actually play in life. Often, we reach a point later life and feel unappreciated for what we have accomplished, or what we think we could have accomplished. If we don't recognize and use our skills, take the proper responsibility, and follow through, much can be lost. Reflect and introspect, challenge your own values, justify them, fine-tune yourself, and be open to being the best person you can be.

SECTION IV - Feelings - Dealing with Them

"Feelings, nothing more than feelings, trying to forget my feelings.....
Feelings, wo wo wo, feelings, wo wo wo..." Albert

Feelings

Feelings.... Scary topic, but we all have them, even though we may try to ignore them! Or, as quoted above, we write songs about them. When we say we feel "depressed" or "anxious", what we actually mean is a "state of being", usually a

temporary condition, which can be broken down into specific identifiable feelings. We can identify those that are making us "feel" depressed or anxious. When we are **depressed**, we might be: sad, lonely, disappointed, hurt. Conversely, **anxiety** is the state of agitated, amplified flux. We have the power to work on the sadness, loneliness, hurt, and rid ourselves of depression and anxiety. Getting rid of depression and just be happy is a tall order, unattainable by wishing. By breaking down our feelings and identifying them, we have already begun "processing out" our issues of loneliness, sadness, and hurt.

Depression. We are emotionally overwhelmed by different feelings of sadness, hurt, fear, anger, guilt. At some point, our mind says enough is enough, we go into a depressed state, stuffing and suppressing our feelings, a "rest" mode of inaction.

Anxiety. We are bombarded by other, different, feelings of fear, anger, apprehension, insecurity. Our mind is agitated, unable to deal with the overall picture. Breaking anxiety down into specific feelings gives us a better "handle" at working things through, by processing out the individual issues. Identifying feelings is the start for most "processing out" in our lives. Learn to OWN your feelings, even those mom and dad, your teacher, or Sunday School teacher say, or said, you shouldn't feel! As humans we all should "feel" the gamut of feelings, even if for only a few seconds, from anger (which we were always told was a no-no) to jealousy (definitely a no-no) to sadness, to boredom (not polite).

Learn to give a NAME to your feelings: they are, and can be, CLUES to what is going on, and CUES to what might happen. These CUES can keep violence and destruction out of your life. Learn to listen to yourself. Take the time to chart a week of feelings. At the end of the workbook there are extra "feelings" sheets for each family member, or you may xerox more.

At the end of the day, check off the feelings you experienced. Use colored pens and pencils. On the first day, use a blue pen, second-red pen, third-black pen, etc. using a different pen or pencil for each day of the week. You will find yourself much more tuned into your life after few days of identifying these feelings.

- Feelings Chart -

accepted
affectionate
afraid
aloof
ambitious
angry
annoyed
arrogant
ashamed
bashful
bewildered
bitter
bored
brave
calm
compassionate
concerned
confident
confused
defeated
defensive
depressed
desperate
detached
disappointed
disgusted
disinterested
disturbed
eager
edgy
elated
embarrassed
enthusiastic
envious
ecstatic
empathetic
excited
fearful
foolish
forgiving
frustrated
furious
glum

good
guilty
happy
hate
helpless
high
hopeful
horrified
hostile
humble
humiliated
hurt
inadequate
inhibited
insecure
intense
intimidated
irritable
jazzed
jealous
joyful
lonely
loving
lust
manic
mean
miserable
needed
neglected
nervous
nostalgic
numb
pained
passionate
peaceful
pessimistic
playful
pleased
pressured
protective
puzzled
reactive
reflective

rejected
relieved
remorseful
resentful
restless
sad
scared
secure
sensual
sentimental
sexy
shy
silly
stagnant
strong
stubborn
subdued
sympathetic
tender
tense
terrified
tight
tired
trapped
traumatized
ugly
understanding
uneasy
unlovable
uptight
vulnerable
warm
weak
worried



"In Friendship, Silence is more important than words..." Rod McKuen

Sharing Feelings

Silence is great amongst friends, good friends will understand. But, Silence can also lead to mis-perceptions when we remain silent, and people try to interpret what we mean. They will put labels on us that may not be accurate as they 'read' our actions. For example, our pet dog does not speak words. When it is not acting like it normally does, we try to 'read' into it's actions what is wrong. Does it have a tummy ache? Does it have something stuck in its ear? Is it just tired and cranky? WE have to interpret and that can lead to mis-perceptions.

It is important to get feelings "outside" of yourself, say them, share them, identify them, process them. As we identify our feelings, they become more tangible, less frightening, not as much of an enemy to you. And other people start to get to really know you. Experiencing feelings is not always smooth, and usually more difficult for men than for women, and for boys than girls. Society often puts negative connotations on males showing or expressing any feelings that are not considered manly; i.e., anger is okay, insecurity isn't, strong is okay, embarrassed isn't.

In the following spaces, when you were young, as a child or teenager, who did you talk to about problems? How often, about what?

Fill in the following questions with the person (names not necessary just: mother / father / brother / sister / other family member / teacher / therapist / doctor / clergy / friend(name)- who?/neighbor / other

If you couldn't talk to them, explain/tell why.

Exercise:

Who was easiest to talk to?

Who was easiest for you to talk to if something bothered you?

To whom did you have to be careful about what you said?

Did they listen to you and how you feel, or try to tell you how they think you should feel?

Did anyone betray your trust?

Is it hard to tell others how you feel about something?

Can you trust the people you talk to?

Do you feel you "lose control" when you share your feelings?

Are you especially vulnerable when you share your feelings?

How has sharing your feelings backfired on you?

Write a little blurb on a piece of paper, or on your computer, about any positive experiences you have had when you shared your feelings. Email it to yourself to read later?



Dr. G. says:

Some people overreact as they learn to express their feelings, but as owning or identifying our feelings becomes more natural, there is no longer the need for them to be bigger than life.

Feelings give us CLUES to what is going on in our lives, LISTEN TO THEM, take their cues. Take possession of your feelings for at least 30 seconds! Be guilty for 30 seconds when you call in sick, have 30 seconds of embarrassment when you trip in a restaurant. Acknowledge the feelings. THEN process them out, get in touch with them by verbalizing them, talking about them, writing about them, **talk, talk, talk**. Time to share your feelings!

"Friends: There's nothing as nice as someone who shares your laughter, your secrets, your wishes and cares. Someone who's there through your good times and tears, who stays by your side as your friend through the years." Autymn Skillings

Who can you talk to NOW? How often and about what?

In the following spaces, now, as an adult, who can you talk to about problems? How often do you talk to them? About what?

Fill in the following online if you wish.

If you can't talk to them, tell why and how that could be changed.

Exercise:

spouse/partner-

sister/brother-

mother-

child-

father-

other family member-

in-law(name)-

co-worker-

therapist/counselor-

neighbor-

doctor-

pet(name)-

clergy-

friend(name) or other-



Dr. G says:

Getting the feelings out, processing them, is the key to a good working relationship that enhances your life rather than impacts it. That allows you both to grow not only closer, talking about them, but grow as individuals who are sharing

a life together.

Some suggested outlets for processing feelings, both positive feelings and negative feelings....

...take a walk

...work out

...rip up some newspapers

...write a letter

...call a friend

...take a ride

...play music

...meditate

...call a family member

...listen to music

...do some yard work

...call another friend

...sing(loudly)

...pound a pillow

and... ALWAYS ...talk..talk..talk..talk! Get it out.

Recognizing those feelings

Negative feelings lessen when we talk about them. When we don't, they get bigger. Today's disappointments, losses, angers and fears can become intertwined with the old feelings from childhood, making it difficult to separate old issues from new.

As you explore your feelings, recognize that having feelings does not mean you need to act on them. For now, just recognize it. Your feelings are a part of you. Feelings hurt the most, and do the most damage, when they are denied. As you take possession of your feelings, understand that you don't have to deal with all of your feelings all of the time. They don't rule you, but are cues and signals -- to tell you something about yourself.

As you explore feelings, be comfortable knowing the value of identifying and expressing them. Remember:

-- Understanding my feelings makes me more honest with myself, letting me be

more honest with others.

- When I identify my feelings, I will be closer to other people.
- When I know how I feel, I can ask for what I need.
- When I experience feelings, I'm more alive.

Exercise:

List four reasons why you think it might be important to be able to identify and express feelings -

What are "feelings"? Define your idea of what feelings are:

How do you know you have them?

How do you express feelings?

Do you get in trouble when you tell your feelings? How?

Self-awareness: Understanding your Feelings

Understanding your feelings and their personal cues and clues are an essential part of your progress in life.

Exercise:

1. Name at least three feelings you have difficulty identifying in yourself. If you think you don't have feelings like that, remember these often are the ones, others may have pointed out to you!
 2. Do you ever have a feeling you have a hard time communicating things to others?
 3. What are feelings you find easy to talk about?
 4. Would you like to change the way you handle your feelings? If so, in what would you change?
 5. Have you ever been told you shouldn't feel a certain way?
 6. What were the feelings you were told you shouldn't have?
-



Dr. G. says:

There was a NEW buzz word way back in the 1970's - COMMUNICATION. Today with the internet and lightening quick interaction, we may not realize that communication was a problem. After centuries of anal-retentive, non-confrontive, co-dependent behavior, when people never told anyone how they felt, communication became fashionable. The pendulum swung, not to the middle, but too far. Often, people said more than they should have, or than was necessary, but this was "communication."

Now, we recognize the need for communication without having to hurt. We have found that stuffing, hiding, keeping it to yourself, putting "it" out of your mind, just escalates the anger and frustration. It lets stuff stay inside and percolate. Processing out the feelings is the key. Talking, writing, sharing are the best ways to process out feelings. But first we have to learn how to identify feelings.

"The problem with communication... is the illusion that it has been accomplished." George Bernard Shaw

COMMUNICATING FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS

It's well known that to "take it like a man" and not to show feelings of pain and hurt, loneliness, or embarrassment, socializes boys and men to anger, with two results: first, boys become men, and men bottle up their anger, sporadically exploding over little things, and second, men develop poor communication skills. This causes tension and resentment in their relationships which they are incapable of resolving until they learn to communicate their feelings. Women in turn, are often supported in their emotions of pain, hurt, loneliness, embarrassment. Coquettish behavior is often rewarded. But women are not supposed to show anger.

The expression of feelings makes a person vulnerable; it is an act of faith because it gives power to the person with whom one has chosen to communicate. However, once men begin to deal with their power issues in intimate relationships, sharing their feelings will be a part of that process. The expression of feelings is a sign of change. Sharing feelings is the ultimate in trust and intimacy in a relationship, allowing trust and confidence by the woman.

While some may not agree with the connection of expressing feelings to the use of violence, it is obvious that withholding feelings and thoughts are a powerful control tactic. Therefore, healthy expression of feelings is an important "new" skill to learn.

Withholding feelings and thoughts, hiding, covering up, or misrepresenting them is meant to control your partner. But it is not always abusive when done to gain or maintain a power position, except when one partner expects the other to share feelings and thoughts but is not willing to take the same risks.

Here is an example of withholding feelings, or not owning them, "I'm fine, nothing is wrong with me," when something obviously is.

Exercise:

List other phrases you've heard that accomplish the same thing:

Give a few examples here of what you were told as a child and adolescent about showing feelings or talking seriously about what was going on with you.

