

# **The Respect 1-1 programme For Individual Working With Domestic Abusers**

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**Developed with input from NOMS, Respect and the Caledonian Development Group**

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# Session 1 - Signals and Time out

## Session plan

Timing	Activity
20 mins	1.1 self-awareness
15 mins	1.2 Signals
10 mins	1.3 Time out

## Background

This programme fosters long-term changes in client's attitudes, beliefs and ways of thinking in their ability to manage their behaviours and emotions, all with the aim of long-term behavioural change. However it is also important to begin with some skills and strategies that contribute immediately to increased safety.

## Aim of session

1. To teach two specific skills that can assist the client, in the short-term, to remain calm and in control of themselves in potentially risky situations.
2. To ask the client to complete a self-characterisation before the next session.

## Materials

- Handout 1.1: Self-awareness
- Handout 1.2: Signals
- Self-calming;
- Handout 2: Time out
- Flipchart and a good range of coloured pens.

## Activity 1.1: Self-awareness

Draw an outline of a person on the flipchart (similar to that shown below). Ask the client to recall and describe the build-up of feelings that they experienced before a specific occasion on which they were violent or abusive towards their partner.

At this stage don't get into what exactly they did, or caught up on whether they are in denial or not. These exercises can be done as easily on those who've shouted at a partner as those who've been injuriously violent.

Take time to help your client, however, with their memory of their feelings – as broad a range as possible. Ask them to identify where these are on the figure. Use the language and/or analogies provided by your client while also seeking to take opportunities to re-frame or label emotions as required. For example:

- I'd like you to imagine that this is you.
- We are going to think about all the feelings you have as you build up to being abusive – right from the very start.
- When did the incident begin? What feelings do you first remember having? Where do you think these feelings are? Where and what colours / shapes/ symbols would

you use to show this? (it might help to imagine a thermo-imaging camera looking at your body that picks up areas of emotional energy in colour)

- And how did these change until you reached the height of your emotions?

Your client is likely to describe feelings in the upper part of the body, possibly 'overheating' from the stomach through the chest, throat and jaw and into the brain.

Discuss each feeling using prompting questions such as:

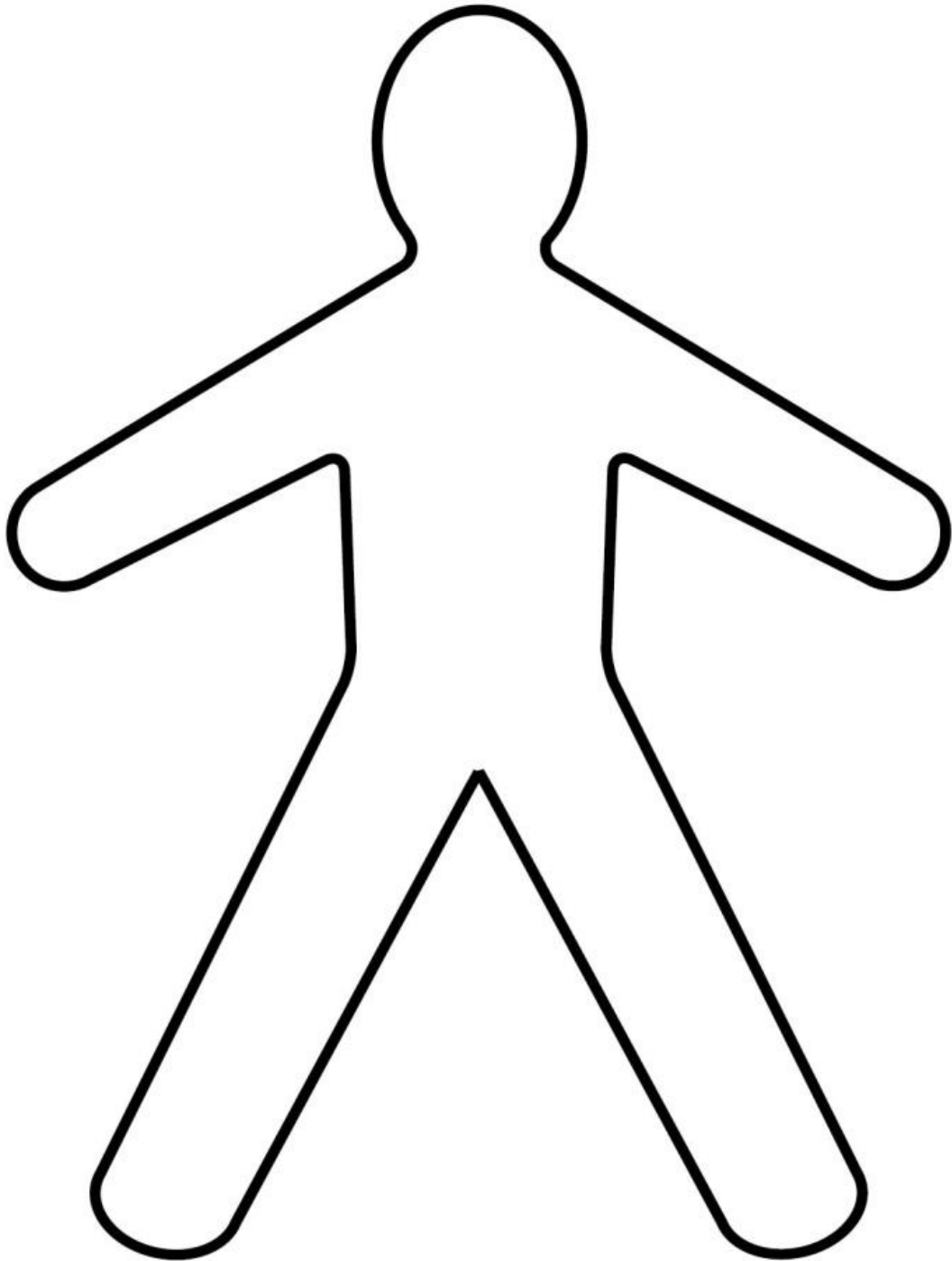
- How good does this feel?
- In this image, how in control of yourself do you feel?

Ask your client if they are willing to try an exercise that could help them manage their emotions more effectively.

### **Complexities / points for workers**

1. While most domestic abuse is functional and instrumental to some extent, most men will only abuse when emotionally aroused. They will find it much easier to use CBT techniques and to hold onto newly-learned empathy if they are at a low level of arousal. In this sense teaching emotional self-awareness and self-regulation sits well with establishing an understanding of the functional nature of violence a little later.
2. However, if it is known from the assessment process that a particular person's abuse has been *purely* instrumental, without linked arousal, it may not be appropriate to use this activity.

## Handout 1.1 – Self-awareness



## Activity 1.2 – Signals

Explain that you are going to assist your client to devise a plan, which could enhance their sense of self-control as well as their partner's feeling of safety. Use handout 1.2 with your client to go through the following:

### **Sore points**

- What kind of situations do you get worked up about?
- What are your arguments usually about?

### **Body signals**

- What are the physical sensations you noted in the self-awareness activity – the ones you notice when you are getting wound up?

### **Behaviour signals**

- What would other people recognise if they saw you at these times?
- What do you think your partner recognises in you at these times?

### **Emotional signals**

- What are the feelings/emotions you have during these times?

### **Mental signals**

- What are the thoughts that come into your head at these times?

Log your client's responses to these questions on the handout or ask them to do so themselves. Encourage them to think about they might use this knowledge about early signals to remain free from abusive behaviour in the future. Try to get him to recognise that being aware of these situations and signs could alert him to the possibility that he is moving closer to committing partner abuse. If he is aware of it he can take steps to prevent subsequent harmful behaviour.

## Handout 1.2 - Signals

Your name:..... Date:.....

This worksheet will help to make you more aware of when you're getting into a situation where you may be abusive. Without this awareness you won't be able to take a time-out successfully. The more you're aware of your signals, the more you will be able to stop yourself from being abusive.

When you notice the following signals in yourself, do something about it: take a time-out.

### Sore Points

These are typical situations in which you've been abusive in the past - the things that really bother you. Examples might include conflicts over staying out, money, jealousy or who is right about something. You may be particularly touchy when tired, at a particular time of day, when you're hungover or when you've not eaten recently.

Please list your typical sore points:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



### Body Signals

Please list what is happening for you physically at these times: What do you feel in your body? For example, tension in your stomach/shoulders/neck/jaw, heat, changes in breathing and heart rate:

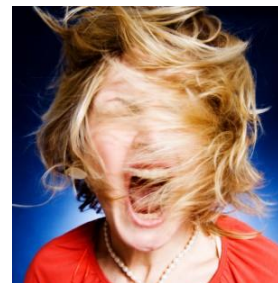
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



### Behaviour signals

What do you begin to do? For example, point a finger, close your fist, flail your arms, pace around the room, raise your voice or shout, glare, alternate between sulking and shouting, interrupt, go quiet;

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



### Emotional Signals

Please list your emotional signals. For example, feeling resentful, angry, trapped, controlled, confused, persecuted, got at, challenged, guilty, jealous, embarrassed:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



### Mental Signals

Please list your typical thoughts at these times. These often include negative self-talk about the other person such as 'She's doing this deliberately to wind me up', 'She's so stupid', 'He's an idiot', 'She never gets anything right', 'What a bastard', 'She never listens to me'.

(Note also the things you *don't* think about, such as how the other person is feeling, trying to understand them, any of their good sides, or listening to what they say):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



At this point you've started to be abusive and should already have started your time-out..... If you haven't, take a time-out *now*.

### Activity 1.3 – Time out

Introduce the idea of *taking a time out* when the warning signals are present, and your client feels that they are becoming risky to their partner. This would involve them deciding, in advance, to remove them self from the high-risk situation for a half hour time-limited period in order to keep their partner safe. In discussing this strategy you can ask the following questions:

- Can you imagine your partner being unhappy about your using a time out? Why might it infuriate or worry them?
- What kind of reassurance or information would help them to accept your using time outs?
- If your partner were to use a time out in the middle of an argument, can you imagine ways they could do it that would be annoying or make you feel insecure?
- What ways can you say you're going to do a time a time out that would be least annoying and most reassuring?

As you go through such questions, there are points you must emphasise:

- This tool is designed it is to help people to manage and control themselves (one of the main targets of the programme), not to win arguments, get the last word or control others
- *Time out* should only be used as an emergency measure to achieve a non-abusive solution to the situation; not to avoid discussion of the issue over the longer term or to avoid hearing criticism
- Your client should discuss the plan with their partner in advance so that they know what to expect and why
- Ideally your client should own the decision to initiate this every time it is used. It is best if they're also able to experience any prompt from a partner to use this as a helpful rather than a punitive, patronising or derogatory remark.
- they must not drink and shouldn't drive during this time
- He must not use *time out* to rehearse and strengthen their own arguments nor put their partner under further threat or fear of their intentions.
- If there are particular reasons why they cannot go out of the house (e.g., a dangerous area, weather is bad, nowhere to go), they should negotiate in advance with their partner a space in their home where they can go. In the event if their partner follows them, they should be appropriately assertive in asking to be left alone. If this does not happen the will need to remove themselves from the house completely.
- They should telephone at the end of the period to check their partner feels safe and negotiate their return

Give your client a copy of Handout 1.3: Time Out and go through the steps with them, trouble-shooting any difficulties they foresee.

## Handout 1.3 – Time-outs

### 1. WHEN SHOULD I USE A TIME-OUT?

The time-out procedure is based on one simple fact: if you're not near the person you're annoyed with, you can't hurt them physically. Use it every time you recognise that:

- **You want to have an argument** - Typical examples include conflicts over, money, going out, jealousy, who is right, and any other time you recognise that you don't want to let go of the fight.
- **Bodily signals** - You start to feel tension in the stomach /shoulders/ jaw/ neck, raising your voice or shouting, pacing, swearing etc.
- **Emotional signals** - Feeling trapped, angry, confused, persecuted, resentful, jealous etc.
- **Mental signals** - winding yourself up: you tell yourself the other person is controlling you; you use degrading names such as 'bitch', or you're thinking to yourself 'Here we go again!' and are wanting to shut them up. You start seeing them as the enemy - you despise them.

As soon as you recognise any of these signs in yourself (don't wait until you get worse), tell the other person 'I need to take a time-out', **and leave!!**

### 2. WHAT IS A TIME-OUT?

Taking a time-out means that you *calmly* leave the argument wherever you may be for an agreed time – 30 minutes is a good amount of time. There are two important reasons why you need to stick to the agreed time:

- The other person is more likely to trust you if you stick to a standard format.
- For most people, half an hour is a realistic length of time in which to calm down. If you start to shorten this to, say 10 minutes, you increase the risk of returning and kicking off again.

During that period, do the following:

- Calm yourself down
- Don't drink alcohol, drive or take drugs. During this first part of the half hour (*about 15 minutes*), calm yourself down by working off adrenalin – walk fast, do sit-ups, run etc.
- Examine your behaviour

During the second part of the half hour (*about 15 minutes*)

- Think about what was going on for the other person – why would **they** say they were acting like that? How were **they** feeling?
- Think about **your** behaviour and figure out in what ways you've already been abusive. What might you have to apologise for?
- If you're going to be non-abusive, you will need to be able to return to the situation and **be** different rather than try to make the other person different. Think about what you're going to do or say when you go back that's honest but that won't escalate the situation.
- **Return** - If the other person doesn't want to talk when you return, propose a better time when you could both do so.

### 3. INFORMING OTHERS ABOUT THE TIME-OUT

It's very important to talk about time-outs with relevant other people well ahead of when you will need to use one. Do this at a time when you're calm. Show them this handout and give them time to read it. They may not want to talk about it with you. If this is the case, leave this handout with them to look at. Remember though, a time-out is a tool for **you**, not for your partner – you don't need their support to use it.

