

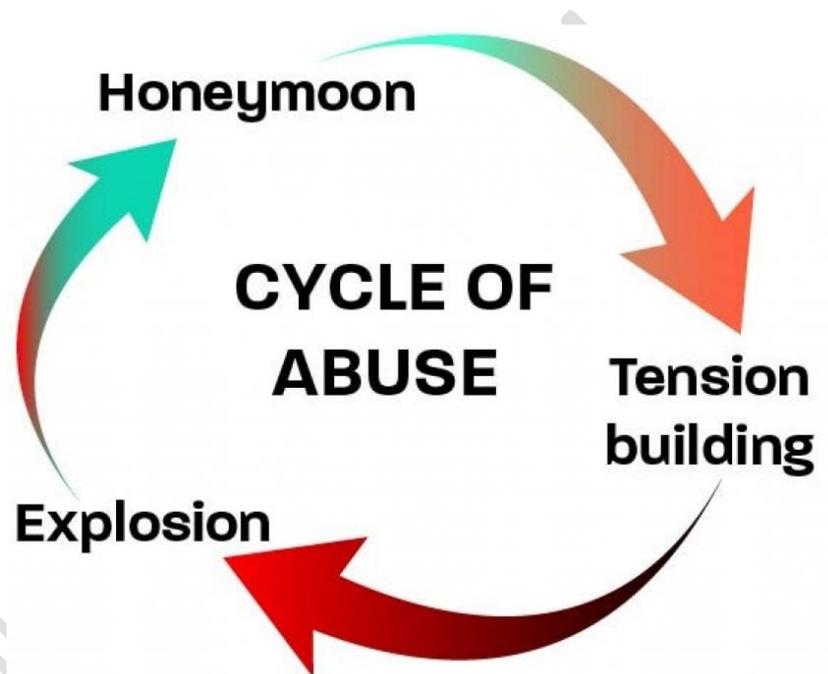


### **Abuse: Intimate Partner Violence**

The dynamics of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) mostly includes subtle threats and/or control that can eventually become more extreme or obvious. Many people minimise, ignore, or explain away the “lesser” forms of violence because of the belief that as no one is being scarred or maimed, no one is in danger. But this is wrong, danger is being concealed and over time, violence almost always escalates in both frequency and severity. And besides, even in these times of “lesser” forms of violence, one partner is being controlled or threatened and that is abuse. Repeated violence tends to follow a three-phase cycle: Tension Building Phase; Acute Battering Phase; and Honeymoon Phase.

**Tension Building Phase: Arguments and Threats.** Typically, this phase includes minor incidents like slapping, verbal and/or psychological abuse which increases the fear of the abuser. It can be harder to get support from the law at this stage as signs of violence are not as salient as it would be in the Battering Phase. The victim might:

- ❖ Appease the abuser by nurturing or staying out of the abuser’s way
- ❖ Manage or control environment to prevent increase of violence
- ❖ Play down, minimise, or deny the violence
- ❖ Hide or lie for the abuser, excuse his or her behaviour
- ❖ Begin to withdraw emotionally from overwhelming stress
- ❖ The victim’s inability to admit the reality of the abuse allows the abuser to escalate the violence.



**Explosion Phase: Beating, Choking, Punching, Use of Weapons.** Typically, this phase is short-lived (a few minutes but can go on for hours), and is often intensely violent causing injury and sometimes death. The victim might:

- ❖ Feel disempowered and trapped (psychologically, financially, emotionally, physically)
- ❖ Wait for or deny medical treatment
- ❖ Have delayed onset of trauma
- ❖ Mistrust law enforcement and fear that their involvement will further enrage the abuser
- ❖ Defend the abuser to the police, neighbours, friends, family.

**Honeymoon Phase: Period of Relative Calm.** Typically, this phase involves a peaceful, pleasant, and calming environment. Whilst it may be initially the longest stage it becomes progressively shorter over time whereby the Acute Battering Phase increases. The victim might:

- ❖ Experience the illusion of well-being
- ❖ Believe the promises of the abuser
- ❖ Feel responsible for abuser’s well being

The cycle usually ends one of two ways — in the death of the victim or a separation. If there is a separation the abuser often moves on to a new victim.



### Abuse: Various Forms

The Power and Control Model visually displays different types of abuse that can occur in abusive relationships. The abuse is based on one partner's need of having power and control over the other. This includes:

- ❖ Verbal Abuse; attempts to lower partner's self worth.
- ❖ Emotional Abuse; attempts to control partner's thoughts and feelings.
- ❖ Destruction of Personal Property; attempts to destroy partner's belongings.
- ❖ Physical Abuse; attempts to cause bodily harm on partner.
- ❖ Intimidation; attempts to scare partner by use of looks, actions, tones, expressions.
- ❖ Sexual Abuse; enacting unwanted sexual acts on partner.
- ❖ Restriction of Freedom; attempts to limit partner's free will.
- ❖ Abuse of Authority; attempts to use authority to control partner.