List what you feel are the minimum levels of communication in a relationship:

List three barriers you tend to incorporate into your communication with others:

Friends tell me I am smart when I talk about....

The time I don't like to talk is when...



Research and experience show that when people with anger problems change self-talk, their anger de-escalated and they regain control. When you start to feel angry, take a **TIME-OUT** and read or say (self-talk) some of the following statements to yourself.

- I don't need to feel threatened here. I can relax and stay cool.
- I don't need to prove myself in this situation. I can stay calm.
- If this person wants to go off the wall, that's their thing. I don't need to respond to their anger or feel threatened.
- Nothing says I have to be competent and strong all the time. It's okay to feel unsure or confused.
- It is impossible to control other people and situations. I don't need to be in control of everything and everybody.
- As long as I keep my cool, I'm in control of myself.
- No need to doubt myself, what other people say doesn't matter. I'm the only person who can make me mad or keep me calm.
- It's time to relax and slow things down. Take a time-out if I get uptight or start to notice my cues.
- My anger is a signal. Time to talk to myself and to relax.
- If people criticize me, I can survive that. Nothing says that I have to be perfect.
- Many things we argue about are stupid and insignificant. I recognize that my anger often comes from having my old feelings re-stimulated. It's okay to walk away from this fight.
- It's nice to have other people's love and approval, but even without it, I can still accept and like MYSELF.
- Erasers are on the ends of pencils for a reason; it's okay to make mistakes.
- People are going to act the way they want to, not always the way I want them to act.



Dr. G. says:

REMEMBER THESE FOUR POINTS ABOUT RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION-

1. You have the right to say what you want to say, but you cannot do it in an abusive way, using intimidating or harsh language.
 2. In order for communication to be effective, both parties must listen to what the other person is saying and not try to merely convince the other of your position.
 3. Good communication requires negotiation and compromise. If somebody has to win the argument, then somebody else has to lose it, and there goes good communication.
 4. No single issue is as important as your overall goal of remaining non-violent and non-abusive in your relationship.
-

"Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while." Kin Hubbard

Forms of communication

1. Gestures
2. Tones of voice (How it is said)
3. Words (What is said)
4. Body language
5. Physical contact

Ways of communication

Passive Assertive Aggressive

Describe yourself as Passive, Aggressive or Assertive, and how do you show it:

Exercise:

When my friends start to argue or fight, it makes me want to:

If a friend tries to get me to argue with them, I tell them:

I think the best thing to say to start a fight is:

I think the best thing to say to get out of, or end, a fight is:



Dr. G. says:

You may misunderstand aggressive and assertive behavior. Many think loud aggressive, pushy behavior is a sign of strength. My way of explaining the differences to them is that passive is non-action, aggressive requires a reaction, and assertive makes a point but requires no action. Aggressive action pushes a point at one, often causes a reaction in the other person to physically protect themselves, or emotionally to stand up for their honor, respect or values. Assertive action makes a statement that the other person can accept or not, but doesn't require a reaction. Here are some examples of ways of stating something:

Aggressive: "You must buy this product or you are an idiot."

Assertive: "This is a great product, I recommend it, you might want to try it."

Passive: "I think this could be a good product but I don't want to waste your time showing you."

SECTION V - Types of Anger

"There are two things a person should never be angry at - what they themselves can help, and that which they cannot. And then - 'Get Over It.'" Gordon

Anger

ANGER defined is: A strong feeling of displeasure, an intense emotional state induced by angry feelings.

FIVE TYPES OF VIOLENCE: Emotional, Economical, Physical, Sexual, Psychological(emotional)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE defined is: The abuse, mental or physical, of one person by another person with whom the abused has or has had an intimate/dating relationship.

What are some other words for ANGER or BEING ANGRY that you use, or that your family used when you were growing up?

Give some examples of each of the following types of anger or violence against others:

EMOTIONAL:

ECONOMICAL:

PHYSICAL:

SEXUAL:

PSYCHOLOGICAL:

WHAT DO THESE FIVE TYPES OF VIOLENCE HAVE IN COMMON?

- 1) They are a violation of a personal relationship.
- 2) They are all against the law.
- 3) They have long term emotional or physical consequences for the victim.
- 4) They are ways of dominating, controlling, or intimidating.
- 5) There are more constructive alternatives for each of these five forms of violence.

Does it make you uncomfortable when someone gets mad around you, not at you, but around you? How do you feel then?

Everyone, including yourself, gets angry. It is a normal, healthy emotion to have. But if you cannot control your anger, or what you do with it, it can lead to violence, verbal abuse, physical ailments or other destructive behavior such as use of alcohol/drugs or sex. Unexpressed anger causes a physiological response in us. Muscles get tense, blood pressure rises, pains may develop, etc.

One of the advantages of being human is that we don't need to be victims of our environment or circumstances. We have the ability to logic and reason allowing us to control our own responses to situations that are not in our control. However, remember we cannot control the behavior of others.

Ways we choose to control our anger are:

- * STUFF IT
- * ESCALATE IT
- * PROCESS/DIRECT IT

Stuff It

Stuffing is easy to recognize. It usually begins with an "I" statement, and is followed by denial, sympathy, low self-esteem thoughts, doubting yourself, and intellectualizing. Some examples are:

Denial	"I'm not angry or upset."
Sympathy	"She doesn't really mean to get me upset."
Low self-esteem thoughts	"Stupid me, it's my fault."
Intellectualizing	"I know she's just trying to get me angry."

Stuffers usually become withdrawn or depressed, but you reach a point where you can't "stuff" anymore and you EXPLODE.

Exercise:

Give an example of a situation in your own life where you have stuffed your

anger:

Have you ever been told not to be angry, not to show that you mad? When you were a kid, to wipe that angry look off your face?

If you were, how did you feel about being told that, did it make you more mad?

Escalate It

Escalators begin their sentences with "you". They may also ask questions such as, "Why did you do that?". They blame. "You made me angry." "It's all your fault." And they call names, "You bitch, you ass." Escalators do just that. They escalate into a blow-up and ultimately into violence.

Escalating is anything that you do that makes you more angry.

For some people, escalation may involve their obsessing about the situation that made them angry. For others, it may consist of trying to get the angry thoughts out of their mind.

Exercise:

What is an example of a situation you've escalated?

Process It or Direct It

Processing has a simple formula, but in spite of that, it is the most difficult to do. It may be because we are usually taught as children to "stuff" or to "escalate." Many of us were told, "if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say it", or "being mad makes you ugly."

To direct anger, and therefore process it out, two simple sentences work the best: "I feel angry that.....", and "I would like.....".

Some Good Examples of Communicating Processing:

"I feel angry that you came home late last night."

"I would like you to call me if you are going to be late."

"I feel angry that you expected me to take care of the kids today."

"I would like you to tell me ahead of time if you want me to watch the kids."

Now use an example from your own life to complete the following, making a clear and concise statement:

Exercise:

1. I feel angry that..
2. I would like..

Write down three ways in which you can do something physical and harmless or constructive or helpful during a Time-Out that you are using for Processing:



Dr. G. says:

You can manage anger by using "directing statements" to yourself, i.e., "Why am I mad?" "Should I be mad?" "Is this worth being mad about?" "What is the trade-off being mad?" Don't forget, "stuffing" and "escalating" statements are as harmful when you are alone as when you are with another person. If you keep reminding yourself how mad you are, you will build rather than defuse.

"Processing" statements may go something like: "I'm feeling angry and I need to take a break (Time-Out). I'm in control of what I do. I need to do something physical, like take a walk or run to cool down. Maybe I can talk about this later, but right now I need to take a Time-Out, so that I don't become abusive or violent. If I do cool down, we could probably talk a lot more calmly about this problem, and at the same time I can begin to rebuild trust with my partner."

Managing Your Anger

If anger is a problem for you, there are hurtful or harmful consequences to yourself and others. Think about how you harm yourself or others with your anger. Have you ever thought of how harsh anger can be to your body? To your psyche?

Understanding your anger reduces the chances of anger causing problems. Be more aware of the consequences.

We usually blame situations and other people for our anger, that what other people do, or what happens to us, causes our anger. What really makes us angry is thinking angrily. What we think or tell ourselves about an event makes us angry, not the event. When we look at events in a negative light, we usually become upset. When we look again, without judgement, we usually feel better. We are not upset by things, but by our thinking about those things. In other words, we feel the way we think.

Angry thoughts lead to angry feelings!

- 1: **Event** - about which you become angry.
- 2: **What you believe** - what you think or tell yourself about the situation.
- 3: **What you feel** - your feelings of anger followed by
- 4: **What you do** - what you did because of your anger.



Dr. G. says:

Since angry thinking is the cause of our anger, we need to modify our thinking if we want to feel less angry. We can change our angry feelings by questioning our angry thinking. We can ask ourselves the following questions:

- * Who said so?
- * Why?
- * Where is my evidence?
- * Is there a better way of looking at the situation?

And then we have answers our questions!

Reminder: Think about it now and you will find it easier to choose your options when the time comes. Just like we were taught to drive defensively, think ahead, don't wait until the situation arises to respond. Store possible options in your brain's computer memory. These times will come for all of us.

Remember: WE ALL GET ANGRY

"Every man has his secret sorrows which the world knows not;
and often times, we call a man 'cold' when he is only sad." Henry Wordsworth Longfellow

Sadness

Let's look at childhood sadness that is still with us. YES, I said childhood sadness that is STILL with us, within us, that we carried for all these years. Sometimes looking at old photos of our childhood years, gives us a clue to how we felt then. Often, we see sad faces but they might have been the 'norm' then, so they didn't seem wrong. Of course, many folks have had wonderful childhood's, but those who have anger issues now, often had problems as kids, whether they knew it at the time or not.

Violence sometimes results from issues that haven't been resolved in our lives, feelings we carry that might have hurt us. We don't know in advance that we are going to be violent or angry, yet we often get there very quickly. Have you seen anyone wearing a t-shirt proclaiming, **Handle with Caution: I go from 0 to pissed-off in 6 seconds!?** One of the childhood issues that adds baggage to our lives, and pressures us greatly, is **sadness**. Unresolved sadness and mourning, often gets turned into frustration, then anger. Because we are human, and can't take care of things, make the sadness go away, make people love us and not hurt us, not be lonely, keep friends from moving, loved ones from dying, animals from running away, our faces from aging, our hair from falling out. These things all start out as sadness, but turn into anger, as we find in our mortal state we cannot wave the magic wand and make things okay.

Sadness can be things that were said, or that occurred, or by what wasn't said or what didn't happen. Sadness can be for all of the times we had to move, from a parent never attending school events, or from never being told that we were loved or OK. So many things hide in the cloak of sadness, and for most of us, as adults, sadness scares us. Sadness is something that we can't control and that makes others around us uncomfortable. "Put a smile on that face young man", "Don't cry, everything will be fine." Maybe it will, but right now the pain is there!

Exercise:

Complete the following sentences:

As a child or teenager, I can remember feeling sad about (whether or not anyone else knew that you were unhappy):

Was there anybody(anything) there for you when you were sad? A person, animal, place? How?

Can you express sadness with tears? Are you afraid to cry?