#### Complexities / points for workers

While most domestic abuse is functional and instrumental to some extent, most people only abuse when emotionally aroused. They will find it much easier to use CBT techniques and to hold onto newly-learned empathy if they are at a low level of arousal. In this sense teaching emotional self-awareness and self-regulation sits well with establishing an understanding of the functional nature of violence a little later. However, if it is known from the assessment process that a particular person's abuse has been *purely* instrumental, without linked arousal, it may not be appropriate to use this activity.

People can and will misuse the idea of *taking time outs* to avoid arguments or to provide an excuse to leave a situation that they find uncomfortable. This can have the effect of further disempowering their partners. When clients feedback that they have used *time out*, check carefully the circumstances and the extent to which they kept to their rules.

It is essential that you communicate well with the partner services to ensure that your client's partner understands the idea of *time out*, and has the equivalent handouts before you introduce it with your client. It is the responsibility of the partner workers to give out and go through the relevant handout wherever possible. Do not introduce this activity in any case where you consider that it will increase the risk of abuse.

## Session 2 - Getting to know you

Timing	Activity
20 mins	2.1 - What matters to me
25 mins	2.2 – what are you like?

### Aims of session

1. To help you to understand how your client sees the world and to find out about their values and what is important to them.
2. To assist him or her to set goals which link the cessation of violence and abuse to a wider sense of what is important to them in life.

### Materials

- 'What Matters to Me' handout 2.1 and 'What are you like?' handout 2.2
- At least 6 different colour pens.

### Background

These exercises is a structured way of eliciting your client's values, qualities and characteristics. The process of rating themselves in relation to these qualities - as they are now, how they are at their worst, and how they would like to be, is in itself motivational. It is also a very supportive tool for actively listening to the client – the structured approach can help clients who find it difficult to talk about themselves to start the process of self-disclosure. This activity can be done in one session but in many cases it will be worth continuing into a second session.

### Activity 2.1 - What matters to me

Explain to your client that whilst this programme is strongly focused on helping them to avoid being violent or abusive, you also want to understand more about what is important to them, and how they want their life to be and what resources they have to set against the problems in their life.

Cut Handout 2.1 into small cards.

Take 3 pieces of A4 paper and place them on the table titled:

- Very important
- Fairly important
- Not important

Give the cards to the client and ask them to sort the cards onto the 3 sheets according to how important each of the values or qualities are for them. This is a question about what

your client sees as important for people generally, but more specifically what they feel are important qualities for themselves.

You can discuss their choices as they sort the cards, or at the end, noting which values or qualities stand out for them and why they have placed them where they have.

## Handout 2.1 – what matters to me cards

sees the funny side of things	popular	interested in lots of things
knows how to have fun	quiet	understands people
tries to be the best	excitable	likes having nice things
good friend	powerful	talented
is Funny	effective	gentle
peaceful	practical	fits in
family-oriented	successful	honest
easy going	organised	keeps healthy
creative	competitive	emotionally strong
good provider	good leader	accepting
takes risks	team player	traditional
perfectionist	secure	stands up for what's right
makes people laugh	grounded	likes being needed
manages money well	wise	clever
manages time well	nurturing	sharing

## Activity 2.2 – polar constructs

### Step 1 – choosing own constructs

Ask your client that if they could only keep four of the cards from the ‘Very Important’ pile, which would they be?

Go on to explore a bit what each of the four qualities means for the client, until you have a definition which is in their words and fits with what they were thinking of when they chose the card.

So, for instance one client chose the card,

***“family oriented”***

However after some discussion the definition was changed to

***“good father”***

Once you have done this for each of the four values or qualities, write them down in the first four blue boxes on the left hand side of handout 2.2 – what are you like?

### Step 2 - Eliciting ‘Polar’ Constructs

Ask your client what, for them would be the opposite of each of the qualities they’ve picked. It can be difficult getting started so begin with one of the more straightforward sounding examples (such as “clever”

*What would be the complete opposite of that idea for you – how would you describe someone who is not at all clever?*

Note the client’s answer on the opposite side of the page. These two opposites form a **bi-polar construct**. If the client struggles to find the words or phrases which he feels are adequate to describe his opposite pole, ask them to say a bit more about what they mean by the original word. Take as much time as needed over each construct, taking care always to listen and not put words in your client’s mouth. It is important to use their own words, as this will tell you a lot more about their thinking and their constructs. As an example, putting ‘loner’ as the opposite of ‘team player’ makes that construct a different one than if they had put ‘independent’, or ‘shy’.

Once the 4 qualities you’re client brought have been turned into polar constructs, go on to the series of constructs that have been begun on Handout 2.2. Soon enough you will have a list of bipolar constructs – or continuums.

### Step 3- rating self on the continuums

*Place a mark on the continuum where you think you are at your better moments.*

You can ask for more detail:

*Give me an example of you when you’re at your kindest or most loving etc.*

Now use a different colour to mark:

*Where are you on that continuum at your worst moments?*

*Tell me a story that shows that side of you etc.*

#### **Step 4 – rating others**

Explain that the work you have completed has revealed how your client judges *themselves* and the next step is do similar ratings for the client's parents or main carers and their partner. Here you will be asking about how your client would rate them generally, rather than at different times.

Use a different colour for each person and go back through the list of constructs rating all of these for one particular person before moving onto the next person.

***Where would you put your mum/dad/partner on that continuum?***

#### **Step 5 – assess and notice**

Now both of you take a moment to look at the handout. There will be 12 continuums each with up to 5 coloured marks on them. Ask your client first what they notice? Are they especially similar or different to one of the others they have rated? Are there bigger gaps between their best and worst in any particular constructs?

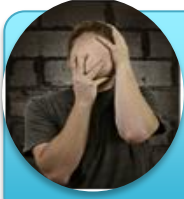
#### **Step 6 – setting goals**

Ask your client to choose the constructs they'd most like to change their rating on.

***What ways would you most like to change over the course of this programme? –  
How much of change do you think would be realistic?***

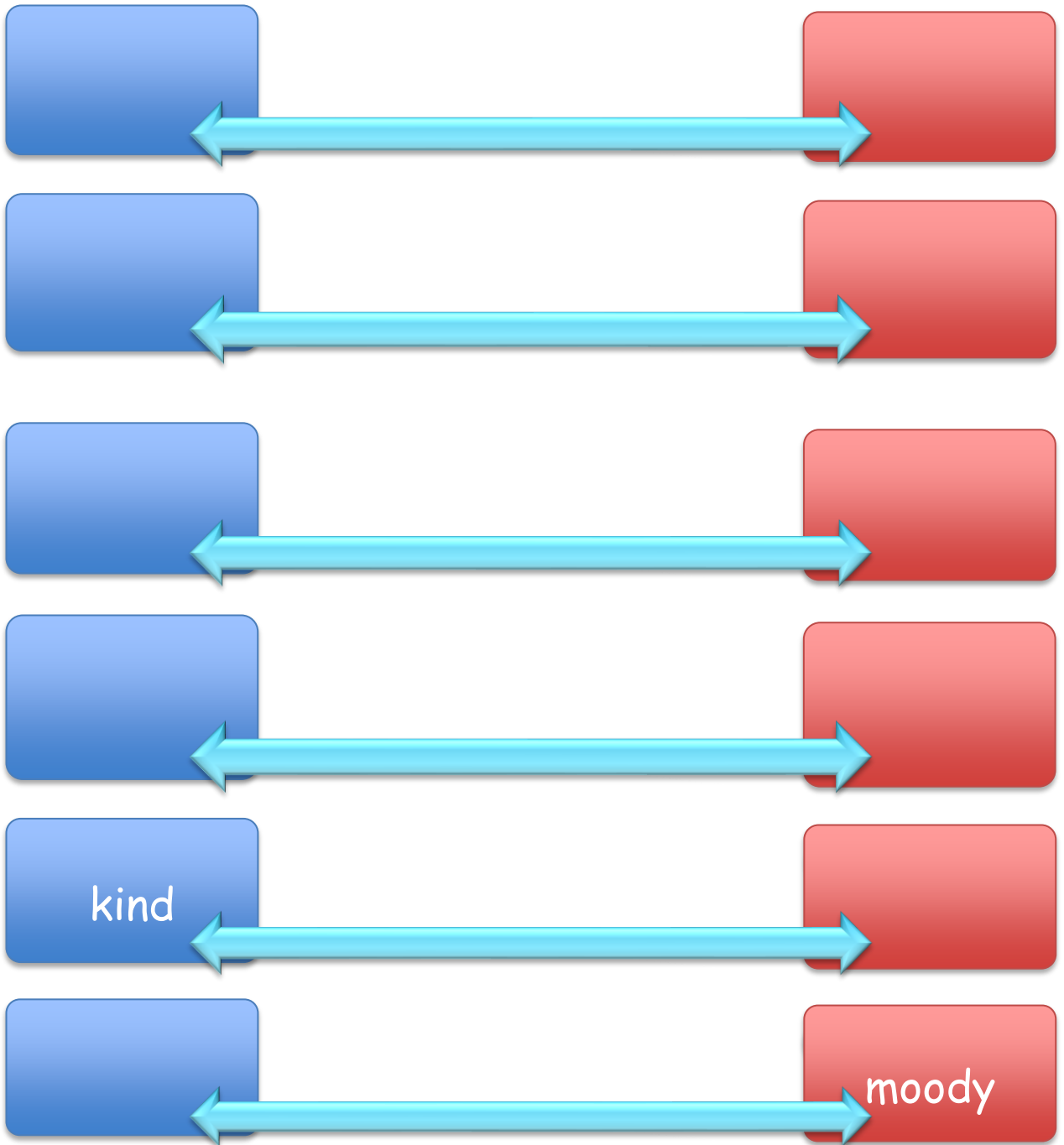
Now ask them to mark a target on the continuums where they would want to see change. Changes may be achieving a new average rating, in which case choose a new colour to mark the goals. However your client may well want simply to move the 'me at my worst' rating closer to the 'me at my best' rating. This is fine. Just use the 'me-at-my worst' colour again but add a little circle around the new mark to identify it as the 'target'

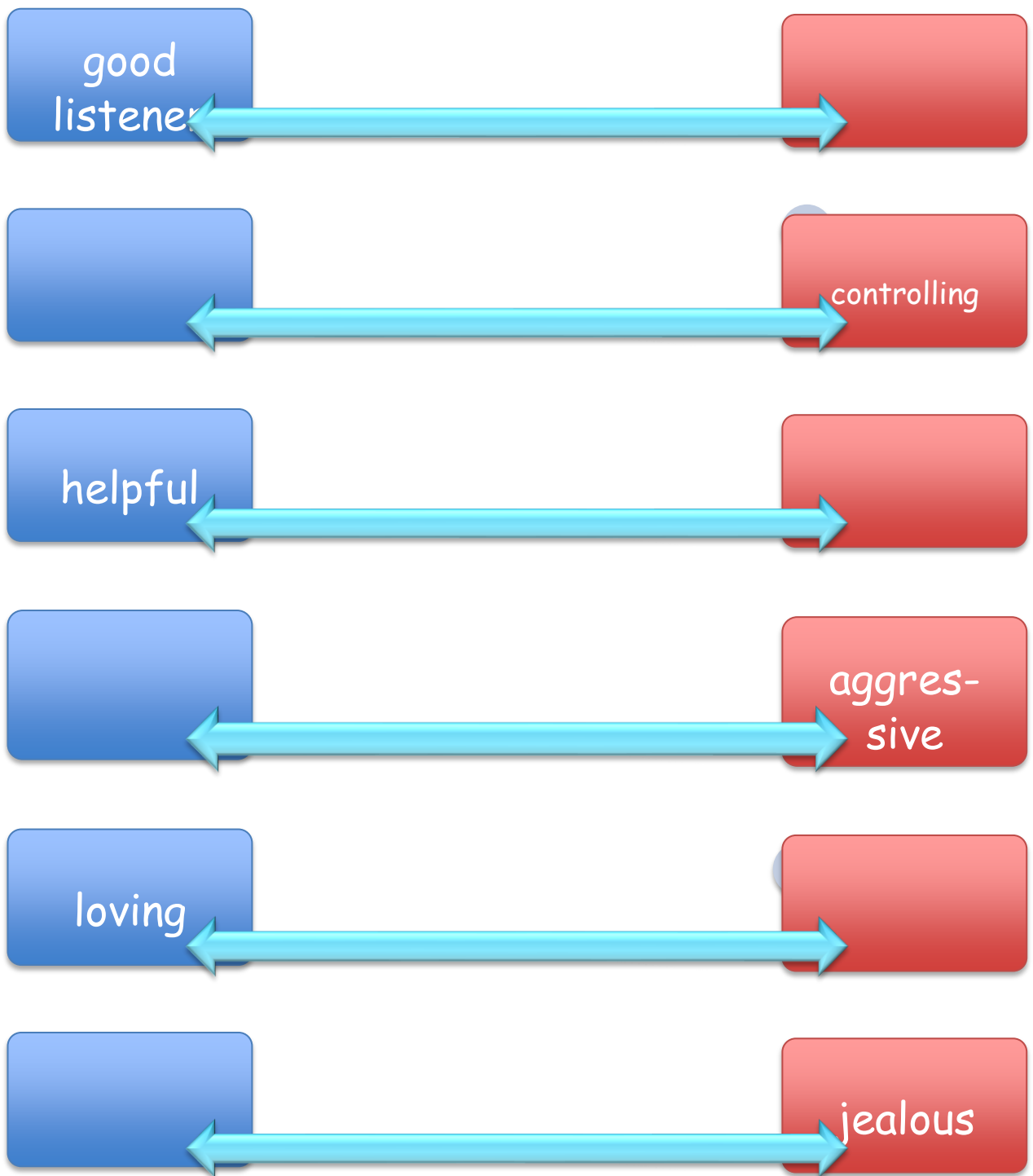
Ensure you leave a 'key' on this handout as to the colours you've used so that you can still understand it later on since you now have some goals for change that can be used to track progress and review.



