



## Cycle of Abuse

People who are abusive sometimes act loving and supportive as a way to keep you in the relationship. **The cycle of abuse explains the pattern of behavior and strategy an abusive partner uses to establish and maintain power and control over you.**

Breaking down the perspective of each person during each phase of the cycle of abuse will allow deeper clarity and understanding of the larger pattern of abuse.

### The Tension Building Phase

*You:*

- Feelings: angry, unfairly treated, hopeless, tense, afraid, embarrassed, humiliated, disgusted or depressed
- Behavior: nurturing, accepting, works to diffuse partner's anger and frustration, may verbally express own feelings of anger or may use alcohol or drugs to avoid the situation

*Abusive Partner:*

- Feelings: tense, frustrated, disgusted, self-righteous or jealous
- Behavior: verbally abusive, fits of anger, silent, controlling, uses alcohol or drugs, possessive, demanding or irritable

*Children:*

- Feelings: afraid, tense, angry at parent for not "fixing" the abuser or confused

### The Explosive Phase

*You:*

- Feelings: frightened, trapped, helpless or numb
- Behavior: may try to protect self, hit back or submit helplessly, may try to get away or seek help, may feign unconsciousness

*Abusive Partner:*

- Feelings: angry, enraged, disgusted, self-righteous, jealous or frustrated
- Behavior: dangerously violent, deliberate desire to hurt or kill, out of control or irrational

*Children:*

- Feelings: frightened, trapped and helpless
- Behavior: may watch helplessly, hide or attempt to stop fighting, may attempt to help or join in beating the victim

## The Honeymoon Phase

You:

- Feelings: relieved, angry over the incident, confused, guilty or hopeful
- Behavior: offers excuses for batterer, talks, tries to settle, solve or prevent future incidents

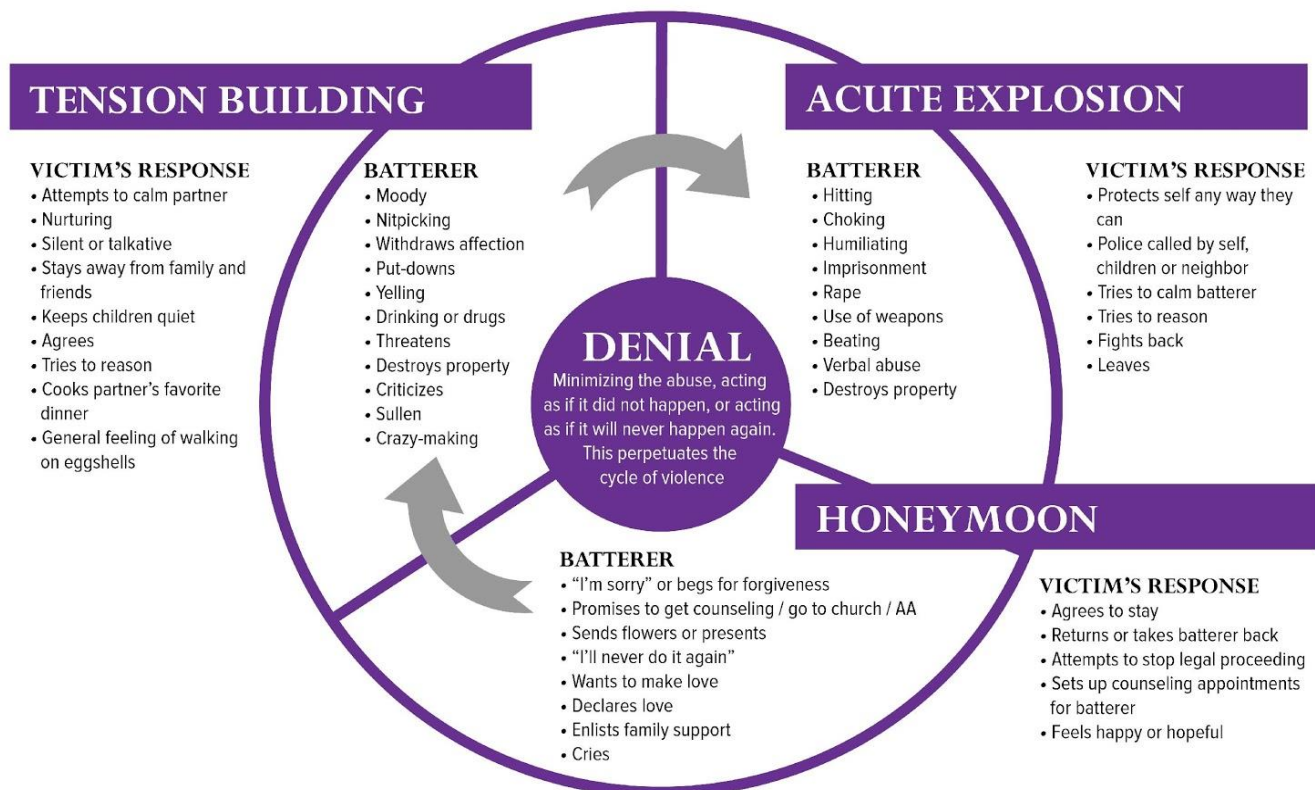
Abusive Partner:

- Feelings: apologetic, remorseful, forgetful about degree of violence, self-righteous or unable to understand why victim is still angry
- Behavior: makes promises to change, blames others and victim for life situations and actions, especially alcohol

Children:

- Feelings: embarrassed, humiliated, relieved, guilty or angry
- Behavior: try to please, distract self to forget about stress behaviors, nervous or twitching

# UNDERSTANDING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE



**Remember, this cycle of abuse will repeat itself again and again.** In most abusive relationships, the abuse becomes more frequent and severe while the “Honeymoon” phase becomes shorter and shorter, and sometimes even disappears completely. This means that, the longer the cycle is allowed to continue the more dangerous it becomes for you as well as the less strength you have to create a plan to leave.

**Shamsaha is here empower you. Speak with an advocate today to ensure your safety and learn about your options.**