

# Ending Abuse in Your Relationship



A WOMAN'S ROADMAP TO EMPOWERMENT

*Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS-NB) is a non-profit organization. Our mission is to provide plain language law information to people in New Brunswick. PLEIS-NB receives funding and in-kind support from the Department of Justice Canada, the New Brunswick Law Foundation and the New Brunswick Department of Justice. Project funding for the development of this booklet and other family violence and the law training materials was provided by the Justice Partnership and Innovation Fund-Family Violence Initiative and the Victims Fund, Justice Canada.*

*We wish to acknowledge and thank our partner, Executive Council Office, Women's Issues Branch. Their expertise and dedication in assisting in the development of the materials, and the dissemination of information about the Woman Abuse Protocols was instrumental to the success of this project.*

*As well, we wish to thank the members of our Advisory Committee and others who assisted with the legal review of these materials including the New Brunswick Coalition of Transition Houses, Strategic Policy and Planning Division, Policing Services and the Victim Services Program, New Brunswick Department of Public Safety, Court Services and Public Prosecution Branches, New Brunswick Department of Justice, Provincial Caring Partnership Committee and members of the Law Society of New Brunswick.*



*Published by:*

**Public Legal Education  
and Information Service  
of New Brunswick**

P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5H1

Tel (506) 453-5369  
Fax (506) 462-5193  
Email: [pleisnb@web.ca](mailto:pleisnb@web.ca)  
[www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca](http://www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca)

*This booklet was produced in  
collaboration with*

New  
Nouveau  **Brunswick**

**Executive Council Office,  
Women's Issues Branch**  
P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5H1

*March 2005*

ISBN: 1-55396-482-9

*Aussi disponible en français.*

*This booklet does not contain a complete statement of the law in the area and changes in the law may occur from time to time. Anyone needing specific advice on his or her own legal position should consult a lawyer.*

# DO YOU NEED HELP?

The purpose of this pamphlet is to help women recognize the signs of an abusive intimate relationship, some of its consequences and the options they might consider for dealing with it. This pamphlet is for YOU if your relationship with your husband or partner is:

- Full of conflict and anger;
- You often feel nervous – like you are walking on eggshells;
- You feel unhappy or depressed about it;
- You wonder why nothing you do is right;
- Sometimes, you are even scared.

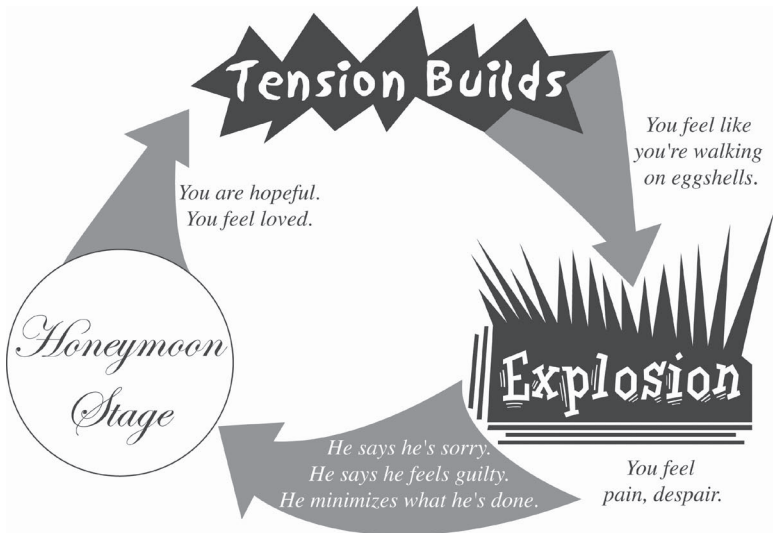
Like many women you may blame yourself for the way your husband or partner treats you. At each blow up, you may be asking, 'what did I do wrong?' You probably haven't admitted to yourself that your husband or partner is abusing you. But, if you can answer yes to these questions, you may be in an abusive relationship. Does your husband or partner:

- Always have to be right?
- Put you down?
- Decide what to do, where to go, and when to do it?
- Try to tell you how to wear your hair or what clothes to wear?
- Criticize you all the time?
- Say you are too fat, too skinny, ugly, or stupid?
- Call you humiliating names?
- Insist on controlling all the money?
- Threaten suicide if you leave?
- Get upset or jealous when you do things alone with your friends?
- Insult the type of work you do or the kind of courses you take at school?
- Force you to have sex when you do not want to?
- Threaten to hit you, harm your pets or break things when he is angry?
- Slap, kick or punch you?

# ARE YOU IN A CYCLE OF VIOLENCE?

Family violence is not a single act of abuse – it is a cycle of violence. It happens over and over and it follows a typical pattern with three distinct phases. In the TENSION-BUILDING phase, you may feel your partner is going to get angry about something and you begin to walk on eggshells. You may become fearful that you have done something wrong. The next phase is the EXPLOSION. Your partner becomes physically violent. The final phase is called the HONEYMOON stage. Your partner promises it won't happen again and acts loving for a while. You forgive him and become hopeful it will never happen again. (See **Cycle of Violence** diagram below.) Unfortunately, this cycle is repeated again and again. And the violence only becomes more serious and more frequent over time.

## Cycle of Violence



**Does this cycle or pattern look familiar? Does it describe your relationship?**

These kinds of controlling and domineering behaviour are called woman abuse or family violence. You do not deserve to be treated in an abusive, controlling and demeaning way. Nobody does!

## ARE YOU AFRAID TO GET HELP?

Have you thought about getting help? Have you hesitated to take action to end the abuse for reasons such as:

- you think nobody cares;
- you think the children need the security of a two parent home;
- you think the abuse is acceptable or normal;
- he keeps promising he'll change – and you still love him;
- you are afraid of being alone;
- you are too fatigued or depressed to care;
- you are concerned that others in the community will gossip;
- you are ashamed and humiliated;
- you don't want to admit someone who is supposed to love you is hurting you;
- you are afraid asking for help will only make matters worse;
- you are afraid he will harm you or your family;
- you think he will carry through with threats to kill your pet;
- you are afraid he will commit suicide and everyone will blame you;
- you have no money and no way to support yourself or the children;
- you have nowhere to go - even when things get really scary;
- you have no housing or money to move out;
- you would have to move away from the country to town;
- the children would blame you for breaking up the family;
- the children don't want to leave their school and friends;
- you believe strongly that marriage is forever;
- your family or his family are pressuring you to stay
- you'd have to leave many beloved things behind - house, property, farm;
- he's told you he will take the children if you ever leave;
- he's told you he will kill you if you ever leave?

***Many women experiencing abuse feel alone and afraid to reach out for help.***

Did you know, in Canada, 4 out of every 10 women experience violence in their intimate relationship? So, you are not alone. Most importantly, you should know that there are services, programs, and laws that can help you deal with ALL of the concerns above. No matter what your reason for delaying action, there is HELP when you are ready.