## handout 2.2

What are you like??





## Session 3 - Family Tree and Support Networks

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
25 mins	3.1- Family tree
20 mins	3.2 – Support networks

### Activity 3.1 - Family tree

#### Aims of activity

1. To encourage your client to see themselves in relation to their wider family.
2. To explore significant family relationships in their life.
3. To begin to understand the possible role that social learning within the family has played in the development of attitudes, behaviours and coping styles.

#### Materials

- Flipchart paper and pens.

Draw a small square in the centre of the flipchart and write on it the name of your client or get them to write 'me' (as shown in the Family tree example). By using recognised family tree symbols, i.e. circles for women, squares for men, horizontal lines for marriage, broken lines for separation, and lines leading to off-spring, construct a family tree going back, if possible, to the client's grandparents on both sides. The easiest way is:

1. Draw client symbol fairly centrally
2. Draw parent and grandparent symbols above and ask for names to fill in to these
3. Ask for number of siblings and add these.
4. Ask for number of significant relationships in your client's life – we advise just sticking to those that have produced children plus the current relationship.
5. Add children and their ages

Once the bare branches are done you can begin to ask questions about the characters emerging, using prompting questions such as:

- *What particular strengths / qualities does this child have?*
- *Did they get these from anyone else in the tree (are they shared with anyone else in the tree?)*
- *What kind of man was your father's father?*
- *How was he different from your mother's father?*
- *What would your parents have been most proud of you for?*
- *What skills have you adopted from others in your family?*

- *How was/is your parents' relationship?*
- *How did disputes get resolved in your house as you were growing up?*
- *How would you like it to be different / the same for your children?*

Any information that seems significant can be written into the diagram. Your clients own words describing each family member can be added (see example – handout 4.1).

#### **Complexities / points for workers**

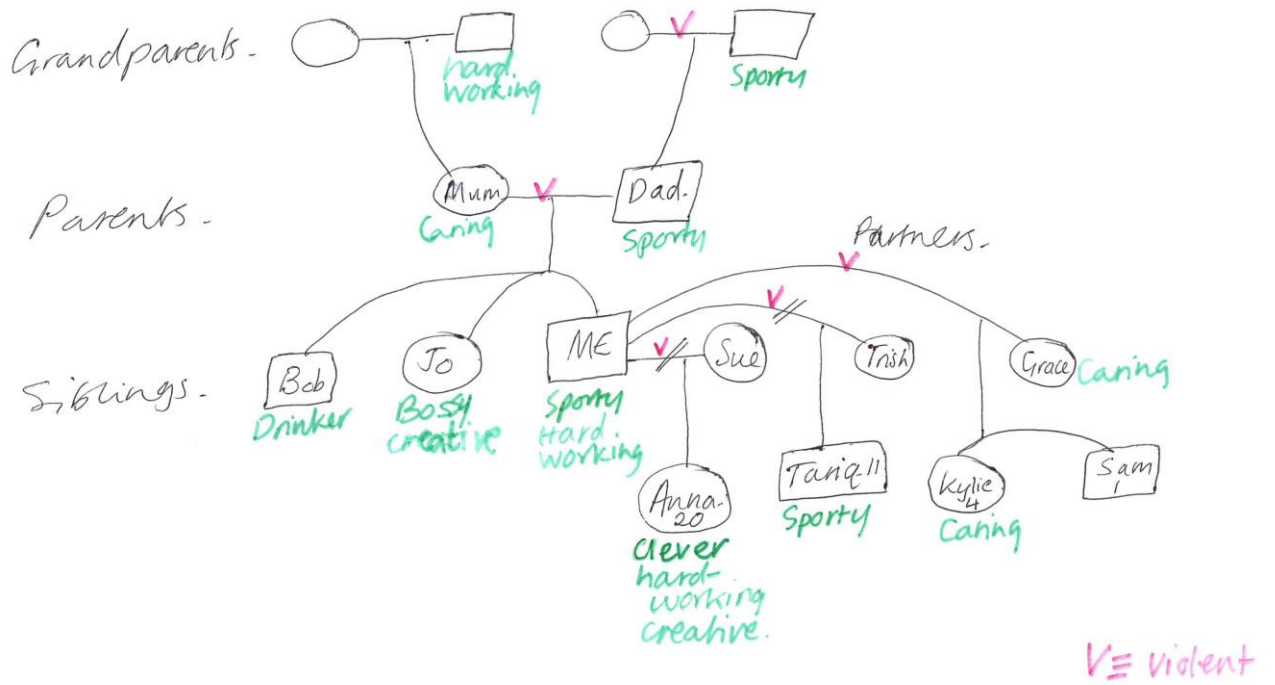
(1) If a person, who is constructing his family tree, reveals that their own father used similar behaviour they may become fatalistic about their future. In this instance, the family tree can be used to reveal family members who have not followed this path and there is the opportunity to discuss how they achieved this. Equally it can be used as an opportunity to empower your client as a parent to positively influence the values and behaviour of their children.

(2) This exercise can be powerful and may result in difficult feelings being raised which may have an impact out of the session. People should be encouraged to consider employing positive self-talk strategies, highlighting the capacity not to be a 'victim of biography'. Should there be concern about the impact on your client's mood and self-esteem which might affect their behaviour towards their partner, the relevant partner worker should be informed.

(3) Sometimes partners may reveal information about your client's family to the partner support worker that your client does not reveal to you. It can be useful for you to be aware of any relevant history but you should not use it or reveal that you know about it in sessions with your client. This is so that you don't put the partner at risk and also that your client retains some ownership of what they bring to you to work on.

(4) Relevant information about your client's family should be passed to the partner worker. It is useful for them to be aware of the extended family's attitude to domestic abuse, particularly where there is close contact with them.

### Handout 3.1 – Family tree example



## Activity 3.2 - Support Networks

### Aims of activity

1. To identify your client's social networks.
2. To consider how these can assist them to make positive changes.
3. To improve understanding of the possible role that social learning has played in the development of attitudes and beliefs, behaviours and coping styles. In this session there is a focus on social learning from peers and professionals in addition to family.
4. To gather information that will assist in identifying the needs to be focussed on during the remainder of the programme.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.

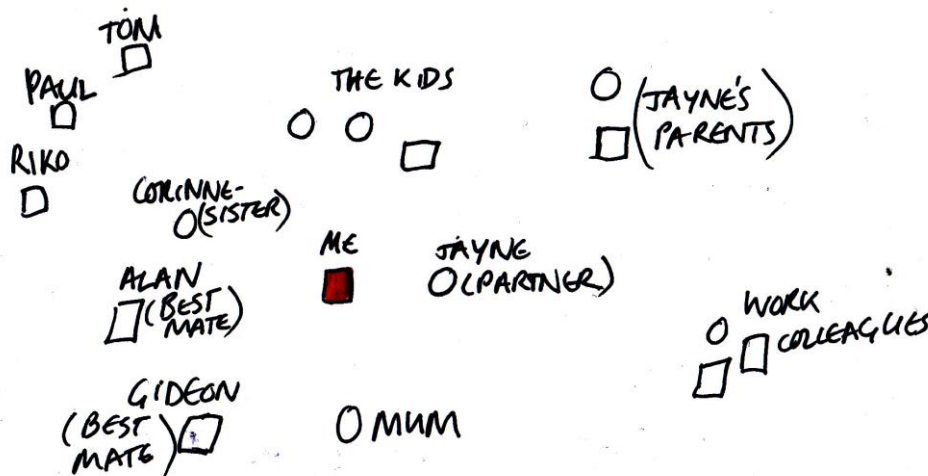
### Identifying your Support Network

Acknowledge that the changes you're asking your client to consider can be difficult and that they do not have to do this in isolation. The support they receive from those round about them will be crucial.

This activity provides the opportunity to identify and explore the presence and absence of protective factors and risk factors in your client's social systems.

Begin at the very centre of the paper by getting your client to draw a small shape representing themselves. By using circles for women, squares for men, and distance from your client (in the diagram) to represent the strength and importance of relationships, construct a social network. The following can be used as prompts:

- *Who do you spend time with generally?*
- *How would you describe this relationship?*
- *Who would you talk to if you had a problem? Who would support your efforts to change behaviour that could lead to you abusing your partner?*
- *What would prevent you from being able to confide in this person?*
- *Who, within this network, might try to stop you changing your behaviour?*
- *How would you describe this relationship?*
- *How would you like these relationships to change?*
- *Is there anyone missing from your diagram?*



While constructing the social network ask questions about the characters with prompts such as:

- *Who would talk you up and who talk you down if you were winding yourself up?*
- *What is it about your relationship with Alan that gets in the way of change for you?*
- *What response would you expect from...?*
- *Which of these people would be contacted in what situation, how would they be contacted and what obstacles might there be to this?*

#### **Complexities / points for workers**

(1) Be aware that for some people their social networks may be very limited or non-existent. It could indicate that they have dropped friendships or relationships with relatives and this is worth exploring. It may indicate the degree of dependence they have on their partner; "she's all I need". If your client is simply isolated, encourage them to consider this as a goal for change.

(2) In cases where it is impractical or too difficult for a client break ties completely with persons that have a detrimental influence on them (e.g. a sibling, work colleague or life-long friend in a close-knit community) encourage them to draw only upon aspects of the relationship that are supportive of an abuse-free life and reject aspects that are not. For example, they might choose to spend leisure time with these friends (e.g. play sport, go fishing) but would decline the offer to go out drinking with them.

## Session 4 - Introduction to Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
5 mins	4.1 thoughts feelings & behaviour
15 mins	4.2 the iceberg – a third party example
25 mins	4.3 the iceberg – analysing own incident

### Aims of session

1. To develop an understanding of the links between sore-points, thoughts, feelings and behaviour.
2. To introduce the idea of self-talk.

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens

### Background

This session and the next are crucial in terms of teaching the basic concepts of the cognitive behavioural model of change.

### Complexities/points for workers

Be prepared to be flexible about the pace at which these sessions are completed, carrying some of the session over until next week or taking three weeks to complete the two sessions.

Ask your client if they are willing to look directly at some of their violence or aggressive behaviour today. This will be like a football coach playing back parts of a match to see what happened and learn lessons for next time.

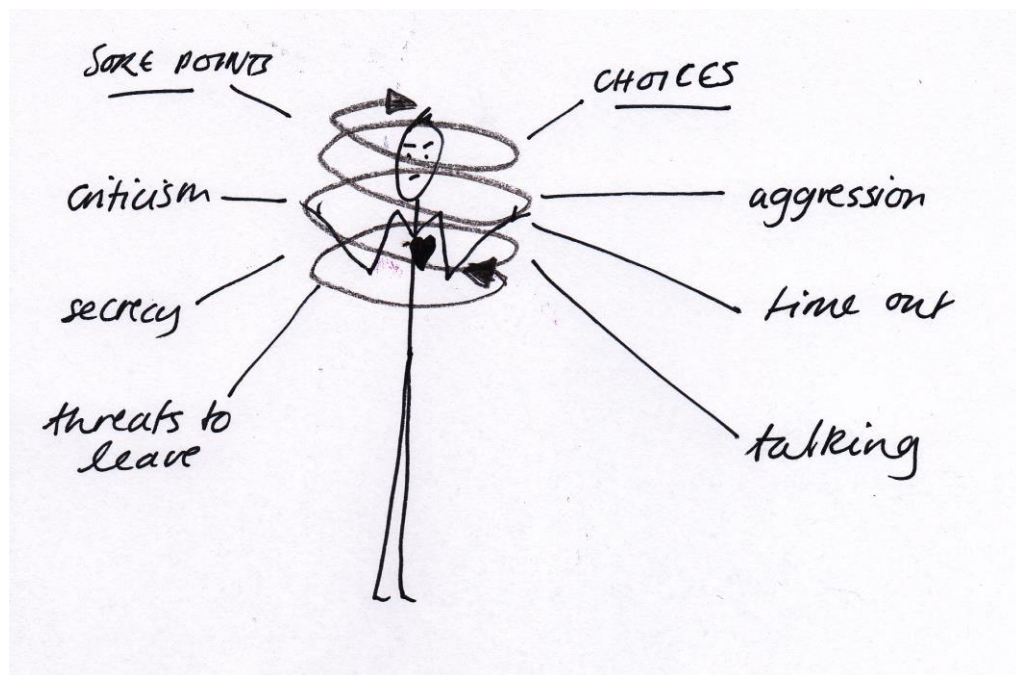
### Activity 4.1 - Thoughts feelings and behaviour

To begin with you'll need to explore the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Sketch a wee pin person like the one below on a sheet of paper.

