

Macedonia International University

Counselor



Counseling and Family Violence

Patterns of Destruction:

Counseling for Victims of Family Abuse

by **Stan E. DeKoven, Ph.D.**
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INTRODUCTION: THE FAMILY VIOLENT

In 1984, a former associate and I first began working as counselors with the Domestic Violence and Youth Diversion programs of the San Diego City Police Department. I never thought that much of my focus in therapy over the next few years would be with victims of family abuse, either past or present.

My leading in that direction should not have seemed such a surprise. We had long been desirous of developing our counseling ministry with specialization in what seemed to be the most needed fields of concern: dysfunctional families, adult children of alcoholics, adults molested as children, etc. These kinds of individual and family problems had for some time been on a steady increase. Yet, my personal interest stemmed from my own personal family background, since my own family was intensely dysfunctional and frequently disruptive. This is not necessarily the best reason to develop a counseling practice or ministry, but the combination of the exorcism of personal demons and clinical training has been highly therapeutic for many, including me. My hope is that my accumulated knowledge and experience will be expressed in wisdom for those who suffer and for clinicians and pastors who desire to be "healers of the wounded."

How to Use this Book and the Study Guide

This manuscript is written for those preparing themselves for effective service in ministry or for personal growth and understanding. This material is meant to be used with the companion study guide. The focus is to first present the various facts and figures, and to lay out a plan for intervention with families caught in the web of violence.

Secondly, in the section on victims and victimizers, the dynamics of abuse in various areas is fully detailed.

Finally, the section on treatment and recovery details the process of change that most people, perpetrators and victims, can successfully experience with God's power and good clinical wisdom. It is my hope that the reader will grow as he/she processes through the material.

*It is a reverent thing to see an ancient castle or
building not in decay: or to see a fair timber
tree sound and perfect.*

*How much more to behold an ancient and noble
family which hath stood against the waves and
weathers of time. Sir Francis Bacon: Essays*

God's Agenda for the Family

In the author's book, *Turning Points*¹, the family is described as God's primary unit for socialization. It was created, not as an afterthought, but as a part of God's original plan. From the beginning, God created the family as the primary institution for the training and development of all human beings. We find this illustrated very clearly in Genesis 2 and 3, where the Bible discusses the development of family life.

The family is not just a collection of individuals, but a system of people who interact with one another. A family unit is just that. Each individual member, as they interact, impacts the others in a very significant way. There is no greater or more significant relationship that developed in human terms than that of the family.

It is also true that the body of Christ is designed to be a family for the people of God. All of us who are raised within the family system recognize that the best of all parents is far from perfect. Therefore, the needs that we have for significance, acceptance, and approval are not totally met within our family of origin. This is one of the reasons that we need salvation, which comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his provision for us. We also need the body of Christ. We become members of the Body of Christ and one another to help and assist each other essentially becoming a family unit.

When families are not functioning well, the balance of the system, the homeostatic balance, can be upset. At times an identified patient can emerge. Many times we observe, especially with families with teenage children, that one of the teenagers will begin to act out. They may run away, do drugs or alcohol, etc. Some of this is caused by peer temptations: the devil attempts to bring about disruption in family life. However, many times it can be a symptom of a family that is not functioning well together. It is important to realize that the whole family is in crisis, not just an individual member. Pastors must be willing to deal with the whole family system without judgment or condemnation.

Family and Violence. These two words do not seem to belong together, yet each day all around the world, wives are physically, emotionally and sexually battered and abused by their husbands. Husbands and wives are attacked by out-of-control adolescents, children are neglected, abused and sexually traumatized, leaving life-long scars on the victims. This kind of family situation was certainly not God's plan for mankind and the family unit.

God's intention, as seen in Genesis 1 and 2, Ephesians 5, Colossians 3 and 1 Peter 3 as well as many other passages in the Word (see the appendix for a fairly comprehensive review of scriptures on marriage and family), was for husbands and wives to love and nurture one another, and for children to be raised in a loving environment.² The fall of man, due to disobedience, has so tainted the world that the ideal of scripture (or even television with

¹ *Turning Points*, Stan DeKoven, Ph.D. Vision Publishing, p 64

² For more on God's agenda for the family, see the author's book "Marriage and Family Life: A Christian Perspective."

families like the Waltons, Father Knows Best, Leave It To Beaver and The Brady Bunch) seems almost impossible. Yet, God's plan is to have families who fulfill their call to be living examples in a sin-stained and torn world. Regardless of past circumstances, cultural values, individual differences, or psychological deficits, God desires to bring the family to wholeness through the power of Jesus Christ.

Defining Terms

For many the following **definitions** can be helpful as we begin our study together. The following definitions are taken largely from Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary:

1. **Family.** 1) Parents and their children, 2) The children as distinguished from the parents, 3) A group of persons connected by blood or marriage, 4) A succession of persons connected by blood, name, etc. a house, a clan, 5) Distinguished or ancient lineage or descent, 6) A household, 7) Any class or group of like or related things.

I would add to this list of **definitions** by including, a constitution of members by blood or law, to include parents and children whether natural, adoptive or foster children.

2. **Violence.** 1) The quality or state of being violent, intense or furious. 2) An instant of violent action, treatment, etc. 3) Violent or abusive exercise of power, injury, outrage. 4) Law or physical force unlawfully exercised. 5) Perversion or distortion of meaning, intent, etc. To injure or damage by rough or abusive treatment.

To those violated, the intense violent and abusive exercise of power to create injury has caused extreme damage (trauma). This creates a sense of outrage in the victim and shame in the victimizer.

3. **Abuse.** 1) To use improperly or injuriously; misuse. 2) To hurt by treating wrongly, injure. 3) To speak in coarse or evil terms of or to revile; ill treatment. 4) Vicious conduct, practice or action. 5) Abusive language; slander. Abuse can be both verbal and physical, perpetrated by the stronger upon the weaker.
4. **Neglect.** 1) To fail to heed or take note of or disregard. 2) To fail to give proper attention to; to neglect one's business. 3) to fail to perform; leave undone. **Noun:** 1) Habitual want of attention or care; negligence. 2) The act of neglecting, or the state of being neglected. 3) An instance of neglect.

It has been stated by many victims of neglect as children, that they preferred abuse to neglect. That is, negative attention is more tolerable than no attention at all.

Family violence occurs whenever one member of the family is violated or neglected by another (or in sexual abuse outside of the family, the whole family is victimized) who is in a position to act differently, and where normal societal expectations are such that they allow for the different behavior. Family violence is on the increase in all segments of society, and affects everyone.

Galatians 6:1 state that we are to restore (return to God's original intent) those who are in sin. Further, 2 Corinthians 1:3 states that we are to comfort those who need comfort. The plan and purpose of God would be two-fold.

1. Restoration for the Perpetrator (who in most cases was a victim himself/herself).
2. Comfort and Reconciliation for the victim (without which the cycle of abuse is likely to continue).

This will be discussed in greater detail in the segment on treatment.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between the Body of Christ as a family and the human family.
2. Discuss each of the terms defined and relate them to situations in your own experience.
3. Discuss any experiences you may have had with programs aimed at restoration.

The son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Old Testament: Micah 7:6

FAMILY THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE

In 1976, 1 out of 26 wives (3.8%) annually or 1.8 million women were physically or sexually assaulted by their spouses. Over 30% of females who were murdered in America were killed by their husbands. It is estimated that presently between 12-15 million abuse cases occur in the United States annually, but less than 2% are ever reported (Geller, 1992).

In a more updated report, Bohovec states that “physical violence occurs in 50% of all marriages and severe physical violence occurs in 25% of marriages” (Bohovec, 1994). The level of violence and its causes are multiple, as we shall see later.

The incidence of abuse, especially sexual abuse of children, is alarming. It is reported commonly that approximately 40% of all female and 20-25% of all males have been sexually violated before the age of 18. Of those who are abused, 81% were abused before puberty and 42% before the age of 7 (Finkelhor, 1984).

Abuse is not just a problem in America, or amongst only one cultural group. Sexual abuse and violence cross cultural and socio-economic boundaries.

For example, child marriage is the rule in India. The tradition of *purdah* (seclusion of girls) requires marriage as early as age 6 or 7 (Journal of Psychohistory, 1991). This highly common occurrence introduces young girls to adult sexual activity at an age which inhibits their ability to experience mature and healthy sexual expression. This early and inappropriate tradition sets the stage for the inability of the female parent to effectively protect their daughters of the next generation.

Within the Latin culture (including Latin America and nations under Latin influence, such as Philippines, Guam, etc.) the rate of incest is very high. There is a perceived danger of seduction by fathers and stepfathers (often unmarried partners, since divorce is not permitted by the Catholic Church), older brothers, etc.

In Europe, the problem exists as well. Though the figures are difficult to obtain in former communist nations, approximately 300,000 reported and confirmed cases occur each year. This in a society that tends to under report such events (Journal of Psychohistory, 1991).

Recent news reports (CNN International) have highlighted the child prostitution slave trade in Thailand, which enslaved thousands of children from as early as age 10.³ Children, usually bought from rural villages in the North are brought to the south where wealthy businessmen from many nations come to act out their most lurid fantasies.

Finally, in other industrialized and third world nations, incest, sexual exploitation of children, the mistreatment and disrespect of women is well known. Unfortunately, the brokenness of our world often becomes most clearly evident in the homes of people, even among Christian families.

The Nature of Violence

The facts speak for themselves. The incidence of Family Violence and related issues are increasing at alarming rates (Brewer, C., 1990).

Causes of Abuse In Families

There are several characteristics of abusive family systems.

Firstly, often victims of childhood abuse will find victimizers to marry out of an unconscious desire to "heal themselves" or perpetuate their ingrained belief system. That is, the victim believes that if he or she can make his or her spouse love them, then all of the wounds of the past will be eradicated. This is referred to as "magical thinking." Unfortunately, because of past abuse or neglect, low self-esteem and a sense of entrapment develops, creating an

³ Miller, Milissa A. Family Violence: The Compassionate Church Response. Scottsdale: Helald Press. 1994. P. 61.

underlying belief that "no one could ever love me." This traumatic bonding is extremely detrimental.

Secondly, society, and even the church, perpetuate certain roles, beliefs and values that are anti-Biblical and stereotypically dysfunctional. Such teachings as "submission" in which the wife is required to submit to her husband's abuse "for the Glory of the God" are included in this. Further, learned methods of communication are clearly dysfunctional. (discussed more fully in the section on family communication) Frequently, neither couple had adequate role modeling to know what good communication is (or what a good marriage is, for that matter). Their communication is characteristically negative and non-nurturing.

Finally, inappropriate expectations and poor impulse control, combined with significant family stress can lead to the family violence cycle. Rage, which is the out of control expression of intense anger, can be overwhelming, and is the outgrowth of significant character deficits in the abuser and often "brought out" by the victim. These patterns are often seen generationally (Ex 20:34) in that "the sins of the fathers are perpetuated," as in like produces like." Of course, these patterns are hard to break and require intensive and direct treatment intervention.⁴

Goldberg, discusses rage in the following terms:

"The accumulation of rage in intimate, bonded, heterosexual relationships is builtin, and in direct proportion to the extent of the man's 'masculine' defenses and the woman's 'feminine' defenses. It is a paradoxical and painful irony that the more classically romantic the relationship is at its onset, the more the phenomenon of rage building up holds true..."

"To understand this buildup of rage, we need to look at the defensive processes involved in the gender conditioning we term masculinity and femininity. Traditionally, femininity involves a number of basic areas of repression. Little girls are taught to repress their sexuality (it's okay to be cuddly, but not "horny") to repress anger ("to be sugar and spice and everything nice") and to repress their assertiveness..." (Goldberg, pp 61-64).

Likewise, masculinity is a set of defenses against dependency, emotionalism in general, vulnerability, passivity, absence of sexuality, fear, etc. A "real man" validates himself as "masculine" if he doesn't really need anybody, never lets conditions interfere with his responses, is "afraid of nothing," rarely tires, is always decisive, knows what to do and how to take charge, and is sexually always ready and able to perform "well."

Goldberg goes on to say that "romance is the process of a man and a woman falling in love with each other's defenses." It is only later that she begins to resent some of the very qualities that attracted her in the first place. The man is initially drawn to the woman's emotionality, which he later comes to consider as childishness.

⁴ Miller, Milissa A. Family Violence: The Compassionate Church Response. Scottdale: Helald Press. 1994. P. 61.

According to Goldberg, "rage builds up as they come to see each other as blocks to personal growth."

Case in Point:

George and Mary Ann

This couple, ages 26 and 24, were referred for counseling by their pastor. They had been married for four years and were committed Christians. The pastor related that the clients were in need of counseling because the husband was beginning to "lose it," yelling and threatening his wife. The precipitating event included a protracted screaming match, culminating in George punching a hole in the wall of their kitchen (he stated it was better than punching her face! No doubt!).

George was initially the primary spokesman for the family, explaining and projecting blame for his behavior. He did not want to be angry, was ashamed but lacked the awareness of his part in the conflict. Mary Ann had accepted most of the responsibility for the problems in the family and made promises to change. Neither could state with any clarity, how they got to this place, since they loved each other romantically and intensely.

Our initial counseling explored the beginning of their relationship. They both related that they knew that God had ordained their marriage as an intended affirmation of special joint destiny and were extremely romantic. Their intimate relationship was intense and satisfying (even after the last acting out segment). We further discussed their family of origin, family models, style of communication and problem solving skills. What we learned was most revealing.

George was the oldest child and the only son. He related that his father was a hard worker but emotionally distant, whereas he was the "apple of his mother's eye." His mother was devoted to him, establishing a certain amount of narcissistic dependency and the expectancy of special treatment.

Mary Ann was also the oldest child, but was the primary caretaker for the younger siblings. Her mother had been severely ill, and she "accepted" her role. Her relationship with her father was very close and dependent, in that he was dependent on her for emotional support and "comfort." There was no indication of abuse, but some "emotional incest" was evident.

When they got married, the romance carried them for nearly their first year. If there ever was conflict they would merely overlook it. Initially, George's dependence and demands upon Mary Ann (he could not seem to do anything for himself) and Mary Ann's competence and mothering were quite compatible and acceptable. However, eventually the mothering felt like smothering and the demanding felt like neglect/abuse. This, over time, led to the present situation. This is typical of many couples on the road toward domestic violence. Fortunately, their early intervention proved most helpful, and their case was less complex because of the absence of the children. Frequently, having children is seen as an answer to the family

conflict. Of course, this only serves to complicate the dysfunctional family patterns onto the children.

Goldberg (1994) sees the repressed responses by the woman as:

1. Passive Aggression -- This is a showing of anger (rage) by always being late, procrastination, non-responsiveness, etc.
2. Lack of Energy -- the woman is exhausted most of the time.
3. Psychosomatic Complaints -- she exhibits an ever increasing list of symptoms and imaginary illness.
4. Religious fanaticism, mysticism, and moral righteousness -- Which she uses to gain a form of power.
5. Complaining and nagging.
6. Crying, blaming and other emotional displays of pain and hurt designed to make him feel guilty.
7. Emotional Breakdowns.
8. Helplessness and Fear.
9. Compulsive homemaking and mothering that irritate him.

On the other hand Goldberg sees the masculine expressions of rage as:

1. Withdrawal and non-responsiveness -- The angrier he feels, the colder and more detached he becomes. He may tend to become a "couch potato."
2. Paternalism -- demeans and puts her down.
3. Critical and sarcastic humor.
4. Intellectualization -- never discusses feelings, but rather intellectualizes everything.
5. Passive indifference.
6. Insensitivity -- repeatedly tries to hurt her.
7. Workaholism.
8. Self-destructiveness and impulsiveness -- drinks too much, gambles, etc.

Goldberg formulated that "Spousal violence is the product of an interaction or rhythm between two people who are intensely dependent on each other and yet feel trapped, frustrated, and disappointed with each other at the same time. This was certainly the case

with George and Mary Ann. He wanted “freedom,” but was intensely dependent on Mary Ann for “permission” (Goldberg, H. 1994).

The inevitable feelings of resentment, despair over making things better, and the deeper sense of being blocked by the other person from growing and being real, make the relationship volatile.

Goldberg (1994) suggested that the "ingredients" that set the stage for the rage that produces physical attack include:

- A traditional woman whose childlike dependence and feelings of helplessness propel her to crave reassurance, contact, and closeness in a relationship with a machinelike male whose tendency is towards isolation. A vicious circle is created as she demands more and he wants less. While she complains of rejection, he complains of being smothered.
- A traditional man and woman who are unable to fight fairly and resolve conflicts.
- An actor-reactor interaction that is basically boring to both, though neither has other resources to effectively change things.

- A traditional man and woman who are drawn to each other out of defensive needs and insecurity and are regressively dependent on each other.
- A man and woman who resent critical aspects of each other.
- A situation in which the same basic fights repeat themselves over and over again.
- A man who has needs but is fearful and unable to ask for what he wants, and resents it when he is not being correctly divined...a woman who has a need for power and autonomy, but feels unable to directly take it and blames her husband for "controlling" her.
- A woman who knows what she doesn't like, but has difficulty defining what she wants: A relationship that begins on a tremendous romantic high.
- Love, marriage and intimacy are different tasks to successfully negotiate in the healthiest of situations. When one or both people in a relationship have significant deficits in personality structure or socialization, the potential for explosive interaction eventuates.

Domestic Violence: Men Who Batter

A considerable amount of research has been presented in recent years attempting to shed some light on the causes of violent behavior in men, especially the behavior that results in domestic violence. In a workshop at the Conference on Trauma and Sexuality in San Diego in 1993, Douglas Humphries offered the following findings on men who batter (Humphries, 1993):

- Men who batter their wives often do not come across to those outside the family as abusive individuals. Often, the abusive man maintains a public image as a friendly, caring person who is a devoted "family man" (David Adams, "Identifying the Assaultive Husband in Court: You Be the Judge," to be published in **Boston Bar Journal**. 1989, p. 2).
- Batterers are reported to be seductive and charming when they are not being violent, and women fall for their short-lived but sincere promises. It seems unusual to have one-third of the sample pregnant at the time of their marriage to the batterer although we had no comparison data (Lenore Walker, "The Battered Woman Syndrome Study: Results and Discussion," Paper presented at the National Family Violence Research conference, Durham, NH, 1981, p. 10).
- Only about 20 percent of the batterers are also violent to individuals outside the home. Many batterers have successful careers and are highly respected in their communities (Lenore Walker, **Terrifying Love: Why Battered Women Kill and How Society Responds**. NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989. p. 71).