# WHY DOES WOMAN ABUSE HAPPEN?

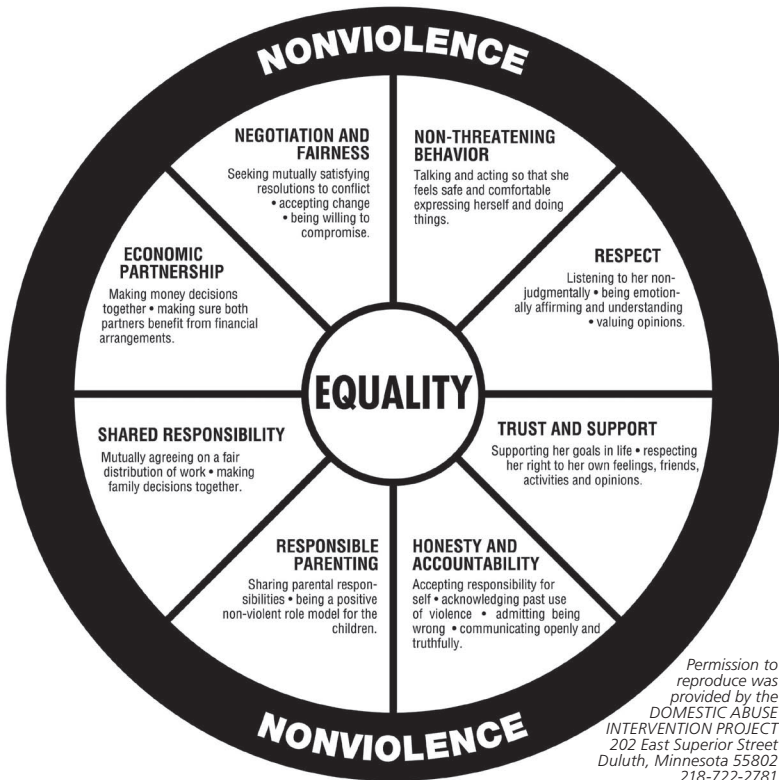
There are many theories why woman abuse happens. The first thing you should know is that you are not to blame. It is not your fault. Research has found that abusers are likely to have multiple personal problems such as unemployment, poverty, and addictions. Abusers may have been exposed to family violence as children and learned to get their own way by using violence. Abusers are often individuals who feel it is their right to be dominant. A widely accepted theory is that men use violence to control women because of the historic inequalities in our society between men and women. Our society has privileged and rewarded men, and devalued women. The **Power and Control Wheel** (see the diagram below) shows that physical violence happens along with other forms of violence. Male domination is at the centre of the wheel. The eight wedges - intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming, using children, male privilege, economic abuse, and using coercion and threats - represent the control tactics used by abusers. They are often used by men in combination with violence to keep power and control over their partners.



**All of these behaviours are wrong and many are against the law.**

# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

In contrast to abusive relationships, healthy relationships are built on love, respect, caring and happiness. The **Equality Wheel** (see the diagram below) illustrates the characteristics of a healthy relationship based on mutual respect and equality. Radiating from the centre of the wheel are eight pieces of pie which represent elements of healthy relationships including - non-threatening behavior, respect, trust and support, honesty and accountability, responsible parenting, shared responsibility, economic partnership, and negotiation and fairness.



Permission to reproduce was provided by the DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT  
202 East Superior Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
218-722-2781  
[www.duluth-model.org](http://www.duluth-model.org)

# STARTING YOUR JOURNEY TO A LIFE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

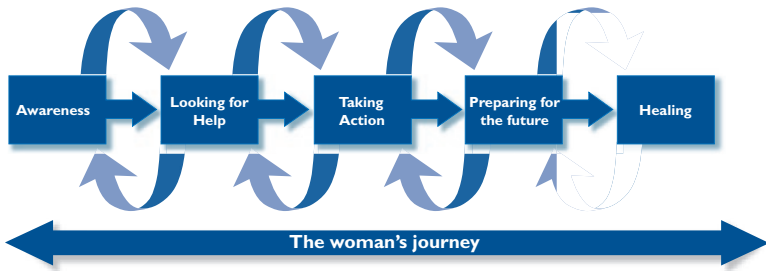
This section of the booklet will help you identify the services available and where to look for them. It will help you map out your journey. It is a great resource whether you choose to work things out alone or involve service providers to help you throughout your journey.

Leaving abuse is not a single act. It is a process or journey. For most women, the journey starts when they become aware that their partner is abusive and decide to end the abuse in their relationship. The destination is when you can focus on your personal healing.

Although every woman must decide which paths are best for her and when to follow them, the important thing is to start the journey. It definitely is not an easy road and you might run into roadblocks. Help is available along the way.