Remind your client about the sore-points they identified in session 1 and write these in instead of the examples of sore points on the left hand side. Tell them that when things happen that hit their sore points their feelings and thoughts tend to pump each other up. Draw an arrow from the heart back to the head, spiralling upwards to represent an increasing

intensity of mood. This circular process is what occurs when somebody feels they are “being wound up” in a given situation. In reality, the person is often winding themselves up. You can use an example:

*Carl has a sore point about his writing related to his struggles at school. He shows a drafted letter to his partner Pat who points out a bunch of mistakes. Due to Carl's sore point he feels hurt and stupid right away. Rather than telling himself that Pat was only trying to help him, he tells himself that she's being picky and putting him down, this makes him feel annoyed, then he tells himself that she thinks he's an idiot, which makes him furious etc etc....*



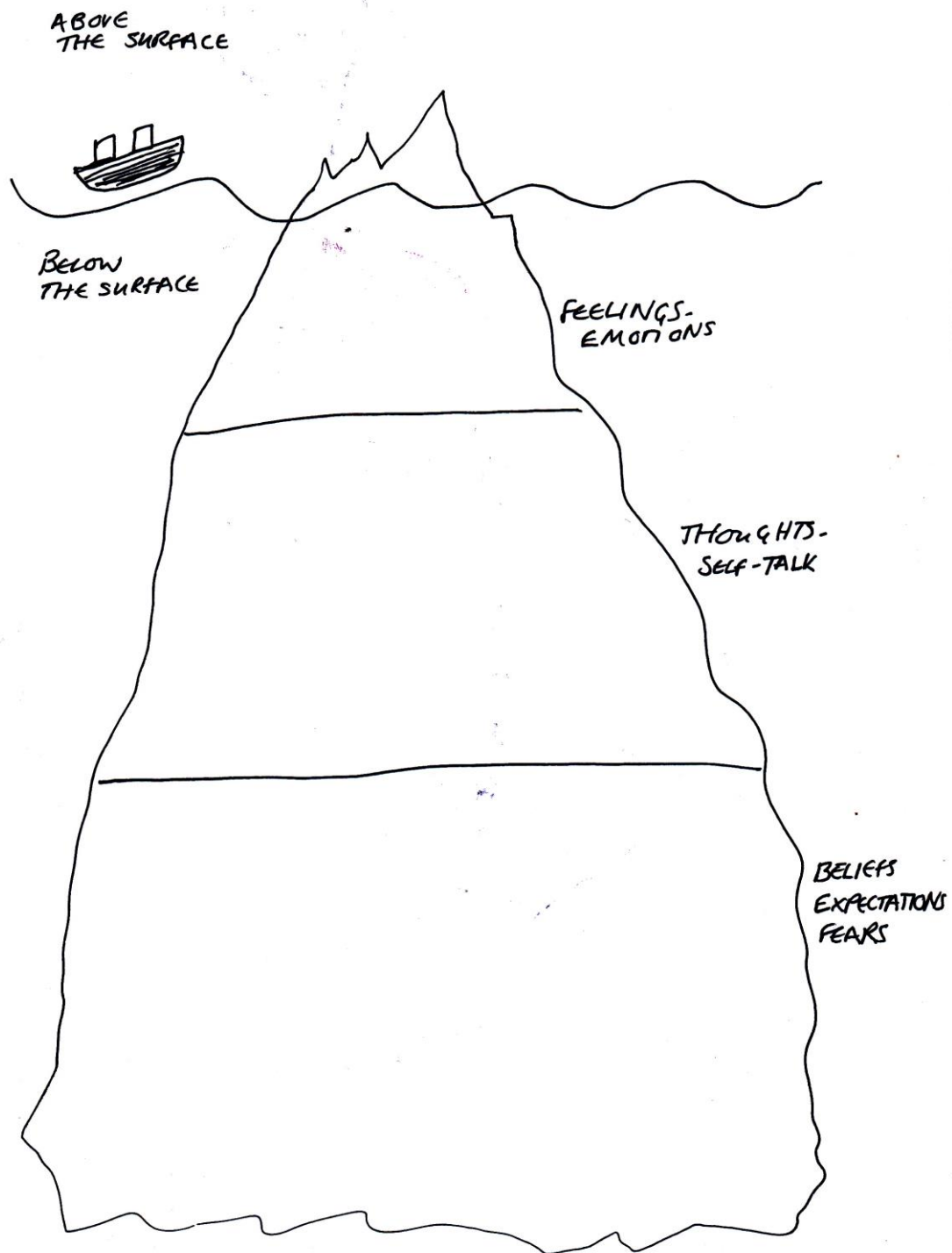
End by explaining that even when he's hopping mad, Carl has a choice of how to behave. Ask your client for some of the range of options open to Carl e.g. to be aggressive – shout or hit out at Pat, to keep on talking it through or to take a time out.

Interestingly, if Carl did yell at Pat he is likely to have felt at the time (or since) as if it was an automatic reaction and as if he had no choice.

### Activity 4.2 - The iceberg – a third party example

Draw a simple iceberg, like the one Handout 4.2, on a big sheet of A3 paper. Explain that people are a bit like icebergs, in that you only see a small part of them (their words and actions). Most of what is important can't be seen and happens 'beneath the surface'. You're going to look further at the relationship between what lies above the surface and what lies below.

## Handout 4.2 – The iceberg

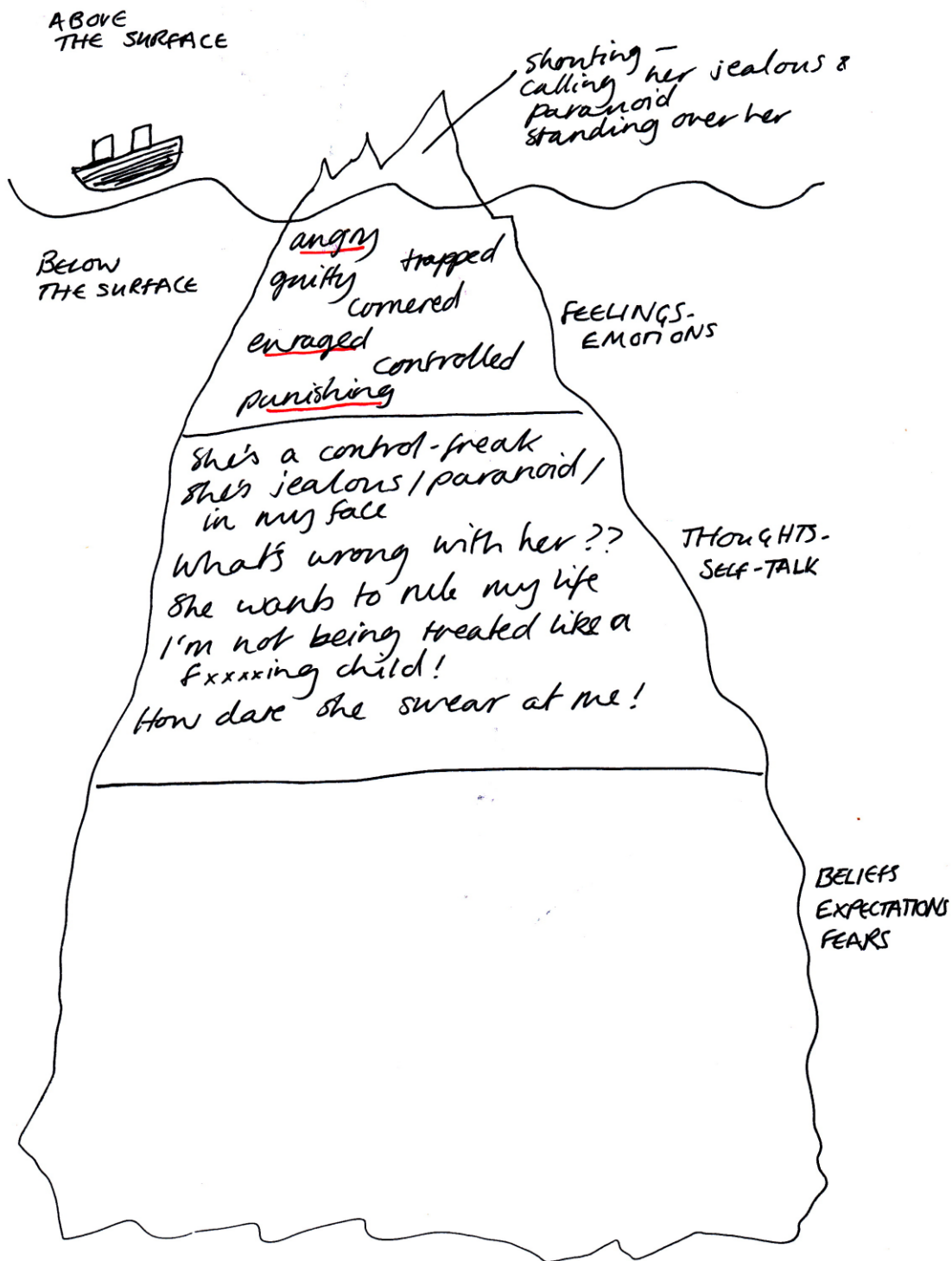


You're going to start off by just getting used to how this model works by filling out an iceberg for our made-up client, Carl. In this example Carl gets in an argument with Pat about him going out with his friends without letting her know. Tell your client that Carl had been out at the pub with his work-mates until 10.30pm and that Pat had been angry when he returned and asked him a number of questions about where he'd been and why he hadn't called her. The argument escalated to the point where Carl was standing over Pat, shouting in her face and pointing at her.

In the top section of the iceberg, above the surface of the water, fill out details of Carl's behaviour - his abusive actions and words. You can ask the client to imagine what Carl said and did in the build up to being so aggressive to Pat. Under the surface you will guess at some of Carl's feelings, thoughts and beliefs during the argument.

The iceberg might now look something like in handout 4.2b:

## Handout 4.2b – The iceberg – Carl's example



Note in particular the powerful emotions (underlined in red) that usually drive the abuse and do get expressed and the other vulnerable emotions that tend to get filtered out and remain unexpressed (such as fear or shame).

You can ask about the relationship between thoughts and feelings:

*What effect did this negative self-talk have on the way Carl was feeling at the time?  
What effects did his feelings have on his self-talk?*

You might end up with something like handout 4.2c – although you'll be looking at the beliefs section next week:

### **Activity 4.3 - The iceberg – analysing own incident**

Now you're going to ask if your client feels willing and ready to try this exercise for one of the times they've been violent or abusive.

Use handout 4.2 again as a starting point and fill it out together up to the section on beliefs which you can complete next week.

Take care to help your client:

- separate emotions from self-talk.
- notice which were the powerful emotions that they acted from, rather than the powerless emotions that they suppressed.
- keep the self-talk as it might really sound in their head – so do include things like “shut up you bossy bitch” but don't include analysed comments such as “I thought she was being rather controlling and verbally abusive”; You want your client to become aware of when they're winding themselves up in future, so you need to get at how this actually sounds in their head in order that this might set off alarm bells next time.
- Help them to consider the effect this negative self-talk had on how they were feeling at the time and on the eventual abuse.

## Session 5 - Alternative Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
25 mins	5.1 – Deconstructing beliefs that support abuse
20 mins	5.2 Thoughts feelings & behaviour – alternative positive self-talk

### Aims of session

3. To introduce to your client the idea of positive self-talk.
4. To assist them to assume a greater responsibility for self-management.

### Activity 5.1 - Deconstructing beliefs that support abuse

#### Step 1 – Carl's example

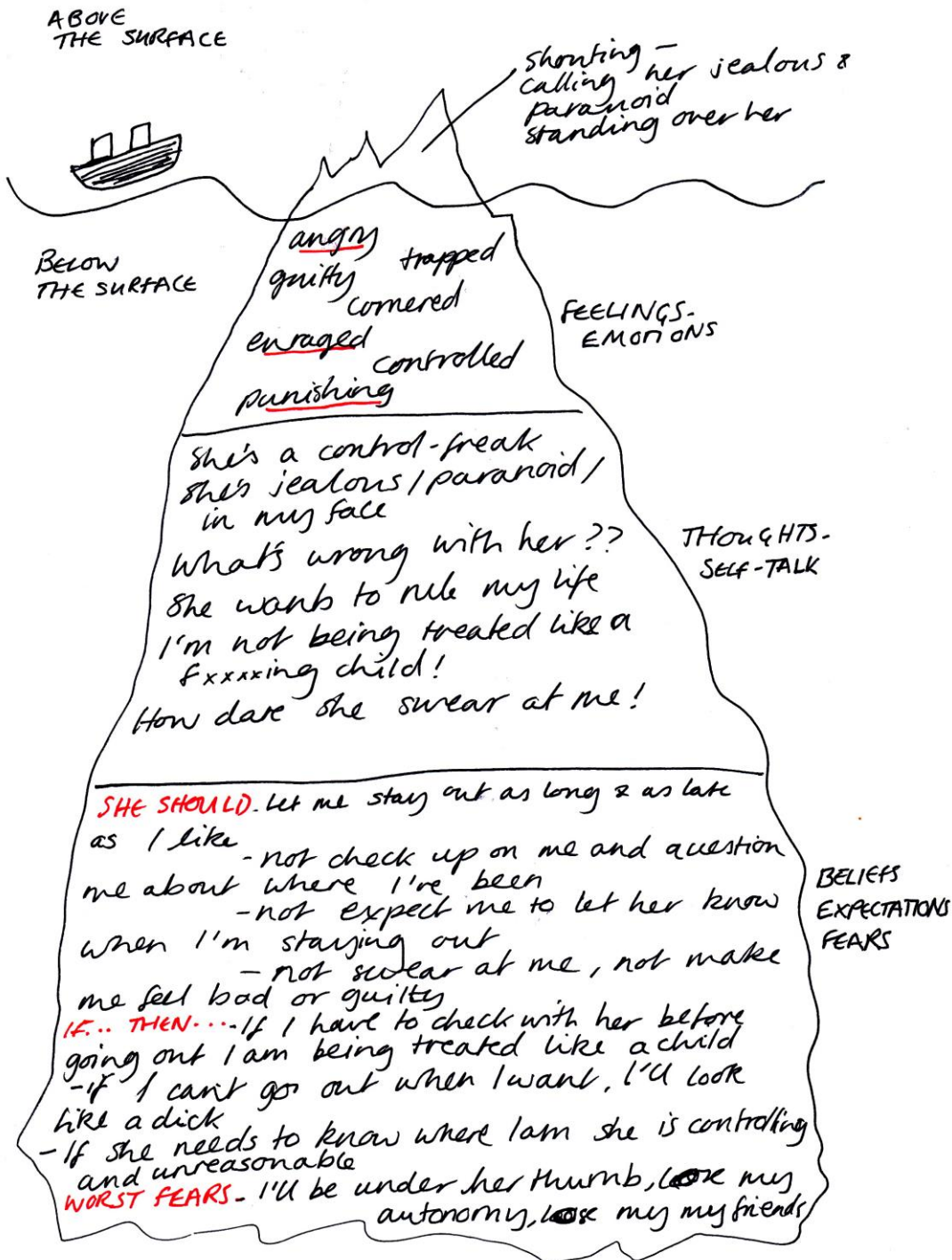
Look again at handout 4.2 and draw your client's attention to the bottom section of the iceberg.

