



MODULE 6: PERPETRATOR STRATEGIES

Introduction

It's not uncommon to hear "Why do women stay in abusive relationships?" or "Why don't they leave?" The effects of domestic violence on its victims are often underestimated. Abused women experience isolation, shame, embarrassment, and humiliation. In addition, it is dangerous for a woman to leave an abusive relationship. If her abuser is economically abusive and withholds all family money from her, leaving can lead to additional hardships. Leaving could mean living in fear of being stalked, fear of losing custody of any minor children, losing financial support, and experiencing harassment at work.

Abusers get and keep control in their relationships. Battering is a choice. It is used to gain power and control over another person. Physical abuse is only one part of a system of abusive behaviours. Acts of contrition and intermittent kindness by the perpetrator can maintain the relationship and give false hope to the abused person that the violence will end.

This module explains and gives examples for several strategies that perpetrators use in violent relationships to keep the women and the children with him despite the violence. The module together with stereotypes gives participants another point of view on domestic violence

Competences to be enhanced

- β Understanding the perpetrator strategies in an abusive relationship.
- β Creating awareness about the risks for the abused person.
- β Creating awareness about factors that make women stay in the abusive relationship.
- β Creating awareness about the factors that make women leave the abusive relationship.

Overview of learning activities

Activity 1: Five qualities exercises and group reflection.

Activity 2: Trainer's input and discussion.

Further reading

- β <http://www.mvwcs.com/mindabuser.html>
- β Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men (Paperback) by Lundy Bancroft



Name of learning activity

ACTIVITY 1: 5 QUALITIES EXERCISE AND GROUP REFLECTION

Rationale

Abusive people typically think they are unique, really so different from other people that they don't have to follow the same rules everyone else does. But rather than being unique, abusers have a lot in common with one another, including their patterns of thinking and behaving and their strategies of power and control.

In this unit the way of thinking and behaving will be demonstrated and discussed.

Aims

- β To create awareness of perpetrators strategies;
- β To get an impression of the power and control strategies.

Description

- β Trainees are asked to write down five of their positive character traits on five cards (one characteristic/card). All instructions are given in a very rude way.
- β Trainees are asked to discard one of their five cards symbolising their characteristic traits.
- β The effect on the trainees is discussed in the group: How did you feel when you dropped one of your five positive characteristics?
- β After a short group reflection, trainees take their four remaining cards in one hand like in a card game.
- β The trainer grabs violently one of the four cards.
- β Again the group reflects on the impact of the action.
- β Conclusion of the exercise as introduction to the power and control strategies of abusers.

Tips

- β This unit is linked to the cycle of violence as well as to women's needs.
- β During the process of the exercise trainers should be flexible enough to communicate and explain every step of their behaviour in the exercise.

People

Whole group

Time

Duration: 30 minutes

Equipment

Cards, pens

Materials

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Name of learning activity

ACTIVITY 2: TRAINER'S INPUT AND DISCUSSION

Rationale

In this unit the strategies of power and control enacted by the perpetrator are shown and their impact on the abused person. Moreover, the factors that keep women in an abusive relationship or that make women leave are discussed.

Aims

- β To understand the perpetrator strategies and its impact on women survivors' life.
- β To understand the factors which make women stay in/leave an abusive relationship.

Description

- β The trainer goes through the slides explaining the strategies of power and control.
- β The wheel of violence is shown and examples are given of how power and control are demonstrated and enacted against the victim.
- β The factors are discussed that make women stay and leave respectively.
- β Trainees are invited to ask questions.

Tips

- β Trainers must be very aware of reactions of the group members.

People

Whole group

Time

Duration: 30 minutes

Equipment

PC, video projector

Materials

*Slides "perpetrators' strategies"
Wheel of violence*