Remember, the choice is yours - you can decide what services you want to access, when and how. This next section of the booklet will help you identify the five stages of your journey, the roadways you might take, and how to prepare a roadmap to get to your destination. Your journey will most likely include these five stages:

## Process of Leaving: stages of Awareness and Action





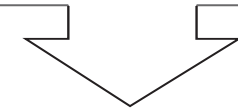
# THE FIVE STAGES OF LEAVING ABUSE

## 1. Awareness

**As you become aware that your relationship is abusive, ask yourself...**

- Am I ready to find out more about abuse?
- Am I seeing negative effects on the children because they see or hear the abuse?
- Is the abuse getting worse?
- Do I really think he will ever change?
- Do I need help with my health and emotional well-being?
- Am I ready to make a change?

As you become more aware of the harm being caused to you and the children, you can decide to get more information on what is available or to get help to change the situation. This is your decision.



## 2. Looking for help

**When you begin to think about getting help, reach out by...**

- Opening up to people who are expressing concern for you like your friend, a family member, your doctor, your neighbour, your minister, or a police officer.
- Calling around and asking for information about services and who can help you access them.
- Finding out about your legal rights and who can offer assistance.
- Creating a safety plan and choosing a place to go if you have to flee to safety.
- Planning your exit.

Gather information and seek support about who can help with your different needs.



### 3. Taking Action

**Once you have decided to deal with the situation, consider...**

- Calling the police and cooperating with them.
- Leaving your partner and going somewhere safe.
- Moving into your own apartment.
- Applying for custody of the children.
- Asking for a share of the property.
- Getting a job or applying for income assistance.
- Getting counselling for yourself and/or the children.
- Developing your support network as you go through all these challenges and changes.

Actively engage support networks and seek the help you need.

### 4. Preparing for your future

**As you progress through your journey consider where you want to be in the future.**

- Finalize as many of the details as possible, such as custody of the children, where you will live, income, etc.
- Allow yourself to dream of how your life will come together and make a plan to achieve those goals.
- Take steps that bring you closer to that future. If it is a good job to support yourself, find out what you need to do to get there. Follow your plan.
- Do not lose sight of the progress you are making. Celebrate successes no matter how small.

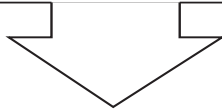
It may seem overwhelming at times. Work towards achieving your goals. Your future begins with you.

## 5. Healing

**The abuse is over. You are settled into a new life. Now it is time to understand how this ordeal has affected you and to heal from the abuse and violence in order to move forward in your new life.**

- Have you successfully filled voids in your life?
- Are you happy?
- Do you long for someone to share your life with, or are you afraid of getting into another relationship?
- Are you in a job that pays well and that you enjoy?

It is a good idea to make sure you are happy within, that you can be your own best company, and that you enjoy your life. When you feel this way about yourself, finding meaningful relationships becomes easier.



**The journey to a violence free life is not always in a straight line. If you start out on your journey and turn back, you should know that many women do just that. When you are ready, try again. You might find the help and the resources you need the next time around.**

# CREATING YOUR PERSONAL ROADMAP

This section of the booklet offers four things:

- **Tips on Making A Safety Plan**

When you leave a violent relationship, you must take great caution. Violence does not necessarily end when you move out. Your partner may harass you even after you leave. Sometimes, the violence can get worse.

- **Suggestions For Working Towards a Balanced Lifestyle**

You are the key person responsible for making the changes necessary to restore peace, balance and happiness in your life. That begins by recognizing that you have incredible strength that you can draw on as you move forward. You are a valued and necessary member of your family, your community and society, so don't be afraid to believe in yourself.

Remember, as you continue your journey to a violence free life, to look after your emotional well-being too. There are people and service providers in your community and throughout the province that are willing to help you along the way. There are also many self-help resources available at bookstores, public libraries and through the Internet at community access centers.

- **Resources and Websites that might help you**

It is not always easy to know what services and resources are available to help you. You may want to research and find these services yourself. Or, you may want to get help. Reaching out and getting help is often an important part of the journey and there are many people willing to help.