When it comes to filling out the bottom section of the iceberg it will help to use the prompts:

1. *What beliefs did Carl have about how Pat should behave in this situation – you can begin all these with "she should....."?*
2. *What beliefs does Carl show he holds about the way the world works – these are often if... then.... Beliefs?*
3. *What are Carl's worst fears about what will happen if he can't make Pat behave in the way he thinks she should? – take it to an extreme; if he can't stop her behaving this way, what is the worst-case-scenario outcome? (fears of this kind are often what give heat to apparently innocuous arguments)*

You may end up with something like handout 5.1 overleaf.

## Handout 5.1- The iceberg – Carl's example 2



Ask your client:

*Do you see how Carl's beliefs were connected to his thoughts, feelings and behaviours?*

*Do you imagine that these are things that Carl believes all the time?*

*Are they reasonable?*

## Step 2 – own incident

Now return to your clients own iceberg and see if you can use similar prompt questions to fill out the bottom section for them.

Help your client figure out what beliefs they must have been acting from at the time – not the beliefs they may hold now in their calmer state. These beliefs can be surmised by looking at the thoughts and at the situation.

Help your client re-consider some of these beliefs – do they still hold them now? Are they reasonable? Are any distorted in one of the following ways?

The following are common types of distortions in beliefs:

**1. Drawing conclusions from insufficient evidence**

(She's late = She's having an affair)

**2. Magnifying situations beyond reality**

(She's talking to a man = She's having an affair)

**3. Inability to see alternative interpretations**

(Anyone would see it this way)

**4. Black-or-white thinking – no shades of grey**

This woman is 100% perfect (100% imperfect). My previous partner used to be perfect but now she's loathsome.

**5. Making assumptions about someone from belief's about others**

(My previous partner left me for a man she met on a women's night out. If my partner wants to go out with her women friends, she'll probably meet another man)

**6. Globalising**

She never.....I always.....

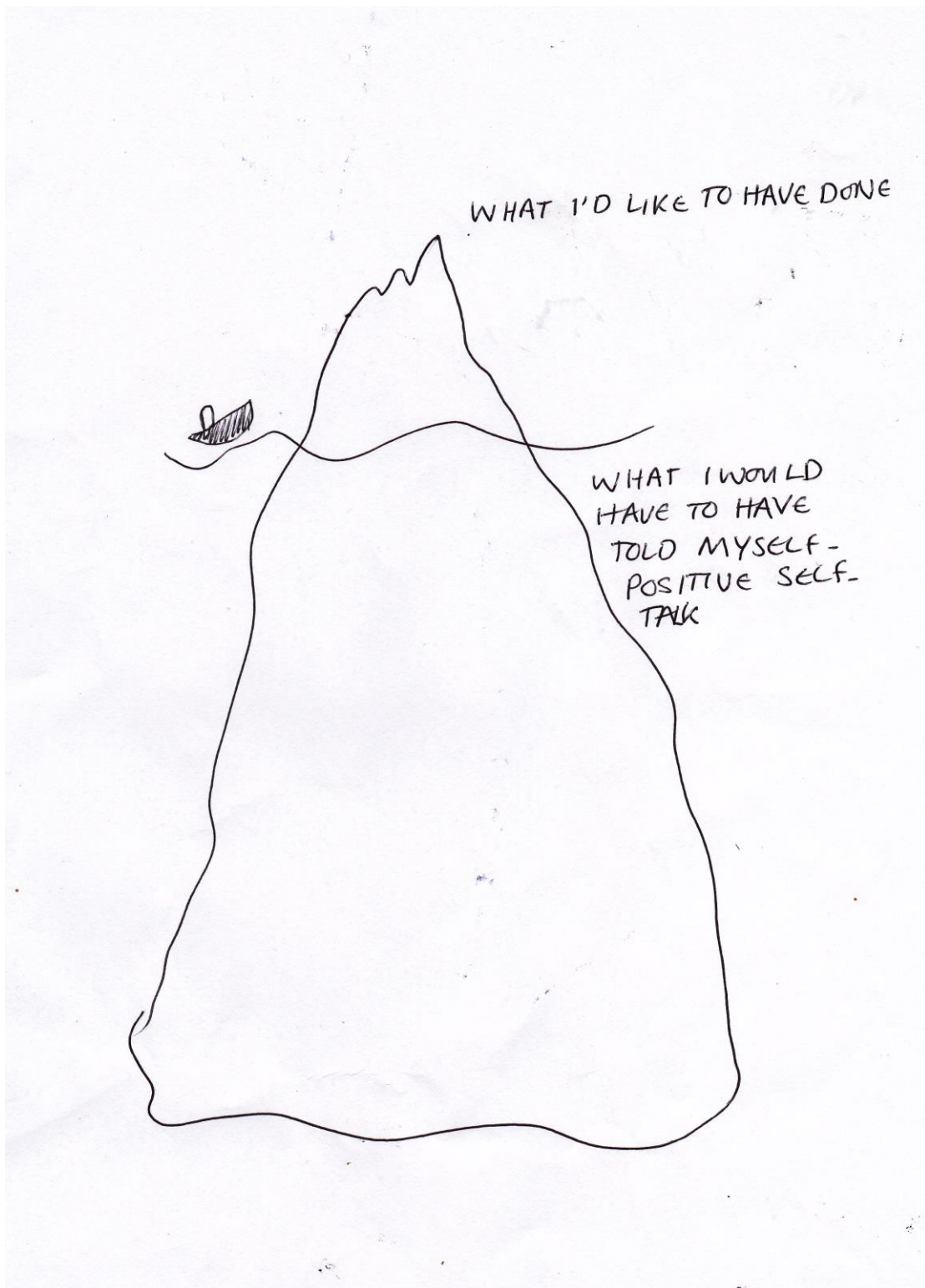
## Activity 5.2 – Positive self-talk

Take a copy of handout 5.2. Ask your client what they'd ideally like to have done in the incident they 'iceberged' last week. You are looking for an alternative that is neither abusive nor controlling. Write that into the behaviour section.

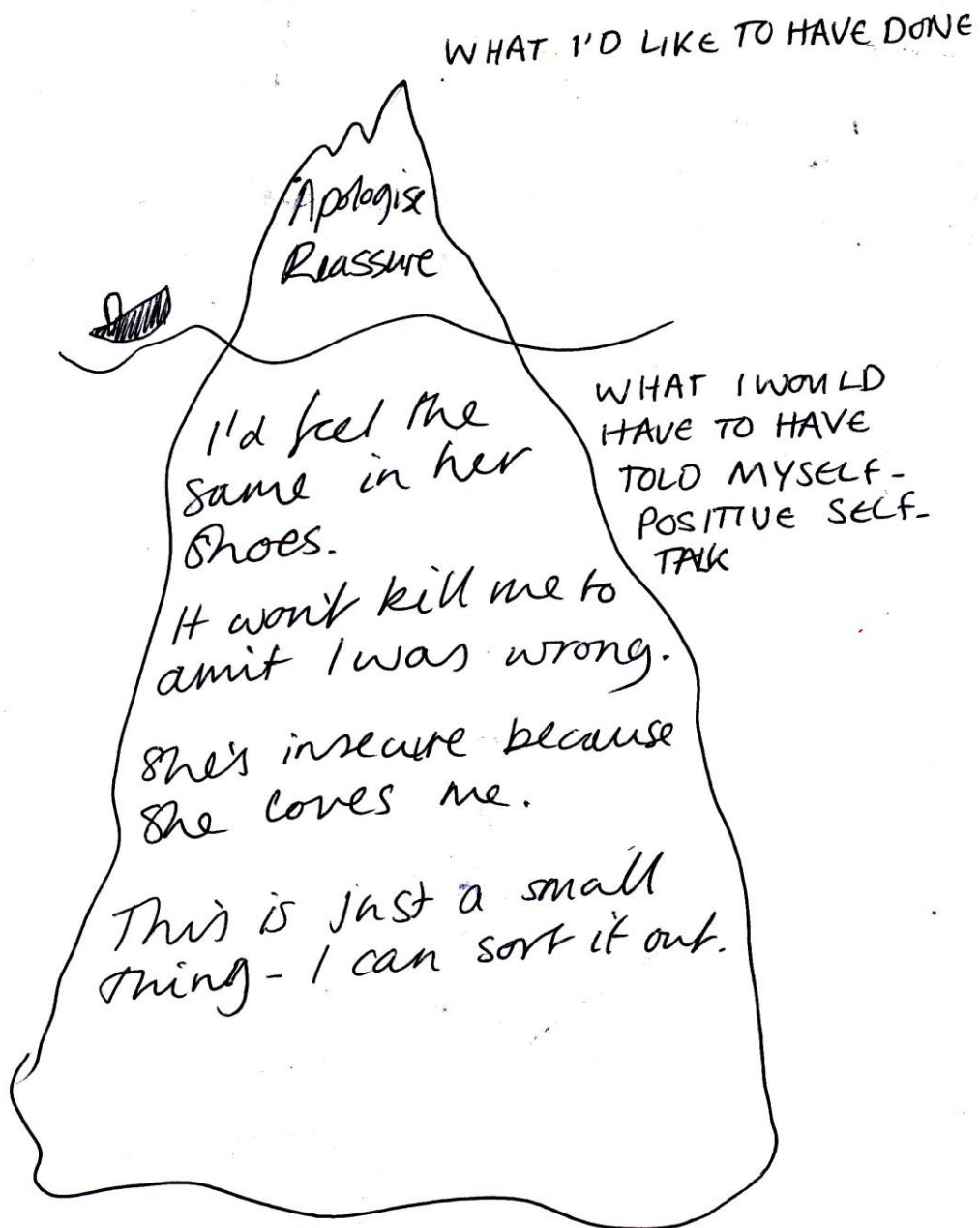
Then ask what sort of self-talk would help him to behave in this way. Try to challenge how realistic he's being – would that really have calmed him down, what else would he have had to have done? Etc. See handout 5.2b for Carl's example.

Be creative – some people are very visual and they may need to literally **see** their partner differently in order to act differently. It may not be enough to tell themselves that she is just feeling insecure and unloved – they may have to bring an image to mind of her at a time when they felt loving or protective towards her.

## Handout 5.2 – Positive self-talk



## Handout 5.2b – Positive self-talk - Carl's example



## Session 6 - Positive self-talk and alternatives

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
15 mins	6.1 Conflict escalation
10 mins	6.2 Active listening
20 mins	6.3 conflict resolution

### Aims of session

1. To develop ideas for alternative non-controlling ways to deal with conflicts

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens

### Background

This session builds upon the work your client did last week with their iceberg. You will need to have this handy.

### Activity 6.1 - Conflict escalation

You and your client are going to explore different negative ways of showing anger in the argument that follows this scenario:

*Sanjit and Anette were planning a holiday together and Sanjit booked time out of work on the agreed dates. Anette was supposed to make the final booking but somehow she got caught up in other things and when she finally got on the internet to book she found that the holiday was sold out. Sanjit feels irritated, disappointed, overwhelmed (by work), stressed, afraid (that he won't get the rest he needs), sad, angry, resentful.*

Tell your client that you want to explore 3 ways Sanjit can deal with this. Divide a piece of paper into 3 and label these: aggressive, passive aggressive, assertive.

Start with aggressive – funnily enough the simplest of the three to imagine. Ask your client what it might look like if Sanjit was aggressive when he heard about the holiday being sold out from Anette. List a few things he might do and say and then ask:

- *What might it be like to be on the receiving end of this for Anette?*
- *How might this affect her response?*

The second style is Passive-aggressive: This involves ways of conveying aggression indirectly (not only passively as the name can misleadingly suggest) if need be you can help your client

with some examples: Sulking, silent, guilt-tripping, moody, and possibly smiling through gritted teeth (“great – well that’s it then isn’t it. We don’t get a holiday this year”). List a few things Sanjit might do and say and then ask:

- *What might it be like to be on the receiving end of this for Anette?*
- *How might it affect her response?*

The third style is Assertive: Clear, honest, non-abusive (listening, acknowledging, expressing own anger without abusiveness etc.). We’ll come back to this a little later....

### Activity 6.2 – Active listening

**It’s easier to see how to do conflict badly than to think about how to do it well.**

Think together with your client about the following questions. To avoid stuckness and widen the options, offer your own answers and ideas and ask if they feel the same or not:

*How would you like someone to respond to you in a conflict?*

*How do you know you’re being listened to and heard?*

*What might have to change for you to listen really actively in a conflict situation - really listening rather than making a mechanical reflection of what partner says?*

*What might you have to tell yourself in order to make these changes?*

Useful strategies might include:

- not shouting or talking over
- checking back on what you’ve heard
- giving an empathetic response to what you’ve heard before putting your own arguments
- asking for more information – in particular see step one of the next exercise

### Activity 6.3 – Conflict resolution

As well as actively listening your client will need to learn to more actively explore his partner’s perspective and learn to express himself constructively in conflict.

We’ve boiled this down into 3 simple steps for you on the handout 6.3b overleaf.

The questions in this handout are designed to help your client recognise the relativity of their perspective. Sometimes we assume that we feel strongly about something because we are

simply 'more right and more rational' than our partner. In fact, rather than some objective rationality being the **basis** for our views, we have mostly come to these views based on a mixture of personality, temperament, life history and experience - and are generally only employing our rationality to justify and back them up. It can help to recognise that many of our beliefs – especially about relationships – are subjective, culturally constructed and hatched within the context of our own very particular and often rather strange, families of origin.

The 'needs' question is meant to call us to think about the needs underlying our surface wants. Whereas Sanjit might want Anette to shut up or get back on the internet right now, there are many deeper needs he might have in his argument with Anette. Show your client the list of underlying needs on the next page to see which might apply to Sanjit's situation.

