

Treatment Options for Women Who Use Force



Jeffrie K. Cape





Context Matters



Not everyone who hits ... is a batterer.

A hit is not a hit is not a hit.

Context matters.

A lot. A whole lot.

Osthoff (2002, p. 1540).

BACKGROUND

- Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS)
& CTS2
- Mandatory, Preferred, & Pro- Arrest
Policies

Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) & CTS2

CTS, Straus et al. (1980) & CTS2, Straus et al. (1996)

- National Family Violence Survey
- 39 Questions Focus on Physical Aggression to Resolve Disagreements
- Counts “blows” & Assesses “severity”
- Excludes Context of Motivation and Intent
- Ignores Influence of Culture and Ethnicity

Conflict Tactics Scale

Similarities in Number of Assaultive Acts

BUT

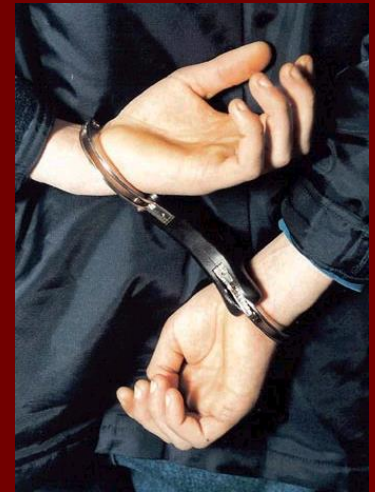
Substantial Differences in Injury Levels

- Women receive significantly more serious injuries than men



Mandatory, Preferred & Pro-Arrest

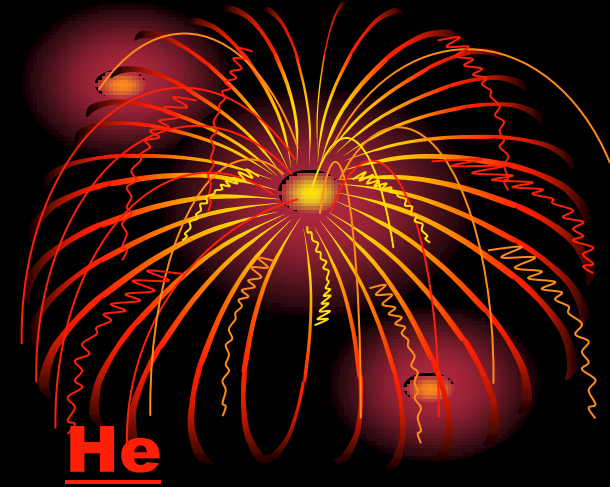
- Public acknowledgement that DV is a serious crime and will be punished.
- To empower and protect victims.
- To create uniformity of police response.



A Story

Tonya and George

At the scene ...



She

He

- **Crying, screaming**
- **She talks about her behavior and actions**
- **She takes responsibility**
- **How can I help him?**
- **Calm & Bleeding**
- **He talks about her behavior and actions**
- **It's not my problem**
- **If she hadn't ...**

Incident Based Thinking



**“I don’t go there to figure out
what happened.**

I don’t care what happened.

**My job is to decide whether or not a
criminal act occurred and if so, what
criminal act and who committed it.”**

-Delaware Police Officer

As quoted in Miller (2005)

BEHIND THE SCENES?