Complete the following sentences(if you never cry, skip this section):

When I cry, I

When I cry, I feel

If other people see me cry, I feel

If you never cry, fill in this section:

I never cry because

If I ever did cry, I would...

I might have felt better if I'd cried when

As a kid, how did you behave when you felt sad?:

Cried when I was alone?

Cried in front of others?

Went to bed?

Told someone about my sadness?

Other (fill in)

When I was sad, my mother usually:

Never noticed?

Noticed, but ignored it?

Made me feel embarrassed or ashamed?

Made me feel better?

Other (fill in)

When I felt sad, my father usually:

Never noticed?

Noticed, but ignored it?

Got mad at me feel, made me feel embarrassed or ashamed?

Made me feel better?

Other (fill in)

Present (as in here and now) Sadness

Exercise:

Draw a picture of your sadness. Your sadnesses can be from past and present experiences. Remember this is yours to look at, and not be judged. Only you will interpret the pictures or words. There is no right or wrong way to do this.

You can scratch something out on scrap paper, or do a nice project on line in a free drawing program. Whatever works for you, but try it.



Dr. G. says:

Drawings can be very cathartic for us, allow us to vent feelings through color and texture, often showing things we can't put in words. Doodlings as we sit on the telephone, or wait in the doctors reception room, often give clearer pictures of our real thoughts than what we may say at the moment. Drawings can be an experience.

SECTION VI - Become Part of the Solution, not the Problem

"Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk." Doug Larson

Listening - Part of the Solution vs Part of the Problem

We often jump to conclusions without REALLY listening or hearing. Sometimes we get ANGRY and attribute to malice what might be credited instead to cluelessness or stupidity. For instance, when a driver cuts us off on the freeway, the normal response is "why did that a'hole do that to me?" Sadly, or truly, it was prolly NOT maliciously intended, the person likely did not plan on cutting you off when they got up at 6 in the morning, BUT were likely either talking on the cell phone, texting, or in another world and not even aware YOU existed. Also, not good for you ego, but better than thinking they just wanted to kill you. We've talked about constructive arguing, how each party needs equal time to express how they feel during an argument. But it is equally important to LISTEN! It seems odd, but listening can be more difficult to learn than talking.

Listening means 'hearing' what the other person is saying, the verbal clues and cues as well as posturing. Hearing what someone else is saying takes practice concentrating on the other person. The person being listened to usually feels understood. Let them finish what they are saying, or make their point BEFORE you respond. Think, before you talk. What are they asking for - advice, support, validation?

How to Improve Listening Skills

1. Associate what is being said with a similar circumstance in your life.
2. Concentrate. Listen hard.
3. Don't be distracted.
4. Daydreams are no excuse for not listening.

Things that get in the Way of Communicating

1. Your expectations, especially expectations you've hidden behind before.

2. Looking for mistakes instead of successes.
3. Nobody's perfect.
4. Are you withholding trust?
5. Watch your language.
6. Open your mind.
7. Are you paying attention?
8. Fear of being exposed.
9. Secrecy!
10. Assuming.
11. Escalating Words like: should - always - never - why?

Being aware helps you overcome them. Recognizing "blocks" in others is ok, but concentrate on what you're doing.

Exercise:

What are three road blocks in your communication with others?

Making Contact to Bring Resolution

In an earlier time, mom, dad, and kids always sat down to dinner and discussed what happened to them that day. Times may have changed, but "Connecting time" is an important ritual to come together in a positive way. If you are single and living alone, it is good to have friends who you can connect with. Sometimes these are neighbors, sometimes very good and close friends, and sometimes they may just be your server at a favorite restaurant. But connections are important. Today with the Internet and Instant Messaging, you can 'connect' with someone miles away, but still have a good rapport.

1. Decide who is going to talk first. Talk about whatever you want for five minutes; friends, family, sex, the lawn needs to be mowed, etc.
 2. No verbal abuse. It's a time to talk, uninterrupted, about whatever is important to you.
 3. The other person is to listen. No reactions, no responses, just listen. NOT DO.
 4. When the "connecting time" is over, tell each other one thing you like about the other.
-



Dr. G. says:

WORDS! WORDS! WORDS! Words can be very important in escalating, diffusing, de-escalating arguments. Watch what words you use, the tone of voice, and the

body language. Here are some word examples:

Escalators

"You never."
"I told you so."
"You always."
"I don't want to discuss it."
"When will you ever learn?"
"How many times do I have to tell you?"

De-escalators

"I'm sorry."
"I need you."
"Please help me."
"I did wrong."
"Thank you."
"I love you."

When I ask you to Listen to me

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving **advice**,
you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to **tell me why I shouldn't feel**
that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel **you have to do something** to solve
my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I asked was that you **LISTEN**, not talk or do --- just hear me.

Advice is cheap: You can go online and get it free from Google.

And I can do for myself. I'm not helpless.

Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can and need
to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and my inadequacy.

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel,
no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you
and can get about the business of understanding what's
behind this irrational feeling.

And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.

Perhaps that's why prayer and meditation work, sometimes, for some
people --- because God is mute, and He/She doesn't give advice
or try to fix things. "They" just listen and let you work it out for yourself,
in Silence.

So please listen and just hear me. And, if you want to talk,
wait a minute for your turn, and I'll listen to ... you.



"Success is a journey, not a destination." Ben Sweetland

Success and Stress

Financial success, owning a nice home, having a good reputation in your field of work, and finding your soulmate are all worthy goals. However, it is possible to have all those and still be unhappy because of depression, anxiety, or other symptoms that come from unresolved emotional issues. Your level of emotional health is the filter through which the rest of your life experiences are perceived. I urge you to ask yourself this question: is there anything more worthy of your time and attention than your own emotional well-being?

Take a moment and think of any person who has achieved greatness, not someone who has inherited riches or won the lottery, but someone who has achieved his or her goal. How were they able to accomplish so much? Personal commitment, hard work, and perseverance undoubtedly played a great role. Some of you may think that success has more to do with having good luck or good genes. I encourage you to read the biographies of two or three of your favorite successful people.

Creating a Balanced Lifestyle

You need: Solid relationships; Rewarding work; Spiritual activities; Physical Recreation

Exercise:

How would you rate these in your life? Put them in order from #1 to 4.

Can you have a balanced lifestyle with just some of these components? Do you have a choice? Why do you, or do you not have a choice?

What changes would you have to make in your life to create a balanced lifestyle?

The most important things I do in my life are:



Dr.G. says:

Life is a balance of many things - all defined by you. Just as too much sun or too much ice cream is bad, too much of anything can be bad. Enjoy life and ALL the different things it has to offer.

How Anger Issues can Impact Friendships and Relationships

How Expectations can become Roadblocks. Think about the following-

Exercise:

What is an expectation you have of yourself that is unrealistic?

What is a specific thing you can do to change those unrealistic expectations?

Name an expectation you have of your friends that is or might be, unrealistic.

Name something you can do to change this unrealistic expectation in the future.

Your own best friend - Yourself

YOU are your own best friend. When you realize that, it is easier to be a friend. We all want and need intimate, caring friendships that develop our personalities, but first, we must start with ourselves. Too many of us become our 'own worst enemy' instead.

Our challenge is learning how to respect and care for ourselves, while respecting and caring for others. What makes it difficult, is how we've been misled at childhood about our bodies, sex, men and women, pressures of work, the lack of support from parents and the economic realities of our lives. Here are some things to think about.

Exercise:

What is a Friendship? Why have friends, or keep a friendship?

What do you think a close friendship is vs an acquaintance?

Has your partner ever said they wanted less sex and more intimacy? How about more sex and less intimacy? What do you make of that?

Are you afraid to tell friends your fears, hopes, or desires? Why? What do you fear most?

Are you embarrassed listening to another person say something personal or painful? Describe what you find embarrassing, and why.

What would happen if you became closer to the special people around you?

Now look at some positive steps you can take to improve and strengthen your family relationships, friendships and your marriage, partnership or relationship.

You can:

listen to others better
say what you need clearly
compromise
imagine options
respect other's opinions

accept outside help
admit mistakes
nurture others
be patient
show courage and honesty

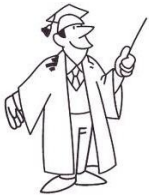
Exercise:

Of the above, what do I feel are MY strong points? I think I need to work on?

The four things I need the most work on are, and why:

Three ways I know that push my buttons, escalate an argument and push me to be abusive are:

Three ways I know to DE-ESCALATE an argument are:



Dr. G. says:

Part of the job of a friend, parent, a partner/spouse in good relationships, is to work on building the relationship, making it stronger. The poem, "Footprints in the Sand", is a good example of what I like to remind close friends, family and couples. As they walk along the journey of life, there will be two sets of footprints for most of the journey - but there will be times when there is only one set when one person is carrying the other. There are times of strife and strain when one or the other takes the load. In any healthy relationship, this will occur from time to time.

So listen, say what you need clearly, be prepared to compromise, look for options when up against the wall, respect each other's opinions, nurture, teach, be patient, honest, and, admit and accept outside help when you need it.

SECTION VII - Stress and Effects

"Pressure and stress is the common cold of the psyche" Andrew Denton

Stress

"Stress is physical", when we're under stress, our bodies react with the 'fight-or-flight' response. Adrenalin, and other chemicals are pumped into the bloodstream. Breathing becomes shallow, muscles tense up and the body prepares for action. Four factors bring about stress:

ENVIRONMENTAL
EMOTIONAL

PHYSICAL
MENTAL

Stress occurs when there is an imbalance in the above four "factors", or when critical needs are unmet. The two most common reactions to stress, both of which cause even more stress are: use of alcohol or drugs, and sexual dysfunction.

Exercise:

How do you define stress in your life?

Name two physical symptoms of stress:

Name two emotional or behavioral symptoms of stress:

What does it mean: "stress is beneficial"?

What does it mean: "stress is harmful"?

What does it mean: "stress is energy"?

What are the causes of stress in your life?

What are the three skills of managing stress?



Dr. G. says:

Stress can also be good for you, so don't confuse challenge, which is the opportunity to change, as stress. There are some simple techniques for controlling stress. They include:

1. Immediate stress reduction or quieting.
2. Assess realistically what we can and cannot do about the stressful situation.
3. Identify your "feeling" response to stress.
4. Directly discuss the stressful situation and feelings with others.
5. Change your expectations, so you can do what you can do, and let perfection take care of itself.



"Reality is the leading cause of stress for those in touch with it." Jane Wagner

Stressful Events

Stress is usually caused by feelings of LOSS AND CHANGE.

- Look at your life to see what repeatedly causes you stress and change it.
- If you are stressed by a boss that you hate, try talking it out with him, get a transfer, or change jobs.
- If you hold your feelings in, start expressing them.
- If you find that being isolated causes you stress, find ways to increase your contact with people.
- Coordinate your time, so that you engage in work and play.

Exercise:

Below are some common stress creators. Look at this list, and rate on a scale of 1 to 5, how stressful you feel they are. Write the value you give them next to the item.

1 = low stress, 5 = high stress.

Problems with your employer-
 Problems with your co-workers-
 You've been promoted at work-
 You've been laid off, or fired-
 A death in the family-
 Pregnancy or childbirth-
 Marriage-

Separation or divorce-
 Arguments with partner-
 Sexual problems-
 Family reunion-
 Problems with your in-laws-
 Being sick or injured-
 Money difficulties-

Now, below, write about one of these stress inducing situations you just rated above, and tell how you would manage it. Be truthful.