- **A Record Book of Your Journey**

It is a good idea to keep a written record of the services you need and the contact numbers of people and agencies who do help you along the way. At first you may not feel a record book is necessary. But you may talk to many different people and a record can help you keep track. It may also help other individuals you contact if you want them to follow up with somebody you met.

# TIPS ON MAKING A SAFETY PLAN

## In an emergency

If you have to act quickly, it's important to be prepared. Here are some things to think about:

- Where will you go in an emergency? You will need to have somewhere safe.
- How will you get there? Is there someone who can come and get you? Can you take a car, taxi, or bus?
- Is there someone you can call to tell what is happening and where you are going?
- Is there someone you can leave your pets with?
- If you need to go to a transition house, do you know how to get there?

## Elements of an emergency plan for safety

You should make a plan for increasing your safety. Prepare it in advance for the possibility of further violence. Although you do not have control over your partner's violence, you do have a choice about how to respond to it and how to best get yourself and your children to safety. Keep this plan in a safe place.

- Establish an escape route. Know where any firearms are kept in the house.
- Know where you can go to be safe, if only to make a phone call.
- If you've been abused before, make sure the police are fully aware of the situation.
- Have emergency numbers programmed into the phone (shelter, neighbours, those who will help you).
- Speak to your neighbours and people you can trust. Let them know what's going on so they can be watching out for you and call the police if they become concerned.
- Call a transition house and talk to the staff. You may want to work out a code word so they know who you are if you have to call them in a crisis.
- Hide some money away if possible (you may need emergency taxi fare) and a spare set of car keys in order to leave quickly.
- Talk to the children. They need to know which neighbour to run to in an emergency and how to use the telephone to call the police.

- Make a list of things to take so that you will know where to find them in an emergency. Here are some items that may be important:
  - Money, bank books, credit cards
  - Clothes for you and the children for a few days
  - Any medicine you or your children may need
  - House keys, car keys
  - Identification
  - Important papers: birth certificates, marriage certificates, social insurance numbers, divorce papers, custody documents, court orders, restraining orders, income tax returns
  - Health cards for you and the children
  - Medical and vaccination records
  - First Nations status card
  - Immigration/citizenship papers, passports for all family members
  - Work permits
  - The children's favourite toys, books and special blankets
  - Copies of your lease, mortgage or other deeds
  - Picture of your spouse/partner (for identification)
  - Your address/phone book
  - Car registration, driver's licence, car insurance
  - Your favourite possessions/books (things that give you comfort)
- Consider packing an emergency bag with some of the above items in case you need to leave quickly. You can't take everything. Just take what you'll need for a few days. You can leave the bag with a friend if you have to.
- It is probably a good idea to get legal and other advice now, even before there is an emergency.
- **If you are in danger, get to a phone and call 911 immediately.**

# SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING TOWARDS A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

Here are some examples of things you might want to consider while planning your future:

## **Economic and Financial Security**

- Explore educational opportunities.
- Explore job opportunities.
- Educate yourself about money and finances.
- Make a financial plan for the future.
- Open a bank account in your name.

## **Intuitive and Spiritual Well-Being**

- Reconnect with your own intuition or “gut-feeling.”
- Discover or reconnect to your faith or spiritual path.
- Get in touch with your own beliefs and passions.

## **Health and Well-Being**

- Take good care of yourself emotionally and physically.
- Eat properly and exercise.
- Get enough sleep.
- Find positive outlets to reduce stress (e.g. exercise, meditation).
- Seek help when things are not going well.
- Allow some time each day just for you.

## **Fulfilling and Balanced Relationships**

- Respect yourself.
- Respect others.
- Set boundaries.
- Maintain your individuality.
- Re-assess existing friendships and relationships ensuring they are mutually beneficial and fulfilling.
- Meet other people with similar interests.
- Communicate to others what you feel, need and want.
- Listen to others when they communicate their needs and desires.

