

## **TSDLYB - Domestic violence involves a cyclical set of behaviors:**

**First**, tension begins to build in the batterer due to unrelated factors which he attributes in some way to the victim;

**Second**, the explosion occurs in which he batters the victim;

**Third**, the explosion is followed by a 'honeymoon' phase, a period of contrition and apologies where the batterer uses every persuasion at his command to persuade the victim that the assault was unintended, he is very sorry and he promises not to let it happen again. The victim is so desperate to have the behavior cease that she may buy into the explanation, or worse, she may blame herself for "causing" the battering by not meeting the batterer's expectations.

This cycle of violence will continue until the victim decides to end the relationship. Each stage lasts for different time periods in the relationship and the duration is often not predictable; the total cycle may take a few hours, a week, a few months or a year or more to complete. Emotional abuse is present in all three stages.

### **1. Tension Building Phase**

#### **The Victim**

Feels like she's walking on eggshells

Tries to reason with the batterer

Feels powerless to stop the next beating

Tries to calm the batterer

Tries to appease the batterer

Keeps silent, hoping to defuse the batterer's anger

Keeps the children silent

Feels afraid or anxious

Prays for the tension to stop

#### **The Abuser**

Picks fights with the victim

Acts jealous and possessive

Criticizes the victim for everything

Threatens the victim with bodily harm  
Is moody and unpredictable  
Blames the victim for his feelings of anger and frustration  
Drinks to reduce tension

## **2. The Explosion Phase**

### **The Victim**

Is assaulted by the batterer  
Experiences pain, fear, shock  
Wrongly blames herself for the violence  
Is ashamed, humiliated, degraded, angry  
Tries to flee, leave, escape  
Is unable to gain control of the situation  
May be so overwhelmed and frightened by the threat of violence that they initiate the confrontation to get it over  
Worries about protecting herself and/or her children

### **The Abuser**

Verbally assaults his victim  
Physically assaults his victim  
Sexually assaults his victim  
Restrains his partner  
Destroys property  
Emotionally assaults his victim  
Feels the victim needs to be punished; deserves the punishment  
Assaults his victim with his fists, objects or weapons

### **3. The Honeymoon Phase**

#### **The Victim**

Forgives the batterer; accepts his explanation

Feels guilty about leaving abuser; returns home

Wants to believe his promises

Is depressed, feels helpless, hopeless, and trapped

Is hopeful that abuse will cease

Blames self for incident

Minimizes or denies the abuse

Promises to change her behavior so as not to stress the batterer

#### **The Abuser**

Feels temporarily in control of self

Feels temporarily in control of victim

Feels shame and guilt

Is afraid of his violent behavior

Is afraid the victim will leave

Minimizes the abuse

Is contrite; asks for forgiveness

Promises never to do it again

Is afraid the victim will involve the police or courts

Becomes extremely affectionate and tender

Initiates tender acts of intimacy

Stops drinking and/or using drugs

The honeymoon stage lasts until some problem or circumstance initiates tension in the batterer and the cycle begins anew.

**The Streets Don't Love You Back**  
[www.thestreetsdontloveyouback.com](http://www.thestreetsdontloveyouback.com)  
*Created by Lucinda F. Boyd 2011*