The 'worst fears' question is important - Often our arguments are almost 'symptoms' of deeper issues – until we look at the worst fears (which often reveal where the real heat is coming from) we may end up dealing with endless skirmishes without ever addressing the root cause.

As you begin to practice finding solutions that don't realise either parties' worst fears, feel free to help your client out with this – making suggestions for other options and helping them to increase the range of possible solutions open to them without pushing them to agreeing to do something they won't follow through with.

Try applying this to the example of Sanjit and Anette - What might Sanjit need to do differently to use an assertive but non-abusive, non-threatening approach. There's no absolute right or wrong answers but whatever they are they might include some of the below:

Firstly, trying to understand Anette's perspective and how this happened. There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation or she may be less concerned about her mistake because she has different information about alternative holidays or about his need to stick to fixed dates.

If her explanation does not sound okay to him, he may need to take some cooling-off time – asking to talk about this a little later and explaining that he needs some 'time out' before he responds.

When he's calm enough he could then specify his feelings, needs and worst fears before moving towards some way to resolve the situation - this might sound like the following:

- Feelings: I feel really stressed and frustrated about this.
- Needs: I feel the need for some R&R. I really want to get a holiday with you and think we need some good times relaxing together. I could use some reassurance that these things matter to you too.
- Worst fears: I'm not just worried about my stress building up and up, but also I fear that you didn't manage the booking because you just don't prioritise our relationship that much. Am I wrong about that?

- Solutions: maybe we can look now together online for an alternative holiday?

### Handout 6.3b - Conflict resolution steps

**Step 1** find out about your partner's perspective:

In the active listening section above there was mention about finding more information about the other person's point of view. This exploration requires some detachment from what might feel accusatory or guilt tripping. Imagine you were not involved and just needed to find the following:

1. What does your partner feel about this issue?
2. How did they come to this particular view (a different view to your own) about this?
3. What underlying needs of his or hers do you think are not being met?
4. If your partner can't get their way in this argument, and perhaps never gets their way on this issue, what is their worst fear?

**Step 2** express your own perspective without being scary:

1. What do you feel about this issue?
2. How did you come to this particular view about this?
3. What underlying needs of yours are not being met?
4. If you can't get your way in this argument, and perhaps never get your way on this issue, what is your worst fear?

**Step 3** finding a solution

Think of solutions that seem fair, realistic and have at least taken care of both parties' underlying needs and worst fears.

## Handout 6.3 - Examples of underlying human needs

CONNECTION	PHYSICAL BEING	WELL-	HONESTY	MEANING
acceptance	air		authenticity	awareness
affection	food		integrity	celebration of
appreciation	movement/exercise		presence	life
belonging	rest/sleep		PLAY	challenge
cooperation	sexual expression		joy	clarity
communication	safety		humour	competence
closeness	shelter		PEACE	consciousness
community	touch		beauty	contribution
companionship	water		communion	creativity
compassion			ease	discovery
consideration	AUTONOMY		equality	efficacy
consistency	choice		harmony	effectiveness
empathy	freedom		inspiration	growth
inclusion	independence		order	hope
intimacy	space			learning
love	spontaneity			mourning
mutuality				participation
nurturing				purpose
respect/self-respect				self-
safety				expression
security				stimulation
stability				to matter
support				understanding
to know and be				
known				
to see and be seen				
to understand and				
be understood				
trust				
warmth				

## Session 7 - Alternatives role plays

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
30 mins	6.4 Alternatives role plays
10 mins	6.1 Active listening
20 mins	6.2 conflict resolution

### Aims of session

2. To practice non-controlling ways to deal with conflicts

### Activity 7.1 - Alternatives role plays

#### Materials

Iceberg filled out for analysis of own abuse

Handout 6.3 – Underlying human needs

Handout 6.3b - Steps for conflict resolution

**Remember** – Being told how to ride a bike and talking about how to ride a bike does **NOT** amount to being able to ride one! These role plays are the conflict resolution equivalent of getting on the bike. Just like when learning to ride a bike, expect your client to wobble and topple off a few times. And just like learning to ride a bike these techniques require **practice**. There's no way someone is going to be able to put in place what they've learned in an angry situation unless they have done it enough that it's becoming pretty easy.

Start with the incident that your client filled out their iceberg for – remind yourselves of the situation and the feelings he had at the time.

Overleaf are two methods for alternatives role plays:

## Method 1 – both playing roles

It can be very useful for people to try out alternatives in a safe environment.

Perhaps the most powerful and flexible way of doing role play is if the worker can play the role of the partner – so the role play can be interactive; lots of alternatives can be tried out and the level of difficulty and challenge in the ‘partner’s’ responses can be varied.

Ask your client if they’re willing to role play one of their own conflicts with you. Note that acting skill isn’t at all important – you can continue talking to each other just as you are.

Make sure that they agree that:

1. Either of you can press pause at any time and the role play will stop.
2. There will be no physical contact between you.

Your client may have to give you the lines to enable you to play this bit like their partner. Remind them that you aren’t really able to play their actual partner who you don’t know. You will only be able to improvise a part around the bits you do know.

Having discussed what your client actually did in the argument in question, you will then ask them now to role play the same situation with you but to try to be non-abusive and, better still, use some of the skills you’ve discussed in terms of:

- Using positive self-talk
- Actively listening to what the partner says – including asking for more information and checking back on your understandings.
- Expressing vulnerable emotions, needs and fears without guilt tripping and blaming the partner

You may pause every now and again in order to review how your client has done so far, offer feedback on what they are doing well and where they could improve their conflict resolution skills. For example you might pause to say:

*“what are you feeling – and what hurts or fear lie beneath your anger – how might you honestly express those without guilt-tripping your partner?”*

*or “as your partner I was feeling that you were asking me for my side of things but not really considering and absorbing that – like it’s just an exercise. How could you show you are really listening and allowing her perspective to effect and change your position?”*

You again take the pause off and return to the role play.

When playing the partner your role will be to keep your client at their learning ‘edge’ – making the partner as challenging as they can manage. Remember there is no point making it really easy for your client to be non-abusive and no point setting them up to fail. Encourage them to practice taking a time out if they really can’t manage non-abusive responses.

## Method 2 – empty chair

If you are not comfortable with taking the role of your client's partner, you can use an 'empty chair' technique –

Invite your client to imagine that their partner is sitting in the chair next to them and start out the interaction by saying something like– “so let's imagine that your partner is here in the room, sitting in this chair maybe, and you want to have this difficult conversation – how would you respond if she said ....?”. As much as possible ask your client to direct their response to their partner. You can then make the process quite interactive by continuing to invent responses for his partner and asking the man to reply.

### Example

*Worker: So, you have said that you find it difficult to respond to Mary without shouting when she shows you that she's angry – the other night she wouldn't talk to you for ages, and you thought it might be because you hadn't done some of the things she's been asking you to do. Let's imagine Mary is sitting in this chair here, she's sitting there silent and angry, what might you say to her? Remembering that the aim is to do this without scaring her or being abusive?*

*Client: I might say – what's the matter with you?*

*Worker: And if she said, Nothings the bloody matter?*

*Client: "I'd try saying "Look Mary, I know I didn't come home early when you asked, I'm sorry I messed your evening up"*

*"And if she just turned away from you with a stony face?"*

*and so on...*

*Try to keep it as direct and interactive as possible, with the man framing the responses as he might actually speak to her partner.*

Stop the action at any point to review how he has done so far, offer feedback on what he is doing well and where he could improve his conflict resolution skills.

Continue to bring alternatives role plays as often as possible in future sessions. Make them snappy – they shouldn't need more than about 15 minutes once you've both got the format.

You can practice alternatives to violent incidents, but also to any incident of abuse at all. These practices will also contribute significantly to your assessment of your client's progress.

## Session 8 - Why people abuse

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
15 mins	8.1 - The function of violence
15 mins	8.2 - The function of other forms of abuse
15 mins	Alternative role play (see chapter 7) on an incident of non-violent abuse

### Aims of session

1. To encourage clients' to understand the functional nature of violence and abuse (even though it is also counterproductive and damaging).
2. To increase clients' understanding of the impact of abuse on a relationship.
3. To introduce the notions of power, control and abuse of privilege within relationships and identify the tactics used to maintain power and control.
4. To introduce a different way of analysing abusive behaviour, that recurs through the rest of the programme.

### Background:

This activity is designed to help your client to identify the functions or intentions of abusive behaviour so that they recognise it is not an irrational outburst, and to understand what they may have to give up (such as getting their way and avoiding uncomfortable emotions) when they choose not to abuse. This is all about getting a realistic commitment to change rather than one that will fall apart as soon there's an associated cost.

### Activity 8.1 – The function of violence

Generate three story scenarios - ask the client for three issues over which a person might get abusive to someone close to them, and write the three issues down one side of a flipchart or large piece of paper. Then ask them to say what sparked the argument off and how it might have gone – improvising the argument by taking turns to give each character their lines can help bring this to life.). Finish the scenario by describing the violence at the end – so if it is a man who does the violence you would say “then he hits his partner, and it shocks and hurts her”.

1. Ask how the person who was hit might act differently the next day or the next week around the same issue. Some of this will be how the abusive partner in each scenario wanted their victim to act differently, some strategies will be defiant and will lead to further arguments. Ask which is which.
2. Ask how they might have felt if they hadn't been abusive “if he hadn't been abusive, what feelings would he have been left with?”. How might the abusive partner in their scenarios have wanted to change their feelings by using abuse?

Explain that people abuse for two main reasons. Firstly, to try to control the way someone acts. Secondly, to change the way they feel in the moment. (Focus particularly on short term feelings of powerfulness vs powerlessness.)

Write the following on a flipchart:

We abuse:

- to control how the other person acts
- to change the way we feel

Point out that if you are going to stop being abusive, it means accepting that you can't control, coerce or manipulate your partner – even when they are doing things you really don't like or agree with.

And also that if you are going to stop being abusive, it will mean learning to tolerate a lot of uncomfortable, powerless feelings for a while rather than using violence and abuse to take control and feel more powerful.

However, before you put your client off non-violence altogether, bring their attention to the fact that violence and abuse are mainly only **short-term** winners, if at all. In relation to the arguments you've been examining, ask the client:

"In the long term how will the victim feel towards the person abusing them? What might they do?"

"In the long term if the abuser keeps on acting that way? How this changes the way they feel about themselves?"

Handout 8.1 might help you structure this discussion.

### Handout 8.1 – The functions and impacts of violence

Scenario	What might've sparked the argument?	Roughly how might this escalate to violence?	How might she act differently next time?	What feelings does he avoid in the short-term by using violence?	As he abuses her, how does he feel?	In the long term how will the victim feel towards the abuser?	In the long term how does he feel about himself?
Example – an argument over money	She opens a final reminder on a bill she thought he'd paid	She asks what the hell? He says he's got no cash left, she says he's useless	She takes over the budgeting or bill payments	Feeling useless Guilt Shame Feeling out of control	Hostile Powerful Right	Loss of trust Loss of respect Resentment	Shame Guilt

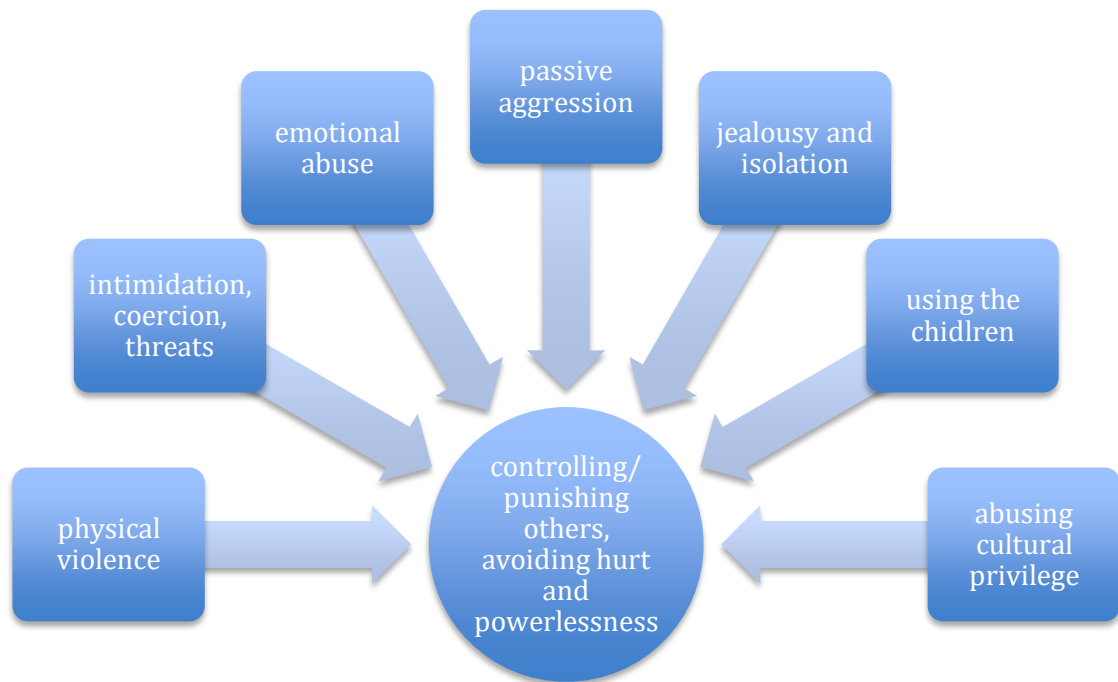
### Activity 8.2 – The function of other forms of abuse

Explain that the next step is to look at some other behaviours that might be used to control a partner. Discuss what behaviours would fit in each element of the fan in Handout 8.2. How would those behaviours function in getting your own way, or in gaining a sense of control and power instead of feelings of vulnerability, powerlessness and inadequacy?