Exercise:

What is the Stress Issue?

How I would manage it?

What I expect of myself in this type of stressful situation?

When you were a kid, and your mom/dad talked about stress, what did you think they really meant:

How did they act when they were stressed?

Did they give you any 'pointers' about how to deal with stress??? What were some of the pointers they gave you? Were the pointers any good?



Dr.G. says:

Remember, stress can be good, so don't panic. Just learn how to choreograph things differently when you are stressed or know you may become stressed, so that you have safer boundaries at the time. By safer, I mean wider boundaries, with more room for flexibility. For instance, if you know you will be in traffic on your way to a pressure-filled staff meeting, make sure you take the sanest, quietest route you can, have the car with the best air conditioning, choose a radio station, or take a selection of music tapes that soothe you.

All you can do is try to make a difficult situation less stressful. I consult once a month at a small hospital 300 miles from home, in the middle of the desert. During the hot months, I make sure I either fly, or since I can relax and meditate when I drive, I often rent a new car from AVIS so the pressure is off if the car breaks down in the heat. There is an 800# for a replacement! I also select music and book CD's that will relax me.

Part of the stress responsibility can be on you, to know yourself well enough to recognize those situations you listed in the exercises, and prepare yourself. If an in-law Holiday meal is in the offing, and that usually stresses you, prepare. Talk with your mate about it, plan plenty of time for the journey, watch your alcohol intake (less chance of arguments), take a good book, think of someone at the event who you do like talking to, and think about what you can share with them to keep out of the fray.

Life without stress is impossible. So make the best of it.

High Risk Situations

"High risk" situations push you toward abusive behavior. After you understand your high risk factors, plan 'prevention strategies' to help you handle these without violence.

Here is a Check List of High Risk factors, if you recognize them, "proceed with caution" and look at making some changes NOW!:

- I. Bad feelings, attitudes, thoughts or behaviors:
 1. Are you holding anger in and then letting it out violently?
 2. Are you anxious or nervous?

3. Are you bored?
4. Are you gambling, overeating, short of money, overworking?
5. Are you always tired?
6. Do you feel helpless or hopeless?
7. Are you guilty?
8. Are you impatient? ("things aren't happening fast enough")
9. Does nothing seem important?
10. Are you lonely or isolating yourself from others?
11. What painful memories have you? (i.e., from combat experience, death of a loved one, or from experiences growing up in a troubled family)
12. Do you have alcohol or drug problems?
13. Do you resent others?
14. Do you feel self-pity?

II. What about other People

1. Is it hard for you to meet people or start a new relationship?
2. Is it hard for you to trust others?
3. Are you doing well at your job?
4. How do you spend your evenings or weekends?
5. What do you do with stress or anxiety?
6. Do you feel overwhelmed frequently trying to deal with your problems?

III. Some other Dangerous Situations:

1. I have no constructive ways of spending my days
2. I have no hobbies or leisure time interests
3. I have physical pain or other problems



Dr. G. says:

What I suggest here is similar to what we learned in driver education, defensive driving. Staying safe is based on prevention. Thinking, as you drive down the highway about what would happen and what you would do if the car next to you had a blow-out or swerved into your lane. The options are stored there in the computer part of your brain. The evasive plan can be called up quickly in an emergency as a reaction, rather than having to think at the time.

Processing out high-risk situations and reactions does the same thing. This way you are prepared for a reaction, you've thought through some of the options and sorted out the loser ideas. You learn to more quickly identify potential problems earlier, and take evasive action, or preventive action to keep things at a minimum. Knowing that in the past arguments often occur near payday, clues you to be more careful and guarded about what you say, or aware that you may be more sensitive near the next payday.

All this takes a lot of work, and yes, relationships do take work, they don't just happen.

"Holidays are the High Holy Days of Moral Obligation and Duty." David Taylor

Holidays and Anger

Holidays often bring out the worst in us. Anger. Violence. And often they are amplified by the alcohol that goes with celebrations. We all have different views and feelings, trepidations, excitement about approaching holidays. Look at the following list, and add words of your own, to tell how you look at the following holidays.

depression	drinking	vacation	boredom
giving	excitement	party	games
food	fun	picnic	obligation
happiness	violence	fear	money
presents	drunkenness	guilt	success
receiving	loneliness	sadness	illness

Exercise:

As a child and now as an adult, how did/do you feel about holidays? Fill in the spaces below-

	As a Child	As an Adult
1. New Year's		
2. Easter, Passover, Springtime		
3. Memorial Day		
4. July 4 th		
5. Labor Day		
6. Thanksgiving		
7. Christmas		
8. Chanukah		
9. Other Holidays		
Holiday A:		
Holiday B:		



Dr. G. says:

Holidays usually mean freedom and relaxation. For many people, holidays can really mean "Holy Hell." Trapped, as we are, in our early childhood memories, we struggle home through crowded airports, snow and rain to find nothing has changed. The only difference is, we're seeing what always has been there, but now with adult eyes. The

same roles are assumed by each family member and the carnage begins. Your parents will always see you and treat you as a child, no matter how old you are. You will resent your older brother, or your younger sister the same as always. With all this, how can you enjoy the holidays?

One way is to recognize that you DO have the option not to go to the family get-together even if it is the thing "you're supposed to do, since they are family". You need to meet your needs at this point, not theirs. Secondly, if you are psyched-up and prepared, you can go, observe and not get tangled into their craziness. Be safe, have boundaries, watch yourself, enjoy watching their behavior. Think of the things you have learned, look at the power wheels, identify their power and control trips, learn something about human behavior, and come home healthy and relaxed. Happy Holidays!

SECTION VIII - Arguing

"In a controversy, the instant we start feeling anger, we have already ceased striving for the truth, and have begun striving for ourselves - saving our ass, saving our ego. And at that point we have lost the point of an argument which is to come to an equal and satisfying resolution, and instead are busy protecting our ego." Gordon

Arguing

When thinking of ways to express their anger, most people want to do something revengeful towards the object of their fury. But there are many other options. *Exercise alone is not enough to heal us from our emotional wounds.* Many people who exercise are unhappy and/or depressed and work out to get rid of that feeling, HOWEVER, they must do some form of Anger Processing while exercising or it's a waste of time. And even worse, it can escalate their anger if they don't recognize what they are working on. What is important is that they feel the anger AND recognize where it is coming from. Not just stay angry at the focus of their anger. I had a client who came in to the Domestic Violence group one day p'o'd that our suggestion to be physical got him into more trouble. What he did was go into the family work out room after an argument. It was located by the living room and kitchen, and he started hitting the punching bag while yelling his wife's name with each hit. He felt he was venting. She got scared thinking he was gonna come back in and hit her next!

LOSS OF CONTROL

Many people define loss of control as revealing their feelings. People who have repressed feelings of sadness fear that if they cry, they will become hysterical, or when they are angry, they will hurt someone, or themselves, in their rage. For these people, control is perceived as a black/white--all or nothing issue.

Some perceptions of losing control are:

"When I lose control, I get angry, sometimes violent, and I feel hostile

and mean."
"I'm scared I may hurt someone."
"My friends will desert me."
"I'll start to cry and not be able to stop."
"Loss of control lets me show my rage. I start throwing things or hitting people."
"I say hurtful things to people I shouldn't."

Exercise:

What are some perceptions of what you consider to be a loss of control?

What are some ways you can give yourself permission to not be in control?



Dr. G. says:

Look at what you wrote about losing control. Usually the fear in losing control is far greater than the reality. Also remember, you are not being asked to give up all control, but to be flexible where you have been rigid.

Control your fears about losing control with messages to yourself that give you greater security as you "give up control".

Examples:

"I won't have to be hostile; anger is real."

"I won't have to become hysterical; it's ok to cry."

"I won't have to hurt people with insulting words. I can let them know what I need, which is better for me."

"I don't have to be in control all the time."

"Giving up control means I don't have to deny my feelings, my sense of spontaneity, or my needs."

"Anytime four New Yorkers are able to get into a cab together without arguing, a bank robbery probably has just taken place." Johnny Carson

A Suggested way or style to Effectively Argue

- Start with:
 - A. Your problem
 - B. Offer Alternatives
 - C. Agree on a solution

- Be fair. If it's important enough to fight over, fight fair.
- Make your problem a request, don't demand.
- Remember **K-I-S-S** which means Keep It Simple, Stupid. In other words, don't complicate things, ONE thing at a time.
- Check your facts before you accuse.
- If it's your opinion, say so. Understand a compromise is the only solution.
- Don't be a head doctor. No one knows what others are thinking, or why.
- Mind-reading is impossible. If you have a question, ask.
- Politicians make speeches. Say what's on your mind and let the other person respond.
- Listen.
- Respond to the other's point before you make a new one. Answer their questions.

And in relationships:

- None of that emotional blackmail. "If you loved me, you wouldn't do this/or you would do..."
- Keep the argument to behavior, not about the way things are.
- If possible, don't go to bed mad but don't force the issue.
- Never fight during a meal. Don't feed your body and deplete your head at the same time, it interferes with your digestion.
- Arrange with your partner a good time to connect each day.
- Do not ever fight or argue in front of the children.
- Keep in mind, fighting between partners is meant to CLEAR THE AIR AND GET YOUR FEELINGS OUT ---- TO END UP HAVING A BETTER LIFE TOGETHER!!! The goal is SHARING your lives with each other. NOT destroying each other!!

Remember, with your Friends it's basically the same drill - clear the air and get your feelings out that are impacting your friendship and end up having a better friendship without the hidden strife. Your goal should not be to destroy each other!!

Some CHECK Points to Control your Anger

- 1) Are you upset? Why? Identify your feelings. They are signals you are telling yourself upsetting things.
- 2) Become a better judge of your feelings. Get in touch with them.
- 3) Oppose your upsetting thoughts by telling yourself something good. Say to yourself, slow down, take it easy. Only you can upset yourself.
- 4) What are the thoughts that are making you angry? What are you trying to control?
- 5) Ask yourself "Why do you need to get your way? Why should others do what I

want?"

... and then answer those questions!!!

Exercise:

Now identify a recent problem, that was a recent problem, resolved or not? Take a few minutes to write the problem as a resolution plan here:



Dr. G. says:

When you are in a tense situation - take a position. Ask yourself, "What is really going on here?" Feel disappointed if you want that is not going your way, but don't get angry at the people who are involved.

You likely need better goals for yourself in regard to problem situations.

Write out a list of options you have to reach your goals. Ask yourself, "What can I do to reach my goals quicker and easier?" Think about the different scenarios, including those that could cause you legal, financial or physical harm... Is it worth the fight?

Select a better option to reach your goal and act on it. What you'll get is positive action.

REMEMBER THESE THINGS:

*Become a better judge of your feelings. Get in touch with them.

*Ask yourself, "What is really going on here?"

*Only you can upset yourself, BY HOOKING INTO NEGATIVE IDEAS.

I know it sounds trite, and too easy, but when you start arguing with someone, try to not hook into the need to keep putting the other person down, getting into the zingers, and getting the last nasty word in. What was the purpose of the argument, to prove you are more powerful and strong, OR to clear the air and move on?