- In this study, only 20% of the batterers reportedly limited their violence towards their wives. The other 80% also engaged in violent behavior towards other targets, such as child and parent abuse, incest, harming pets, destroying objects, and acting abusively towards other people (Lenore Walker, “Eliminating Sexism to End Battering Relationships.” Paper presented at the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON. 1984. p. 2).
- For 39% of these men, their frustration led to violence only in the presence of their wives or lovers; for 33%, their frustration led to violence only when they were in the presence of their partners, children, and mothers. In only 28% of these cases were the men violent both within and outside the family (James Ptacek, “Why Do Men Batter Their Wives? Chapter 6 from **Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse**, ed. Kersti Yllo and Michele Bogard, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. 1988. p. 143).
- Dr. Daniel Sonkin, a San Francisco psychologist, found that 95 percent of men who sought treatment for their battering behavior admitted to abusing more than one woman. Likewise, Dr. Anne Ganley has found that the batterers she treated often go on to batter another woman in their next relationship; each partner of the battered is different enough in behavior and character for Dr. Ganley to have drawn the conclusion that the abusive behavior stems from the male batterer himself, not from the relationship (Walker, Terrifying Love. p. 72).
- Clinicians note that at least half of the small percentage of abusive men who receive treatment continue their violent behavior with new partners (Lenore Walker and Angela Browne, “Gender and Victimization by Intimates,” draft version, published in Journal of Personality. Vol. 53. No. 2. 1985, p. 17.)
- The particularly vicious batterer usually has a violent history (Berk, Berk, Loseke & Rama, 1983, from Jacquelyn C. Campbell, “If I Can’t Have You, No One Can: Power and Control in Homicide of Female Partners,” unpublished draft to be published in **Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing**, ed. J. Radford and D.E.H. Russell, Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, p. 6).
- 72% of the batterers (in Walker’s study) were arrested as compared to 34% of the non-batterers. 44% of those batterers arrested, as compared with 19% of the non-batterers, were convicted of those charges. These results support the belief that batterers as a group are a violent population (Walker, Terrifying Love. p. 22).
- Experts working with abusive men note that they greatly underreport their violent actions, minimizing or denying assaultive behavior against their wives, and claiming more involvement by the victim of their violence than witness or police reports would support (Irene Hanson Frieze and Angela Browne, “Violence in Marriage.” **Family Violence**. ed. Lloyd Ohlin and Michael H.

- Tony. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1987. p. 7).

Few, if any, abusive husbands characterize themselves as men who beat their wives. A recent informal poll of clients at Emerge revealed that few men, even the most severe abusers, had thought of themselves in those terms. The abuser's tendency to minimize problems is comparable to the denial problems of alcohol or drug abusers (Adams, "**Identifying the Assaultive Husband in Court: You Be The Judge.**" p. 3).
- Descriptive studies emphasizing the psychopathological roots of battering traces male violence to a vulnerable self-concept (or low self-esteem); a complex of helplessness, powerlessness, or inadequacy; conflicts over being dependent; traditional attitudes, particularly about sex; pathological jealousy; fear of abandonment, alternating with desire for control over women and children; an inability to communicate feelings or to identify feelings in others (empathy); and a lack of assertiveness (Evan Stark and Anne Flitcraft, "Violence Among Intimates: An Epidemiological Review," Chapter 13 from **Handbook of Family Violence.** Ed. von Haselt, et. al. 1988. Incomplete Citation, p. 307).
- No factor other than male violence appears to precipitate any substantial degree of woman battering. Conversely, apart from age, no factors have been consistently found to increase a woman's risk of abuse. Race, income, occupation, alcohol, an inheritance of violence, isolation and status inconsistency are frequently cited risk factors, but their importance remains ambiguous (Stark and Flitcraft, "**Violence Among Intimates.**" p. 307).
- Batterers tended to be less educated than their wives, from a lower socioeconomic class, and from a different ethnic, religious, or racial group (Walker, "The Battered Woman Syndrome Study: Results and discussion." p. 9).

One of the most outstanding treatment programs available for men who batter is the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in Duluth, Minnesota. This program described in the book by Ellen Pince and Michael Payner, entitled One of the most outstanding treatment programs available for men who batter is the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in Duluth, Minnesota. This program described in the book by Ellen Pince and Michael Payner, entitled **Groups for Men Who Batter: The Duluth model.** Published by Springer Publishing Co. New York 1993 indicate the following:

Violence is used to control people's behavior. The goal of violence, especially domestic violence, is control. The individual being violent for personal gain. Thus, the goal of treatment is to diminish the power of the batterer over their victim(s) through exploring the intent and source of the violence and the possibility of change by seeking different relationships with women. Generally, their research indicated that three primary internalized mindsets set the stage for abuse. They include:

- 1. The objectifying of the victim, where the person being victimized is seen as an object (need gratifier or withholder of the same) rather than a full person created in God's image.

COUNSELING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

2. The victimizer embraces societal support for the place of dominance and repression in relationships. Thus, the man has a “right” to control or overpower his spouse, and or the wife has a reactionary right to dominate the husband as seen in other forms of radical feminism.
3. Differences between men and women are not celebrated, but are segregated. This includes much of the normal experience in the Evangelical Church.

Further, Melissa Miller (1934) states that the husband “chooses to treat his spouse violently because he has learned this abuse of power and believes he can get away with it.” Violence is frequently reinforced in society as a means of settling disputes (wars, personal problems, kids in a sand box). Also, there is certain historical reinforcement of abuse as “normal” if within limits, as seen by original meaning of the Old English phrase “rule of thumb.” This English law stated that the husband could beat his wife (for any cause) with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Some would say, “how humane!”

Referring back to Pence and Paymor, there are six commonly found traits reported in the histories of men who batter:

1. Childhood abuse, experienced by the future victimizer.
2. Exposure to abusive or hostile male role models.
3. Exposure to women hating environment.
4. Alcoholism or drug abuse.
5. Jealousy
6. Racism.
7. Poor self-esteem.
8. Poor communications
9. Fear of abandonment
10. Denial of love and nurturing as a child.

Finally Pence and Payner found several common (false) statements made by abusers about their abuse and those whom they abuse. Listed here are 10 that seem most poignant and indicative of the mind of many abusers:

1. Anger causes violence (if I get angry I will blow up)
2. Women are manipulative.
3. Women think of men as paychecks.

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4. If a man is hurt, it is acceptable and natural for him to hurt back.
5. Smashing things is not abusive, it is “only” venting feelings.
6. Women “libbers” hate all men.
7. Women want to be dominated (if they do not like it, they would not stay; some women are masochistic, women ask for it).
8. Men batter women because they are insecure.
9. A man has the right to choose his partners friends or associates.
10. A man cannot change if the woman will not.

Though any and all of these symptoms or causes can be found in the life of a batterer, they should not be used (by a pastor, counselor, perpetrator, or victim) as an excuse for wrong, sinful, and destructive behavior. They can, and often are, reasons for the abuse but never justifications.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the most common causes and characteristics of abusive family systems?
2. What is meant by the “repressed responses by women” as suggested by Goldberg?
3. What are the masculine expressions of rage as suggested by Goldberg? In what ways are the responses of the woman different from the male responses?
4. Why are there such differences between the responses of men and women?

Stress: “Any interference which disturbs the function of the organism at any level, and which produces a situation which is natural for the organism to avoid.”

L. Howard

Stress defined: “a non-specific response of the body to any demand, whether it is caused by or results in, pleasant or unpleasant conditions” Hans Selye.

Family Stress and Distress

The principle cause of most health problems, and unhealthy family systems, is stress. Dr. William F. Lee has stated "Science...cannot alleviate the causes (of stress and distress), they can only control the symptoms. The only cure from stress comes from a reawakening of our relationship with God..." (Lee, 1989. pp. 8-9).

Some would look at Lee's statement with resolute dismay at its simplicity. Others would embrace it wholeheartedly. Even in our secular society "spiritual" answers to the distress of our world are being sought. The 12 step movement, New Age philosophy and techniques, and humanistic psychology all look for a spiritual dimension. They look, unfortunately, to the wrong "spirit."

Stress and especially stress in the family is as old as mankind. One can easily see the dynamic tension in the relationship between Adam and Eve (especially after the fall), Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Moses with Pharaoh, Jesus in the garden, etc. Stress is an inevitable aspect of living in our world. Distress, however, isn't an optimal state, clearly beneath the level of comfort (peace or shalom) that the Lord has promised.

The Causes

Family stress has been well documented over the years. Many causes can be identified, including world industrialization, increase in family expectations, media, values changes, drugs and alcohol, poverty and racism, etc. Most families develop coping mechanisms which assist them in managing the stress and maintaining a fairly happy equilibrium. However, a growing percentage of families succumb to violence, sexual abuse or emotional outbursts to cope with the stress and distress of life.

There are several ways in which stress, which is gone out of control, can manifest itself:

Anger: Ephesians 4:26 states, "Be angry and yet do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, neither give the devil an opportunity" (author's paraphrase). It is not anger itself that is the problem, but unresolved anger that creates havoc, spiritually, emotionally, relationally and physically. Anger can literally cause physical damage to the individual who displaces, projects, or represses feelings of rage. Both the over expression and the denial of anger, can cause harm.

Managing Anger: Dr. Lee describes four key steps in learning to channel or manage anger. They include:

1. Teach the counselee to recognize anger. A lack of awareness or denial can suppress or repress anger, and as it were, lock it into place.
2. Evaluate the causes of the anger, tracing its origin, function and its triggers.

3. Learn to positively control these energies through socially appropriate outlets such as journal writing or time out.
4. Confront the client's residual anger, learning to forgive and release bitterness and accept ourselves as created in God's image (Lee, 1989. pp. 32-33).

Guilt and Fear: Many times, as when a child gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar, anger can be an individual's response to guilt or fear. Guilt for being caught or shamed, fear of being abandoned or rejected, can create sufficient stress to develop emotional symptoms. Further, guilt or fear from past traumatic events or the discovery of those events, can create a similar response of anger.

The Response: Most people respond to distress in the family by collapsing together in support. However, too often the response is the expression of stress in anger, codependency or sexual acting out. Many other physical and emotional symptoms can also develop but are beyond the scope of this study.

Reducing Stress: There are several things that can be done to reduce the amount and type of stress that occurs in an individual's life. According to Lee "One way (to manage stress) is called the **content of stress management**. Another way is called the **concept of stress management**." By content of stress, Lee meant such things as nutrition, exercise, and relaxation. The concept of stress management deals with the following question: What can you do when there are limited choices? How can you cope with different personalities? How can you function when your self-image is low? How can you get into a power position when you feel powerless?

It may be helpful at this point to review some of the more common recognized stress producing situations. One such area is the **gender reversal role**. Stress increases when a female finds herself in a male dominated job or role and vice versa. Other factors causing stress are sickness, job changes, changes in the environment, and perception.

A problem develops when the counselee does not own up to his problem and is incapable of hearing the fact that he has a problem. Lee suggests that "it is as though he is asleep."

The role of Christian counseling is to help the counselee make good decisions. People with low self-esteem make hasty or incorrect decisions because their creative and combative energies are low. People tend to look for other jobs and places to relocate when their sense of self-worth is diminished. They write resumes when their self-esteem is low and expect people to buy a product, namely themselves, when they do not believe in themselves.

"Decisions made when there is a poor self-image result in an inadequate outcome" according to Lee.

To raise self-esteem requires realism and patience. In answer to the question, "What one thing can I do right now to help my self-image?" Lee suggests that the client needs to identify their primary values and support those values behaviorally. Support-action is supporting

behavior. When the client supports his family, children, job, church, etc., giving them the time and space they deserve, he is exhibiting supporting action. Once a value is identified, it calls for action on the part of the person who has identified that value.

Lee suggests that, "Although content stress management experiences like exercise, nutrition, relaxation, etc., help cope with stress, there may be a value (concept) that has not been addressed properly which produces conflict."

The counselor needs to have the client make a list of things that he values. Once the list is made, the counselee prioritizes that list circling the things he values the most. Next comes the question, "What do you give most of your energy to?" What we give out energy and attention to is generally what we truly value.

Another primary suggestion by Dr. Lee is that the client not let **others control their values -- this is a major cause of stress.**

"Activating Control" is a very important tool for stress management. Dr. Lee postulates that activating control by spending "quality time together" may save a marriage that is on the verge of breaking up. The same principle applies to children who may be exhibiting the symptoms of stress or distress.

Another example of "activating control" is the avoidance or reduction of communication that may be causing the marriage to shift into a hostile mode. Lee suggests the use of a **conflict notebook** to keep a record of the types of situations that result in family conflict (or conflict with children, friends, etc.) so that the individual(s) may be able to take active control of those situations and practice avoiding them.

Stress Balance: As noted, before, stress is not all bad. The absence of all stress is death! Stress is that energy that either can push us forward or which can destroy us, depending on how it is used and perceived. The object is to maintain a flexible balance. In order to maintain this flexible balance it is important to have support systems. One such support system is conditional. A "conditional" support system could be a job, personal relationships or even close friendships. Another type of support system is the "unconditional" support system which allows positive self-regard without any ties or conditions. Faith in God or Jesus Christ is one example of an unconditional support system. Special interests such as hobbies, etc., also provide an additional support system.

Effective Stress Counseling

Dr. Lee quotes Dr. Gary Collins, who in his book *Spotlight on Stress*, lists areas of pressure that cause stress. Dr. Collins "Life Stages" extracted from the Life of Jesus in the New Testament areas of stress that families are subjected to.

The stress began when the angel Gabriel first visited Mary with the announcement of the events that were to follow. Joseph must have experienced considerable stress upon learning

that his beloved, Mary, was with child before they were officially married. Some other examples listed by Dr. Collins include:

- The trip to Bethlehem where a stable became the birthplace of Jesus (Lu 2:1-7).
- Herod's attempt to kill Jesus and the resulting massacre of all male children two years old and younger (Mt 2:16).
- The day Jesus stayed behind at the temple in Jerusalem and taught in the temple, causing great stress to both his mother and father (Lu 2:41-49).
- The wilderness experience which must have caused a great deal of concern for his family (Lu 4:1-13).
- His radical teachings in the synagogue which caused people to literally run him out of town (Lu 4:30).
- Local opinion, as expressed by Nathaniel, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn 1:46).
- The request of Mary at Cana to turn the water into wine (Jn 2:4).
- Jesus' rejection at Nazareth as being just a carpenter's son (Mt13:53-58).
- Gethsemane and the Cross of Calvary.

The final conclusion is that "Life is change and change is stress."

Dr. Lee concludes that the "how" of coping with stress in each of the various stages of life varies greatly. The need is to become aware that stress exists in each phase of life. This by itself is a beginning.

Stages of Possible Stressors

EARLY CHILDHOOD

leaving the womb;
adjusting to light, temperature,

touch, smell, etc.
communication, talking

eating

stages of walking

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

skills needed for simple games

developing the 3 R's
social interaction

developing morals and mores

self-esteem and independence

conscience and choice

male/female relationships

ADOLESCENCE

EARLY ADULTHOOD

independence of parents

initiate occupational goals

sexual adaptability

reside away from home

academic & occupational goals

marriage and children

preparing for marriage and family

proper social grouping

religious choice & maturation

major purchases (car, house)

social skills

military obligations

MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

LATER ADULTHOOD

adjusting to vocational success

reduced income, retirement

accepting economic status

declining health and strength

encouraging & assisting children

death of spouse and peers

adapting to physiological changes

children's independence

relating to spouse as a person

grandparenting

develop leisure-time activities

social and civic responsibilities
adjusting to living arrangements

preparing for death

The reduction of stress begins with an adequate understanding of what stress is, and what causes stress (and distress) at the various stages of life. We must always keep in mind what God has prescribed as a primary treatment for life's stresses at each and every stage.

Jesus said, "*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all of these things will be given to you as well*" (Mt 6:33, NIV).

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is Selye's definition of Stress? What is considered as some of the causes of stress in humans?

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2. What is the role of the Christian Counselor in dealing with people under stress?
3. What is self-esteem and explain how it can be raised?
4. What are Collins' stages of possible stressors?

People love to talk but hate to listen. Listening is not merely not talking. Though even that is beyond most of our powers; it means taking a vigorous, human interest in what is being told us. You can listen like a blank wall or like a splendid auditorium where every sound comes back fuller and richer. Alice Duer Miller

Family Communication and Violence

Communication in our life is a primary ingredient for success, happiness, and contentment. God created us with the desire and need for intimate communication both with our Lord and with our fellowman.

In families where domestic violence has been demonstrated, communication is usually difficult, skewed, dysfunctional, or non-existent. For healthy families to grow, healthy communication that is positive and esteem enhancing is required. For unhealthy, dysfunctional families to maintain their dysfunction, unhealthy communication patterns must be established and maintained. For those in the people helping professions, you will find that most families of domestic violence have extremely faulty communication.

Roadblocks to Communication in the Family

There are several areas in which communication can be difficult. Some have been described in detail by Dr. William Carter in his book, ***Family Communication***. One such roadblock is the "right words at the wrong time." In communication, as in many areas of life, timing is everything. In violent or abusive family systems, the wrong word seems to be spoken at the right time, and the right word at the wrong time. Because of the defensive and vulnerable state of the family members, seldom is there any clear communication presented and rarely is there any helpful communication presented.

Secondly, "overstatement of a valid point" can cause serious communication blocks. Some would call this form of communication nagging or badgering. Rather than simply stating a point, dysfunctional families will overstate their position until they receive an unconscious, yet predetermined, response, whether it be withdrawal, aggression, or whining. The self-fulfilling prophecy of the others' response is fulfilled. Lectures and sermons are frequently given, but rarely heard in violent family systems. Members of violent families learn to "tune out" early in life to avoid the unpleasant lecture. Often resentment builds, setting the stage for emotional/physical outbursts.

Other roadblocks of significance include "mind reading" (always predicting what the family member will say or do), finger pointing, constantly "projecting blame" and accusing the other for the family's problems, and gossip, where nothing is truly confidential. This is part of the family betrayal, and often is a part of a stressful triangulation of communication between

mom, dad and one or more siblings. For more detailed information on communication and its development in the family, the reader is referred to the author's book Marriage and Family Life: A Christian Perspective.

The Results. As you can imagine, the results of faulty communication are broken or damaged relationships. Lack of understanding leads to confusion, mistrust, fear, and even violence. The importance of clear communication modeled by the Christian care-giver is extremely important. Much more will be said on this subsequently in the chapters on treatment.

The Bible and Communication

The Word of God speaks volumes on this topic. However, the Apostle Paul speaks most profoundly on the importance of Godly communication in Ephesians 4:25-32:

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin.' Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Honest, loving and clear communication is lacking in the violent family system. But with the grace and mercy of God and judicious application of God's Word, positive, Godly communication can be developed.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the various roadblocks to communication in the family?
2. What does the Bible say about communication.
3. Make a list of scriptures that refer to good or bad communication.

*A continual dropping on a very rainy day and
a contentious woman are alike.*

Prov 27:15 KJV

It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

Prov 21:9 KJV

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

Prov 21:19 KJV

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

Prov 25:24 KJV

Spousal Abuse

Spousal abuse usually involves abuse of the wife, but more and more frequently these days the husband may be the victim. Spousal abuse has reached epidemic proportions in western cultures. It has long been a very real problem in other parts of the world. **S**The national pastime of "bashing" one's spouse is definitely on the increase. Spousal abuse, or marital violence, occurs in all segments of society, including the church (Brewer. 1990).

Marital violence can be defined as any physical, emotional, sexual, economic or verbal violence or abuse which is ongoing and persistent, causing severe distress to one spouse or the other. Battering or abuse creates a pattern of learned helplessness, a feeling of worthlessness and hopelessness, and intense fear in the victim.

Marital Violence, as defined by Brewer, can be expressed as follows (Brewer. 1990):

It is estimated that 1 out of 10 women are battered. Spouse battering is the nation's most unreported crime -- less reported than rape. The more it happens the more likely it is to be repeated. Battering can present itself in three major ways:

1. physical abuse
2. psychological/emotional abuse
3. sexual abuse

Physical abuse refers to brutal rather than accidental physical contact. Violence includes any act or behavior that inflicts bodily harm.

Major physical assaults include:

Slaps and punches to the face and head

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Kicking, stomping and punching all over the body

Choking to the point of unconsciousness.

Pushing or throwing her across the room or down stairs.

Severe shaking.

Arms bruised or broken limbs.

Burns from irons or cigarettes.

Broken ribs and arms resulting from woman raising her arms to protect herself.

In addition to physical abuse there is the problem of psychological/emotional abuse. This type of abuse consists of overt and veiled threats of violence as well as the consistent tearing down and ridicule of a spouse's character. This form of abuse has the effect of lowering one's self-esteem and leads to a feeling of learned helplessness. These threats of violence can include (Brewer. 1990):

- a. Verbal expressions of intent to inflict bodily harm.
- b. Threatening gestures.
- c. Injury to pets.
- d. Destruction of property.
- e. Wielding of weapons.
- f. Any other intimidating verbal or non-verbal behavior.

This type of abuse often leads to the more physical abuse, but even without an act of physical injury, the potential damage to the victim can be devastating. It should be noted that there is seldom only one victim.

More often than not, children suffer as victims of the psychological/ emotional abuse that is directed against a spouse. Brewer also noted that "threats of violence may be more damaging than the violent act itself."

An equally sinister form of abuse is that of **isolation**. Here the spouse may be kept from having any contact with anyone except the abuser. The abuser actually works at weaning the spouse away from everyone. He may intercept her mail, spy on her, and/or demand a complete accounting of time, etc.

At times abuse takes the form of **humiliation and degradation** once the victim/spouse is isolated. The key communication given is that no one would care for or even want the victimized spouse.

The enforcement of trivial demands can be extremely abusive behavior. The abuser insists on compliance with trivial demands such as food, household arrangements, clothing, children, money and conversation.

In this form of abuse the victim spends enormous energy focusing on the demands of the abuser in fear of the potential rage that may result. Everything becomes important in terms of how it will affect the abuser.

Co-dependency, similar to that of alcoholism, will develop, entrenching the victim.

Often wives that are abused physically are also victims of **sexual abuse**. Sexual abuse may take the form of **marital rape** in which the unwilling partner is forced to participate in intercourse or other sexual acts against his/her will.

Marital rape can also involve forced sex in front of children, forced sex during sickness, forced sex after a beating, but always involves a total disregard for the spouse's self-esteem and sexuality. The abused spouse becomes a sex object. The abuser constantly minimizes the importance of the spouse's feeling about sex and criticizes her/his sexuality. Often sexual abuse involves the calling of names (whore, frigid, impotent, etc.).

Sexual abuse often includes some form of sexual perversity.

Most sexual abuse is committed at home involving the perpetrator (usually the husband) and the spouse and often takes place in the kitchen, the bedroom or even the living room. Usually this form of abuse takes place in the evening on a weekend. It is often preceded by high stress and arguments. Most incidents occur in a cycle, best described in a book by Lenore Walker (Walker. 1979) and include:

Tension Building: This phase is evidenced by mounting stresses and tension, gradual escalation of incidents and irritation over things like finances and/or children. At time some expressions of dissatisfaction are present, but not often dealt with directly. Feelings are repressed, becoming more and more intense; communication and cooperation diminish. Dissatisfaction and hostilities build and a minor battering incident occurs. At this level the spouse attempts to rationalize their behavior.

Strangely enough, the wife often identifies with the batterer's faulty reasoning. She may try to placate the husband, attempting not to respond to his hostile action. Tension increase as the wife finds she is unable to control her husband's angry responses.

This is the point where the learned helplessness syndrome sets in, leaving the victim with the feeling of being powerless to prevent the rest of the cycle from happening. Every move the victim makes is subject to misinterpretation, and the wife usually withdraws in order to not make things worse.

The husband, seeing the spouse's withdrawal, reacts with more intense anger. Tension becomes unbearable, and the wife may at this point precipitate or bring on the inevitable

explosion so that she can minimize or somewhat control the pain or injury. It almost appears as though the woman is "asking" for the pain, but this could not be further from the truth.

Alcohol often is a part of the violent episode. This entire episode may last from one hour to several months.

Violent Episodes. The uncontrollable tensions that have built up in the first phase of the violence scenario will usually erupt in what Walker has called "Violent Episodes." The anticipation of what may occur creates severe psychological stress for the battered spouse. Prior to the actual violent outburst there often exists a feeling that the outburst is inevitable. The batterer unleashes his aggression toward the wife (or husband).

During the abuse, the woman may psychologically disassociate her mind from her body in an effort to cope with the pain. However, there is a complete lack of predictability and control during this cycle.

Just before the violence occurs, the perpetrator may withdraw and not communicate because of a feeling of inability to compete with the spouse's verbal arguments. This withdrawal results in a heightened frustration. The withdrawal is a signal to the spouse that their mate is about to lose it.

After the abuse the husband and wife both feel victimized. It is also true that many acts of violence are not preceded by any verbal arguments, but are based totally on impulse. This phase can last from a few minutes to 24-48 hours.

Honeymoon Phase. The final phase, discussed by Walker is the honeymoon phase. It is the period immediately following the second phase and usually brings a period of calm. Tensions have been dissipated for the moment. There may be apologies by the abusing spouse, and some acts of extreme kindness may be shown.

The husband may beg for forgiveness, promising to never let the abuse happen again. His behavior may resemble that of a little boy caught in a transgression. The confession and subsequent request for forgiveness are rather shallow, although he may really believe that he will not repeat the action and never allow himself to become so violent again.

The battered wife may desire to leave her abusive husband, but often is dissuaded from leaving by relatives and friends of the husband or even an unsuspecting pastor, whom he has engaged to plead his cause. Guilt and a sincere desire to believe that things will be better may precipitate a decision by the wife to stay on with an abusive husband.

The remorseful attitude of the husband and the subsequent lavishing of kindness may cause the battered wife to catch a glimpse of the original dream of true love. All of this causes her to stay in the relationship.

During the make-up part of this phase there may come a level of intimacy that is at its very best in the lives of the couple. The wife tends to believe that the behavior she sees in her husband during the honeymoon stage is evidence of what her husband is really like. She

begins to believe that she can be the source of healing for her husband. During this period of relative bliss, the battered wife finds it difficult to even think about leaving her husband.

At this time there is somewhat of a shift of power with the wife feeling that she is in fact in control. Over time the honeymoon cycle of violence shifts. The honeymoon periods become shorter and shorter, and the violence increases.

Forces Against Change

According to Geller (1992), there are five primary forces against changing the violent family dance. They include:

Conspiracy of Silence. - Since no one in the family desires exposure due to shame and fear, an unconscious code or conspiracy of silence exists. Though everyone wants the violence to stop, there is a dread of confrontation and exposure, two necessary components of change.

Societal attitudes. Societal attitudes include such beliefs as “adults make their own choices.” Women are blamed for staying in the violent relationship. The Judeo-Christian ethic prohibiting divorce as well as the concept that you “reap what you sow”, reinforce the societal pressure to stay.

Clergy’s non-support. Some ministers teach that one should stay for the sake of the children. 21% of clergy state that no amount of abuse warrants a wife leaving her husband. However, the majority felt it was appropriate or permissible to separate if the abuse was “severe” (undefined). The teaching on submission was cited as the primary reason to endure.

Substance abuse. Substance abuse, as we will see in greater detail later, is often a major contributor to abusive situations.

Women stay due to financial pressures. Women often feel trapped and helpless, without the personal empowerment to act.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the major issues of spousal abuse? What are some of the ways spousal abuse can be included as forms of spousal abuse? Are there other forms of spousal abuse that you would add to the list?
2. What is meant by the term co-dependency?
3. What constitutes marital rape? What are its causes and the legal and ethical ramifications?
4. What are the phases of spousal abuse as presented by Walker.

Jellinek's Disease (alcoholism) is responsible for:

50 percent of all auto accidents

80 percent of all home violence

30 percent of all suicides

60 percent of all child abuse

65 percent of all drownings

It is estimated that when a woman contracts the disease, her husband leaves her in nine out of ten cases; when a man contracts it, his wife leaves in one out of ten cases.

Kathleen Whalen Fitzgerald

Alcohol/Drugs and Abuse

Much has been written on the devastating effect that substance abuse (alcohol and illegal drugs) has had on western society. I will not attempt to develop this theme too deeply.

Increasing evidence points to a significant correlation between alcohol abuse and domestic violence (including sexual abuse). Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, creating symptoms of greatly reduced or lack of social inhibition, poorer than normal impulse control, feelings of euphoria, lessened coordination, and reduced judgment. This, added to severe mental distress, financial pressure, etc., can set the stage for "acting out" behavior. Alcohol and drug abuse are not the causative factors in violent/abusive behavior, but frequently the abuse of alcohol and/or drugs can be the catalyst for violence. Anger and hostility, as well as immature attempts at sexual/emotional fulfillment, are generated by faulty communication between couples and their family's members, not directly due to the intake of alcohol.

Obviously, as Christians, no substance should control our lives. We have been bought with a price (1 Co 6:20). We are to yield our bodies as instruments of righteousness, not become involved in the abuse of substances. Yet as a Christian care-giver, it is essential to look for alcohol or other substance abuse where forms of violence are present in the family system. In review, alcohol/drugs will lower good judgment, decrease inhibitions, and give "permission" to impulsive feelings of rage and hostility, as well as to sexual/emotional "acting out".

Where present, alcohol/drug dependency, must be treated as part of the intervention in the family. However, a "dry" alcoholic can often express repressed hostility even more when dry, since alcohol/drug consumption was often used as a stress reducer or conflict avoider. In either case, alcohol/substance abuse must be evaluated and often treated as part of the treatment strategy.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are some of the problem of alcohol and drug abuse in relationship to family violence?
2. What are some of the evidences of alcohol or drug abuse?

Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on their environment, and especially on their children, than the un-lived lives of the parent. Carl Jung

Adolescents will tend to treat their younger siblings and their parents in the same way that they were treated by their parents throughout their lives.

JJB

Adolescent Violence in the Family

Most of us were shocked as we watched the burning, looting and violence demonstrated in the infamous Rodney King/L.A. riots. Men and women destroyed property, caused bodily harm, looted and pillaged in response to a perceived injustice and a repressive society. Years of frustration, suspicion and hatred erupted, spreading to other cities across our land (America).

As I watched the riots from afar (while praying for many of my friends and neighbors in L.A.), I could not help but see the intense expression of rage coming through the adolescents and pre-adolescents of the community at large. This is but a microcosm of the battles occurring in families daily, even in Christian homes.

Now, lest I become too cynical, in defense, adolescence is not a disease (though many parents believe they may die from it). Most teenagers not only survive, but thrive during the years of identity formation, hormones and zits. But for too many, family stress leads to family violence against parents and younger siblings.

Abuse by Adolescents

What are some of the causes of abuse by adolescents and how can they be handled?

Family problems. Adolescents are caught in a unique struggle. They are neither child nor adult. They carry some of both, the naiveté of childhood, with the inherent needs, and the power (both physical and emotional) of an adult. As children grow into adulthood, especially if they have been overly coerced or abused, or have observed abuse as a resolution to stress or family problems, they will likely repeat the patterns in their family and the community at large. There are certain names that have been given to the roles that people will play in order to attempt to resolve the problems inherent in an abusive family. They have best been developed by Virginia Satir, a well-known psycho-counselor and educator. They include:

The enabler. Often the spouse or parent, though it can be one of the other children, the enabler is usually the one the abuser depends upon the most. This family member becomes more and more responsible for the family to make up for the lack of control of the abuser or the lack of input into the family.

The family hero. This individual is especially sensitive to the family's needs. They feel responsible for its pain. The hero does everything possible to improve the situation by trying to present him or herself as a success in the environment outside the home.

The scapegoat. This individual does not work as hard as the hero to achieve recognition, but instead, pulls away in a destructive manner by getting into trouble, hurting themselves or withdrawing. In doing this they attempt to bring the attention of the family away from the abuser and onto themselves.

The lost child. This child offers relief to the family by taking care of personal problems and avoiding trouble. The family ignores the child who is then left to face problems all alone. In many cases, this child is the one who suffers the most pain within the family while seeming to be the least affected.

The mascot. This person provides relief for the family through humor. By being the "class clown" they mask their own pain and loneliness for the sake of what seems to be the good of the family.

In each case, the adolescent may, under the right circumstances, explode out of their dysfunctional role, often violently in an attempt to get relief or help in the family.

What intervention can occur that will assist the family?

Intervention. Intervention is designed to motivate the abuser to seek help. Without help, whether by intervention of the Spirit of God through a tremendous conversion experience, or through the loving support of a family, the abuser is likely to continue to abuse as a way to meet their own desperate needs.

Treatment. Without exception, Christ-centered treatment of the abuser and the victim is needed. An abusive adolescent will become an abusive adult. I have said many times, "The most normalized, well integrated human being that does not know Christ, is just as readily going to hell as one that is a total mess." With that in mind, I believe it is essential for an abuser to come to know Christ as their personal savior. They must be filled with the Holy Spirit if they are ever going to be able to overcome the temptations of the devil and be able to walk in victory over their abusive patterns.

Re-socializing. Along with that, most abusers, especially teenagers, must learn how to re-socialize themselves. In most cases, they have had very little or poor parenting. They need to re-learn how to live their lives in a more appropriate manner. This is where 12-step groups, such as these developed by Alcoholics Anonymous, but in a Christian vein, counseling services, home groups and other related services, help to re-integrate the individual abuser and teach them how to live a Christian life.

Learning. There is certainly no substitute for the abuser learning the Word of God and applying it to their life. They need a strict and disciplined approach because they

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have learned to be very undisciplined and very self-absorbed. The counselor involved with an abuser must be wary and use wisdom in ministering to them.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are some of the causes of adolescent abuse in the family?
2. What are the various names of the roles that Satir has given to individuals in the family?
3. What are some of the possible interventions that can assist the family.

Child Abuse

In answering the question "Why Child Abuse Happens," Blair Justice and Rita Justice state, "The vast majority of people who have physically abused children are not maniacs or even parents who do not love their children. As a group they defy psychiatric classification. They come from all socioeconomic groups and all educational levels" (in Justice and Justice, 1975).

The question is, therefore, how then do they differ from parents who do not abuse their children?

Drs. Justice and Justice quote Dr. Gill as saying "...reports of child abuse were heavily concentrated among the poor. Child abuse, he suggested, may be regarded largely as being one more aspect of the poverty syndrome".

A similar viewpoint is presented by Gelles' theory of child abuse. He saw child abuse as a particular form of adaptation to stress. He also considered such factors as societal values and norms, socialization experience, and psychopathic states. But his theory mainly emphasizes such stress areas as socioeconomic position of parents, marital stresses, excessive number of children, unemployment, social isolation, unwanted or "problem" children, and precipitating situations such as an argument or child misbehavior (Gelles, 1979).

Perhaps the foremost theory in the field of child abuse was offered by Kempe, Helfer, and their colleagues. This group of researchers presented a "three-factor" theory: First, the parents must have the potential to abuse, primarily as a result of receiving an inadequate "mothering imprint" in their own childhood. Second, the abused child must be seen by the parent as being "special" or different, whether he or she really is or not. Third, a crisis must occur that triggers the abuse.

Abusing parents have in their lives what Holmes and Rahe call a "chronic state of life crises" Justice and Justice also suggest that in Selye's, three stages of responding to stress it could be said that the abusive parents had no sooner gone through the first phase of shock and countershock and had begun to enter the second stage of resistance when a new crisis came along, and they plunged into the third stage -- exhaustion. It is this stage of exhaustion, when defenses are lowest and controls on "acting out" behavior are weakest, that abuse occurs.

Helfer noted that "Most abusive parents are products of the 'World of Abnormal Rearing.' The cycle begins with parents having unrealistic expectations of their child".

It is an old story. The parents expect to receive nurturing from the child, and, although he may do the best he can, he is never able to meet all of their expectations. In Ericksonian terms, the child never really learns **trust**. In this type of family situation the process becomes cyclical. Everyone wants a kind of love and nurturing from the others who often are simply unable to meet their expectations. The demand is just too heavy.

The child in the abusing situation is to be considered as a contributing factor. The parent's abuse is directed at a "special child" the one that the parents perceive as being most in need. Or the abused child may be the one that is in the greatest level of competition with the parent who is seeking the attention. At high risk of being physically abused are children who are premature, twins, retarded or handicapped, adopted, congenitally malformed, conceived during a mother's depressive illness, or the children of mothers with frequent pregnancies.

A final factor suggested by Justice and Justice in the Psycho-social Stress Model is what they call "cultural scripts." By this they mean the accepted and expected patterns of interaction between individuals in a society.

The biblical "script" that is often quoted and misused is "Spare the rod and spoil the child," which does indeed reflect an attitude of violence toward the child. A clear understanding of the Biblical passages is necessary which is that discipline is needed for children (the intent of the passages is not brutalization). Other cultural scripts include such concepts as: "Madonna mother, Gerber baby, Super-moms" and others, usually the result of media presentation of the false ideal. These cultural scripts serve as a source of frustration and feelings of guilt by potentially abusive parents and actually lead to more violence and abuse of children.

Note: Much of what has been said about the causes of the abuse of children can be also said about other types of abuse.

Types of Child Abuse

Child abuse can be seen as physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect perpetrated against a child in custodial care. There are several individuals or agencies that may come into play in dealing with child abuse or neglect. Understanding the roles of these individuals and agencies can assist in the proper care for the child and their family. They include: (the following was taken from *Child Abuse Prevention Handbook*)

Law Enforcement: By the very nature of their community role and their legal authority, the police and sheriff's departments are the principal agencies responding to family crisis situations. The responding officer will decide whether to take the child into protective custody, to arrest the parents/caretakers, to seek the filing of criminal charges or refer the case to another appropriate agency. In some California law enforcement agencies, the child abuse units include full-time social service workers who respond to calls with the officers as an investigative team.

The investigating officer seeks answers to the following questions when determining whether child abuse has actually occurred:

- Is this an isolated incident, or is there a history of abuse, neglect or family disturbances? (Verification of prior reports can be made through record checks).
- Is there a perceived danger to the child or other children in the home?

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- How was the incident reported? Who reported, if known?
- What is the emotional and mental attitude of the parents? What is the general condition of the home?
- Are the nature and severity of injuries indicative of abuse or neglect?
- What is the general behavior of the parents?
- Are the explanations of the child's injuries inadequate?
- Do the parents/caretakers vehemently place the blame upon others?
- Are the parents/caretakers apathetic or insensitive to the child's condition?

Once the investigating officer is inside the home, he or she will isolate the child, and with sensitivity, question him or her as to the cause of the injuries. The officer will also examine the child thoroughly for discoverable injuries, such as broken limbs, cuts and bruises.

Depending on the age of the child, a visual examination of the child's anatomy should be conducted to ascertain the existence of burns on the buttocks or bottom of the feet or injuries to other areas hidden by clothes. Very often it is impossible for an officer or a lay person to detect an injury, for example, when the injury is not visible, as in the case of internal hemorrhaging. Head injuries are particularly dangerous and often are detectable only by x-ray. Therefore if an officer has any reason to suspect a head injury, the child should be taken to a medical facility for an examination. Additionally, a complete examination of all children in the family is advisable when child abuse is suspected.

If the preliminary investigation indicates abuse, the officer will take the child to a facility that has doctors trained to detect child abuse injuries. The child should be carefully and sensitively told where he/she is being taken, why this is being done, and what to expect.

The process of investigating will continue according to standard procedures.

Legal Community: In addition to the adult court which handles the criminal cases of adult offenders, and the juvenile courts which make determinations about dependent children, the "legal community" is basically composed of three additional agencies: the county district attorney, the county counsel and the city attorney.

Depending on the county or jurisdiction, the judge, prosecutor and defense attorney may agree to defer prosecution if the suspect is receptive to psychotherapy, family counseling or other rehabilitative help; or they may prosecute them and then agree to probation with supervision.

Probation: When ordered to do so by the courts, the probation department investigates adult offenders convicted of child abuse or neglect. A court report outlining the offender's social history, prior record, offense and attitude is submitted. The report also evaluates suitability for probation and, in appropriate cases, recommends probation with specific conditions

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aimed at control and treatment, psychiatric or psychological treatment, family treatment and/or enrollment in self-help programs are typically recommended in these cases, along with the other standard conditions or probation.

In order to assure the child's safety and welfare, the supervising officer also works cooperatively with the protective services worker assigned to the case. Their assessment of the child's needs and the offender's response to treatment is of significant influence in determining when, and if, the child will be returned to the home.

Medical Community: Doctors, nurses, dentists and all other types of professional medical personnel play a crucial role in child abuse detection. In addition, other indices of abuse that hospitals and medical personnel should consider are:

- history of repeated injuries
- delays in seeking medical care
- discrepancies in explanations, history and the nature of injuries
- injuries not reported by parents and found in physical examination and X-ray.
- generally inadequate nutrition and poor health
- the child is extremely passive, compliant or fearful
- evidence of sexual activity or abuse
- bruises or broken bones in an infant or toddler
- x-rays showing chip or metaphysical fracture in joints (a result of twisted limbs)
- head injuries
- abdominal and/or internal injuries
- behavior of parents (overreact or under-react; cannot remember how it happened; insensitive to child's pain or condition; refuse consent for further examination of child; blame others; appear detached or apathetic)

While some people in the medical community may think child abuse is a problem to be treated without involving law enforcement, it should be emphasized that the law requires doctors and nurses (and other mandated reporters previously listed) to report abuse to a child protective agency (the police or sheriff, county probation, or county welfare).

Social Welfare: The importance of a county welfare (social services) department's role lies in both crisis intervention and the ongoing services it provides to children and families in difficulty.

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County welfare department personnel provide immediate response to emergency situations on a 24-hour basis. Such crisis intervention generally involves short-term protective and social services for children and families. Workers utilize available community resources and coordinate case plans with other agencies to maximize services to the family.

When a child is declared a dependent of the court, social welfare agencies supervise the child for the court at home or in a placement facility. They also offer ongoing social services to the family and/or the child, including referral to needed treatment services, and make periodic progress reports to the court.

Schools: School teachers, nurses, counselors, principals and supervisors of child welfare and attendance and other designated school personnel who are mandated to report suspected child abuse cases play a critical role in the early detection of child abuse and neglect. Symptomatic signs of abuse and/or neglect, which may include injuries, listlessness, poor nutrition, disruptive behavior, absenteeism or depression, are often first seen by school personnel. Because immediate investigation of suspected abuse by proper child protective agencies may save a child from repeated injuries, school personnel should not hesitate to report suspicious injuries or behavior. Their duty is to **report**, not investigate.

Schools can also play a substantial role in the prevention of abuse and neglect by offering classes on marriage, parenting and child development to students. Parenthood education is vitally needed. We know that today's mistreated youth will likely be tomorrow's abusers unless intervention takes place. Classes in parenting offered through the local school may help break the pattern of successive generations of child abuse.

The Church: Often the church's role in dealing with child abuse is overlooked in literature on the subject. The church, however, has always offered many programs that can be of great influence in not only dealing with the problems of abuse among their own people, but by offering seminars and classes in family, parenting, personal, emotional restoration, etc., they can also greatly affect their community at large! The church can be a great force in the prevention of future potential abuse.

Many churches are offering help in the way of Family Care Centers where free or very inexpensive counseling is offered to families and individuals of the congregation and people from the community in general. This is a ministry that has long been needed. Some excellent training programs are being offered through such organizations as the Institute for Christian Counseling, that prepare lay workers for a ministry in counseling.⁵

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What constitutes child abuse. Why? To what extent?

⁵ More information about a training program in Christian Counseling may be obtained by contacting Vision College, 940 Montecito Way, Ramona, CA 92065.

2. What types of questions should be asked to determine if child abuse has actually occurred?

To act without rapacity, to use knowledge without wisdom, to respect interdependence, to operate with our hubris and greed are not simply moral imperatives. They are an accurate scientific description of the means of survival.

Barbara Ward

Sexual Abuse

Dan Allender writes in his excellent book, *The Wounded Heart*, "Sexual abuse often follows a typical sequence of stages: 1) the development of intimacy and secrecy; 2) Enjoyment of physical touch that appears appropriate; 3) Sexual abuse proper (physical contact or psychological interaction); and 4) Maintenance of the abuse and the shameful secret through threats and privileges" (Allender, 1990). Each are described briefly here.

1. **Development of intimacy and secrecy.** This is a conscious, deliberate set-up, seductive in nature, created by the perpetrator to victimize the child. The time frame for this set-up can be a day to years in process. The set-up may be either mildly or plainly conscious.
2. **Enjoyment of physical touch that appears appropriate.** This is the beginning of physical and sensual bonding between perpetrator and victim. This heightened relational intimacy is akin to love and meets a "need" in victim and victimizer. Areas of touching can include such things as hand holding, hugs, back rubs, etc., and to the neglected child is like a glass of water to a man lost in the desert.
3. **Sexual abuse proper (physical contact or psychological interaction.)** There are different levels and intensity of abuse, and the extent of damage is not easily assessed. Allender states "Sexual abuse occurs in a context of loneliness, a context that set up the victim for a baffling interplay of betrayal and ambivalence, and powerlessness as the adult moves the victim from one stage of abuse to the next. Sexual abuse crosses the line between nurture and affection to relational sabotage" (Allender, 1990). This can include inappropriate manual or oral sexual arousal, sexual intercourse, or dialogue of the same. The truth is that God made our bodies to respond to physical stimulation, creating an obvious diabolical conflict (pleasure vs. pain). Even if the victim blocks feelings of sexual stimulation, arousal, occurs each and every time. The mass of emotions triggered during sexual abuse creates nearly unending conflict, without treatment.
4. **Maintenance of the abuse and secrecy through threats and privileges.** The perpetrator, fearing discovery and often desiring continuance of the relationship, will

use fear (physical threats, exposure, withdrawal of "attention") or use privileges (gifts, special status, etc.) to maintain the abuse and avoid discovery. This is why abuse can go on for years, undetected, without escape.

Sexual Abuse Defined

Sexual abuse can take many forms. Sexual abuse can be defined broadly as "any sexual activity, verbal, visual, or physical, engaged in without consent, which may be emotionally or physically harmful and which exploits a person in order to meet another person's sexual or emotional needs" (McGee and Schuamburg.

Verbal sexual abuse consists of remarks including sexual threats, innuendoes, comments about a person's body, solicitation, harassment, coarse jesting, inappropriate sexual talking, and sexual name-calling.

Visual sexual abuse includes voyeurism, exhibitionism, viewing of pornographic material, or genitals, or of any sexual activity such as masturbation or intercourse.

Physical sexual abuse includes any inappropriate form of touching, from hugging to rape. Rubbing, holding, and kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification are examples. Also included in physical sexual abuse are oral, genital, anal and breast stimulation, and penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object, of mouth, anus or vagina.

Ritualistic sex abuse represents the ultimate in human degradation, torture, mind control and destructiveness. The majority of such abusers are involved in satanic rituals and worship. The components of ritualistic abuse fall into four areas: physical, sexual, psychological, and spiritual.

Information for Parents

Statistics will vary as to the frequency of child sexual abuse -- partially because it is estimated that only one in ten cases are reported, but estimates are that one in ten males are sexually abused and one in four females are abused. Seventy-five percent of children are abused by **SOMEONE THEY KNOW**, such as acquaintances, baby-sitters, friends of the family, or relatives.

Most children are tricked or manipulated, not forced into sexually abusive activity. Because bribery or threats are so often a part of the abuse, children may feel as if they are to blame. Sexual abuse is **NOT** the victim's fault.

A person who commits a sexual offense needs outside intervention and help in order to stop his/her behavior. Keep in mind that it is the person's **behavior** that is wrong or bad, not the **person**. We do not do offenders any favors by not reporting them.

Sexual abuse is a difficult, traumatic experience, yet there are many resources for victims, families and offenders. Not giving children information leaves them vulnerable in the future, as well as leading the child to believe that abusive activity is acceptable.

What to Let Children Know

Personal safety is as important as any other safety rules we learn about. Determine what your children know about safety: what to do in case of fire, poisoning, how to cross the street, etc., and then let them know that their personal body safety is important too!

Use the TOUCH Continuum as a tool to discuss different types of touch.

Lack of	Good	Confusing	Bad	Lack of
Touch	Touch	Touch	Touch	Touch

Ask your children to discuss touch they think is good, such as games, hugs, kisses, etc. Then ask them what types of touch they think are bad, such as bullying, hitting, etc. Discuss the fact that there are times when touches may be confusing and they may not be sure if it is good or bad. It is also helpful to discuss any lack of touch and that some people do not touch much -- families and people are different in how much touching they do.

Stress that NO ONE, whether stranger, acquaintance, or relative, has the right to force or trick them into sexual contact or touch.

Develop your child's "support system" for help or information on this subject. The support system includes people they know like parent(s), relatives, friends, ministers, teachers and counselors. Other resources include places such as police department, child protective services, rape centers, mental health centers, etc.

Guides to Remember in Talking to Your Children

- Listed here are five primary guidelines to remember when talking to your children.
- Minimize the scariness of the conversation. Balance the conversation.
- Listen to your child's questions and responses.
- By talking, you are helping to prepare and protect your child. You are also taking a big step toward prevention of sexual abuse.
- Always use proper vocabulary.

- Never laugh or joke about their questions or apparent ignorance, particularly in a serious conversation.

If You Suspect Your Child May Be a Victim

Even in the healthiest of parent/child relationships, children may be too embarrassed or scared to tell you what has happened.

When your child reaches out for help, LISTEN AND BE SUPPORTIVE. A child may subtly hint at the incident, or a child's behavior may drastically change. If you are angry or upset about what has happened, let the child know that the anger is not directly toward him or her.

It is so very sad that we have to deal with topics such as sexual abuse. Not only do parents need to educate their children, but churches need to educate the parishioners as well. Awareness of the problem is the first step to solving it. And all problems are best solved before they occur.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What constitutes sexual abuse as suggested by Allender?
2. What is and is not to be thought of as sexual abuse?
3. What are some of the things that parents need to know about sexual abuse?
4. How much do children need to know about sexual abuse?

And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.(family)

Zec 13:6 KJV

Long after the wound heals, the scars remain.

JJB

The Results of Abuse

The results of abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual, are devastating. Though each individual will cope with trauma differently, all victims are traumatized to an extent beyond the plan and purpose of our Creator. In this section, the symptoms common to children of abuse will be reviewed with the hope that greater awareness of the symptoms of abuse will be helpful in your counseling ministry. This information can be used both diagnostically, and as a teaching component in your counseling.

The Symptoms

Firstly, children can experience many difficulties due to childhood abuse. Typically, what a counselor or parent should be aware of is a dramatic change in behavior or demeanor, or a continual pattern of these symptoms over time. All children may have some of these symptoms during times of "normal stress". The symptoms of child abuse include withdrawal from normal social encounters, to include friends and family. Fears can be manifested, to include nightmares in the fear of undressing or of being left alone. Severe expressions of anger, violent play or self-punishing behavior may occur. Finally, some children will try to compensate for their low self-esteem with a pseudo-adult maturity. This is often a mask for the deep pain that the child is experiencing.

Adult females will experience many of the symptoms in childhood but may have repressed the events to survive. In late adolescence and adulthood, the symptoms which may manifest include memory blocks of periods of their childhood, secrecy about areas of their life and family, nightmares or insomnia over several months or even years, seductive behavior and promiscuity, and severe anxiety (panic attacks), depression and even eating disorders are common. Finally, co-dependent relationships often develop, and adult physical/sexual abuse may be the result. Of course, every person is unique, and can display additional symptoms. These are the most commonly seen in the counseling office.

Though less talked about, men do experience abuse. The effects are quite disturbing. They include depression, anxiety and frequent self-hatred to the point of suicidal ideation. Most often the symptoms are somatized into stomach disorders. The major betrayal which has occurred, especially if the abuse has been of a homosexual nature, scars the identity, creating confusion and difficulty in developing intimacy.

The effects go beyond simple symptom development. As pointed out in Dr. Allender's book, the *Wounded Heart* (Allender, 1990), the problems created affect the core of the individual's personality. He listed four primary areas of pervasive repercussions caused by sexual abuse, which can be, with certain modification, generalized to all abuse.

Powerlessness

Abuse deprives a person of the sense of personal power. When a person is abused, especially as a child, the sense of freedom to choose, to self-motivate, or to give self-direction is stripped away. Abuse generally occurs within the family setting, a place of "safety." The individual learns that his/her environment is unsafe, and must learn to adapt to the environment to survive. All of the child's or spouse's energy, energy needed for growth in the life cycle, is taken for personal survival. Therefore, what is learned is that "I have no power" or "I must conform to the authority over me, no matter what."

The powerlessness that develops causes severe self-doubt (I can't do anything, I am worthless), despair about the circumstances of life (I can't change, this is just the way my life is), and deadness, or the inability to feel anything, neither pleasure nor pain. This leads to an overwhelming sense of the loss of self, the ability to make decisions or have adequate adult

judgment, or to care and protect oneself from present and future harm. Also, this powerlessness is the reason that men and women who have been abused do not "see" the abuse of their own children. The numbing of the self makes awareness of danger for the self or others most difficult. The child will interject (turn inside) the blame for the abuse on themselves, and this interjection continues unless there is healing of the wounds.

Betrayal

The first stage of our development as presented by Erickson is Trust vs. Mistrust. Trust is the foundation upon which all growth in relationships is built. When abuse occurs in the family, regardless of the age at which it occurs, the ability to trust is violated. The sense of betrayal in a family relationship is most devastating. The adult has projected their needs onto the child, violating the sacred trust. The violation of trust opens the door to feelings of shame and guilt, which are most often discussed by abuse victims. Further, due to the dynamics of family life and relationships in general, the one betrayed often falsely believes that he/she could/should have done something to keep the victimization from occurring. Perhaps if the one betrayed had been less needy or vulnerable, the abuse would not have occurred. This powerful internalized and often ritualized lie is one of the major barriers to the healing process. It is much of what the therapy process will encounter and must address.

The betrayal can create in the victim such problems as hypervigilance (perfectionism and extreme self-consciousness), paranoia (better thought of as suspiciousness), which makes the ability to have a satisfactory intimate relationship nearly impossible, and denial, which includes a distortion of the truth that must be faced, if the victim is ever to be truly free.

Ambivalence

Dr. Allender defined ambivalence as "feeling two contradictory emotions at the same moment" (Allender, 1990). A joke that illustrates ambivalence is the person watching his mother-in-law drive his new Lexus (slight update) over a cliff. The point is, when two strong emotions, such as love/hate, honor/betrayal, trust/fear are combined, confusion and misunderstanding can develop. The distorted feeling that is created when a double message is experienced (I love you, so let me touch you/I want our marriage to work, so shut up and do as I tell you), is one which has no solution. The most difficult ambivalence of all is the mixture of pleasure and pain that all sexual abuse victims experience. God made our bodies, regardless of age, to respond to stimulation. When the body feels pleasure, but the mind knows the wrongfulness of the stimulation, a tremendous twisting of truth occurs to tolerate the experience. Untwisting the lies, resolving the ambivalence, can only be done by the power the Holy Spirit and wise, professional counsel.

Relational Style

All victimization, especially when prolonged over time, will inevitably create a pattern of relating which will perpetuate the victimization. This can be most frustrating, to you as a care-giver, as you watch your client enter into the same problems over and over again. It is

important to remember that the client does not want the patterns that have developed. They desire, more than you, to be well, productive and happy in their life. However, since the only models provided for them as children or in their marital relationship have been abusive, the pattern of victim or victimizer becomes fixated. Dysfunctional communication and often destructive behavior will be the ultimate result.

The relational style is primarily the daily mask that the victim wears to protect him/herself from the world. Often a "social trance" occurs allowing for the continuation of abuse generationally. This self-protective style of relating to people keeps one from growing. One of the key ingredients in counseling is vulnerability, or the modeling of honesty in relationships. Though not trusted, sometimes for weeks and months, the counselor must work through this resistance (it's not personal!) to bring lasting relief and restoration for the counselee. The Lord has called us all to be conformed to the image of Christ. This can only occur as we "renew our mind" (a process, not an event), through the Word of God and effective healing prayer. This will be discussed in greater detail in the sections on treatment.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the various symptoms of abuse? Can you think of more that are listed in this section?
2. What is the concept of generational abuse?
3. What is meant by the Relational Style.

The prayer that reforms the sinner and heals the sick

*is an absolute faith that all things are possible to God --
a spiritual understanding of Him, an unselfish love. Mary
Baker Eddy*

*For I will restore health unto thee, and I will
heal thee of thy wounds. Saith the Lord. Old
Testament: Jeremiah 30:17*

TREATMENT STRATEGIES CONTRASTING VIEWS HEALTHY VS DYSFUNCTIONAL MODELS

As an introduction to treatment it would be beneficial to look at the functional or healthy family systems, Abnormality cannot be determined in a vacuum but in relation to “normal” or “healthy.”

In a recent article (John K. Rosemond. ”Is Your Family a Healthy One?” Hemisphere Magazine, December 1994), the writer provides six primary characteristics of healthy families based on his 23 years of counseling families.

The family is marriage-**centered** or, where only one parent is present in the home, parent-centered. Contrary to common belief, the children are not to be the primary focus of family life. Where parents have as a primary focus, their marriage and it’s growth and satisfaction, a healthy and secure family system is created. Children need an atmosphere where the parents lovingly work together for a strong home. With single parent family systems, a parent who “has a life” that includes children but is not limited to parenthood, provides a good model for the child, knowing that the parent(s) is not solely interested in the child provides for a balance of attention in the child, avoiding the narcissism of our present age.

Secondly, Mr. Rosemond suggests that healthy families exist where “parents are authoritative.” That is, the parents define the limits and encircle them with consistency. The parents are the bottom line, though open, even emotional, discussion can occur (respectfully). This is contrasted with authoritarian parents, often seen in dysfunctional families, where they tend to rule “with an iron fist.” In these families, the parents interpret disagreement with disrespect and thus do not allow for the open discussion needed in healthy growing families. The focus of the parents shall be on being parents, not the best of friends of their children. That time will come (being friends) after the child reaches maturity (18-21 years).

Thirdly, “conflict, whether within the marriage or between parents and child, is resolved through respectful confrontation.” Healthy families understand that some conflict in life is inevitable. It is neither sought nor avoided. Disagreements are handled “directly and creatively rather than indirectly and destructively.” Children thus learn that conflict is a part of life that, when handled well, can lead to positive growth and adaptation. Parents will seek unity if possible or will agree to disagree, while taking the more conservative position. Generally, that is the road of safety for the whole family.

Fourthly, yet often overlooked, is that healthy families, “**have some spiritual instruction**” in their lives. This forms a basis for morality which goes beyond the child’s or parent’s self-imposed values, but requires an adherence to absolutes beyond oneself. Thus, Parents enforce the right and wrong codes developed by One who is wiser than us all.

Fifth, “**each child in the family is expected to perform chores on a daily basis.**” Chores teach the child a sense of responsibility, teamwork, fair play, and develop a

sense of competence in the child. All the family (parents included) should take care (without compensation) for the upkeep of the common domicile, vehicles, etc.

Sixth, **“The Children are expected to be responsible for their own decisions and behavior.”** Except in cases of victimization by an adult or older child, children need to be held accountable for their decisions. Healthy families are willing to impose consequences for misbehavior and to restrain their natural desire to protect (over protect) their children. Thus, children learn to take their proper place in the home and ultimately in society.

Another view of the healthy family was presented by the University of Nebraska in their research on healthy families. Interestingly they found some collaborating views on the healthy family through nation-wide research. Their conclusions were:

- **Healthy families have a strong measure of unconditional love.** Acceptance of one another exhibited by the parents and emphasized in practical ways were clearly part of the family.
- **There was a freedom of expression within the family, both “good” and “bad” feelings.** Feelings of all kinds were celebrated and dealt with as a part of family life.
- **Discipline that was age and situation appropriate were consistently found in healthy families.** Further, the discipline was not generally punitive in motivation but corrective and instructional.
- **The family had predictability and stability, creating an atmosphere of trust.** In most dysfunctional homes, chaos is often the norm.
- **The family had shared common goals clearly understood by all members, which covered individual and group hopes and dreams.** Things like doing your best in school, keeping the house nice, enjoying recreation and holidays, and planning for college and retirement. None of these were secret, and input from all members was appreciated. The final decision was always a parental prerogative.
- **Though there were common goals, the family was able to subordinate personal goals for the greater family good.** Personal sacrifice was shared and not the role of one identified parent.

As you can see, healthy (vs perfect) families can and do exist. Unhealthy families have opposite characteristics of those listed above. As a Christian care giver, or educator, you may need to keep in mind that the goal (whether seemingly realistic or not) is to assist abusive family systems become healthier, if not truly healthy. Now let us begin to look at the need for intervention or treatment.

*One ship sails East, one ship sails West by the selfsame wind that blows;
It is not the wind but the set of the sails that determines which
way we will go.*

Anon.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

When the initial reporting or discovery of the abuse occurs, the need for crisis counseling or management is evident. As a Pastor, lay leader or Christian counselor, you will want to be as supportive as possible in your treatment of the victim. Their initial reactions are usually masks to guard themselves from further violation. Again, it is important that you not take this defensiveness personally, but in the love of Christ accept the person where they are and skillfully assist in the management of the components of crisis.

In this chapter, the dynamics of crises are discussed, from a theoretical and biblical basis. Much of this material is an adaptation of the book by the author, *Turning Points: Ministry in Crisis Times* (DeKoven. 1992).

What is Crisis?

Webster's Definition: "A turning point in anything; decisive or crucial time, stage, or event; a time of great danger or trouble, whose outcome decides whether possible bad consequences will follow."

A crisis is any event, whether a "normal" part of our developmental life or an "accident," which temporarily changes our world and necessitates an emotional/spiritual adjustment.

Crises are not of themselves good or bad. Their impact is determined by the meaning one gives to the event, and the feelings generated. The power found in any crisis is related to two factors:

The closeness of the event.

Perception of the meaning of the event.

In either case, a crisis definitely makes us stop and evaluate and make necessary adjustments to cope effectively.

Phases of a Crisis

H. Norman Wright, in his excellent book *Crisis Counseling: Helping People in Crisis and Stress*, outlines the four primary phases of crisis.

They are:

- 1) Impact
- 2) Withdrawal Confusion
- 3) Adjustment
- 4) Reconstruction/Reconciliation

Most of us have experienced a crisis of some proportion during our lifetime, forcing us to make a life adjustment. Knowing what a crisis is and how to manage it is of vital importance in ministry to one another in the body of Christ. Let us begin our study by looking in great detail at the four phases of crisis.

The Four Phases of Crisis

(I) Impact

Our initial response to any given crisis, whether developmental, such as the birth of a new child, a change in career, a new teenager in the family or situational, such as an accident, loss of a job, separation and divorce, or death, or especially the crisis of uncovered abuse, is determined by the impact that the event has upon us and the meaning that we give it. The impact can only be measured by the response that the individual has toward the crisis situation. For some people, the smallest situations can create great anxiety, sadness or depression. Many others, because of a high tolerance for pain or a fairly peace-oriented spirit, are able to flow through many crises without great difficulty. How we respond depends upon many factors including:

- 1) Our genetic predisposition toward stress
- 2) Our present spiritual walk
- 3) Our understanding of the things of God (as outlined within the Word of God)
- 4) Our support systems such as family and friendships (both within and outside the body of Christ)
- 5) Our history in regards to the management of crisis situations in our families.

Needless to say, the impact of a crisis cannot fully be understood until the crisis occurs. My father used to have a favorite saying, "One man's meat is another man's poison," meaning that what to one person is a crisis to another is not. We must be willing to be loving and gentle with people in the body of Christ, understanding that one man's meat is another man's poison.

(II) Withdrawal/Confusion

In the case illustration in the beginning of this book, the couple experienced extreme confusion and withdrawal from one another. Both were in shock that their marriage which had started out so wonderfully had degenerated to near (their words) abusive responses. They did not want to talk with anyone, experiencing shame and dismay, and were initially resentful of having to seek help. Yet, after the process of confrontation (beginning with a friend and their concerned pastor) and exposure began, their withdrawal lessened and the ability to mutually seek solutions to their crisis began. No counseling can really begin until things are brought to the light.

(III) Adjustment

Because a crisis creates a change, and all change is a bit frightening to us, there must come a time of adjustment or acceptance of the change. People will adjust to change and crisis at their own pace. We must allow time for people to make adjustment; although we must watch for signs of their staying in a withdrawn and confused state beyond what is helpful and healthy for them. This adjustment is very smooth for some, but rather difficult and jagged for others. Again, our history of dealing with crisis in the past, and our personal genetic makeup and personality, will determine how quickly and how smoothly we make the adjustment to a life crisis.

(IV) Reconstruction/Reconciliation

During this time, we attempt to make final sense, and come to a place of peace in regards to the crisis that has occurred in our life. This takes time and each person deals with it in their own way. As Christians, we hope that people will come to a place of reconciliation, of understanding God's plan and purpose and how his hand would have been involved in any crisis that may have occurred. It is important, as believers, that we seek this through wise counsel, through inquiry of the Lord in prayer, and through study of the Word of God.

Solutions to a Crisis Situation

There are several steps that a person can take in order to resolve a crisis. In order to solve a crisis, you must be willing to face the problem. James 5:16, in many ways, talks about the need to face the truth about a situation. The truth is, if you are in the crisis of family violence, it must be addressed openly and bluntly. Violence in the family is not tolerable and must be faced.

Secondly, in dealing with a crisis, you must help the individual to untangle their projection system. That is, you can help them to look at things in a more appropriate way.

Third, you want to assist them in expressing their feelings in an appropriate manner, to speak the truth in love. I also believe it is important that the Church of Jesus Christ create an atmosphere, through the pastoral staff and trained lay people, whereby crisis situations can be dealt with in a loving manner, whether developmental or situational.

A model for crisis counseling that is simple and effective is the A.B.C.D. model of crisis intervention. Let's look at these one point at a time.

- A. To ACHIEVE a relationship.** To achieve a relationship, it is important to listen, fully, to the individual's problem without judgment, and with great empathy. That listening process shows that you care and that you are willing to assist the individual in the time of crisis. The goal is to first achieve a relationship with the individual who is having the crisis through active listening.
- B. BOIL down the problem.** Most people, when they are in the middle of a crisis, have a sense that it is astronomical and overwhelming. They feel hopeless to resolve the conflict that they are involved in. Part of assisting them is to break down the components of the problem into smaller bites. Boil down the problem so that it can be managed one step at a time.
- C. You want to CHALLENGE the individual** to take constructive action. Again, looking at things one piece at a time, you assist the person to deal with, "What can I do now? What can I do tomorrow? What can I do to resolve the problem?" It is very important that the individual in the crisis, with your assistance, take responsibility for the solutions to the crisis. You can be quite frustrated if you are trying to solve the problem for them rather than allowing them the dignity of coming up with solutions for themselves. We need to allow them to solve the problem the best that they can, trusting that, with God's help, they will be able to do so.
- D. DEVELOP an ongoing plan of action.** A one-shot type of ministry will not work. There must be an ongoing relationship and an ongoing plan of action. Most of the time it is helpful to actually write these ideas down. Develop goals that will make a difference. One of the things that you would hope to do is to assist the individual to understand how they got to a place where they were vulnerable to this crisis and to be able to learn how to cope more effectively or even avoid this kind of crisis in the future. In order to do that, you must make a commitment to be truly involved in the lives of those that are in the midst of trouble.

Abuse as Crisis

Specific interventions are commonly needed in the crisis of abuse. First, the safety of the victim must be considered above everything else. If a long pattern of abuse is presented, or if the danger of continued abuse is apparent, separation of the victim(s) from the perpetrator is required. If possible, keeping the victim(s) in their natural environment is preferable, avoiding insult (losing my home, job, school) to injury. However, due to the frequent out-of-control reactions of the abuser, a safe house, friends or family need to be found for the protection of the family. Frequently, legal relief (separation or divorce with restraining orders) must be filed to give some teeth to the confrontation the perpetrator will be facing.

Generally, a cooling out period, providing counseling support for the family and communication to the perpetrator (to hopefully defuse them from further hostile actions) is needed. This will last until there is a relative assurance that the perpetrator can control his rage (of course for children involved in physical or sexual abuse this period may be prolonged or indefinite).

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If treatment is recommended, the perpetrator must be able to enter into contract which includes the following, prior to their resuming “normal” family relations. They include:

- The perpetrator must be held, and must accept full accountability for the abuse. However, as a counselor you must recognize that initially, all the abuser wants is to “have my wife, lover, family back,” he will agree to anything.
- The violator must be involved in a non-violent environment and must covenant to insure a non-judgmental respectful environment. This is a primary goal.
- A simple contract for this initial stage must be agreed to, signed and witnessed (by significant authority, pastor, police, etc.) which agrees to:
 - No hitting or verbal abuse
 - Resolving conflicts through talking
 - Setting a positive example and being willing to work through the long process of counseling which includes taking honest personal accountability for all women who have been victimized by him.

This is but the beginning of treatment. Because of the complexity of the abuse pattern, the commitment to therapy must be made and generally should include individual counseling for the victim(s) and the victimizer, family counseling when safe and appropriate, and group support for all involved. However, before going into greater depth in specific treatment of family violence, an overview of standard process of Christian care giving might be helpful.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What is a crisis? What is not a crisis?
2. What are the various phases of a crisis?
3. What is meant by the A.B.C.D. model of crisis intervention?

A wise physician is John the Baptist, who recognizes that his only mission is to prepare the way for a greater than himself.

Arthur S. Hardy

He who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything.

Arabian Proverb

Treatment Process

There are always strategies that can be recommended; even in cases of severe abuse, most have proven effective in specific situations. However, no one treatment strategy will work on all clients. Therefore, the more you know and the more comfortable you become with the human tragedy, the better able you will function in the therapeutic process.

Initial Phase

It has been said that counseling begins with the phone call (or first contact). It is important to remember that the person making the call is usually the one with the greater degree of discomfort. Problems do not occur in isolation from family dynamics.

When you first meet a client, whether individual, couple, or family, it is recommended that you adopt the SOAP method of information gathering.

SELF

When you initially encounter a client, you need to be aware of your own feelings towards the client, your perceptions, and your attitudes. How did you feel as the client shared their story with you. Were you angry, sad, hurt, scared, confused, manipulated, etc.? Note these feelings in your counselor log or on notebook paper. How you initially experience your client is often an indicator of how others respond to the family or person. However, be careful not to make your judgments based upon this information alone. You will need much more than feelings in you before deciding on a complete course of treatment.

OTHER

Observation of the client interaction, from where they sit to their conversation is an essential aspect of talk therapy. All counselors must be acute observers of human behavior. Further, you must have a good working knowledge of why humans do what they do as you observe their behavior. Ask yourself, why would they act in such a way? What motivates them to certain life decisions? Where did they learn their dysfunctional or functional patterns of life? What additional information do I need that has not been revealed thus far, and how should I obtain it? These and other pertinent questions must be asked after they have told you how they feel and how they believe they have gotten to the place where they are. Try not to assume too much, and only believe what you are certain of. All hypotheses must be tested.

ASSESSMENT

After the initial session or two, where they tell their story, you will want to develop a preliminary assessment of the client. (all members of a family must have the opportunity to speak their mind and heart, domination of the session by a client or yourself is not permitted.) This can include areas that need further exploration, through tests or questionnaires. Many counselors give tests or questionnaires on the first visit or even before the first visit to insure adequate information. This is up to the individual counselor. In the beginning of your

counseling ministry, it is best to err on the side of too much information rather than not enough. Your assessment should include the history of the client, when the symptoms began, how the family or individual has coped thus far, what has worked and what has not, and your impressions of the underlying dynamics of the case. In most cases, a DSM-IV diagnosis is not necessary, but it is good to be familiar with the classification system, and practice good diagnostic methodology.

Once you have developed your thoughts, it is most helpful to share the case, while insuring confidentiality of the client, with a supervisor or colleague, to see if they have any insights that you may have missed. None of us are infallible, and outside input can cover a multiple of mis-diagnosed clients. Finally, in all assessments, I believe it is important to find something good or something you like about the client. We are commanded to love our neighbors, and especially those the Lord has allowed us to be in relationship with in the counseling office.

PLAN

The development of a treatment plan is as important as the development of a business plan. Without it, unless you are a highly seasoned veteran, you will likely spend much time wandering in the "counseling wilderness." Your treatment plan should contain all of what you have previously obtained, and testing information you have, and an actual idea of the direction you will go in your treatment process. You should have specific goals to accomplish, such as reduction of anger by 50%, or more intimacy, as demonstrated by dating and communication exercises, etc. Your goals should be measurable where possible and should be developed with the assistance of the client(s), and in keeping with your expertise, client time frame, and financial means. Many clients do not desire a total life transformation. Remember, you did not break them, and you cannot fix them. It is only by the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of his word applied to their lives that real change will occur.

Specific Goals for Abusive Families

The Victim

When counseling the victims, much support and tender care mixed with a fine dose of reality is needed. Victims need to be affirmed for their decision to seek help for the true abuse situation (rather than manipulative in order to get one's way or punish their partners). They must hear, in graphic terms if needed, the truth about the cycle of abuse and the likelihood of its continuing. Since the best measure of future behavior is past behavior, where a history of abuse is evident, it must be stopped or it will inevitably worsen.

I have heard many people proclaim that their parents were abusive, or generally that the father is abusing or did abuse their mother, and they "made it" or "never needed headshrinking." However, continued or impending misery is not a badge of courage, but a tragic scenario that could have turned out differently with different care.

Along with supportive and directive treatment, eventually individual counseling, and family counseling, the battered spouse/ child support group is highly recommended. The individual counseling must focus on the sense of being trapped, so as to increase the self-worth of the victim to a place of healthy self-respect. The goal is not to learn to cope with abuse but to recognize that it was neither caused nor deserved by the victim. Further, survival needs may need to be faced with the help of the church or government agencies for the long term growth of the abused.

Finally, it cannot be emphasized enough that the more serious and long term the abuse, the longer and more intense will be the counseling. The counseling will ultimately assist the victim to overcome: the sense of being trapped, which is characterized by the fear of more violence (often a very realistic fear), and the lost sense of self-worth and identity. The hope for immediate change, (which is a false hope or fantasy), overcoming the shame of being perceived as causing the abuse, or the sense of despair of having “taken it” for so long, and the overwhelming sense of isolation, betrayal and sorrow over the loss of what “could have been”. All of these issues, and more, will be dealt with in the counseling process, which is why the process is so difficult yet rewarding.

As you can probably well see, this is a fairly long process which is more a journey than an event. In the process, the counselee will experience re-parenting, much change in their thinking, and new skills which will help them avoid and/or prevent future abuse.

The Perpetrator

Once the perpetrator agrees to the initial terms of agreement, is willing to comply with any/all court requirements, and has initially taken full responsibility for the abuse, counseling can begin. A three pronged approach is usually indicated, including individual counseling, family counseling (eventually) and group counseling. In all counseling, the abuser must be confronted to bring exposure of the real thoughts and intentions of his/her heart. This is no easy task, since frequently the perpetrator has had years of defensive coping strategies to justify his problems and avoid discovery. These must be systematically taken away for healing to begin.

First, the offender must accept full responsibility for their offense, without justifying excuses.

Secondly, the perpetrator must learn to empathize with the victim. This is difficult for many since they see themselves as victims and have dehumanized their spouse or child. Role-play and group interaction, along with pictures of the results of abuse can often begin to soften the hard hearts of offenders.

Thirdly, a group network and an outside network of accountability is necessary for the perpetrator to return to the environment he came from.

Fourthly, the offender must learn stress management techniques which must be demonstrated and practiced. Along with stress management, anger management techniques must be learned and practiced in group sessions and eventually life.

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Fifthly, they must come to an understanding of power, its proper uses and control.

Finally, for lasting change to occur, a true and mature spiritual dimension must exist in the perpetrators life, or we must see in Christian terminology, the fruit of the repentance in their life.

Along with these primary goals, a good history of the clients violent or other anti-social behavior must be taken. A profile such as the “Abusive Behavior Profile” can be given to further this assessment process. Further, a group, along the lines of the Duluth Model is recommended. In that group, various themes of importance are discussed as a standard curriculum. Where a group is not possible, the theme they utilize can provide a good framework for counseling. They include

1. Non-violence, or how to resolve conflict in a non-violent fashion. Options are explored, role-played, demonstrated and implemented.
2. Non-threatening behavior, or how to express yourself without threatening anyone else.
3. Respect, or what is respectful vs non-respectful behavior of self and others. Since authority and authoritarian are often mixed or misunderstood, they must be clearly defined.
4. Trust and support, or the need for both, which are often denied.
5. Honesty and accountability are character traits that are a must in relationships. Any lying or deception must be confronted and exposed.
6. Sexual respect for the rights and needs of their spouse must be understood.
7. The concept of partnership or mutual covenant is an essential component of a reunification plan.
8. Learning how to negotiate with fairness is a skill that is necessary in place of power and manipulation.

Ultimately, for re-integration of a family that has been separated due to abuse, and especially if the family member is in counseling and remains under the same roof, family counseling is required. In our next section we will look at various forms of mental and family therapy and review their appropriate application in treating families experiencing domestic violence.

In Miller’s book on Family Violence, she provides a 10-point path to healing for victims of family violence. They deserve review:

1. Building of supports to include the counselor, church, support group, friends, and public agencies, is needed in the initial stages of counseling and should continue as a new life pattern.

2. In counseling, trust the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. Naming the abuse (Jn 8:32) is required.
4. Along with naming the abuse, remembering the abuse is needed. Miller uses a helpful rewording of remember as remembering or putting the process of the abuse back in proper perspective.
5. Anger must be expressed in a healthy way through role-play, journalizing, or other exercises.
6. Grieving or mourning the loss of relationships is required for health to be gained.
7. Confrontation of the victimizer is usually needed, to be done from a position of strength (see Jan Frank, A Door of Hope.)
8. Justice making, or making the victimizer accountable financially or otherwise for his actions.
9. Spiritual response, or intimately forgiving (but not trusting).
10. Finally, living with the fact that the abuse happened (see Grief Relief, by the author).

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

(2 Co 5:19 KJV)

Major Modes of Marital and Family Counseling

Psychoanalytic Marital Therapy's basic assumption is that of the reciprocal relationship between conflict among family members and conflict within the mind of any one member. There is interpersonal and intra-psycho conflict which feed upon one another in a circular fashion. The counselor is more interested in the family history than are most family counselors. This type of therapy is often indicated for serious, longstanding emotional problems that have resisted other therapy and very often will involve several generations of family members.

Family myths and secrets are brought out in the open during treatment. Actual facts and events known to some family members and not to others may emerge. Some events or conditions not allowed to be discussed are talked about, such as alcoholism. Skeletons that embarrass the family, such as imprisonment, institutionalization in a mental hospital, an illegitimate pregnancy, or a defection from the armed forces, are frequently revealed. Ghosts

in the family, whether living or dead, are an unfinished topic in the family. It could be an un-mourned death or grief over a living person who may be brought into the therapeutic process.

Social Learning -- Cognitive Marital Therapy

The Social Learning - Cognitive Marital Therapy (SLC) is characterized by a dual emphasis on the social environment and cognitive-perceptual processes as the determining factors of behavior. The approach is based on the assumption that behavioral change is not only important, but it offers a leaven for producing cognitive and affective changes.

Another premise of this therapy is that skills are required in order to maintain a satisfactory intimate relationship over a long period of time. Love and attraction are not enough to sustain a relationship. A variety of skills, including the ability to deal constructively with conflict, provide support and understanding to one another, and to perform affectionately. The counselor must identify the areas of deficiency and develop a plan for change.

Reinforcement erosion is another major category which refers to the tendency of spouses in a long-term relationship to gradually lose their ability to gratify one another. Counselors help the couple to track relationship quality on a day-to-day basis and devote the time and attention to it required to maintain a high level of marital satisfaction.

Structural-Strategic Marital Therapy

Structural Marital Therapy is directed toward changing the organization of the family. When the structure is changed, the positions of the members are also changed. As a result, each of the individuals experiences change. Therapy is based on the fact that the individual is not an isolate, but an acting and reacting member of a social group.

Salvador Minuchin is the founder of structural marital therapy. He was working with poor families struggling day-to-day for survival. His approach was oriented towards solving problems that were immediate and very real. Focus is on the relationships that connect one part of the whole to another. It is a therapy of action. The focus is to modify the present, not to explore and interpret the past.

Strategic Marital Therapy's major assumptions are in ongoing interactive sessions within the family, the practitioner is the primary source of change rather than the client, and problem formation and resolution rather than helping the client grow. The basic theoretical view of this approach is that clients come for help because they do not handle everyday problems of living. The counselor's skillful use of directives is an art. The counselor must motivate the individual, couple or family to follow his direction. Rapport and trust must be established. Precise and clear direction is given by the counselor, and if the first strategy does not work, a second directive is given. A distinguishing quality of strategic therapy is the use of positive connotation or reframing. The behaviors of the client are accepted without labeling them as resistant.

Bowen Family Systems Family Therapy

In Bowen Family Therapy, the importance of theory to guide a counselor is important rather than an intuitive, spontaneous, emotional, or non-theoretical approach. Murray Bowen, the founder, contends that emotional disturbances develop from relationships with others and are maintained by those relationships. There are eight interlocking theoretical concepts that are forces that shape family functioning. They are differentiation of self, triangles, nuclear family emotional system, family projection process, emotional cut off, multi-generational transmission process, sibling position, and societal regression.

Bowen suggests that the counselor take the position of the significant other to help modify the relationships within the family. He advises the counselor to remain uninvested in the family conflict to avoid triangulation. His goals are for each family member to maximize their self-differentiation within the nuclear family and from the family of origin.

Marital Enrichment and Prevention

An alternative approach to marital distress is to intervene with preventative programs before problems develop. Unlike treatment, prevention occurs before any symptoms of relational distress develop. It is future oriented and only indirectly addresses any current difficulties premarital couples may be experiencing. Relationship enhancement is included as a preventative function to couples who are already experiencing high levels of satisfaction to prevent future problems.

Prevention, ideally, starts with premarital counseling. The Premarital Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP) is a cognitive-behaviorally oriented intervention. The program helps couples develop competency in communication and problem-solving skills to increase the probability that they will achieve successful marriages. The couples solve low-conflict relationship problems to increase their confidence in their ability to solve more serious problems in the future.

The PREP program also covers sensual-sexual enhancement, which increases the couples' knowledge of human sexual functioning and decreases misconceptions without intruding on their moral beliefs. It covers relationship beliefs and expectations about children, careers, and role responsibilities. Communication proficiency is evaluated also, obtaining both subjective and objective assessments of problem-solving interaction skills. Relationship satisfaction and areas of agreement-disagreement are evaluated using the Premarital Adjustment Test, this test evaluates the overall level of relationship satisfaction and areas in which the couples perceive themselves as agreeing and disagreeing, such as finances and displays of affection.

Assessing Distressed Marriages

Whatever marital/family counseling approach is used, it must begin with a good assessment. Assessment is the process of describing the interaction between the client and the arresting obstacle of their surroundings. Direct observation rather than inferences from surface cues

make it reliable. Assessment describes productive and unproductive elements of the client's behavior and offers immediate relevance to therapeutic planning. Assessment surpasses diagnosis in both its reliability and validity and further serves as a foundation for the collection and analysis of data. Assessment is an ongoing process that covers the period of time before the first contact and which ends long after the last treatment session.

The assessment must broaden the partners' perspectives to include awareness of their own roles. The data collected must be strength oriented and positive. A new respect for the couples' strengths can replace their dirty laundry lists about each other and a new hope will emerge knowing there are resources available for change.

Boundary conditions affect marital interaction and satisfaction. They can predispose them to positive joyful interactions or to negative and highly stressful experiences. They do not determine the success of the marriage, but they do influence the challenges and the effort that must be put forth for success. Some controllable conditions would include: cultural attitudes, life stresses, aging and illness. Couples can control the way they see and handle these events, for instance, by thinking of obstacles as opportunities. They can control the way in which they react to these events.

Reciprocity Techniques

Reciprocal determinism is the belief that all behavior is always reciprocally (repaid) interactive with the social, physical, and personal environments in which it occurs (or you reap what you sow). The individual is actively creating his own environment or the environment has been constructed in his head and is the environment he responds to.

Reciprocity between couples is common. It is the "voluntary actions of individuals who are motivated by the returns that they expect, and typically do bring from others" (Blau, 1964). It is not necessarily a calculated and self-serving motive. Couples today express a high degree of commitment to the ideal of reciprocal, equalitarian marriage, but it does not imply symmetry nor equality, but equity. The expectations of one's spouse to immediately reciprocate can often lead to frustration and anger. While strangers may reciprocate immediately, spouses don't and the expectation that they will may contribute to shattered illusions. While reciprocity may be the norm that maintains all stable reactions, a mature expectation recognizes that the debts are more likely to be paid next month or next year as opposed to tomorrow. Reciprocity among stable relationships are viewed as a norm. Spouses either feel well compensated for their investments into the relationship when they expect and receive a just return, or feel ill-used when they believe they have been and will continually give substantially more than they are getting. Stability of the relationship is increased when each spouse's investment increases in light of their potential returns and costs. Instability stems from everything in the relationship being evaluated by both parties in terms of potential rewards.

Communication Techniques

Communication is basic to the survival of all organisms. Skills are needed to send information and to receive and interpret data. Goals for marital therapy are to build the couples' communication skills to make their desires known, to understand the other's requests, and to gain a common understanding. A five-step program to help achieve these goals is:

The Ability to Listen. Good listeners are able to separate their emotions from the other's words. Effective listening requires considerable effort. Good listeners: are fully committed to listening, are physically and mentally ready to listen, wait for the other to complete the message before expressing their own ideas, and use analytic skills to supplement listening and not replace it. These skills give the listener the ability to help the speaker feel accepted and understood.

Constructive Request-Making. Couples have a tendency to be quite indirect with their requests to their spouses. Their requests are not openly expressed. They are disguised in sweet suggestions or questions and accusations with much manipulation. Appropriate phrasing of their requests should be taught, as well as when to express their requests. We have learned to say please, but we did not learn how to read the cues of the other's readiness to hear or grant requests.

Selective, Specific and Timely Feedback. The way in which the couple expresses their reaction to one another's behavior helps to improve the quality of their communication. It reduces uncertainty and feedback is necessary if we are able to perform any kind of social or physical task. Direct and honest feedback is very rare. Positive feedback rather than negative feedback brings change, stimulating better outcomes, positive risk-taking, and higher performance as a result.

Clarification. This is simply to clarify the message that has been received. Pseudo communication is an illusion of understanding in which both spouses think they have shared an understanding of the situation and each is way off the mark. Training in clarification is taught in most communication programs-validation or confirming/clarifying are terms used. The couples practice a two phase clarification process, instigating them to ask for meaning and then to restate the message received. The listener should probe the speaker for additional data until he/she can accurately paraphrase the speaker's message.

Treatment of Spousal Abuse With

Conjoint Marital Therapy

Throughout the treatment of spousal abuse and the crisis intervention process, transitional counseling is needed. This can include obtaining emergency leave, planned exit from the home, financial support and support for children, etc. Further, a clear assessment of the level and types of abuse must be determined.

Where Post-traumatic Stress Disorder is found, individual therapy is needed. Couple therapy, family treatment and skill training groups are recommended.

A recent article in *Family Therapy Today* stated that, "Domestic violence has finally been recognized as an epidemic, and substantial media attention has recently been devoted to this crime. It is now estimated, when the results of various incidence studies of family violence are reviewed, that spousal abuse (physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional) occurs at least once in 20-30% of all families. In the majority of cases, it is the woman who is battered, yet in about 10% of the cases, it is the man who is battered. In many cases there is mutual violence; but even in these situations it is the woman who usually gets hurt (Straus & Gelles, 1986). Every 18 seconds in the United States, a woman is beaten by her partner. Because spousal abuse is so prevalent, it is very important for marriage and family counselors to be fully cognizant of this problem and to become familiar with treatment techniques.

A Conjoint Approach

There are different techniques to reduce spousal abuse, including individual and group treatment of battered women in shelters, or anger management programs for batterers as suggested by Dr. Geffner. Probably the most controversial approach of all those being used is conjoint therapy. It is controversial because it works with the man and the woman conjointly (Geller & Wasserstrom, 1984, Harris, 1986). The intervention technique is basically psychoeducational and eclectic.

A selection of this treatment choice is indicated as an option for those couples who wanted to end the violence and intimidation, remain in an improved relationship, and participate in counseling together. The fear of losing the relationship is a powerful motivator for both partners.

Abusers and victims indicate that both batterers and battered women have many similar characteristics. The results of extensive psychological, marital, and social evaluations indicate that both the men and the women exhibit anger, hostility, impulsivity, low self-esteem, lack of assertiveness, stress, marital dissatisfaction, poor communication skills, and abuse of alcohol. These problem areas need to be addressed even if they are the result of the partners living in an abusive situation.

Conjoint therapy has the advantage of not only working with the couple to reduce the violence but also to improve their relationship. This approach focuses on the dysfunctional relationship and helps both people change their individual ways of interacting as well as modifying the relationship itself. The long-term goals are to: reduce the batterer's violence and intimidation, empower the woman, and change the entire structure of the relationship. This is important in breaking the cycle of violence, since research indicates that the greatest risk factor for spouse abuse is being abused or witnessing abuse in the family of origin (Caesar, 1988, Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986).

A disadvantage of the conjoint approach is that both partners need to be willing to commit themselves to therapy. Further, there is the potential danger of additional violence if the

couple remain together, so the counselor must be aware of and focus on this in the initial sessions. In addition, the counselor should keep in mind that the couple does not have to be living together in order to make effective use of the conjoint approach.

Specific Techniques of Conjoint Therapy

In the initial stages, the couples sign a non-violence contract, again to ensure commitment and safety, this is quite effective, especially since they often enter therapy during a "honeymoon" period following an abusive incident. We make it clear from the beginning and throughout the entire program that violence is not acceptable under any condition. Abuse is a choice that a person makes, and each is responsible for their own behavior. The ideas of personal responsibility and choice, as well as specific safety precautions for the woman, (emergency plans and telephone numbers) and maintenance of the non-violent contract are repeatedly reinforced.

The contract developed must include at a minimum agreement concerning the following issues per Dr. Geller:

Recognize the signals -- when the anger might escalate, sweaty palms, stomach knotting, increased heartbeat, light-headedness, dizziness and body tension. When the batterer receives and becomes aware of these cues or anger, the contract must be employed. It is important to remember that "Batterers often feel victimized themselves. One author has noted that violence occurs when the batterer believes his partner is attacking his sense of self (Geller p. 109).

Examine the various options -- what can the batterer do to avoid acting out? Such things as take a walk, jog, go to another room, hit a pillow, etc. The options should be presented by the counselor but must be chosen by the batterer.

Determine to take time-out -- It is vitally important that the batterer ruthlessly determine to take time out (for 15 minutes or more, until calm and rational) before resuming dialogue.

Directives must be given regarding the number of times that discussion is attempted to resolve a conflict. No more than three attempts can be made until termination of attempts, or until the next day.

Bonding is to occur and ways found to strengthen and improve intimacy, communication and trust. Again, as a counselor you are to make suggestions, but it is up to the wife (victim) to choose which methods are safe and acceptable.

Review of the contract -- is made weekly so that corrections can be made as required.

Repeat the process until there is "fruit of repentance" or a cessation of the acting out for a significant period of time (at least 90 days).

Usually the couples in the initial sessions want to focus on accusations and fault-finding for various behaviors. We emphasize a "no blame" approach similar to systems theory, since we

do not seek to punish either person. A "blame approach," if permitted to continue, would even further lower the self-esteem of the partners and tends to hinder the development of rapport with the counselor. It does not allow the counselor to act as an agent of change to help the partners alter current and future behaviors and attitudes. It is necessary to explain that the counselor's job is not to judge and assign blame but rather to help them to change so that "he" no longer uses violence and intimidation and "she" no longer feels afraid of being hit. This no-blame approach seems to create a more positive overall therapeutic environment and encourages the partners to focus on productive changes in behavior and acceptance of personal responsibility.

The next step focuses on anger management techniques. Handouts and homework assignments are given to the clients. The abuser is often not aware of his own anger nor the corresponding body and environmental cues to anger. Attending to non-verbal cues, being aware of his own feelings, and learning how to express these feelings in a more constructive way are emphasized. To create alternative ways of expressing anger, we spend time focusing on the alternatives to violence. Other ways to ventilate anger that are not intimidating nor violent are modeled; for example, physical exercise, relaxation techniques, time-out periods, and desensitization.

Once a non-violent repertoire of behaviors to anger are established, we focus on communication. Fair fight rules are emphasized as a means of helping couples communicate better. Assumptions, "mind reading," and other maladaptive behaviors are pointed out with the use of psychoeducational techniques, role-playing, and modeling. Humor is often absent in abusive families. It is very important to be able to bring humor back into the relationship and into the counseling lest the clients and the counselors become overwhelmed by the situation itself.

Finally, cognitive re-framing is utilized to reduce ritualistic behaviors, and to focus on irrational thoughts and beliefs. Rational-emotive therapy is used to help the couple improve self-esteem by counteracting failure and worthlessness messages, and to confront rationalizations, denial, and tendencies to blame everyone else for the current situation and problems. Being able to assertively express feelings is especially important in abusive relationships, and these communication techniques are repeatedly emphasized. Problem solving techniques and conflict resolution methods are included in the therapy. By this point in the treatment, the couples are able to tolerate much more intense emotional expression without getting abusive or defensive.

Self-esteem enhancement, which is a crucial factor in abusive situations, is also included. The couples are encouraged to discuss and think about their strengths, and to reinforce each other positively. Typically, these couples' definition of intimate behavior is strongly affected by their dysfunctional families of origin (Family Therapy Today. 1989).

Paul Bohovec, MSW, has developed a program in Fort Washington, PA called (**The Reduce Abuse Program**) (Project RAP). It has proven effective in treating abusive and/or overly controlling men through a group counseling approach. He states that "Safety precedes

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healing.” That is, the treatment of the husband in-group sessions is necessary prior to couple or family counseling.

In the first phase of the counseling, awareness of abusive behaviors (which include possessive, intrusive, demanding, controlling, and passive-aggressive behavior) are addressed, to include consequences for such behavior. The abuser must learn how they give permission to themselves to act out.

In phase two, the working through of their feelings and developing accountability is accomplished. Group work emphasizes:

- Recognizing difficult emotions and impulses and choosing not to act out.
- Acknowledging that their spouse has faults and may also be abusive.
- Realize the danger of abuse, especially that of men directed at women.
- Learn that there is no excuse for hitting or other physical violence.

Our society socializes men to be dominant over women. Men who are emotionally insecure attempt to protect their vulnerability and shame by the mask of machismo and aggression.

The man feels strong and in control when aggressive. Men are socialized that vulnerable, negative feelings need not be tolerated, and that aggressive explosions are just a part of our “maleness.” Men must be taught to control and redirect aggressive impulses into constructive action.

*And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves:
for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

1 Pet 4:8 KJV

*Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from
the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and
shall hide a multitude of sins.*

James 5:20 KJV

Assisting to Rebuild Marriages in Times of Crisis

When a crisis occurs within a marital relationship, there are several steps that one can take to assist in the resolution of the crisis times.

When a crisis occurs within a marital relationship, there are several steps that one can take to assist in the resolution of the crisis times. There are some immediate concerns to be aware of. We must assess the potential for physical violence within the family. Whenever a spouse is in danger of continued physical abuse, it is strongly recommended that an intervention occur. Part of that can include, if necessary, contacting the local police. I don't find anywhere in the Word of God, other than persecution for righteousness sake, that we are to accept physical harm. Where physical violence occurs, separation is necessary.

There are certain things that are important to keep in mind in ministering to people in times of crisis, especially when working with couples. They include:

1. Emotions

Emotions can run very high. Expect a lot of anger, tears, resentment, and bitterness between the two people. This happens normally whenever two people cannot seem to get along together.

2. Time

All problems take time to develop and all solutions take time to be brought to fruition. Sometimes it has been months or years of silent, sporadic conflict that has finally erupted.

The role of a counselor in this situation is to open the lines of communication that are closed. Many times couples are unable to understand each other. Your role is to act as translator and mediator between the two.

3. Blame

People will be focusing the blame on their spouse, rather than focusing on the issues of their personal responsibility within the problem. You must reframe their focus.

Some things that are helpful include:

Providing an opportunity for a controlled expression of emotions. The expression of feelings is not negative in and of itself. It can cause negative reaction in people's lives. Allow for the expression of feelings in a controlled manner, without the assassination of character.

As a counselor, you must remain neutral. Regardless of how injured you feel one party is, and how innocent you feel the other is, it is important to remember that there are no innocent victims.

Create a forum for them to be able to discuss things openly. Confidentiality and privacy are very important.

4. **Encourage** the people to talk **with** each other, not **at** each other.
5. **Remind them of the covenant** that they have made with each other before God, especially when they are Christians.

There are certain things that one should not say in the midst of a marital or family crisis.

Do not take sides. It is important to recognize that there are no "villains" or "victims."

Do not assume responsibility for patching up someone's marriage.

Do not underestimate the potential for acting out, especially of violence, in a domestic quarrel.

Be careful of unhealthy attractions, or dependencies, that could form between you and a counselee.

Romans 8:1 says that there is "*no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*" Those who have failed marriages or difficult family situations know about their failures and are often loaded down with guilt and shame. To add insult to injury is not wise. Do not condemn. Do not put down. Try using the mercy of God, to recognize that it is but for the grace of God that it is not you experiencing difficulty. Be an encourager, not a judge.

Helpful Techniques Towards Counseling Resolution

There are several techniques that can assist an individual to resolve crisis issues and problems rooted in the client's past. One of the goals is to bring them to a place of facing the truth, for "knowing the truth will set them free." It is also important to assist them in the process of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a commandment that the Lord gave. He said, "If you do not

forgive, you will not be forgiven." It is therefore important to process through the anger and hurt to a place where they can resolve, forgive, and let go of hurts from the past.

There is a three-pronged model of counseling for those who have experienced crisis, discussed fully in the book *A Door of Hope* by Jan Frank.

1. Face it

It is important to help the individual face the problem straight ahead. This is usually fairly easy to do since in the midst of problem you cannot help but see what the domestic violence is. Part of facing it is facing personal responsibility for the crisis and an obligation to act responsibly towards the violence (with abuse victims that are children, they are **NEVER** responsible for their victimization). In spite of what has happened, the couple is responsible to act, believe, and respond in a Christian manner. Pastoral care and counsel should help them to face things directly.

2. Trace it

Trace the origin of the violence. What things led up to, or precipitated the event leading to counseling? If it was a car accident, many times there is not much you could have done to avoid it. It just seemed to happen. That has to be managed, there is nothing to trace. In the case of child abuse, or some other form of domestic violence, there are usually issues in your life that must be walked through. The client must trace back to the origins. This is where asking questions and allowing the individual to talk openly and freely is very important.

3. Erase it

Some techniques have already been discussed. There are several methods that can be used to resolve personal conflict, and assist individuals in working through their patterns of destruction. Two of the most effective are:

a. Letter writing or journalizing

Many times assisting someone to write out what they feel and think, in the form of prayers or letters to those who have hurt them, can help them to process through the anger or hurt they may be experiencing. Ultimately there must be restoration and reconciliation. In some cases they must go to an individual and make things right or confront their victimizer. The letter writing helps them process their feelings in a positive way.

b. Role Playing

Assisting the individual to talk through their hurts is a very helpful technique and can be done safely in this manner.

These experiential things can help them move past the denial phase and help them in the restoration process.

When counseling someone who has been abused, keep in mind the following things:

1. Trust is most difficult for a victim or a perpetrator to establish. Therefore, being supportive and empathetic is highly important. For trust to develop, the client needs consistency of care in the counseling process. The client is likely to challenge you in this regard, often eliciting similar feelings in you that are felt by those that have victimized them. These feelings are quite normal, and an indicator of the depth of counseling you are engaged in.
2. Denial is usually quite strong, with an apparent need by the victim to protect the victimizer. This comes from the intense threats that the victim has lived under over the months or years of abuse. Telling the story is not easy, and distortion of the full story may be evident. Patience is needed until the whole truth can be told.
3. Be prepared to assist, but do not become a rescuer. The temptation to become a Messiah for the victim is to be resisted as it is non-therapeutic for the client.
4. Look to the future while dealing with the past and present. Give a sense of hope, while encouraging longer-term therapy to deal with the damage caused by the abuse. Band-Aids are inadequate as a cure for what is truly needed in the wounded soul of the victim.

The Redemptive Model

When discussing ministry, especially counseling in cases of domestic violence, the redemptive model must be kept in mind. That is, since the creation of man and his fall, God has actively persuaded man with a hope of salvation, or redemption from sin. Modern and not so modern movies often portray this. The classic of which is Lewis Carroll's, The Christmas Story.

As believers in God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, our focus should be on a full salvation (*sozo*, wholeness, completeness) which goes far beyond the forgiveness of sin (the beginning) and moves through sanctification and ultimately the glorification. All three aspects of salvation are provided by God's undeserved favor (grace), but requirements of cooperation on our part for the final two are given. All are received by faith, but especially in sanctification, we must be a willing participant in the search for truth, and then we must allow the Holy Spirit to change us. The following counseling measures are provided from an overall redemptive view that is holistic, not simplistic. In light of this, several scriptures should be studied by the counselor as foundation for the redemptive process we will pursue with the victim and victimizers. They include:

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

'not as a result of works, that no one should boast'" (Ep 2:8-9 NASB).

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“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Ro 3:23 NASB).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ro 6:23 NASB).

“Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?”

For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man.

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET."

But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.

And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;

for sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me.

So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

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For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.

But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good.

So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me.

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish.

But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good.

For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.” (Ro 7:1-25 NASB)

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Ro 8:1 NASB).

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Ro 5:8 NASB).

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Ro 12:1-2 NASB).

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

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fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (He 12:1-2 NASB).

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (He 4:12-13 NASB).

“This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,” (Ep 4:17-22 NASB)

Though you will not use these scriptures as a weapon against people, they may be strategically used to minister appropriately to the violent family and to introduce to them the full intention of God to conform us all to the image of Jesus Christ.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the major modes of marital counseling.
2. Which system of marital and family counseling seems most useful to you. Why?
3. Discuss the place of marriage enrichment in the program of prevention.
4. How can marriages be rebuilt from your perspective.

*Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.
Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church;
and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name
of the Lord:
And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord
shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they
shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another,
and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The
effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
James 5:13-16 KJV*

Another Look: A Christian Integration

The Secret Revealed: Facing the Truth

David prayed, "Search my heart, O God and know my thoughts...see if there be any wicked way in me." The very thought that the Family Secrets, often hidden for generations, might be revealed, creates trepidation in the heart of both victim and abuser. Because the family is all that they know, there is intense pressure to maintain the family unit. Children especially, and the spouse who is battered, feel obligated to protect and abhor the possible responsibility of sending mom or dad "away". Yet to treat a family system, the truth must be faced. Though it is most difficult, with God's help and good clinical skills, the task of healing the broken individuals and restoring the family can occur.

The Process

Even if a client is referred by a social service agency for child or spousal abuse, the truth is not clearly known. There is no psychological test that can predict a child or spousal abuser. The best predictor of present and future behavior is past behavior. One thing is certain, without breaking through the denial, and facing the truth, the likelihood of repeated offenses is frighteningly high.

Breaking through

Frank was a 39-year old black man, father of six children, two by his first marriage and four by his second. The family had been referred to counseling for therapy because of their fervent religious beliefs and strong denial. Frank had been accused of repeated sexual assault on his oldest daughter, with clear but un-prosecutable evidence of his guilt. Frank denied the abuse in the first session. I reviewed the county probation reports and tried to directly confront Frank's denial. He was too "slick" for that, using the biblical term "under the blood" as his primary defense. As I listened to him relate, in a cocky and arrogant style, his innocence and disdain for the county, I prayed for a word of wisdom to erode his denial. My theological arguments were well founded, but he remained smugly comfortable. I began to tell a story,

with a moral of "where there's smoke, there's fire". I stated that about ten times during the session. They left, and I felt that this case would be an up-hill battle. The next day I received a call from Frank. He was calling from the sheriff's office. He had voluntarily admitted his guilt, not only of abusing his daughter, but of having abused his son as well. He could not sleep as the Holy Spirit pounded the word of wisdom into him, convicting him of his of sin and "scaring me to death." With the denial removed, therapy could begin.

Depending on the situation, confrontation of denial and an honest search for truth can usually begin however, direct confrontation frequently creates defensiveness, and more indirect approaches are needed. Keep at the defensive system by analyzing it, challenging it, pointing out deception (in a loving way) and allow the Word of God to penetrate the soul.

Determination: Assessing the Problem

As mentioned earlier, without a proper diagnosis, effective treatment is very difficult. Because of the nature of an abusive family system, multiple determinations of the problem may be possible. In light of this, proper investigation into the family history, back two or more generations is helpful.

Generational Patterns

You will find in nearly 80% of family violence cases, one or both of the parents in the family had violent or abusive/neglectful parents. Therefore, most victimizers are, or were victims of a previous generation. The symptoms can be carried, as stated in Exodus 20, 34, "...unto the third and fourth generation.." Empathy for the victimizing occurring in the past, and assisting to bring the awareness of the patterns learned to the client is the first stage of therapy. The dynamics that need to be observed and probed for include:

1. **Past abusive patterns** should be explored in great detail. Often, due to the poor communication and family denial, the patterns are not readily available. A genogram or other such instrument can be helpful in gathering this information. Disclosing this information to the client can open doors for fruitful treatment.
2. **Triggers to abusive patterns**, often non-verbal cues, must be uncovered and brought to the surface. The stressors that release the rage or sexual acting out must be traced, and a full understanding of the causes of the abuse must be uncovered. Role-play of past (recent) incidents under strict control can be helpful.
3. **Communication processes** have to be traced to determine how the family or couple remains stuck in their dysfunctional patterns. Especially look for, and describe in treatment, projections of blame, triangulation, unclear or mixed messages, and other faulty communications in the family.

Without proper determination of the real problems, you can wallow around in symptoms which are non-productive, prolonging the treatment process. After determination of the problems, discovery of the roots must occur.

Ultimately, honesty is required for growth and change to occur. Honesty must be modeled, usually by the counselor, giving courage to the victim and victimizer alike.

Discovery: Uncovering the Roots

The Apostle Paul warned us not to allow "roots of bitterness" to enter into our lives. In families victimized by violence and abuse, bitterness is quite likely (He 12:15).

Extreme anger and hurt, guilt and shame, are frequently at the root of family abuse. An individual has one of three choices to deal with these emotions:

Turn it to the outside and blame everyone for all the bad things that have happened to them.

Turn it inside, and blame themselves for everything bad that has happened.

Learn to express their anger (fear, guilt, etc.) using God given, biblical principles, accepting full responsibility for what they are in fact responsible for.

This will be discussed more fully in the section on reconstruction.

The clients must acknowledge that the difficulties do go deeper than immediate events. The patterns discovered through eroding the denial must now be faced in all their impact. This will generally lead to the expression of anger and other emotions, resulting in a great need for the clients to be encouraged. Ultimately, the goal is the recognition of the "place of the devil," and the removal of any bitterness through "healing" prayer. One way to process through the hurt so that bitterness can be removed is through existential exercises, such as writing letters to all the perpetrators or co-perpetrators, without mailing them.

Dr. Allender states that ultimately we must overcome our bitterness, and learn to bless the other person. This is certainly not easy, but is both possible and required to grow in God. Further, he states "Real life requires death. Death involves the experience of suffering. Suffering is required for growth." All of us have something to overcome, and as the roots of bitterness are systematically removed, pain will be experienced. Yet pain is inevitable, and as a counselor we must compassionately work with our clients through the "valley of the shadow of death" (Allender. 1990).

Deliverance: Destroying Fortresses

In Luke 4, Jesus, speaking of himself and validating the prophecy of Isaiah, states,

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release to oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Jesus came to deliver those who are captive, to open prison doors, to comfort those who mourn. When he left this earth to ascend to the Father, he sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, for our direction, instruction and healing. As Christians, we have also been called to comfort

and to fight for our brothers and sisters who are in distress. The power for deliverance (setting free) of those captives is available to us by the Holy Spirit.

When a multi-generational pattern of family abuse, especially sexual abuse, is evident, the breaking of generational curses or patterns may be needed. This specialized area of ministry, a form of spiritual warfare, is a weapon that secular counselors can never know. We must use this wisely, so as to insure that no re-injury of the client occurs.

Prayer of Deliverance

Once general family patterns are uncovered, teaching on the plan and power of God to set us at liberty needs to be presented. This teaching, outlined in detail in *I Want to be Like You, Dad*, should include:

Reading the scriptures concerning generational patterns.

Ex 20:1-5

"And God spoke all these words:

'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

You shall have no other God's before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me..." Ex 34:6-7 (NIV)

"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation (the results of sin can be clearly seen generation after generation. We do reap what has been sown.)"

Ga 3:13 (NIV)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us...(though redeemed we continue to carry areas of weaknesses which are open to demonic attack and temptation"

Mt 12:25-29, 43-45 (NIV)

"Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drive out Satan, he is divided against

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himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first that is how it will be with this wicked generation."

Ja 5:13-17 (NIV)

"Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

Ro 12:12 (NIV)

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

2 Co 10:3-6 (NIV)

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete."(Spiritual warfare will continue. The mop-up campaign that will help us to develop Godly self-respect)

Provide a clear picture of their responsibility in dealing with their past.

Once the time of study, meditation and instruction is complete, a two-hour session should be set for the prayer to break past bondages. You will need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, asking for clarity as you proceed. I encourage my clients to make a list of the hurts, people may have caused, breaking any curse and systematically praying, breaking any bondages and agreeing for healing in the areas of brokenness. Often, as you pray, you will see God move in a very powerful fashion. This "file dump" will open the door to working through the roughest areas of their life. One caution must be stated. Except on rare occasions, this time of prayer can stir more than resolve. It is not a cure all, and much time will need to be spent working through the results of past abuse, and to learn how to establish new and positive

relationships that are not abusive or neglectful. This dynamic process is available to us as Christian counselors and is a powerful tool that we must be prepared to use as God leads us.

Dealing with the Thoughts

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 speaks about a process most helpful for abuse victims and abusers alike, who struggle with residual negative thoughts which often plague them. The application of the scriptural principles are found here. The scripture provides four statements of therapeutic value.

1. **Our Warfare** - The warfare that is experienced in most clients is intense. It is difficult to imagine the level of hurt, sadness, shame and guilt that the client experiences. The facts of their flesh walk must be recognized. The pain, remorse, and fear is truly experienced, and is not to be minimized, yet the warfare is not in the flesh, but in the mind.
2. **The Power** - God has given us the power to overcome the hidden fortresses in our lives. Paul called our spiritual weapons, including prayer, meditation on God's Word, and confession, divinely powerful. Assisting your client to actively participate in the destruction of lies or negative beliefs that result from abusive situations is paramount in the healing process.
3. **Casting Down** - The concept presented by Paul is, after the initial identification of the fortresses, they must be destroyed or cast down. This is done through confession and repentance. As we see the truth and "throw down" the lies, which are any thought or belief contrary to God's Word, the freedom begins. You cannot cast things down or take the thoughts captive, the client must. You are the primary motivator for the client to pursue this necessary course.
4. **Punish** - To punish the disobedient thoughts means literally to not indulge oneself in a pity party, but continuously remind oneself that God has truly set us free. This will take time, and it is a significant part of the working through process.

Deliverance from bondage, whether soulish or spiritual, takes time, spiritual insight, certain gifting, and God's grace and mercy. Amazing results do occur in men and women who submit to God's prescribed process of liberation.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What is the concept of deliverance? What are the scriptures listed? Can you think of more scriptures that can be used in deliverance?
2. What is the idea of dealing with thoughts?

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Mt 23:26-7 KJV

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Co 7:1 KJV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 Jn 1:9 KJV

DECONTAMINATION: THE CLEANSING

Along with honesty and prayer, there must come decontamination or a cleansing from the shame that accompanies abuse. The cleansing that comes through talking, confession, and effective (to the mark) fervent prayer is step one. Step two, the deliverance through warfare prayer is vital. Third, you must assist the client to truly repent, or change their thinking that leads to a change in lifestyle.

Repentance

In spite of the abuse any individual has experienced, sin must be confessed, and our thoughts or beliefs must be changed. In 2 Corinthians 7:10, the Apostle Paul states that Godly sorrow, (sorrow for sin committed or received, not sorrow for being caught), produces repentance without regret, leading to salvation (Sozo). The sorrow that is expressed must not be for sorrow's sake, but must lead one to:

The truth, seeing the sin/situation as God does (setting us free) without the continual **regret or condemnation** that people tend to feel due to the prolonged abusive themes in their lives.

This process does not occur over night, in the Greek word "Sozo" for "salvation", is the meaning of being whole or complete. It is both a miraculous event of God's grace and mercy, and a progressive changing from Glory to Glory. Much of the time delay in wholeness comes because of the fact that much negative seed has been sown into the life of the abused, over time.

Sowing Death, Sowing Life

In the parable of the wheat and the tares (Mt 13: 24-30, 36-43), Jesus speaks of two seeds being sown into the "field". The field has been interpreted as the world, and perhaps the church. I also can see this parable as analogous of the life of those who have been abused. The seed sown is either one of two, either the good seed of the word of God bringing life, or the imitation seed of the devil, that leads to bondage and death.

The devil's seed, or his word, are lies sown into the garden of our hearts. When abuse, neglect, negative words or statements are sown, often thousands of times, the resulting "weeds" or misbeliefs grow up to choke the very life of the individual. Even Christians, those who know and understand the word of the Lord, may not be able to overcome in certain areas of their lives, not because of a lack of faith, but due to a lack of good seed versus bad. Therefore, gardening and pruning of the weeds and bushes (false beliefs and attitudes) must occur. Simply reading God's Word, will not be sufficient to overcome the entrenched lies that are believed over many months and years, especially when those very lies continue to be reinforced. Though the Word is quick and powerful, sharper than a twoedged sword, and can bring healing and restoration, we must have patience, as God works in the client's life according to his perfect timing.

Grief and Loss

The grief over loss of innocence, and the childhood or marriage that could and should have been is most difficult. Most clients must process through their sorrow, and mourn their losses similar in a way to that of a divorce or a death. Much of the cleansing work that is to happen will occur as you help them to grieve their losses.

The Stages of Grief

Moving through the grief stages is not automatic. Your client will move through them in their own style and in their own timing. The circumstances of the loss will cause the client to move through the stages differently, depending upon their relationship with God, the type and extent of the abuse, and their ability to embrace the pain they will be experiencing.

Shock

The first stage of grief is shock. Shock is a numbness which envelops the client, and is originally a most effective defense mechanism, necessary for surviving of the original event. Without it, the client may have never survived the trauma of the abuse. Shock is a physical experience in which the client loses a sense of the reality of the abuse, thus protecting themselves for a season.

Denial

Denial is the repression of the traumatic event or events over a longer period of time. Denial is the general inability of the client to face the truth of their victimization, or of being a victimizer. Denial for a short time is probably necessary and helpful, but becomes a mask that must be penetrated for therapeutic intervention to occur.

Fantasy Vs Reality

The third stage of transition of the grief process is the struggle between fantasy and reality. This can be viewed as a component of denial. The client will fantasize about how she or he wishes his/her family was, that the family will change, that the father will no longer come in at night, that the husband will not lose his temper any more. Reality is hard for most clients, but you must gently lead them to the facing of the whole truth if freedom is to be obtained.

Grief as a Release

In Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61 in the temple in Nazareth (Lu 4) He states that He had come to: "comfort all who mourn." However, for those who never mourn, there is rarely any comfort. Mourning is the releasing of the intense feelings that accompany the loss, in a way to bring relief to the client. The counselor is called upon to be the precipitator of the grief and the comforter as they mourn and process through the feelings of pain, usually through tears and much anguish. This is a most dramatic and sacred time for the client in the treatment process.

Learning to Live with the Memories

After the client has experienced, over a period of weeks, the flood of grief from the previous stage, the pain of grief begins to ease. However, this is often where the real battles for the soul begin. The work of restoration is far from over, yet it does feel so good when it stops hurting. The client must be reminded that the battle for the mind is yet to come, and to hang in there for the full process.

The memories can continue to plague and condemn the client for months after the treatment has begun. God made our minds with the ability to remember the most seemingly unimportant details of our lives. To truly forget everything that has happened to us is not realistic nor even desirable. The client has to learn to remember without condemnation, and without the associated pain. Like a scar, the reminder of the injury may always be with us, but the pain can be completely alleviated.

Acceptance and Affirmation

As the client processes through the grief cycle, they will eventually determine that "all things do work together for good to those who love the Lord". The beginning of therapy is not the time to share that Rhema! As their mind is renewed, they will be able to see how God has brought them through the valley of the shadow of death, and the fear and pain are now just faded memories. The cleansing of the heart of the person takes time, but the end result is a person or family fit for usage in the Kingdom of God.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What is the process of cleansing? What are the various steps?
2. What is the process in grief and loss? Review each part as described in the text.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2 Cor. 5:17 KJV

DIRECTION: NEW BEGINNINGS

The overall goal of counseling is the restoration of the abuser and the victim. There are several steps, as I conclude this manuscript, that should be considered in finalizing the recovery or restoration process.

1. The Word of God is a dynamic force that must be a part of your counseling process. This is especially true as you attempt to wrap-up the formal counseling contract. The client must be taught the principles of the word, and how to find answers for him/her self. What is learned in the counseling milieu is nearly as important as therapy itself.
2. Assist the client to "fish" for themselves in the Word and through such activities as journalizing. The dependency that naturally occurs between the client and the counselor must be slowly weaned. The ultimate statement of health is that the client is now dependent on the Lord Jesus Christ and his Body (in local expression) rather than the counselor.
3. Forgiveness is an absolute necessity, and yet cannot be forced. Remember that it is a process, one commanded by the Lord, but use wisdom in pushing for it.
4. Leave an open door for a return to your office if necessary. It is quite normal to have occasional visits for a check up, as long as it does not become a regular checkup.
5. Acknowledge the dignity of the client, as they have completed a phase of their ultimate healing. Be careful to remind them that perfection is designed for a very few; which primarily are Messiahs!
6. Insure and instill in them that the love of Jesus will never fail. They are co-inheritors of Christ, and are acceptable to him.

The journey with the abused or the abuser is often long and difficult. The pitfalls at times make the journey seem terribly long. But trust in the Lord, for if you have been placed in a position of ministry, and you are trained, be confident that the Lord will assist you beyond your seeming limit. I am never more amazed than when that which is impossible with man becomes possible, even easy with God.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What is involved in the recovery process? Can you find Bible verses that deal with this part of the process?

The Church is a religious home, a sanctuary for worship, a school for religious instruction, a fighting unit for the new world that is building. It is a social center of the highest type, since it gathers into relations of mutual helpfulness people of every age and condition, and since it adds to the attractions of the ordinary club of power or religion and the generous sympathies of the altruistic impulse. The Church is the most broadening and catholic organizations among men, since its vision is to the ends of the world whither the gospel is being carried, and since its citizenship is in heaven as well as in the earth.

Worth M. Tippy

The Church's Response

For centuries marital abuse has been an "unmentionable" sin. The church, like society as a whole, has ignored the problem and maintained the conspiracy of silence. Victims of this kind of violence feel humiliated. Many feel betrayed by God, experiencing a loss of faith and trust. In the church few have responded effectively, many have inadvertently denied the gravity of the problem, or even made it worse.

The church needs to take a definite theological and spiritual stand on the issue of marital violence and child abuse.

Symptoms of Abuse

Symptoms of possible abuse which pastors and church members need to be aware of include:

Patterns of absenteeism or interruption of regular attendance at Sunday services, choir practice, group meeting and other regular church activities can all be symptoms of an abusive situation.

Any change in patterns such as not sitting in one's regular place in church, avoiding friends, leaving before the end of the service or immediately after, etc. can also suggest problems.

A sudden change in appearance, such as radical changes in clothing (i.e. from well-kept to sloppy, conservative to seductive) or a change in makeup from no makeup to extreme makeup is a possible sign that something is really wrong.

Such things as refusing to see the pastor or the man speaking for the wife on the phone could be an indication that abuse may be happening.

There are many other evidences that should receive attention such as: Showing up at church at unusual times. Physical changes including new glasses, dental work (maybe due to broken teeth), hair style (covering bruises), obvious bruises and injuries such as burns or broken bones.

Suggestions for Pastors and Lay Counselors Responding to Victims of Spousal Abuse:

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What is told to you about such abuse should always be taken seriously. If the wife says she is being abused, believe her. It is difficult to accept that things like abuse happen in church families, but they do and if battered women are not taken seriously, the sin will continue.

If it is perceived that the woman is in immediate danger, she should be offered a place to stay for a night or two, until a suitable place can be found for her.

The one thing that a battered wife needs most in a time of crisis is a listening ear and understanding. Understanding is much better than advice. Just sharing the frustration and fear that a victim is experiencing can help resolve some of the confusion. Ministers and lay people must not only be approachable, but they must be shock proof. Reactions of shock or embarrassment will reinforce the feelings of shame being experienced by the victim. Often the victim is looking for support and the courage to go on.

In the counseling situation it is important to help the victim see that she is not to blame for her husband's violent behavior (though to some extent she may be somewhat responsible or at fault). She needs to realize that her husband's behavior is wrong regardless of what may have precipitated the outburst. The Victim should not be made to feel that she must return immediately without some guidance regarding a reasonable approach to a way of confronting him with his need to change.

The counselor should attempt to help the victim realize that she has choices. She must be helped to make her own choices. Although the counselor may feel that he knows what she should do, it is important that he realize that his job is to support and guide. It is the victims responsibility to take action.

A part of the counseling responsibility is to help restore or repair lowered self-esteem. A battered woman needs to see herself as Christ sees her. This can be done by pointing out scripture verses that demonstrate God's love for her.

Ro 5:8

"But God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Ro 8:37

"In all these things, we are more than conquers through Him that loved us."

1 Jn 3:1

"Beloved, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

1 Jn 4:10

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins."

It is always advisable to direct the victimized woman to a support group, either in the local church or in another church or agency.

Responding to Abusing Men

The first and foremost priority is that **the violence must stop**. The man must be made to understand that the violent behavior cannot go on. His rationalizations must not be accepted. Even if he feels extreme stress because of his work, abuse of alcohol, his wife's nagging, etc., the violence is not acceptable.

The man must be held accountable for his actions. His promises to change are usually a part of the cycle of violence, unless they are accompanied by concrete actions, such as seeking counseling, etc. He needs to be convinced that he can change.

The counselor must not take his word that the violence has stopped. Abusers must be constantly watched. Check with the abused partner and establish some system of accountability with other men in the church.

The Role of the Church FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What is the church's role in dealing with family violence?
2. What symptoms of abuse should the church be concerned about?
3. What are the scripture in the text as the refer to the church's role? Can you list others?
4. How can the church help abusing men?
5. What can the church do to help battered wives, or women in general?

CASE STUDY 1

Statement of the Problem

The Harmons were referred for counseling by their Pastor. The family was seeking counseling due to the eldest son's physical threats against the mother, physical assault and inappropriate sexual suggestiveness towards the sister.

Initial Interview

The family was closed, unemotional (except for the father's occasional expressions of rage against the son). The mother related that all was wonderful in the family until John began

acting out 6 months prior. She described the family as Christian, and quite normal. The daughter was slightly withdrawn, and somewhat depressed. She stated that she was only in counseling to support or help her mother. John remained quiet and nearly detached from the family, showing a little smile on his face.

History

It took some time to gain a sense of trust in the family. In separate interviews with the family, John and Jill presented quite differently. Both felt that mom and dad had the real problem, and John had threatened mom but only after mom screamed at him. Mom admitted to "losing it" once in a while, but feared her son's power. After the initial statement about John's sexual inappropriateness it was never discussed again.

I focused the counseling on the generational pattern of Mom and Dad in their families of origin. Both had initially related happy homes. After some probing, the underlying truth was uncovered. Jan had been sexually abused and traumatized by her father from age 4 until age 20, six months prior to her wedding. She had never revealed this secret to anyone, and she was extremely fearful and enraged. In a counseling session, after giving her some time to process the pain of the abuse, she chose to tell her husband. He showed little sympathy for Jan, merely intense anger towards the perpetrator. As I explored this further, Bill revealed that he had also been sexually abused and raped by friends of his older brother when he was 12 years of age. Neither knew of the others abuse until revealed in the counseling process. Both were unconsciously projecting their fears on their son, who happened to look like Jan's father.

Treatment Process

Once our focus changed from the son (who was acting out some of the family pathology, mom's fear of her daughter being abused) we began to see how the pain of the abuse had set into motion beliefs and needs that were highly dysfunctional. Once the secrets were revealed, grief work was begun and worked through, and communication systems were reworked, the family began to move towards a healthy adjustment.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. Review the case study, especially with regard to the treatment.

CASE STUDY 2

Melissa, age 26, a single Caucasian female, and a recent Christian, came for counseling due to low self-esteem, symptoms of co-dependency, and extreme anxiety. Her former live-in boyfriend, that she continued to date, was the focus of her counseling complaint. He was a recovering crystal meth addict, who had been in jail on a drug-related charge and released only three months prior. He was very repentant, and had begged her to continue to see him. She was confused and needed advice.

Melissa related that she needed help in deciding whether to marry her boyfriend or not. She had dropped him before he was sent to jail, but still felt she should give it another chance.

She had dropped another boyfriend before this one, three months before. She was to be married but was too attached to the present boyfriend. She presented as an intelligent, yet extremely confused young lady.

History

Melissa was the middle child (older brother, younger sister) of an alcoholic family system (father). Though she had been treated well as a child, she frequently observed her father physically and verbally assault and abuse her mother. She had left the home to go to college, which she had graduated. She was presently in an outstanding job.

Present

She had broken up with her present boyfriend due to his drug usage, episodic violence, excessive pornography addiction, and extremely manipulative and controlling behavior. Further, when she stated that she no longer wanted to see him (in the past) he would threaten her or threaten to commit suicide. She feared that he might do just that, and it would be all her fault. Finally, she believed that as a Christian she was obligated to work things out if possible because she had slept with him. She was clearly conflicted between co-dependency and the desire for her own life.

Course of Treatment

At Melissa's request, we included her boyfriend in a session every other week.

Our focus was "pre-marital" counseling, with a goal of preparing them for marriage. As we discussed the attributes of maturity and the biblical grounds for marriage, the potential spouse became increasingly agitated. He had two "slips" into pornography and drugs, but she continued to "forgive" him.

After six months, she decided that he was too much like her father (she had not seen the similarity before). His response was similar to the past, but this time she did not give in to his threats, even calling the police when he tried to break down the door.

Melissa is still single and actively involved in her church. She is dating cautiously, and is in a support group for co-dependents and adult children of alcoholics. Her prognosis is good. Her ex-boyfriend still tries to "rehook" her, unsuccessfully.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. What are the various aspects of Case Study 2?
2. Was the course of treatment adequate or can you think of others things that could have been done?

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Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Ps

119:11 KJV

Scriptures on Husband-and-Wife Relations

Ge 1:26-28 (KJV)

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Ge 2:7 (KJV)

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Ge 2:18 (KJV)

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Ge 2:21-23 (KJV)

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Ge 2:25 (KJV)

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Ge 3:1-21 (KJV)

- 1. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*
- 2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

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3. *But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*
4. *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*
5. *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*
6. *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*
7. *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*
8. *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*
9. *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*
10. *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*
11. *And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast, thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*
12. *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*
13. *And the LORD God said unto the woman, what is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*
14. *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:*
15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
16. *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*
17. *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat*

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of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Ex 20:5-6 (KJV)

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Ex 20:12-14 (KJV)

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Ex 20:17 (KJV)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Ps 37:1 (KJV)

A Psalm of David. Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

Pr 5:15-17 (KJV)

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.

Let them be only thine own, and not for strangers' with thee.

Pr 6:32 (KJV)

But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

Pr 31:10-31 (KJV)

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

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Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Mt 5:27-28 (KJV)

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Mt 5:31-32 (KJV)

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Mt 12:25-29 (KJV)

And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

Mt 12:43-45 (KJV)

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

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Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Mk 3:23-27 (KJV)

And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Mk 7:14-23 (KJV)

And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand:

There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Jn 5:19-24 (KJV)

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

That all men should honors the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Ro 7:1-4 (KJV)

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Ro 8:1 (KJV)

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Ro 12:1-2 (KJV)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

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And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Ro 13:1-10 (KJV)

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for the beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake.

For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

1 Co 7:1-17 (KJV)

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

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The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.

1 Co 13:1-13 (KJV)

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

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And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Ga 3:13 (KJV)

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Ga 3:28-29 (KJV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Ga 5:14-24 (KJV)

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For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Ga 6:1-10 (KJV)

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

For every man shall bear his own burden.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

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For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Ep 4:11-32 (KJV)

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and for and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ;

If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

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And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Neither give place to the devil.

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ep 5:15-16 (KJV)

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ep 5:21-22 (KJV)

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. Ep

5:4 (KJV)

Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but, rather, giving of thanks.

Ph 2:3-11 (KJV)

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

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Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

C1 3:5-15 (KJV)

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

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Cl 3:18-21 (KJV)

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

He 12:1-3 (KJV)

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

He 4:12-13 (KJV)

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Ja 1:19 (KJV)

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

Ja 1:20-25 (KJV)

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

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For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Ja 4:1-10 (KJV)

From whence come wars and fighting's among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Ja 5:13-16 (KJV)

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

1 Pe 1:13-16 (KJV)

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1 Pe 2:9-10 (KJV)

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

1 Pe 3:1-9 (KJV)

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

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Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

1 Pe 5:6-8 (KJV)

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Casting all your care upon him; for the careth for you.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

1 Jn 1:1-4 (KJV)

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

1 Jn 1:6-10 (KJV)

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 Jn 2:7-11 (KJV)

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

COUNSELING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

1 Jn 3:10-11 (KJV)

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

1 Jn 4:7-8 (KJV)

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

See also the entire book Song of Solomon.