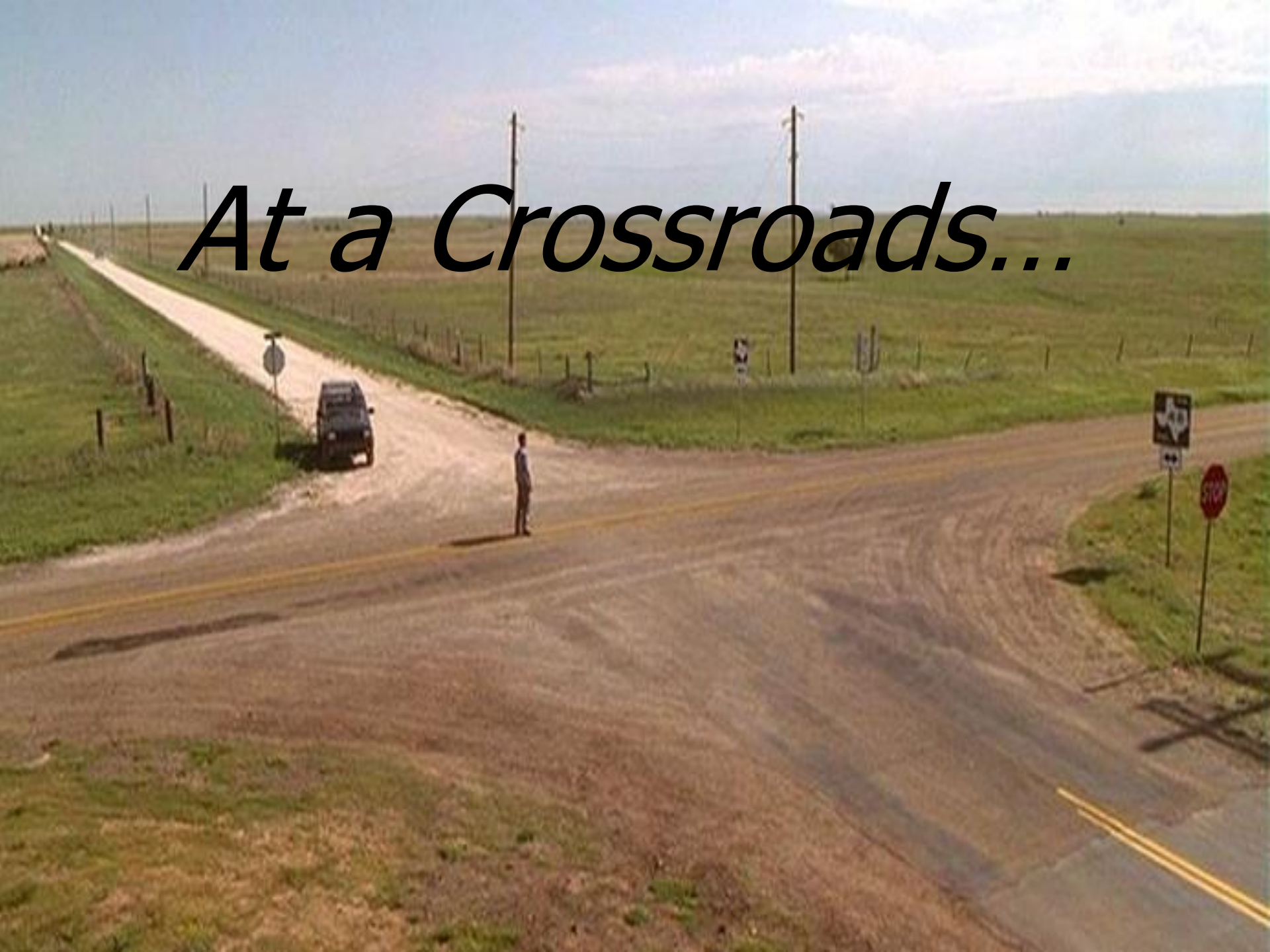
Her Arrest & Conviction Have an Impact On (I):

- DV shelters' willingness to accept her
- His ability to use arrest & incident details against her at "home"
- Native women's access to tribal land.

Her Arrest & Conviction Have an Impact On (II):

- Her public benefits including housing & financial aid
- Her employment and/or schooling
- Opportunity to chaperone school fieldtrips

At a Crossroads...



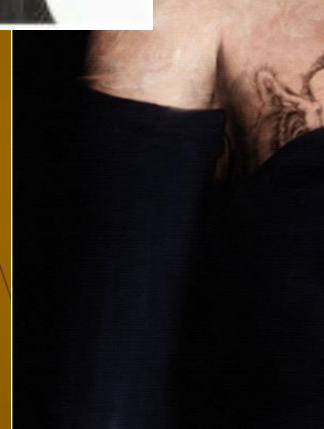
Assumptions



- Compliant
- Helpless
- Quiet
- Seeks Help
- Protects Her Children
- Looks Beaten Down
- White



- Psycho-bitch
- PMS'ing
- Loud
- Doesn't Look Bruised
- Doesn't Protect Her Kids
- Violates "The Code"
- Women of Color



African American Women

- Expectation by other American ethnic groups that African American women are “strong” and “invulnerable” (Miller, 2001).
- Dilemma: If they report their partner’s violence against them, they are reinforcing negative stereotypes that black men are naturally violent (Donovan & Williams, 2002; Swan and Snow, 2006).



Generational Shift



Preemptive violence

- Survivors of long term abuse
- Young women



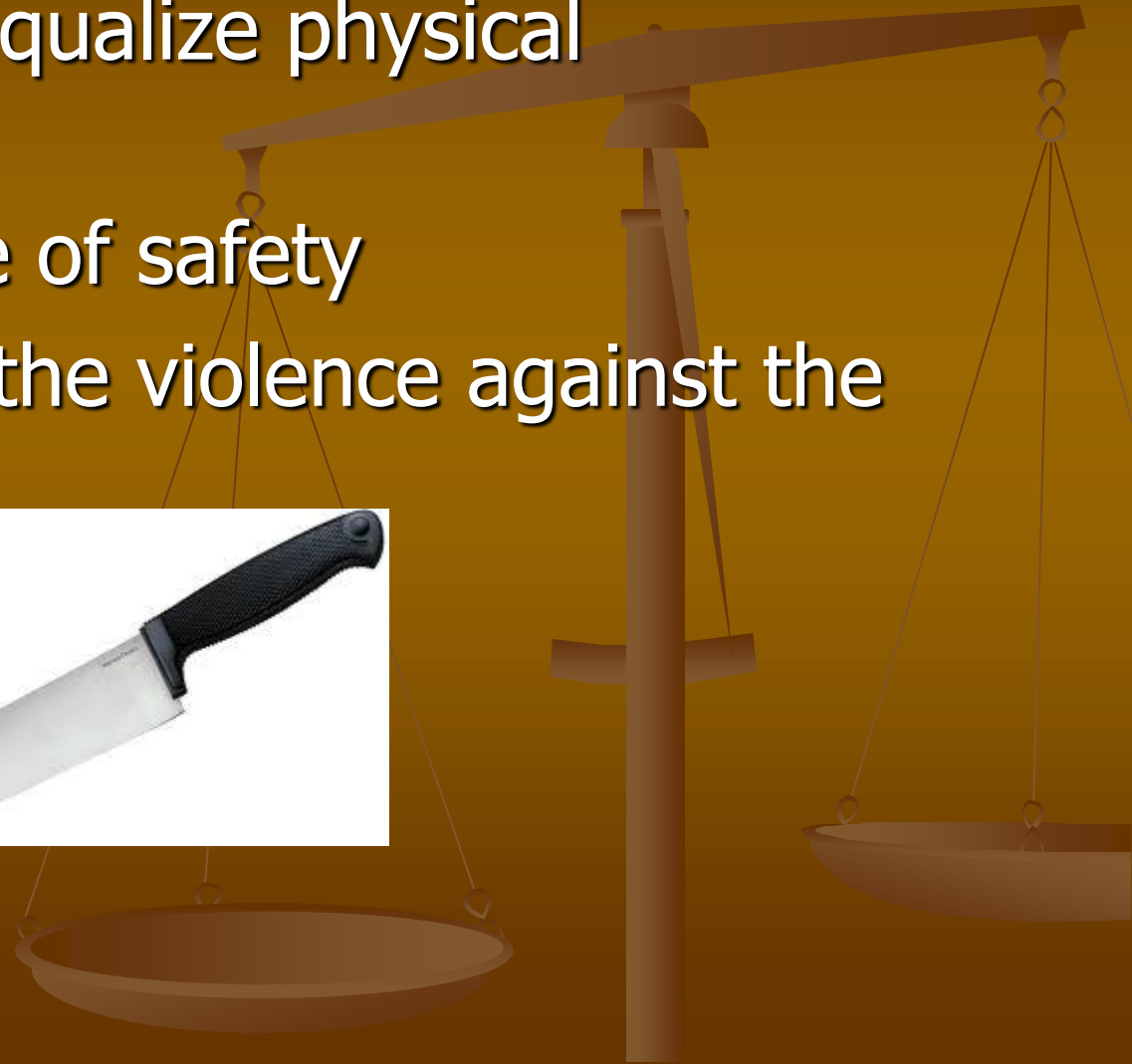
Imminent Danger

- Legal definition “Imminent Danger”
 - imminent - About to occur; impending
- Often no apparent imminent threat

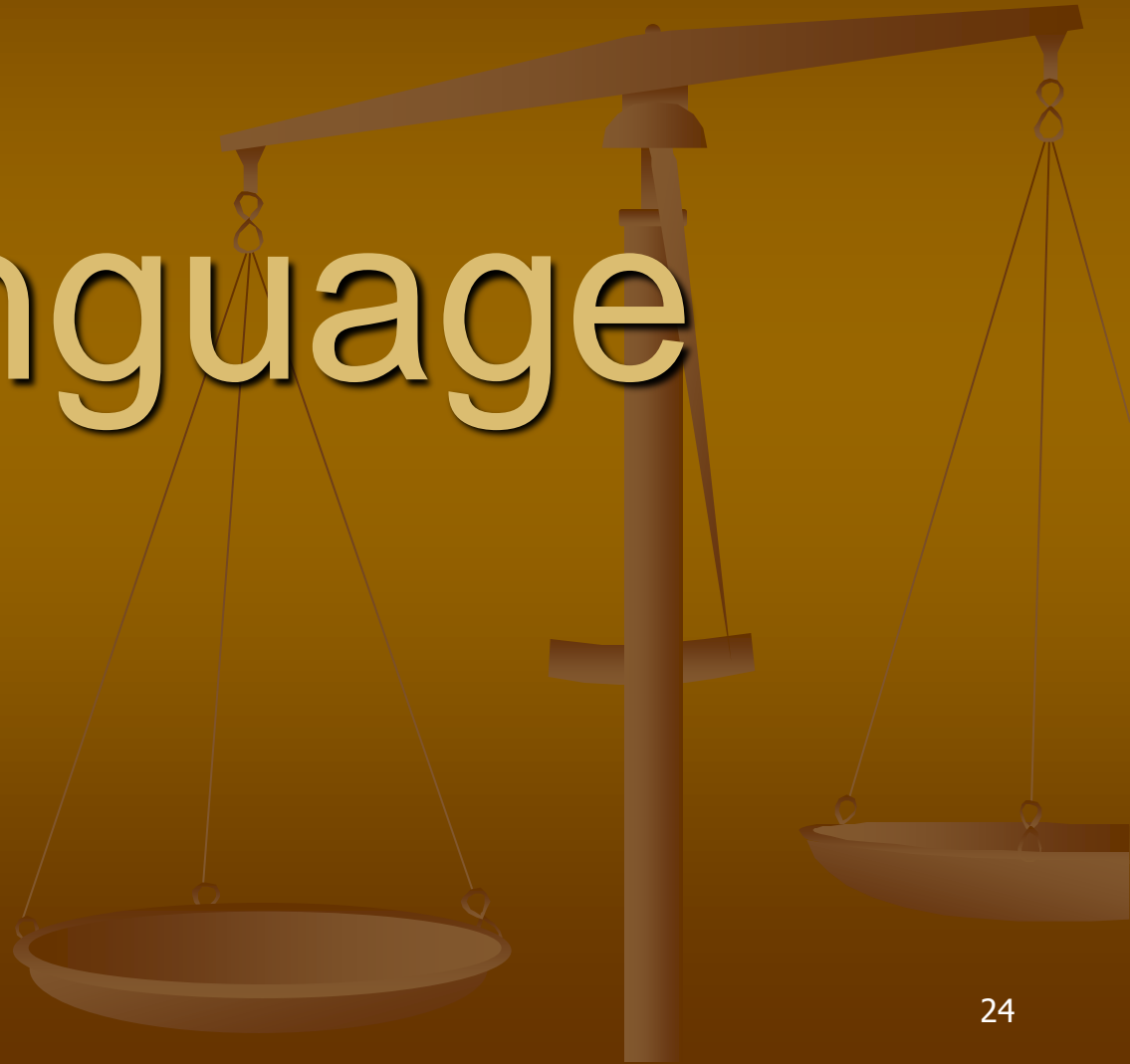


Use of Weapons

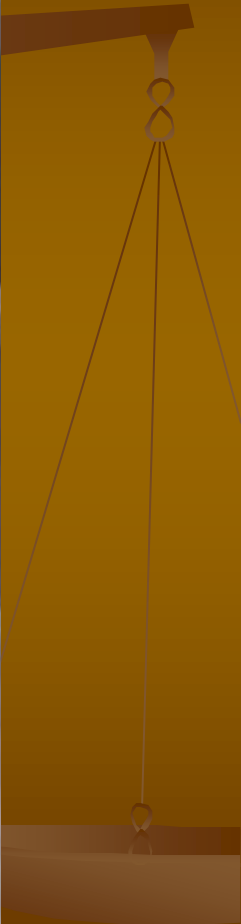
- An attempt to equalize physical disparity
- Give false sense of safety
- Often Increase the violence against the women



Language



Where Do They Fit?



Use of Force

...refers to physically, verbally, and emotionally detrimental behaviors used toward an intimate partner...to gain *short term control* of chaotic, abusive and/or battering situations.

(Dasgupta, 2002; House, 2001; Larance, 2006; Osthoff, 2002)

Battering

...signifies a pattern of coercive control, intimidation, and oppression *effectively used* to instill fear and maintain *long term* relationship domination.

(Osthoff, 2002; Pence and Dasgupta, 2006; Schechter, 1982; Stark, 2007)

Coercive Control

entails a malevolent course of conduct that subordinates women to an alien will by violating their physical integrity..., denying them respect and autonomy..., depriving them of social connectedness..., ...or denying them access to the resources required for personhood ...

Stark (2007, p. 15).

Women Batterers

... it is exceptional for a woman to achieve the kind of dominance over her male partner that characterizes battering.

Social conditions which do not condone women's use of violence, patterns of socialization...physical disparities ...make the woman "batterer" an anomaly.

Pence and Dasgupta (2006, p. 6)

“I had had enough.”

- Sadia



**Yes, she used violence
but is she a
batterer?**

Advocacy Model

Survivor

Person who experiences a pattern of coercive power and control by another over time.

Batterer

A person who establishes a pattern of coercive power and control over another person over time.

Criminal Legal System

Victim

Person against whom a crime of battery has been committed.

Perpetrator

Person who has been convicted of committing a crime of battery.