Another Way to work with Anger: TIME-OUTS

Time-outs are one of the very best ways to keep a bad situation from getting worse!

A TIME-OUT IS: An opportunity to recognize your anger, and show yourself and the people you care about, that you can control yourself.

**Caveat: Always STOP before you do anything unlawful.
Or even feel like you are getting close!**

- Leave for an hour. It's cool-down time.
- While you're cooling off, don't drink, or use drugs, and don't drive. One of

every 10 drivers on the road is impaired.

- While you're cooling off, do something physical. Release your pent-up energy.
- Return in an hour, no sooner, no later. Live up to that commitment. If you say you will return in one hour, make sure that you do, it builds trust for your partner and integrity for you.
- As you are returning, do a self check - Are you calm? Or at least Calmer"
- Be honest, be fair.
- REMEMBER TO Take another Time-Out if it looks like you're getting mad again.
- Time is required to heal family wounds.
- Time-Outs rebuild trust.

Work at your Time-Outs. They're hard to do, because we always want to end it now!

Exercise:

Think of a time that you felt yourself getting angry.
What did you do to control your anger?

When you were a kid, did your parents use TIME-OUTS with you? If they did, do you remember some of those experiences? Write a description of what happened and how you felt.



Dr. G. says:

It's very hard to recognize when to take a Time-Out. Your mind wants to convince you that you are in more control than you really are.

It is better to listen to your body or mind signals to decide to take a Time-Out.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK usually quiets our anger. In our angry moments, we think bad things about ourselves, making things worse. Say to yourself, "I can...., I am....." Feel better about yourself.

SECTION IX - Alcohol and Anger

"Drinking makes such fools of people, and people are such fools to begin with that it's compounding a felony." Robert Benchley

Alcohol can Amplify and Alter Anger

Research on Violence shows that 70% of people in domestic arguments that reached enough intensity to have the law enforcement involved, had been drinking or using other drugs, and 90% of that 70% were using alcohol. Alcohol and other substance abuse, affects communication, rationality and awareness of boundaries. It may be playing a role in your life, sometimes without even realizing it.

INTERESTING STATISTICS:

- 70% of the adult population of the U.S. drink alcohol on a fairly regular basis.
- 10% of the 110,000,000 people who drink are alcoholics.
- 11% of deaths in the U.S. are caused by substance abuse-related diseases.
- One person in the U.S. is killed every 21 minutes in an alcohol related crash.
- 15% of all health costs in the U.S. are for alcohol-related conditions.
- One in three Americans cite alcohol as a cause of trouble in their immediate family.
- Four thousand people between the ages of 16-19 are killed in alcohol-related accidents each year. This is the leading cause of death in this age group.
- Forty thousand people between the ages 16-24 are permanently injured in alcohol-related accidents each year.
- In the last ten years of the 20th Century , the population of the U.S. rose 18%. Alcohol consumption has rose 42%.
- Drunk driving alone, costs consumers about \$35,000,000 annually.

As a kid in your family, you may have seen parents in denial, where they don't want to admit to drug and alcohol use, and call it other things like, "Dad just has the stomach flu", or "Mom is just having a bad time."

As an Adult now, what would you tell your kids about alcohol? And its impact? And what drugs are?

Physiological affects of alcohol and other mind altering substances on our brain and body

Exercise:

1. How does alcohol affect you (not others, not your friend, YOU) physically?

2. Does alcohol impacts my values....?
 3. Has alcohol ever impacted my decision-making....How?
 4. Is alcohol helping you or hurting you? Describe how.
 5. What kinds of actions do alcohol and other drugs allow a person to justify?
 6. How do the drugs help a person avoid getting close to another person?
-

Substance Abuse in General

Substance Abuse is a topic that deserves special attention. Partly because it is such a widespread problem, and partly because it provides such a perfect example of how circular self-abuse and abuse of others can be. Drug and alcohol abuse illustrate for us how self-abuse can really be abusive to others, and how abusing others really ends up being self abusive as well. Watching relatives and friends destroy themselves drinking or using is bad, sad, and destructive to us, as well as the horrible situations where we see the abuser cause an accident and kill the folks in the other vehicle, while they often walk away with minor injuries.

Even when abusers are in 'recovery' they often remain stuck in depression. This could be attributed to the intense shame that results from all the regrettable things that they have done while "under the influence." When people are users, they lose impulse control. Their normal constraints are gone and they cannot control their behavior as well as they usually would. As a result, severe abusers have almost always committed some if not numerous acts of abuse against others.



Dr. G. Says:

Social and cultural influences connect violence and substance abuse. Taking mood-altering substances usually leads to violent family interactions. For instance with families, the husband who becomes intoxicated at a bar and then attacks his wife or children seems to understand that: (1) he can be violent as part of 'being drunk'; (2) the proper target of his aggression is a family member because they usually don't fight back; and (3) he can later say it was the booze rather than take full responsibility for the damage he has done. Sometimes entire families must quit taking intoxicants.

American culture gives mixed messages about alcohol and drugs. They're promoted heavily, and advertised until users become chronically dependent and their behavior becomes problematic. We tend to blame the drugs and alcohol, rather than the individual. Studies show: (1) we do it to each other - "training"

each other to escalate misunderstandings and disagreements into physical aggression; (2) We learn how to be both "victims and victimizers"; (3) physically aggressive persons use aggression to stay in control; (4) and remember, if you have kids, or ever were a kid, that power, and being a victim or victimizer in a family flows downward;

The connection between drugs, alcohol, and violence is LEARNED. When they stop using drugs and alcohol, abusers are confronted with their past errors and sins. They must come to terms with all the times that they have hurt people in their lives, and this is extremely difficult. It's not that the world judges them so harshly, but they often judge themselves mercilessly. The self-criticism often puts them back into that downward spiral and leads to repeated harmful behavior.

Substance abusers have an impulse control problem. When people cannot control themselves they are more likely to hurt others. When the drug wears off, they have to face themselves in the mirror. The shame can be overwhelming. When one makes the choice to do drugs they are making the choice to turn over control of their impulses to the substance. Then they are often the ones who use the cop-out, "I didn't know what I was doing, I was drunk" or "I was stoned, so I wasn't thinking clearly". "I blacked out!"

SECTION X - Violence is...

"Shakespeare said: 'These violent delights have violent ends.'
Beware that your fun and excitement does not go to danger and violence,
with arrests, injury, or even... death." Gordon

A Look at Violence

Many of us are taught to get what we want through emotional abuse, though it is never defined that way, or recognized by the people who teach it. This guarantees destructive relationships at home, and often with our friends or at work, as well. Recognizing this destructive route, and changing it, will create major benefits in our success in family relationships with friends and co-workers. Look at the items in the exercise as an inventory, be honest with yourself. Place a check in the box next to each behavior that applies to you now, as well as when you were a child or teenager. No one is grading this, and it is a talking/communication point for you.

- ridiculed or ignored a person's feelings?
- insulted, or attacked a person's beliefs, religion, race, heritage, lifestyle, or social class?
- withheld approval, appreciation, or affection as a punishment?
- humiliated a person in public?
- refused to share or hid money from a person you were living with?
- taken money away from, or controlled the financial affairs of another without their permission?
- humiliated a person about their sexual ability?

- harassed a person about affairs you imagined they were having?
 - abused pets to hurt or intimidate another person?
 - used a very loud voice and/or harsh words to dominate or assert control?
 - used your body size to threaten or intimidate?
 - If you have children, threatened to take the children and run away from your spouse?
 - If you have children, punished your children when you were angry at your spouse/mate?
 - threatened to physically hurt a person, or that person's family?
-



Dr. G. says:

These behaviors vary a lot in their intensity, destructiveness and severity. The impact on different people varies, based on their history, and whether one uses these destructive tools on a routine basis for control. The goal of the exercise is to help you think about ways you may have hurt, or may now be hurting someone.

Often, these behaviors have been directed towards you, by your family, friends, co-workers, spouse. You know how painful they can be, and how the abuse hurts deeply even though there are no physical scars. If people abuse physically, we can see the bruises, validate the abuse, and show what needs to be "fixed". Emotional abuse is internal and hard to identify, find and repair. Using the excuse that "She does these things to me and worse", or "I only pick on him in self defense" does not take away YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to control your actions and reactions.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Now think about the things you marked above that you have or have not done as you complete the next part of the exercise.

Exercise:

Where did you see the behaviors you marked modeled?

If you are emotionally abusive, does this usually lead to physical or sexual abuse?

What physical or emotional clues/cues do you have that you are becoming emotionally abusive?



Dr. G says:

Remember what does a child who watches the parents fight, argue, yell, scream, and shove think? What does he or she learn from those parents about love, life, boundaries and trust?

Children seeing abuse is devastating. Watching people who say how much they loved each other enough to get married and have them, suddenly hate and try to destroy each other verbally and often physically, leaves some very confused kids. Does love have to lead to hate? Can love last? What do mom or dad really mean when they say they love me? Will my parents fall out of love with me, and hit me too?

Children who see abuse in their home, learn abuse as the method of control. If they see the cycle of violence, the fights, arguing, remorse, then kiss and make up as the standard for relationships, what kind of a relationship can they expect to have? Violence leads to violence. Angry abusive people often come from violent, abusive homes. Remember, you are teaching your kids every moment, they are learning from you as you model how to handle life and its problems. Teach them healthy ways to resolve issues. Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Violence is ... impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind." When the goal is to humiliate rather than understand the opponent, the relationship turns to destruction rather than growth and sharing.

Please note, in the APPENDIX there is a section about what the Law says about Domestic Violence. Read it and learn, it is NOT just hitting!

What some People believe and say about Violence

"ANGER CAUSES VIOLENCE"

I didn't mean to do it.

"I DON'T WANT TO BE CONTROLLED."

If a man gets hurt, it okay or natural for him to hurt back.

In a marriage, if you don't stand up and strike back, you'll be henpecked for life.

Somebody has to be in charge.

"IT'S OK TO SMASH THINGS, IT'S LETTING GO OF YOUR FEELINGS."

"SOMETIMES VIOLENCE IS ALL THERE IS."

"VIOLENCE IS JUST A BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNICATION"

Men get physical because they have to

Men have always been in charge, its a natural, cultural, biblical thing.

Now think about these Ideas folks have about Anger and tell what YOU think:

Exercise:

Who gets more mad and angry, Men or Women?

Does getting mad make you look stronger?



Dr. G. says:

These common mis-beliefs often get people in trouble. Only YOU can define your beliefs! As you go over the above, you may own some of these or not, but they are good discussions starters for you to define or redefine yourself.

Abuse

Physical Abuse is simply defined by the law as any unwanted touching of another person's body whether or not there are any cuts, bruises, marks or trauma showing. Physical abuse can be pushing, shoving, hitting, grabbing, pinching, punching, tripping, kicking, holding, anything done to control, hurt or harm another person.

In domestic relationships, in a fight, even if she did fall against the counter and "bruised herself" as she was running away, or if it was "just a little firm grasp to move her", unwanted touching, or the fear of physical abuse is wrong PERIOD - END OF DISCUSSION!

Economic Abuse is a less obvious issue. Economic abuse uses money to control others. This can happen in work situations, and relationship situations, when the one doesn't have enough of their own money to be independent.

Economic abuse is demeaning and degrading, and undermines a person's self-esteem by making them dependent on the other person, a power and control tool. "You need me or you are nothing." A past client would be sitting at dinner with friends at a restaurant, and after a few drinks, make his wife get her wallet out, and show her credit cards in the name of, "Mrs. John Brown", and then remind her and the guests that she was nothing without him.

"Money is the root of all evil." "Money buys happiness." Contradictions or facts? Your values about money impact how you treat others when money is involved. In a relationship, finances are a major segment. In family counseling, financial issues are always in the top three reasons why couples seek counseling, or get a divorce. Money can be a threat, a soother, a teaser, a comfort. Money becomes a power and control tool in relationships when it becomes a weapon rather than a reassurance. Be careful, talk openly about finances, clarify your needs, desires and values around money. Be realistic with your finances.

Emotional abuse is usually worse than physical. With physical, we can see the wound, see what hurts and usually repair the body. With emotional abuse, there are no blatantly visible scars, so the abused person is often ridiculed or ignored when they complain of abuse. When dealing with kids, or subordinates at work, emotional abuse has LONG term effects.

Sexual Abuse is forcing sex without a partner's consent and approval whether

it's a dating situation, marriage or long term relationship. It really is rape, a power and control issue. Its coercion or bargaining for sex - if you do this, you will get sex. Overt or covert. Passive stuff too! Subtle stuff is more difficult. Rape is power.

Examples of sexual abuse by a partner would be: degrading treatment, based on your sex or sexual orientation, using force, threats or coercion to obtain sex or perform sexual acts, apologies, blaming, promises to change, giving presents, someone touching you in a place on your body where you do not feel comfortable being touched. It is also someone's asking you to touch him/her in an area where you do not feel comfortable touching.

Sexual abuse is wrong, PERIOD. In no way is it ever tolerable. People who are sexually abusing others are power and control junkies, needing the rush they get from sexual abuse to bolster their weak or abused egos. They feel that if they can sexually abuse others, they're "strong", in control and can intimidate anyone.

Verbal Abuse uses words that are hurtful, intimidating, degrading, or threatening in order to control your partner. The motivation is hurting, destroying, controlling. Everyone will say something mean or inappropriate from time to time, but in destructive relationships, these comments are the rule rather than the exception.

Verbal abuse is something said by someone to another that is degrading. It is not an attack on someone's behavior, but on the person himself. It is not only yelling at people for what they have done, but also making them feel bad about who they are.

Examples of verbal abuse towards another person would be: name-calling, mocking, accusing, blaming, yelling, swearing, making humiliating remarks or gestures, saying bad things about your friends, co-workers, and family, lying, making uninvited calls, embarrassing you in public, making threats to hurt you or others, apologies, false promises to change, telling you what to do.

"My mouth is my only defense. Yelling is healthy, it is just venting. I don't mean anything I say when I'm mad" "Sticks and stone will break my bones, but names will never hurt me." All attempts at justification, but the pain and damage is there.

Verbal abuse gets ignored when trying to identify problems, because the rationality is that everybody gets nasty from time to time. Venting, erupting, saying all the nasties that come to your mind may be relieving to you, but you must be aware of the surroundings and the feelings of other people involved.

Exercise:

Your Thoughts:

My parents always told me, "Money is....?"

Money equals...?

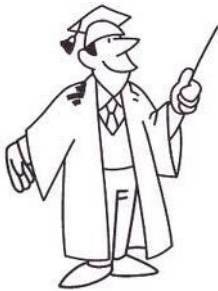
I wish I could have more money, so I could...?

Is there a difference between sex and love? If so, how are they different?



Dr. G. says...

I know a stand-up comic who is verbally abusive. He "shares" his anger by taunting his audience, being verbally abusive. It doesn't work and he doesn't understand why he hasn't become a star. The audience realizes he is working out his anger on them not with them. Venting and emoting is releasing the frustrations and anger within, while attacking and destroying builds up more hate and anger.



DR. G'S Final PERSPECTIVE

Learn something new, observe something new, every day. Wonderment is a wonderful thing! Build skills. Do things you do very well, keep an ego file of awards and commendations for those bad days, appreciate what you do well. Change yourself. If something you do bothers you, or your friends point out something they find irritating, consider working on those issues (i.e. attitude, tone of voice). If you can't change those things realistically or practically (i.e. height, ethnicity, quality of voice), stop beating yourself up over them, and emphasize your other qualities instead. Never give up. A recent ad campaign included the phrase, "There is plenty of time to rest when you are DEAD." The only thing that really stands between mediocrity, giving in and excellence, between failure and success, is the little voice inside you that says, "I can do it."

Look good, feel good, take care of yourself. Low self-esteem sometimes begins with dissatisfaction about appearance. Look your best as often as you can. Your best, not some unrealistic model in a magazine. Physical Fitness. Exercise enhances feelings of positive well-being and zest. Be active, walk, run, swim. Don't be part of what I call the pre-dead, those who have reached the epitome of mediocrity and are stuck there for the rest of their lives, whether that is 10, 40 or 60 more years. Use Positive self talk, treat yourself kindly. Don't get stuck on your mistakes, "I did it again, I always do that, I guess I always will..." Instead, promise yourself next time, or next life, you will do better. Be Realistic, set goals realistic enough to be attainable, yet difficult enough to be a challenge. Set incremental goals for big project, each being attainable, culminating in the big goal.

Keep your perspective, mistakes are not catastrophes. Acknowledge your shortcomings, but remember you can never be a failure as long as you've given it your best effort. Finally, Go for it, take risks, expand the boundaries, try new things. "Been there, done that" doesn't mean you are part of the pre-dead waiting for the end, but rather "Been, there, done that, what's next?"

**REMEMBER THESE FOUR POINTS ABOUT RESPECTFUL
COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION.**

1. You have the right to say what you want to say,
but you cannot do it in an abusive way,
using intimidating or harsh language.
2. In order for communication to be effective,
both parties must listen to what the other person is saying
and not try to merely convince
the other of your position.
3. Good communication requires negotiation and compromise.
If somebody has to win the argument,
then somebody else has to lose it,
and there goes good communication.
4. No single issue is as important as your overall goal of
remaining non-violent and non-abusive
in your relationship.

Appendix

"Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than convert.

Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers."
Martin Luther King

Commentary:

What MLK states is true for all types of violence including Domestic Violence and the common bar fight amongst former friends!

"Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent" so stated by Hardin. E.F. Schumacher said, "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage-to move in the opposite direction."

Reflect on these thoughts as you review the rest of the items in the **Appendix**.



What is Domestic Violence?

Breaking the taboo! - let's talk about domestic violence. Dysfunctional families of all types and extremes have always existed in every society, creating a continuous cycle of future dysfunctional families. Some of these families have harbored special secrets, secrets that have caused a lot of harm and pain. Many have been hurt physically and emotionally, thanks to society's taboo against talking about domestic/family violence. A dirty little secret in many "nice" families. Today we are breaking that taboo, Domestic Violence no longer is that hidden secret that went to the grave with many. Education and awareness will help eradicate the control that silence has played.

For thousands of years before civilization, and since, men have dominated women and children, first by "might" and then by law. Treating them as property, as chattel and even as currency.

Recently, in the United States, a women's movement has gone far to equalize relations, prompting government to codify a new series of laws that protect wives and children from domestic and family violence. America, in the vanguard of human rights as a matter of national policy, now legally frowns on physical, emotional and economic violence against the formerly perceived "weaker" sex and the children, arresting and prosecuting the perpetrators. The perpetrators are also required in most states to attend counseling sessions as part of their sentence. The sessions are run as classes versus the traditional group therapy sessions. The assumption is that many of the perpetrators, mostly men, have not learned options in dealing with their anger and frustration, as well as understanding and identifying their many feelings. In the classes, the perpetrators are introduced to methods of anger management, listening skills, time-outs, recognizing stress and what it causes, and other factors that lead to power and control or adversarial relationships, instead of the nurturing most people want.

In the state of California, all institutions providing health care must receive instruction and awareness training for their staffs, in recognizing and handling Domestic Violence cases (A.B.890). Domestic Violence education and awareness for staffs of hospitals, schools, and law enforcement is a key way for institutions to identify and assist those who are abused. It is a commitment to helping societal progress.

This info presented in this PDF book was originally created for the purpose of helping institutions, from law enforcement to acute care hospitals to school faculties learn what is the "dirty little secret" called Domestic Violence, to understand it, recognize it and offer some guidance to overcome it in families being serviced by the agency.

In the book, each topic has a general definition of the issue. Many topics, also, have sample questions that could be used to interact with families to either identify the problem, or to help you further understand each topic. Finally, there is an interpretation by Dr. G, of how the issue directly applies to families you work with. The complete course/seminar topics are covered in section One, the last sections are a resource of information directly connected to Domestic Violence, including topics and lessons used in our Domestic Violence Batterer's program workbook, as well as part of our book, the Family Guide to Domestic Violence: Breaking the Taboo in the 90's. Feel free to review these added topics for your own awareness of issues in families, and ... try them out at home!

What the law says about domestic violence

Until recently, domestic violence was not covered by a specific law or penal code. Instead, the police charged people with combinations of offenses under the penal codes: assault/battery/kidnaping/stalking. For example, in California (273.5 p.c.), and many other states there have now been enacted laws with a penal code specifically for Domestic Violence. In the rest of the jurisdictions, combinations in addition to or with a Domestic Violence penal code are used. In the states where there are Domestic Violence laws and penal codes for them, most have very similar definitions of Domestic violence. The following write-up is based on the California law, but the definitions fit for all states.

Domestic Violence: The law defines domestic violence as abuse, mental and physical, of one person by another person, with whom the abused has or has had, a significant and intimate relationship. This can occur in relationships of couples: living together or not living together; married, divorced, separated, or not married; with children or without; heterosexual or homosexual.

Abuse includes verbal, emotional, economic as well as physical and sexual. See the Domestic Violence Power and Control Wheel, and the Equality Wheel on pages 7 and 8. They show the many facets of both types of relationships. Actual threats of harm to a person, threats to take the children, threats to commit suicide, putdowns, name-calling, sarcasm and ridicule of a person's beliefs's or ethnic background, smashing things, destroying a person's property, putting a fist through a wall to scare someone, wielding guns and weapons in front of someone threateningly, manipulation to control, controlling what a person does, who they see and talk to, pushing shoving, shaking, burning, forcing a partner to perform sexual acts against their will, not allowing them privacy--are ALL forms of domestic violence when done against a partner in a relationship.

Domestic Violence is not "Mutual Combat", but a serious problem in the world. Battering is the single major cause of injury to women between 25 and 45, exceeding rapes, muggings, and even auto accidents.

Domestic Violence usually occurs in relationships based on power and control, fear and intimidation, dependency, low self esteem and insecurity. Often the physical incident that causes law enforcement to get involved is just a one time incident, however, in these cases, it is usually found that emotional abuse or other abuse, had been present in the relationship for a long time. Domestic Violence crosses the socio-economic lines, from the very rich to the very poor, and from the well educated to the poorly educated.

Many laws are used in combinations, or are available, to handle Domestic Violence cases and the issues surrounding these special cases. Some of the laws and definitions applicable and utilized in apprehension and prosecution in the state of California are:

Abuse: intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or placing another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent serious bodily injury to himself, or herself, or another.

Domestic Violence: abuse committed against an adult or fully emancipated minor who is a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, former cohabitant, or person with whom the suspect has had a child, or is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship, heterosexual or homosexual relationship. The common element which ties the relationships together creates the "domestic violence" situation is the present or past intimate nature of the relationship.

Felony: Punishable by a fine and incarceration in state prison or county jail, or both. Offenders once they are released, are usually subject to parole. Offenders are usually given formal, supervised, probation.

Misdemeanor: Punishable by a fine and/or incarceration in county jail or both. Usually subject to summary (unsupervised) probation. Misdemeanor crimes often have alternative/diversion "classes" available as part of their sentence and or probation.

Co-habitant: two unrelated persons living together for a substantial period of time, resulting in some permanency of relationship.

p.c. 273.5, Spousal Battery: willful infliction of corporal injury upon a spouse or co-habitant of the opposite or same sex, or person who is the mother or father of his/her child and the injury results in traumatic condition.

p.c. 240, Assault: An assault is the unlawful attempt, coupled with a present ability, to commit a violent injury on the person of another.

p.c. 243, Battery: A battery is any willful and unlawful use of force or violence upon the person of another. "Spousal Battery", recommitted against a non-cohabitating former spouse, fiancée, or a person with whom the defendant currently has, or has previously had a dating relationship.

p.c. 262, Spousal Rape: The rape of a person who is the spouse or the perpetrator i.e., an act of sexual intercourse accomplished under certain specified circumstances(generally unwanted sex, unwanted by one partner)

p.c. 273.6, Violation of restraining order, domestic violence: Intentional and knowing violation of court order to prevent harassment, disturbing the peace or unlawful threats of violence. The violation of the order does not have to be in the presence of law enforcement. A second conviction for a violation within 7 years involving an act of violence, or "a credible threat of violence" is turned into a felony.

p.c. 594, Vandalism, misdemeanor: Property destruction and defacement.

p.c. 653m, Harassing, or annoying telephone calls; misdemeanor.

Vehicle code 10852, Auto tampering; misdemeanor.

p.c. 591 Injury to telephone lines".

p.c. 273.1a Child endangerment

p.c. 646.9, Stalking: Willfully, maliciously, repeatedly following, harassing or terrorizing another person, or person's immediate family, and making credible threats to place that

person in reasonable fear of death or great bodily harm.

p.c.12021(g) Firearm possession by subject of Domestic Violence restraining order, "Persons subject to a restraining order may not obtain, receive, purchase, or otherwise acquire a firearm. The person must know they are subject to the restraining order and the restraining order must contain in bold print that they are prohibited from receiving or purchasing or attempting to receive or purchase a firearm and the penalties. (This does not apply if a firearm is received as part of a community property settlement)"

p.c.12028.5 Family Violence/Firearm Seizure:

The police at the scene of family violence involving a threat to human life or physical assault, may take temporary custody of any firearm or deadly weapon in plain sight or by consensual search, for protection of the peace officer or other persons present. The police may retain the weapons for 72 hours unless they were seized as evidence or for an additional crime.

p.c. 422-422.1 422. Any person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death or great bodily injury to another person, with the specific intent that the statement, made verbally, in writing, or by means of an electronic communication device, is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed one year, or by imprisonment in the state prison.

Note: For the purposes of this section, "immediate family" means any spouse, whether by marriage or not, parent, child, any person related by consanguinity or affinity within the second degree, or any other person who regularly resides in the household, or who, within the prior six months, regularly resided in the household. "Electronic communication device" includes, but is not limited to, telephones, cellular telephones, texting, computers, video recorders, fax machines, or pagers. "Electronic communication" has the same meaning as the term defined in Subsection 12 of Section 2510 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

422.1. Every person who is convicted of a felony violation of Section 148.1 or 11418.1, under circumstances in which the defendant knew the underlying report was false, in addition to being ordered to comply with all other applicable restitution requirements and fine and fee provisions, shall also be ordered to pay full restitution to each of the following:

(a) Any person, corporation, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, association, joint venture, government, governmental subdivision, agency or instrumentality, or any other legal or commercial entity for any personnel, equipment, material, or clean up costs, and for any property damage, caused by the violation directly, or stemming from any emergency response to the violation or its aftermath.

(b) Any public or private entity incurring any costs for actual emergency response, for

all costs of that response and for any clean up costs, including any overtime paid to uninvolved personnel made necessary by the allocation of resources to the emergency response and clean up.

(c) Restitution for the costs of response by a government entity under this section shall be determined in a hearing separate from the determination of guilt. The court shall order restitution in an amount no greater than the reasonable costs of the response. The burden shall be on the people to prove the reasonable costs of the response.

(d) In determining the restitution for the costs of response by a government entity, the court shall consider the amount of restitution to be paid to the direct victim, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 1202.4.

PROTECTIVE ORDERS:

Remember, a court order is valid EVEN if the victim has asked the restrained party to violate the order. ONLY a JUDGE can lift the order or change it.

TYPES OF ORDERS:

Emergency Protective Orders(EPO):

EPO's may be obtained by an officer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each jurisdiction has a 24 hour number for an on duty Commissioner. EPO's are valid until 5 pm on the 5th court day or 7th calendar day from the date of issuance. EPO's must be served to be valid, a peace officer may serve them.

Temporary Restraining Orders(TRO):

Temporary Restraining Orders are issued by a judicial officer in the Superior Court in the jurisdiction where the victim lives. When served on the person to be restrained, the TRO is enforceable for 14 to 24 days. This is followed by an Order to Show Cause hearing, when a permanent restraining order may be issued, enforceable for up to three years.

Note: Some of the penal codes can be "wobblers", i.e., they can be either a Misdemeanor or Felony depending on the severity and actions of the perpetrators and the situation. 273.5 was originally to be misdemeanor, but made a wobbler to get impact and attention. The average client in a batterer's program has never had contact with the law before, therefore the threat of a felony will get their attention and cooperation FAST. The average batterer is given the option of attending batterers education classes, some community service, restitution fees, and where applicable, AA or NA meetings, with a SUMMARY probation of 3 years with the charge reduced to a misdemeanor. If they successfully complete the requirements, at the end of three years the charge remains on their records as a misdemeanor. If they violate their probation, and get another 273.5 charge-WITHIN the probation time, the original charge "wobbles" back to a felony, plus the new 273.5 charge being a felony, gives person "two counts" in California "Three strikes" you're out law. The court system would rather have perpetrators take the diversion option of classes et al, rather than a fine and jail time because the recidivism rate is better for those who have "learned new methods of handling anger and relationships" than those who just do jail time.

Characteristics of the People in Destructive/Violent relationships

People who are in relationships that are identified as Domestic Violence Cases where there has been a loss of control of their anger and abuse, tend to:

- *have low self-esteem
 - *have one partner who is very narcissistic and in need of constant strokes, or approval, actually having low self-esteem but showing much EGO to hide their insecurities
 - *have one partner who is very dependent and insecure, or co-dependent where they need to "live for someone else", i.e., their own lives have little or no value, and their self-worth is based only on making someone else happy
 - *narcissists and co-dependents make a good combination feeding on each other's needs
 - *minimize and deny their anger
 - *not communicate well with words (not express feeling and needs verbally) and thus often become physical in place of verbal
 - *feel isolated, feel alone (even when living with someone in a relationship!)
 - *have a history of explosive tempers
 - *have problems with drugs and/or alcohol
 - *feel their lives are out of control
 - *not know how to handle (control) their feelings, anxieties, or disappointments in "others" behaviors
 - *follow the cycle of kiss and make-up relationships where there is tension and anger, building to a blow-up, FOLLOWED by the remorse stage (kiss and make-up) where one partner, usually the male, becomes docile, loving and forgiving--everything the other partner had always wanted--allowing the other to see this great side, and giving false hope that there will be change--UNTIL the next blow-up
 - *have grown up in families where violence has been the norm rather than exception
 - *have one partner who has grown up in a very competitive world, often in sports, looking for a lot of admiration
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What you need to do now

What now? Well, now that you know what Domestic Violence is, what can you do, and how can you recognize it, or get clients and patients to acknowledge it? If you suspect family/domestic violence, ask some questions! Much of this section is a compilation of suggestions that are included for and are aimed at, varying groups of folks from: John Q Public to Teachers to Nurses to Therapists and Hospital Workers.

Remember, the victim in family violence is often being treated like a child in their relationship, where the other partner is the critical parent, so don't just "rescue". Be adult-adult. Help empower them to make choices, acknowledge their adulthood, and give them information and support to make adult decisions, to let them finally have some control, and take control. Usually, they are treated like a bad child in their relationships, even by outsiders who often challenge them if they say things aren't good at home. How often are the victims

told, "but you married him to love, honor and...". Present options. OPTIONS are a big item since most feel there are none. They are stuck for financial reasons, emotional connections or physical threats. Help them make a CHOICE to take control and support that choice.

HOWEVER, if you are aware of immediate threat to the person's being NOW, violence that is occurring NOW if you are on site with them, or have a reasonable fear for them to return home, YOU must take action.

For law enforcement, this usually means taking the perpetrator into immediate custody, and often, removing the victim to a shelter. It can include Restraining Orders as outlined in another section. Follow recommended procedures for your agency in securing firearms, checking for alcohol abuse, providing for the children present, if any, and taking full and complete reports. In the resource section we give some suggested questions and points for the report. At one station, the edict is, "IF you roll on a family 415, with a 911 call, SOMEONE will be taken into custody, or there will be a LONG report written by the officers showing why not, and who is responsible."

If you are a health care facility or school, and the violence and abuse is occurring on your site, you MUST call 911 and report it NOW. You can advise persons you are doing this, or not, if you have your own safety at risk. DO NOT send the couple home, telling them to work it out at home to save your institution from getting involved, because you WILL be involved. If you observed a domestic violence situation, didn't act, and later one of the people is harmed. You can and WILL be liable. If you have just the victim present, but have discovered abuse, as in an acute care hospital where bruises or cuts are presented, inform patient they have a choice; you will call or they will call NOW.

If there is fear of abuse, as in a school situation, where only the victim is present, you may call directly, or inform person they must call within a reasonable time period(1 hour, or so) to let you know they reported it, or you will file a report.



Dr.G. says:

Until the '90's, most Domestic Violence 911 calls would have two male cops show up. One would take the guy outside and calm him down, while the other would sit down with the "little lady" and talk to her, often reminding her that she should be more understanding, remember her role is to care for her husband. Suddenly, its 1990, women are frustrated and rebel, they have had enough. Women pushed for and got, new laws, new recognition and new RESPECT.

Additionally, today, when a black and white rolls to a family 415(disturbance) call, the couple may not be married, are divorced but living together, or be a same sex couple! In sheriff academy training, I have fun asking the new recruits how they would handle a family 415 when they walk into a same sex couple fight. Most still say they would first ask who plays the male role! So they know who to say what to!

Each agency should have a Domestic Violence Card as a handout with supportive words for the victim, suggested things to do, a list of shelters in the area, and hotline phone numbers for help. A suggested format is included in the Resource Section of this book.

Law Enforcement: Report Observations and Statements

For law enforcement people, it is important to take good reports, since there is a strong chance that the officer(s) reports will be critical for the prosecution of the case. The report must accurately describe the scene, and include all statements of all parties involved.

It is important to include in your report the observations you made when you arrived, including: if the altercation was still in progress, what you heard upon approach, what you had to do to quell the disturbance, what you saw. Mentions in the report the physical appearance of the scene if it indicates a physical altercation had just occurred. Note smashed furniture, upturned lamps, broken ashtrays and glasses. Presence of alcohol, opened bottles of beer, alcoholic drinks, or drugs present.

Victim:

- Administer First AID to the victim, and note if medical treatment is sought
- Describe the victim's location upon arrival
- Note the time dispatched, arrived, and when victim spoke
- Record any spontaneous statements made by the victim
- Describe the victim's emotional condition
- Describe the victim's physical condition, note size of victim in relation to attacker
- Note victim's relationship with suspect
- Describe the victim's injuries in detail, (size, location, and coloration)
- Record history of abuse and court orders
- Record temporary address and phone of victim
- Inform victim suspect may soon be released on bail
- Provide a Victim Information and Referral Sheet

Suspect:

- Administer First Aid to the suspect and note if medical treatment is sought
- Describe the suspect's location upon arrival
- Record any spontaneous statements made by the suspect
- Describe the suspect's emotional condition
- Describe the suspect's physical condition
- Describe the suspect's injuries in detail
- Document evidence of use of alcohol or drugs by the suspect
- Ask suspect if he wants to make a statement, knew of restraining order or understood order, if applicable

Note: REMEMBER MIRANDA REQUIREMENTS: CUSTODIAL INTERROGATION

Witnesses:

- Interview the reporting party
- Identify all witnesses and interview them separately
- Record all witnesses addresses and phone numbers
- List names and ages of all children present
- Interview the children
- Record the names of emergency personnel who assisted
- Identify the treating physician

Evidence:

- Photograph the crime scene
- Take "Full Body" photograph of victim
- Photograph the victim's injuries
- Photograph the suspects's injuries
- Impound or take into evidence all weapons used or items thrown
- Seize weapons for safekeeping
- Attach related reports, photos, and evidence tags

Take the time to ASK questions, LISTEN to the answers. Inquire about children or any elder or dependant adults in the household.

Special NOTE: The Above Info is based on Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Field Deputy Guide to Domestic Violence. Each agency and jurisdiction around the country, will have their own points to observe, and questions to ask. This sample is a quite complete and thorough example of what can be done.

Medical facilities and Public/Private School Settings/nurses offices

Documentation, interviews, and what to look for:

A California Law, Assembly Bill 890, is in effect that covers training and education requirements for health practitioners and health facilities in the area of Domestic Violence. Though these requirements are by law specific to health facilities, they are applicable to school settings, particularly if a child is presented to the nurses office with injuries from home, or if a parent presents information at parent/teacher conferences or any other direct contact with school, that Domestic Violence is part of the home scene.

The law requires all general acute care hospitals, acute psychiatric hospitals, special hospitals, psychiatric health facilities, and chemical dependency recovery hospitals to establish written policies and procedures to screen patients routinely for purposes of detecting spousal or partner abuse.

USE THE FOLLOWING AS A GUIDE FOR REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION WHEN PERSON/PATIENT DECLARES INJURY OR PRESENCE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE CAUSED INJURIES:

In all note taking, record patient/clients own words where possible.

Take a History:

1. Note chief complaints and the history of the present illness. Does this illness or injury directly evolve from a family dispute. Get previous trauma history.
2. Review past medical history for any items which might indicate domestic violence or abuse. Include substance abuse history.
3. Document any sexual assault, STD's, abortions, unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages.
4. Medication history, use of medications or psychoactive drugs.
5. Document living arrangements, relationships, relationship to abuser, access of abuser to victim or other family members.

Physical Examination:

Record via body map, and photos, as well as written details of findings related to abuse including neurological and mental status, as well as physical status. Use standard evidence collection techniques for acute injury or sexual assault.

Record the results of any lab test, x-ray, or diagnostic procedures and their relationship to the abuse.

Safety Assessment:

1. ALWAYS check for patients safety and suicide/homicide risk.
2. Remind patient to always have options, including an overnight bag packed(with meds, contacts, etc) in car at all times, a friend's home they may go to, funds set aside, and a list of shelters and resources.
3. Many are in situations where there is serious threat of harm to their person if they return home.
4. Determine if it is safe for the person to return home, and if there are other persons in the home, children and dependent adults who might be at risk.
5. Lethality check; are there guns and weapons at home, etc?

Police Report:

Note if one has been filed, record where and who it has been filed with.

Referrals:

Give a list of shelters, hotlines, options to living in an abusive situation

IMPORTANT: Arrange for a follow-up/discharge visit. This also will stand well for you if there is further violence to show you did your duty and were responsible. Often the person will NOT return, but at least you have shown them the options, and given them a resource for help.

Clues and Questions to Ask

When working with a family, learn to look for specific behaviors that are clues to Power and Control in a Family Unit, pointing to potential abuse by the perpetrator. Some of these things to look for are listed here. This is not an all inclusive list, not is it a fail-safe diagnostic tool. Common sense prevails.

Clues that could Show Presence of Domestic Violence:

- Verbal threats to well being of child or family members.
- Stalking by perpetrator, i.e., victim is followed to medical visits and school conferences, versus being accompanied.
- Accompanies victim to all appointments, but plays control games, giving "looks" to victim, not allowing victim to be interviewed or examined alone.
- Brings family members or friends to interview or medical facility to intimidate care giver or victim.
- Verbally blaming victim for all the problems in the family and relationship, often seeking validation, trying to prove why the abuse happens, - "its the victim's fault for causing the reaction."

- Showing exaggerated remorse, or emotion about the victims while alternating with abusive or threatening barbs.
- Physician Hopping, Therapist Hopping, School or Class Hopping-defusing the impact of any one individual's awareness of the problem.
- Abusing the legal system by requesting restraining orders, demanding documents of all sorts, just for harassment.
- Threatening custody fights.
- May portray self as the perfect patient or parent, in contrast to victim's failure as a parent or patient.
- May harass healthcare providers, or school with civil suits, legal action to threaten and keep them out of the family situation.
- May split health care providers, school staffs by divisiveness, making comments like, "your nurse doesn't like me", "the teacher takes my wife's side", etc.
- Pressure to be home at a certain time, or partner will be VERY mad.

Clues from the Children:

- Eating, sleeping disorders.
- Mood related disorders, depression, neediness.
- Over-compliance, clinginess, withdrawal.
- Aggressive acting out/destructive rages.
- Detachment, avoidance, fantasies
- Somatic complaints
- Fingernail biting, restlessness, shaking, stuttering.
- School behavior problems.
- Suicide talk.

Perpetrators Traumatize children in the process of battering their adult partners in FOUR ways:

- Intentionally injuring the children to threaten or control the victim.
- By unintentionally injuring the children during the attack on the victim, i.e., child gets in the way, or child tries to intervene and gets injured ancillary to the attack on the victim.
- By creating an abusive environment, where the children observe the abuse and feel the emotional effects of the behavior.
- By using the children to coercively control the abused partner, this causes emotional trauma to the children.

In interviews and conferences, watch for these indicators of power and control/abusive homes:

- The perpetrator will assert the children's bad behavior is the reason for the anger and assault on victim.
- The perpetrator will try to isolate the children as well as the victim, keeping the children from their peers and from school extra curricular activities, and sometimes from school itself.
- The child is dragged into the abuse against the other parent/partner and forced to take sides.

Questions to Keep in Mind:

- Has the patient been abused in the past? Is the patient at risk now?
- Who is the perpetrator? What kind of access does the perpetrator have to the victim?
- Is the person in danger going home? How much danger? Suicidal? Homicidal? Partner in danger? Kids in danger?
- Have you offered support, information, advocacy numbers, legal numbers, validated the need to take action?
- Does the person need help following through? Family members who can be contacted to help?
- Do you have the person's trust and confidence? Are they truthful?
- Have you checked on information?
- Have you checked your own responses? Be sure not to fall into, "that's just what my father did to me, I understand!", syndrome.
- Do you have the information available to hand them at that point, and are you aware of some of the resources which might be sensitive to clients needs? Religious, cultural, gay and lesbian, and financial institutions .

Tactful ways to inquire about abuse:

- "Today, domestic violence in homes is a big concern, so we ask all our clients some routine questions. In fact 25% of the women in this country/a large percentage of gay couples in this area experience abuse by partners. Has this ever happened to you?"
- "I now ask all my trauma patients about potential abuse at home, do you ever feel put down, threatened or are you ever physically abused at home?"
- "Often our clients are too afraid to ask, or feel they must be crazy to ask, about abusive relationships, that it reflects harshly on them. So, I ask every client about their home situation and if they ever feel threatened or abused? It is quite common you know."

Direct Questions:

- Is there a lot of jealousy at home?
- Are you ever afraid to be with your partner? Do you ride around the block or go somewhere else if you see their car in the driveway?
- "Have you ever had your partner refuse to let you leave your home, or take away the car keys? Pull the phone wire out? Grab your cell phone and mash it? Throw it out the window?"
- "I have a concern about your sadness, are you being hurt at home?"
- "Have you ever been hit by a partner or mate? Who? Has your partner ever threatened you or someone close to you?"
- "Have you ever been forced to have sex when you didn't want it? Unsafely?"
- "Do you have your own financial resources to care for yourself, or are you dependent on someone else?"
- "Do you feel controlled or isolated by your partner?"
- "Have you been under significant stress at home lately? Where is the stress coming from?"
- "Do you argue at home, any physical fighting?"
- "Do you ever have alcohol problems at home that end up in major family fights?"
- "Does your partner's behavior ever scare you? Is their driving ever scary when you are

- in the car, is it done to frighten you?"
- "Does your partner ever "take it out" on the children? Do you have to apologize to them for your partners abuse of them?"
 - "Are there weapons at home that you are afraid of?"
 - "Are there pills or drugs at home you are afraid either you or your partner will use to end your lives?"

Lethality Intake:

- Weapons in the house? Ever wielded for emphasis in an argument?
 - Partner ever been in jail, or busted for violent crime, or Domestic Violence?
 - Pet abuse, child abuse, property abuse? Stalking? Obsession?
 - Isolation? Depression and lack of leaving home for long periods?
 - Rage, blame? Threats of harm or suicide?
-

AN ANGER LOG

Everyone can use an anger log to record anger episodes for their own review of progress. A full log is provided for your use with the Study Questions. Fill out the log based on a recent anger episode, be honest and accurate, its only for your own use. Do the same for future anger episodes. Review the log yourself, look for improvements, or places to improve. It puts anger into a concrete object, to help you get a handle on your response to anger.

Date _____

Intensity Scale: Low- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - High

Physical Signs:

Behavior Signs:

Situation:

Did you take a Time-Out? Yes NO

Comments:

Did you: Stuff Escalate Direct/process

Comments:

"I" Statements

I'm feeling:

Physical Activity:

Alcohol or Drug use? Yes NO

Comments:

Special Thanks to:

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Carol, Evelyn, Francis, Fred, Georgia,
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