## **Positive Self-Concept**

- Value yourself.
- Discover things that you can do to feel better about yourself.
- Recognize the good that you can do and have done.
- Develop goals focused on achieving a healthy you and take action to realize those goals.

## **Self-Directed and Motivated**

- Recognize that you are in control of your life.
- Discover skills to be more effective and assertive.
- Set personal and work goals.
- Challenge yourself.

# RESOURCES AND WEBSITES

## **Police-emergency 911**

### **New Brunswick Coalition of Transition Houses**

(lists all the Transition Houses located in New Brunswick)  
[www.nbcth.com](http://www.nbcth.com)

**Chimo:** Toll-free, province-wide 1-800-667-5005

### **Family and Community Service** 1-800-442-9799

\*Other abuse information on page 2 of your telephone directory.

### **Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick**

[www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca](http://www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca)

### **Government of New Brunswick Violence Prevention**

website offers links to many NB violence and abuse related sites  
[www.gnb.ca/0012/violence/index-e.asp](http://www.gnb.ca/0012/violence/index-e.asp) or see Province of  
New Brunswick Home page, select key word - Violence Prevention

### **Directory of Services for Victims of Abuse:**

Offers province-wide information on available services  
[www.gnb.ca/0037/report/Directoryeng.pdf](http://www.gnb.ca/0037/report/Directoryeng.pdf)

### **National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence**

[www.nacafv.ca](http://www.nacafv.ca)

### **Native Women's Association**

[www.nwac-hq.org](http://www.nwac-hq.org)

### **Provincial Caring Partnerships**

[www.violencepreventionnb.ca](http://www.violencepreventionnb.ca)

### **Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research**

[www.unbf.ca/arts/CFVR/](http://www.unbf.ca/arts/CFVR/)

### **National Clearinghouse on Family Violence Health Canada**

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nc-cn](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nc-cn)

### **Education Wife Assault**

[www.womanabuseprevention.com](http://www.womanabuseprevention.com)



# A RECORD OF MY JOURNEY

Use this record to keep track of your contacts

## Crisis Response and Information

<b>Police</b> NAME: _____ DATE: _____ FILE NUMBER: _____ NOTES: _____ _____	<b>Hospital</b> ADMISSION DATE: _____ ATTENDING PHYSICIAN: _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Transition House</b> ADMISSION DATE: _____ TEL NUMBER: _____ CONTACT PERSONS: _____ _____ _____	<b>Mental Health Counsellor</b> NAME: _____ TEL NUMBER: _____ APPOINTMENTS: _____ _____ _____
<b>Family Doctor</b> NAME: _____ TEL NUMBER: _____ APPOINTMENTS: _____ _____ _____	<b>Victim Services</b> NAME: _____ TEL NUMBER: _____ APPOINTMENTS: _____ _____ _____
<b>Outreach Worker</b> NAME: _____ TEL NUMBER: _____ APPOINTMENTS: _____ _____ _____	 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

## Court Related Services

### Crown Prosecutor

NAME:

APPOINTMENTS:

TEL NUMBER:

COURT DATES:

### Victim Services

NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:

### Court Order Enforcement

CONTACT PERSON:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:

### Lawyer

NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:

### Domestic Legal Aid

NAME:

APPOINTMENTS:

TEL NUMBER:

NOTES:

### Family Court Social Worker

NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:

### Probation Officer

NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:

### Legal Aid Clinic

NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

APPOINTMENTS:



## Long-Term Healing Resources

### Support Group

TYPE:

CONTACT NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

### Volunteer Activities

TYPE:

CONTACT NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

### Reading Club

CONTACT NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

### Community Networks

TYPE:

CONTACT NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

### Special Interest Groups

TYPE:

CONTACT NAME:

TEL NUMBER:

### Community Resources

CHURCH OR SPIRITUAL ORGANIZATION:

SUB-GROUP OR COMMITTEES:

PUBLIC LIBRARY:



