

Help your loved one to gain power back – not by telling them what to do, but by helping her to make her own decisions. Your friend knows her situation best of all and she knows what she needs to do to make the choice to stay or to leave. Above all, don't be judgemental!

Empowering

Speak truth to her:

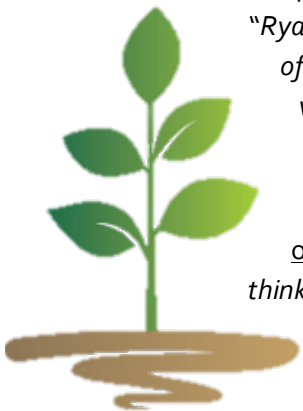
Because of the abuse she's been subjected to, she'll be unsure of herself. You can help her to regain certainty by asking questions like: "I know he says you're stupid, but is that really true?" or "He says you'll never find work, but you were a great secretary".

Plant seeds of change:

Ask questions that help her to see the consequences of staying: e.g.

"Ryan's been getting into a lot of trouble at school recently, why do you think that is?"

Ask questions that help her to see some benefits of leaving: E.g. *"Do you think your husband might get counseling if you left from him for a while?"*



Reasons she'll leave

She will only leave when she feels that leaving her abuser is a better choice for her and her family than staying!

Resources (Cape Town)

The following list include places that offer accommodation for women experiencing domestic violence as well as information:

Carehaven - 021 638 5511

Saartjie Baartman - 021 637 3487

Sisters Inc. - 021 797 4190

St Anne's - 021 448 6792



Do you need someone to talk to?

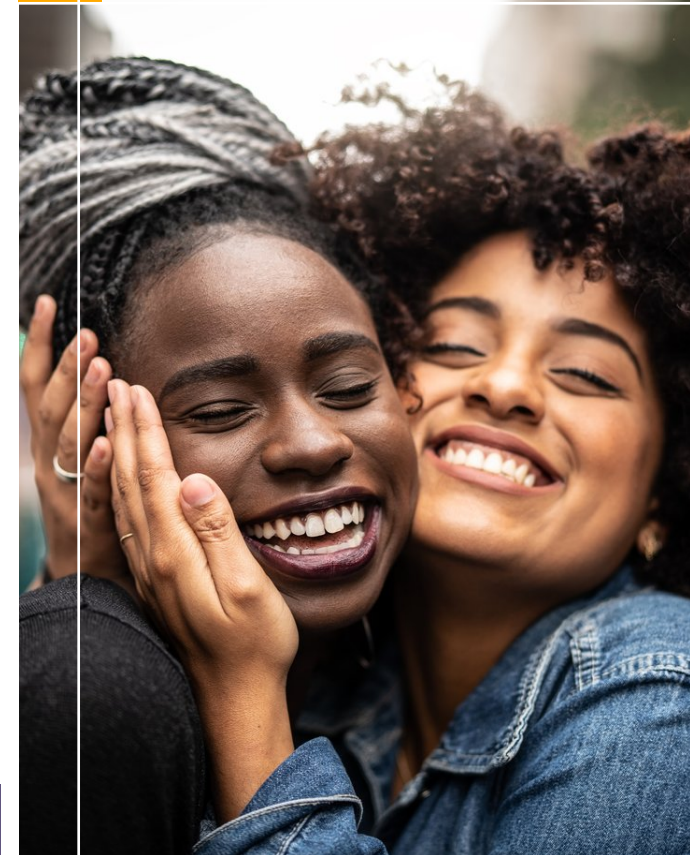
Please come & speak to the TCC Interventions Team
Call us on (021) 007 1960 – Speak to Jaki or Yolanda

Trinity Children's Centre

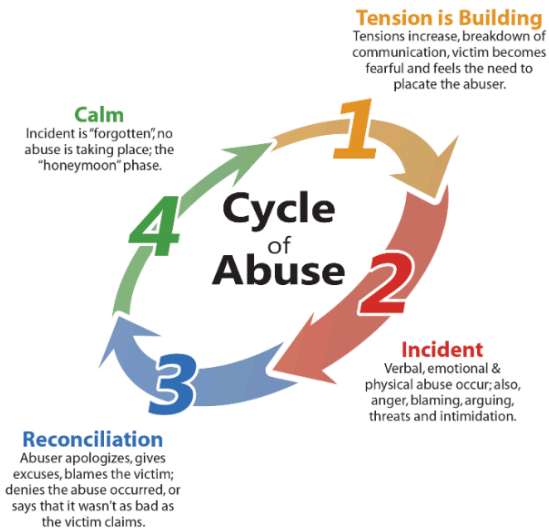
Helping victims of abuse?

Why women stay in violent relationships

Source:
www.psychologytoday.com



Helping Somebody in an Abusive Relationship



Over time phases three and four disappear as Tension and Incidents become the norm.

The cycle begins with a stress (e.g. money worries). The stress causes the abuser to feel powerless so he looks to gain esteem by belittling his partner.

As tension builds, she walks on eggshells, but to no avail as verbal abuse escalates to threats or physical violence. Once power and control is reestablished the abuser blames their partner, who is terrified and powerless to object. Over time she begins to believe the lies, seeing everything as the abuser describes it.

As she accepts the event as he describes it, or forgives him, life returns to normal.

Don't be judgemental there are lots of reasons people stay in abusive situations

She'll stay because of threats of harm, for the sake of her kids, financial dependence, social status, not wanting a divorce or hope that it's going to get better.

She's already controlled

Abuse is all about control:

When someone we love is being abused, our first reaction is to dive in and help. But trying to force somebody who is abused to leave may backfire!

Her abuser has been consistently and steadily exerting his power over her to the point that she doesn't trust her own judgement any more (*see the next section on gaslighting*).

So what can we do? We can let them know that we are there when they are ready and that we are concerned for their safety and the safety of her kids.

Understanding control

Control (*Gaslighting*) includes:

- 1) He tells huge and blatant lies and refuses to acknowledge them as lies.
- 2) He denies what he said, even when the victim has proof or witnesses.
- 3) He uses the children against her, (either questioning her as a decent Mother, or getting the kids to side with him in arguments against her).
- 4) It happens so slowly and over such a long period of time that she doesn't even notice.
- 5) He praises her to add to her confusion, (usually for something that serves him or his purposes).
- 6) All of his techniques are designed to make her question everything, and so depend on him more and more.
- 7) He constantly tells her or others that she is crazy. She thinks no one will believe her if she speaks up.
- 8) He says everyone else is lying!