Connie Burke, 2004, for the Northwest Network of BTLG Survivors

Distinctions in Behavior





His Motivation

- Long term relationship control
- Intimidate her
- Instill fear



Her Motivation

- Self-defense from him
- Defense of children
- Control of the situation
- Retribution for real or perceived wrongs
- Fear of him

Dasgupta (1999), Swan and Snow (2006)



Motivation: Her Words

- I wanted to stand up for myself.
- I wanted make him take some responsibility.
- I just use what he used against me.
- I wanted to make him respect me.
- I wanted him to pay for his behavior.
- I wanted to hurt him because he threatened my family...
- I am “tough”.
- I refuse to be a victim!

At Court...

“I believed if I just told the whole truth then everything would be fine.”

- Sarah, RENEW Program Member



Men's Group

Women's Group

- ✓ Over-report victimization
- ✓ Under-report battering tactics
- ✓ Violent & coercively controlling tactics changed partners' behaviors over short & long-term

- ✓ Under-report survivorship
- ✓ Over-report use of force
- ✓ Use of force escalated violence against them over short or long-term

Primary Power vs. Secondary Power

- Decides What the Choices Are
- Has Access to Resources
- Exercises Authority

- Picks from Available Choices
- Seen as Manipulative When Seeking Power
- Seeks Autonomy

Primary vs. Secondary Power

**Corporations Can
Terminate**

Unions Can Go On Strike



Women's Use of Force Increases:

- *His violence* toward her and, therefore, risk to her safety (Swan and Snow, 2002).
- Likelihood that she will be injured severely by her male partner (Archer, 2000).
- Risk that she will use force again — putting *her* — at increased risk of future harm (Larance, 2006, 2007).



*Keep Fishing
for Answers...*

ASSESSMENT

*“So I could go to the grave, the
psych hospital or jail...”*

-Connie

"Yes, I slapped him and I did it
because the cops were there to back
me up!"

-Laura



The Dunking Chair Test

Circa 1692

*If she floated she was a witch and would
then be burned at the stake.*

*If she drowned she was exonerated
...and dead.*

“She is Not an IPV Survivor” (Are You **Sure**?)

- “It was just a fight with another woman.”
- “But her husband is a great guy.”
- “She says she is not afraid of him.”

Fear Factor...

- Does she *dread* his presence?
- Does she *dread* his findings?
- Does she *dread* what he can do to her if she doesn't comply with his demands?

Bottom Line?

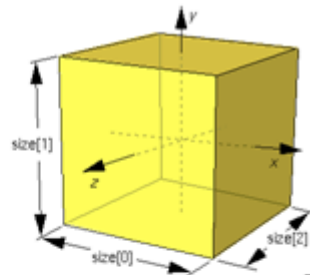
- ❑ Majority of the women in the programs have been arrested.
- ❑ The women need assistance exploring choices.





Gender Responsive Intervention

Creating Programming



WO Men

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Considerations

- Site selection
- Staff selection
- Cost
- Childcare
- Intake process
- Program development & approach



Women
Examining
Accountably
Violent
Encounters



Integrity

Holding Women Accountable

VS.

Holding Women Accountable Appropriately



Women Using Violence Under Duress

Understanding is not the same as excusing



To emphasize and promote safety...

her's, children's, partner's, and community's

...is our professional duty.



To not consider safety is to be derelict in our duty as professionals



How Women See Themselves

“I feel sorry for all these women who’ve been abused. I have never been abused”

Carla 45



Personal Integrity

"I was gonna buy cigarettes and no man was gonna stop me!"

-Nicole, RENEW Program Member



Philosophy: The Three Strands...



Safety & Support



Socio-Cultural Messages



Skills & Resources



RENEW Program Design

- Fundamentals:



- Examination:



- Sankofa:



Phase 1: Fundamentals of Abuse



Help Women Be Aware of the Power & Control Wheel

Explore Women's Responses to the Wheel

Remember: the wheel about having POWER *not* wanting power



Phase 2: Examination of Personal Belief System



Phase 3: Sankofa



- ***How am I continually watching out for the safety of myself & others?***
- ***What can I look for in new relationships that will clue me in?***

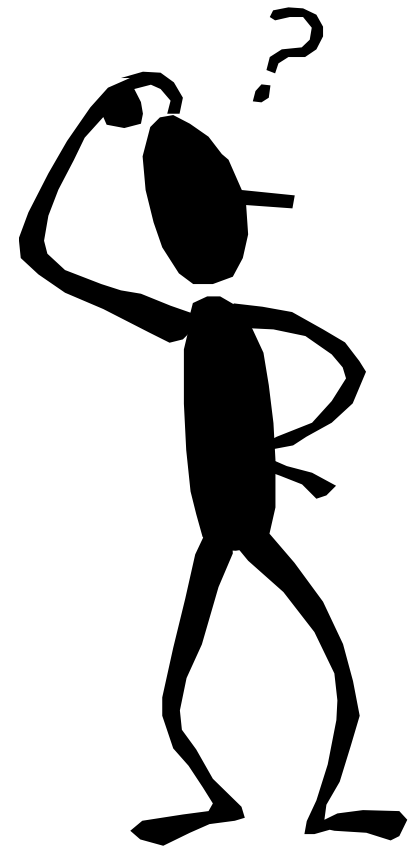
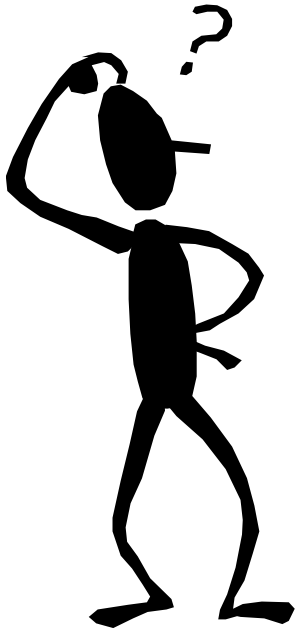


OPPORTUNITY IS NOWHERE

Questions

&

Answers



RESOURCES:

W-Catch22 Listserve

Vista Curriculum: www.jbws.org

RENEW Program Website:

www.csswashtenaw.org/renew

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