

# Crisis Connection

## Cycle of Violence



**THE TENSION-BUILDING PERIOD:** This is usually the longest period of the cycle.

### THE ABUSER MAY:

- be moody, sullen, faultfinding and very critical
- withdraw affection
- isolate partner
- belittle partner
- drink and/or take drugs
- make threats
- destroy partner's personal property
- engage in inconsistent and "crazy-making" behavior

### THE VICTIM MAY:

- attempt to keep partner calm and placate partner
- become overly accommodating, agreeable, solicitous and nurturing
- become silent, or overly- talkative
- withdraw from, and avoid, family and friends
- try to keep the kids quiet and "out of the way"
- constantly feel as if she is "walking on eggshells"

**VIOLENT OR ABUSIVE INCIDENT:** This is usually the briefest period of the cycle.

**THE ABUSER MAY:**

- beat partner, often severely
- rape partner
- attack partner with weapon
- isolate partner from family and friends
- imprison partner
- become extremely verbally abusive
- humiliate and degrade partner, often publicly

**THE VICTIM MAY:**

- protect herself any way she can
- attempt to calm abuser down
- try to reason with abuser
- call the police
- fight back
- leave, or attempt to leave

**RESPITE PERIOD (Honeymoon):** In many abusive relationships there may not be any respite period at all.

**THE ABUSER MAY:**

- apologize, cry, and beg for forgiveness
- make declarations of love and want to "start over"
- promise to get help, to go for counseling to AA, to do "whatever it takes"
- send flowers and presents
- take partner out lavishly
- enlist support from family, friends, clergy and the children
- promise it will never happen again

**THE VICTIM MAY:**

- agree to stay, return, or take abuser back
- cancel, or try to cancel, legal proceedings
- make appointments with counselor or therapist for abuser and self
- cancel those appointments because things seem to be better
- feel happy and hopeful
- believe it will never happen again

Adapted from Domestic Abuse Services, Inc. at [www.dasi.org](http://www.dasi.org)

**Crisis Connection, Inc.**  
**24-Hour Hotline**  
**1-800-245-4580**  
[www.crisisconnectioninc.org](http://www.crisisconnectioninc.org)