Start out by discussing the various areas as they apply to any relationship, then ask the client which ones they recognise for themselves, and how those behaviours functioned for them. As the course goes on you'll find more on all of these other forms of abuse.

While you're looking at these other behaviours, ask your client to identify one incident lately where he's used one of these forms of abuse. Go on to try alternative role plays on this incident.

## Handout 8.2 – Different types of abuse



## Session 9 - Minimisation, Denial and Blame

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
30 mins	9.1 - Exploration of minimisation, denial and blame, using the image of shields.
15 mins	Alternatives role play – see chapter 7

### Aims of session

1. To introduce the concepts of minimisation, denial and blame, as examples of avoidance tactics men may use to prevent taking responsibility for their behaviour.
2. To reflect on feelings of shame and guilt which men may be experiencing and their place in the process of change

### Materials

- Flipchart and pens.

### Background to this session

Some clients will use minimisation, denial and blame more than others when describing or thinking about their abusive behaviour. Many clients will minimise their behaviour yet others will be brutally honest about what have they done. Others may have an understanding of their behaviour which rests on a perception that they are incapable of change or unworthy of the good life which change might bring them. In choosing how to conduct these sessions and which parts to use, be aware of how the client has generally presented their behaviour, how much they are affected by shame and how their general mood is. This should not be confrontational; the intention is not to evoke shame but rather to promote accountability, recognise the likelihood of shame which may follow and detoxify it to ensure it does not interfere with the process of change.

### Activity 9.1 – Exploration of minimisation denial and blame

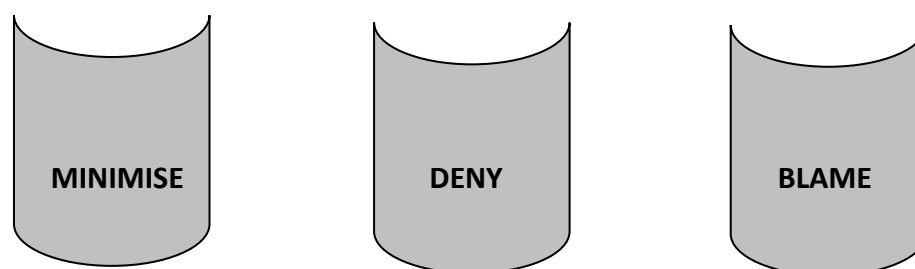
Be prepared to be flexible over the pace of this and the next session; with some clients it may be possible to complete the work in one session.

Ask your client to recall some of the ways they have described specific incidents of violence or abuse, e.g. to his partner/ex-partner, parents, siblings, children, friends, police, and programme assessor. Log these in note form on the flipchart. If they say that they have not discussed his offence with anyone explore this further, though at the very least they would have had to describe it to the police and should have described it to you earlier in this process.

Ask your client to consider in general how people describe behaviour they know to be wrong. Examples can include:

- *When they are late for something?*
- *When they have forgotten to do something, missed an appointment?*
- *When they have broken something belonging to someone else?*
- *When they have argued with someone?*
- *When they are stopped by the Police for speeding?*

With each answer ask them to consider what they think the person is trying to do by using these tactics and introduce the concept of *shields*; used to avoid dealing with difficult feelings or reflecting on what they might need to change about themselves. These shields also help people to abdicate responsibility for what they have done. Suggest that the most common shields are *minimisation*, *denial* and *blame* and if appropriate, draw them on the flipchart, as shown below. Explain each of these to the client.



Return to their descriptions of their abusive behaviour and ask them to consider which of the shields may apply to each of the explanations they gave. Invite them to consider what feelings they may avoid by using these shields and what impact they feel this might have on their chances of changing their behaviour.

## Session 10 - Exploring parenting

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
5 mins	10.1 – Video
20 mins	10.2 - Using Iceberg to analyse video material
20 mins	10.3 - Using Iceberg to explore client's awareness of impacts on their own children

### Aims

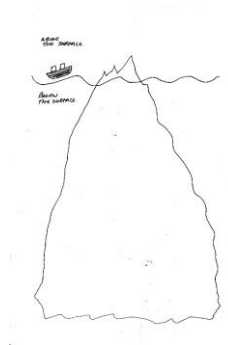
To increase awareness of the effects of domestic violence on children. For those men who are not involved in the lives of children, some of this session is still relevant – most men will go on to become fathers and all can reflect on their own experience of parenting. However, we have also provided an alternative activity which can take the place of parenting work at this stage if you do not feel it is appropriate. see ripple effect exercise 10.1a .

### Activity 10.1 Video

Show 'Craig's Story' from the Respect video 'Our Stories'.

### Activity 10.2 Iceberg

The worker reminds the client of the iceberg model and how most of an iceberg is hidden beneath the water. Draw an iceberg out on a large sheet of paper:



- (a) The worker may ask the parent to draw above the water line the behaviour that Craig and his brother showed when their parents argued. Below the surface the parent is then asked to draw or write in what the children didn't show – what feelings and thoughts weren't expressed and what their fears were, what they learned, beliefs might have hatched about violence, relationships, their parents, how conflict can be dealt with etc.

It is also important to ask:

*"Why is it that Craig's parents don't know how much the children are hearing, and what the effect their arguments are having on them?"*

- (b) The worker asks the parent to draw their own child's iceberg  
*"what does he show on the surface when you shout and hit? – and the next day/ weeks?", "and what do imagine is going on underneath?"*
- (c) The parent is then asked to look at what they have drawn and is given another iceberg. The worker says – *"when you look at that, these are the things you show on the surface"* and writes in what he sees. Then he hands the pen to the parent and asks *"what's going on underneath for you?"*

Be sure to allow time to gently wrap up this session and do some safety planning. Talk through what kinds of things might be harder to handle in the coming week if the parent feels more vulnerable, guilty or moody as a result of this session. How he or she can look after as such themselves at such times, remind himself why he feels this way, and get to safety somehow? This might for example include agreeing to take a breather, visits to the gym, listening to music they like or agreeing to call someone supportive. It is also important to remind your client that the healing can begin from right now for them and their child.

## Session 10a - Alternative for non-parents

### The ripple effect

#### Session plan

Timing	Activity
30 mins	10.1a – Ripple effect

#### Aims

To increase awareness of the effects of domestic violence.

#### Activity 10.1 the ripple effect

You will need a lot of chairs for this exercise to hold the place of ‘people’ in the room and some paper. An alternative is to do the exercise standing up and use sheets of paper or paper plates to hold the space for people who have been impacted by the abuse.

#### Step 1 – Me

Ask your client to step into the first chair or space. In this place he is representing himself.

*Today we’re focusing on the impacts of how you’ve sometimes mistreated \*\*\*\*. We’re going to begin with thinking about how this has affected you, yourself. I’m going to ask you to talk about those effects and I’m going to take some notes while you talk.*

Encourage your client to think about the full range of impacts – these can relate to:

- consequences such as seeing you or being arrested
- feelings such as guilt, shame or anger
- practicalities such as losing your house, missing work
- social – it may impact on your feelings towards others or theirs towards you

Finish by asking:

*Who knows about this? Who have you told about it? Who is close to you but does not know?*

You have a difficult job while listening. On the one hand you are to write “ME” on top of the sheet of paper and list some of the key things your client names as impacts. Be brief – shorthand it. Detail is not important in this task.

At the same time you need to be noting in your head any other people mentioned or implied in his account. For example, if he says that being arrested was a consequence you might want to check who called the police. Say it was a neighbour, in your mind (or on another sheet depending on your memory!) you’ll note:

- police

- neighbour

When your client is talking about how it's affected work, you might add:

- boss
- colleagues

When he speaks about social relationships and who knows and doesn't – keep some note of all the players – whether they know or not. All these become options for zooming in on later in the session.

## **Step 2 – my partner**

Get your client to step out the 'me' space. Place your paper on the chair or the floor where he was standing. Get him to step away for a second and come and stand by you, facing back into the space. Then ask him to occupy the next chair or space, beside the first. This is 'my partner'. When he is in that space he is expected to speak as his partner.

Again 'she' will be asked how the abuse has effected 'her', who she's spoken to about it and who's close to her but doesn't know.

Again you'll be noting the key impacts at the same time as adding anyone new who you find was involved to your list.

Note: These steps are not intended to be a series of highly emotionally charged role plays, simply brief perspective-taking sessions which should bring out the key impacts and then move on. In this sense they differ from those designed to build emotional empathy. As a result it does not matter if your client seems to be 'really getting into role' or a bit distanced from their own response. If they do get deeper into the emotions that go along with one or more of the perspectives they are exploring then that's fine, but you will need to remember to incorporate more time for safely wrapping up as well as reconsidering the 'victim empathy session' to ensure that it isn't a total duplication.

## **Step 3 - onwards**

Now you can randomly choose someone from your list – let's say the neighbour – and ask how it was to hear the argument that prompted them to call the police. Use the information you have to focus in on the difficult impacts – for example, by asking "how is it when you see \*\*\*\* nowadays on the street?"

Include unlikely characters like the Police who came – how did they feel when they came to the house? How do these scenes affect them?

Include the people the couple have talked to – how was it to hear about these events? How it has affected their relationship with the one who told them? And the one who didn't? Who have they spoken to about it?

Include the people the couple haven't talked to but are close to – do they sense that there's some distance in their relationship? How is it not to be confided in? How does this affect their relationships with the couple?

The steps can go on and on to quite peripheral people – family, friends, partners of close friends, neighbours, professionals, colleagues.....

At the end of each step place the paper to hold the space for each person with the key words to represent the impacts on them. Keep filling the floor.

When you're out of involved persons, or out of time, get your client to come stand beside you and look out at the way his violence has rippled outwards, touching the lives of so many people at various levels. Ask how that feels?

Point out that he may one day have children and that he has a chance to change his contribution before that time comes.

## Session 11 - Other forms of abuse: Threats, intimidation, harassment

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
10 mins	11.1 - Sandra's story
15 mins	11.2 - Identifying intimidation, threatening and passive aggressive behaviour
10 mins	11.3 – listing examples
5 mins	11.4 – Direct teaching on impacts of intimidation and passive aggression.
15 mins	If time – alternatives role play on a time the person has used threats/ intimidation/ passive aggression

### Aims

- Educational input widening the definition of abusive behaviour.
- Increase the client's awareness of ways in which they may threaten and intimidate their partner.
- To recap and extend the work done in session 8 'Why people abuse' on the link between other forms of abuse and the use of violence.

### Activity 11.1 – Sandra's story

Look at Sandra's description of how it was to live with her partner.

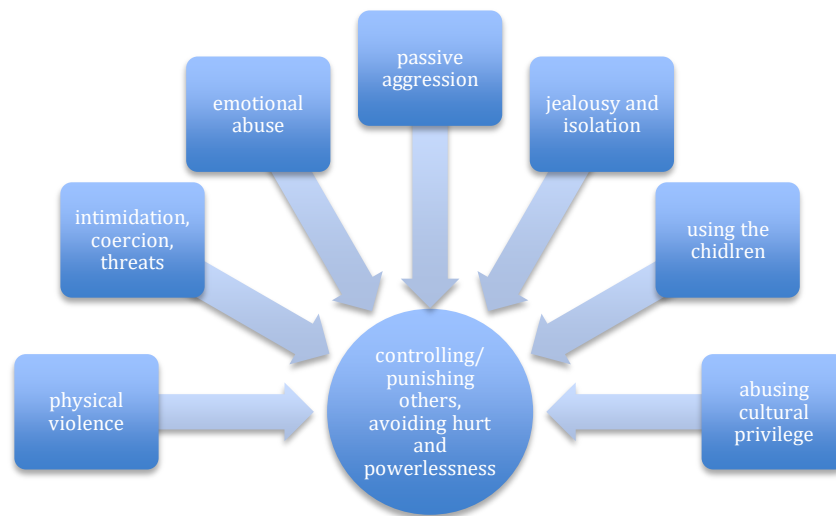
#### **Sandra**

*I knew when we had to tread softly around him. His moods took over the whole house. The kids had the same sense. We were totally tuned in to his moods and they governed our lives.*

- What might he be doing that would make his partner and children 'tread softly'?
- What might 'treading softly' involve for Sandra and the children?
- Do you think he knows how they are feeling? If yes, what is he trying to achieve by behaving like this? If not, how does he shut this knowledge out?
- What is the benefit to him of behaving in this way?
- What is the cost to him?
- What is the cost to his family?

## Activity 11.2 - Identifying intimidation, threatening and passive aggressive behaviour

Remind you client about the different types of abuse (Handout 8.2).



You're now focusing in on intimidation, coercion and threats and passive aggression. Run through the following with your client:

1. *How do your partner and children know to tread softly around you? Firstly, how do they know that you're angry?*
2. *Are there particular times, situations or subjects around which they would do this?*
3. *What would they say if they were here?*
4. *What effect has your history of using violence had on how your partner feels when you shout? How does that work?*
5. *If someone wanted to deliberately make their partner feel afraid and uncomfortable without actually using violence, how might they behave?*
6. *Is that the same or different with your children?*
7. *What scares **your** partner, your children?*
8. *How you can reassure them that they don't need to be afraid?*

## Activity 11.3 – listing examples

Some of your client's answers will be overtly aggressive and others will be more passive aggressive. You might divide a page into two columns and write your client's answers in under the appropriate headings. Following this ask what other ways people use intimidation and passive aggression. If your client struggles then show them an episode of "passive aggressive man" to get them going. As always when listing like this, try alternating – you add one, they add one and so on....

Examples of threats and intimidation	Examples of passive aggression
Giving 'the look' Banging around, smashing furniture Punching walls Shouting Standing over her Pacing around Gesticulating wildly or close to her face Issuing orders e.g. "Shut up" or "Get out" Repeating questions without letting her answer Getting 'in her face' Saying you'll hurt her, yourself or the kids Punching walls Saying things like "Make me/ How dare you/Try it" etc.	Sulking Giving in without meaning it Sighing Muttering Sarcasm Mimicry Ignoring Guilt tripping Fake crying Not owning up to feelings Withdrawing cooperation Giving clipped brief answers Making faces / rolling eyes Saying things like "I'm not angry, I'm just disappointed in you"

#### Activity 11.4 – Direct teaching on impacts of intimidation and passive aggression.

Some of the lighter-end versions of passive-aggression can be quite entertaining to own up to and this does not necessarily deter from the useful effects of naming them. Remember though, that some couples can maintain sulking for days or even years. There's no doubt, though, that this kind of silent resentment will eat away at them, their partner and their children. Go through the following with your client:

*Even at the lighter end, however, these tactics can have powerful impacts. For a person who has never been violent, if they shows signs of anger around their partner or children it will be unpleasant. But it is not the same if they have hit their partner, and put them in physical fear in the past. After that, angry and 'acting out' behaviour evokes the memory of the past violence. Once you use violence in the home, you have made your home a threatening environment for your partner and children. So even what might seem like trivial aspects of your behaviour can become warning signs to them.*

*You may also find that a lot of the earliest signs of a build up towards violence are passive aggressive or threatening, so that becoming more mindful of these can be a way to increase your own awareness of warning signs (your signals).*

*What is more, once you have used violence to frighten and control your partner, you do not need to do it very often again to control their behaviour. The threat of violence or even subtle signs of displeasure can serve as a warning for them to stay in line.*

*It may feel unfair but people who have caused fear in their intimate relationships need to set themselves a higher standard of behaviour than other people. It means that even at times when you feel really unhappy, grumpy, irritated or angry you are still going to have to think about what that might*

*look like to your partner and or children, and how you can reassure them that they don't need to be afraid.*

#### **Activity 11.5 – Alternatives role play**

Ask your client to pick an incident of intimidating or passive aggressive behaviour and do an alternatives role play based upon it.

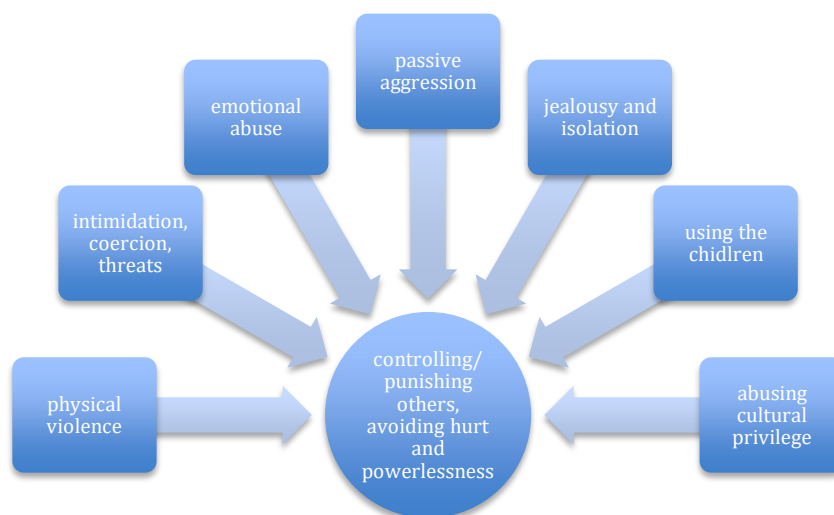
## Session 12 - Emotional abuse

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
5 mins	12.1 Defining emotional abuse
20 mins	12.2 Listing examples of emotional abuse and considering effects
20 mins	12.3 Building your partner up rather than running them down

### Activity 12.1 - Defining emotional abuse

Explain that this week you are going to be focussing on emotional abuse.



People who have lived with domestic violence often point to the emotionally abusive aspects of the relationship being the hardest to recover from. It is important to work on emotional abuse alongside physical abuse. Violent relationships are often maintained through a combination of emotionally and psychologically abusive tactics, including running the victim down to the extent that they do not have the will or the internal resources to leave.

One way into this discussion is to work together to come up with a definition of emotionally abusive behaviour.

Two themes should emerge:

- Behaviour which is hurtful, either because it is aimed to hurt, or because you haven't thought or checked out whether it is hurtful or not.
- Behaviour which is controlling.

## Activity 12.2 - Listing examples of emotional abuse and considering effects

*List ways in which people can be abusive emotionally – what have you seen in your friends or families relationships?*

*What have they used in their own relationships?*

*Were children in your family put down or labelled?*

*How do you think you might be emotionally abusive to your partner and children?*

*What are the effects of these behaviours? What is the cumulative effect if they go on for a long time?*

You might want to refer to the handout overleaf on Emotional Abuse.

## Handout 12.2 - Emotional abuse

### It's about:

Putting her down, making her feel bad about herself, calling her names, making her think she's crazy, playing mind games, humiliating her, making her feel guilty.

### It includes:

- Swearing, general put-downs: *fucking cow, bitch*; and sexual put-downs: *slut, tart, flirt, whore*.
- Making her feel stupid, or writing off her viewpoint: *you're stupid/ ignorant, you don't understand*.
- Making her feel crazy, or writing off her viewpoint on the basis that she's irrational: *you're hysterical, you're mad, you've got a problem, you've got PMT*.
- Getting calm just when she gets angry and then mocking her: *look at the state of you*.
- Writing off her viewpoint by exaggerating it and making it seem ridiculous or by using sarcasm: *so you want me to keep a logbook of every single penny I spend? Shall I go around with a pair of blinkers on so I can't even see other women?*
- Deflecting a problem from you to her by making out she's irrationally obsessed by it: *you're always nagging about that, you're obsessive about tidiness, you're paranoid*.
- Lying to her and then making out she's got a problem with trust: *you're always imagining I'm out with other women, you're always questioning me about my drinking*.
- Putting her down or writing off her viewpoint on the basis of her class, race, culture, religion or gender: *that's just middle-class bullshit, that's typical of a woman / Italian / Christian etc., you'll never understand because you're not a proper Muslim / European*.
- Getting at her weak spots and making her feel unattractive or bad about herself: *you're fat / ugly / useless, you can't hold a job down, you're just like your Mother, you embarrass yourself in front of your friends, nobody else would have you*.
- Making her feel incompetent; comparing her with past partners: *you're not fit to be a Mother, you're frigid, you drive like an idiot, you can't cook, you're clumsy*.
- Answering a criticism with a counter-criticism, an accusation with a counter-accusation: *yeah, well, it pisses me off when you... too, you think you're such a bloody angel – what about the time when you.....*
- Bringing in other people's opinions as if to prove your point: *Billy thinks you were out of order too, my mum's always said you were a bad Mother*.
- Dodging her criticisms and making her feel crazy by flat-out denying things or arguing over tiny details: *I did not say you were flirting – I just said it was bloody odd behaviour, I didn't kick you, I am not shouting, I am not angry, it was only seven times, actually – not ten*.
- Putting her down by devaluing her work, her interests, her friends: *it's just a poxy low-paid little job, you're just a housewife, your mates are just a bunch of brainless bimbos*.
- Mocking her by agreeing without meaning it at all, or by making insincere apologies or promises: *yeah, yeah, yeah, sure I was wrong, whatever, look I'm sorry, now is that enough?*
- Overlooking her anger and her underlying needs by focusing on the smallness of her complaints: *it's no big deal, you're making a mountain out of a molehill*.
- Putting her down in front of others by using any of these tactics: ordering her to do things, displaying your dominance publicly, touching her sexually in public when she isn't receptive, bringing up stories and jokes about her that you know she wouldn't want aired publicly
- Refusing to consider changing your behaviour: *I'm just made like that – take it or leave it, it's the way I am*.

### The Cumulative Outcome of such tactics can be:

- She feels guilty, bad about herself and insecure, stupid / ugly / crazy, unheard.
- She becomes withdrawn / resentful / angry / depressed.
- You don't have to look at your behaviour, so you don't have to change.
- The argument is diverted elsewhere - The problem never gets solved.
- You both feel that she's the one with the problem; the one who needs help and has to change.
- She feels more insecure about herself and more dependent on you, so she finds it harder to leave.
- She stays only because she hasn't got the confidence in herself to leave.
- She remains unhappy - You remain unhappy.
- The relationship moves further away from intimacy, honesty and respect.

### Activity 12.3 - Building them up rather than running them down

Finish up the session by looking at how it would be for your client to support rather than run down their partner and children in their 'weak' points. What might this involve?

Look at what else they appreciate most about their partner and children – you can use a range of questions such as:

*Boast about each of your children*

*If we were stranded on a desert island, what would I rely on your partner for?*

*What qualities did you choose your partner for?*

*What are you most proud of them for?*

*What do others tell you are good about them?*

Whenever your client comes up with a quality, ask for examples of this in action. Whenever they come up with examples, ask what qualities are implied or say something like “it sounds like she’s really considerate – is that right?”.

Ask how much they express this pride or admiration to their family.

If your client builds their partner up rather than running them down, what impact might this have on their partner, and on the relationship? What impact might praise have on their child(ren) in the long run?

## Session 13 - Building empathy

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
20 mins	13.1 – Listing effects
25 mins	13.2 – Powerless

### Aims

- To increase your client's understanding of the effects of domestic abuse and to develop their cognitive and emotional empathy.

One of the aims of this work is to increase the capacity for empathy-based guilt - the painful sense of discomfort that is felt when we harm another person. Whilst an insensitive and accusatory approach to this topic could lead to your client either shutting off from feelings of regret and guilt, or of moving into a position of 'toxic shame', both common sense and academic research indicate that feelings of guilt about behaving badly towards one's partner are linked with more consideration of partner's needs and a desire to make amends<sup>1</sup>.

Before a person is able to experience regret and guilt, it is first necessary to realise one has harmed another. It is then necessary to hold that realisation in mind and to process the experience in such a way that it is likely to lead to positive, prosocial action rather than angry dismissal and externalisation of blame.

Another aim is to increase your client's sense of dissonance – the discomfort felt when we realise we have acted in a way which is not in line with our preferred self-image and how we want others to see us.

### Note

Be sure not to rush this session – difficult emotions may be aroused and it is important to leave time at the end to debrief.

### Activity 13.1 – listing effects

Ask your client to bring an example of someone they have known (or known of) who has lived with domestic abuse (workers should have stimulus materials and stories ready for those men who fail to bring materials to the session). Explore together the effects on this person of living with physical violence and other forms of abuse.

Ask the man to expand this awareness by asking about how he imagines the woman in the example might have been affected in a range of areas of her life –

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<sup>1</sup> See Baumieister R Stillwell, A and Heatherton T (1994) Guilt, an interpersonal approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115, 243-267 for a review.

- Her relationship with her children and ability as a mother.
- Her performance at work.
- Her relationship with her family and friends (explore the mechanisms of isolation here, how relatives may help initially then lose patience if it becomes too difficult or painful for them).
- Her plans for the future.
- Her attitude to relationships, the dream most of us have of a loving, supporting relationship.
- Her relationship with the man who abused her.
- How it would affect her sexual relationship with the man who abused her.
- Is it possible to feel the same way about physical intimacy when boundaries have been breached by violence? (Her ability or likelihood of saying no, of turning down sexual advances when he makes them).
- Her attitude to men in general.
- How she feels about herself.

It is important to acknowledge that one of the effects of abuse may be anger, resistance and fighting back.

### Activity 13.2 – Powerlessness

This can take the form of a guided discussion with a few separate sections (which of course may get mixed up as you go along, but keep the following thread in mind).

*Did you see or suffer violence/abuse as a child?*

You may touch on difficult and powerful memories here. Acknowledge these, and hold these disclosures in mind for later in the discussion.

*“Think of a time when you remember feeling powerless and afraid”.*

(you may need to clarify that you are talking about *physical* powerlessness as opposed to “When she insults me I feel powerless” etc.).

Ask him to think back to that time, to revisit it in his imagination and to let some of the feelings associated with that time come back for him. What scene does he visualise in his mind’s eye? What was he thinking and feeling? Give time to really hear his account here and allow yourself to empathise with him. Then consider how he made sense of that experience at the time and how he feels now about the person(s) he was afraid of then.

When listening to his description, mentally or in your notebook identify one or two central aspects or phrases: e.g. “*I thought I was going to die*” “*I had no control*” “*I was terrified*” “*I didn’t know what was going to happen next*”.

When he has concluded his account of his own powerlessness say that we have been

thinking about how women might feel when they experience violence and abuse. If he feels ready to make a more direct, experiential connection to how his partner might have felt about the violence, then these memories can give us a way in. If he says he is willing then you can ask if his partner or children might have felt anything similar when he was violent and abusive.

It is helpful to draw attention to how long the fears, mistrust and resentments can last after a traumatic experience. It may feel to him that his own violence is in the past, and he is likely to be wishing she would stop bringing it up, but this is unrealistic. He needs to understand that these feelings linger for a long, long time – especially when they are triggered by current events such as him raising his voice again. [this section can be referred back to when covering accountability].

Worker note – This exercise can arouse difficult memories and emotions, so plenty of time should be left at the end of the session to debrief.

## Session 14 - Change: keeping at it

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
30 mins	14.1- The rope bridge to change – costs
15 mins	14.2 – Alternatives role play

### Aims of session

1. To enhance the man's motivation to change.
2. To identify potential obstacles to making those changes.
3. To invite reflection on the role of shame and guilt in the change process.

### Activity 14.1 - The rope bridge to change

#### Materials:

- Handout 14.1: the rope bridge to change

Share with your client the hand-out of the 'rope-bridge to change'.

*What this shows is that, when you behave to those you love, in ways that don't fit with how you want to be – or are expected to be – you damage your relationship and the environment you live in. You feel out of control of yourself and uneasy with how you've acted.*

*In your case what have been the costs of using abuse – for you, your relationships & those around you?*

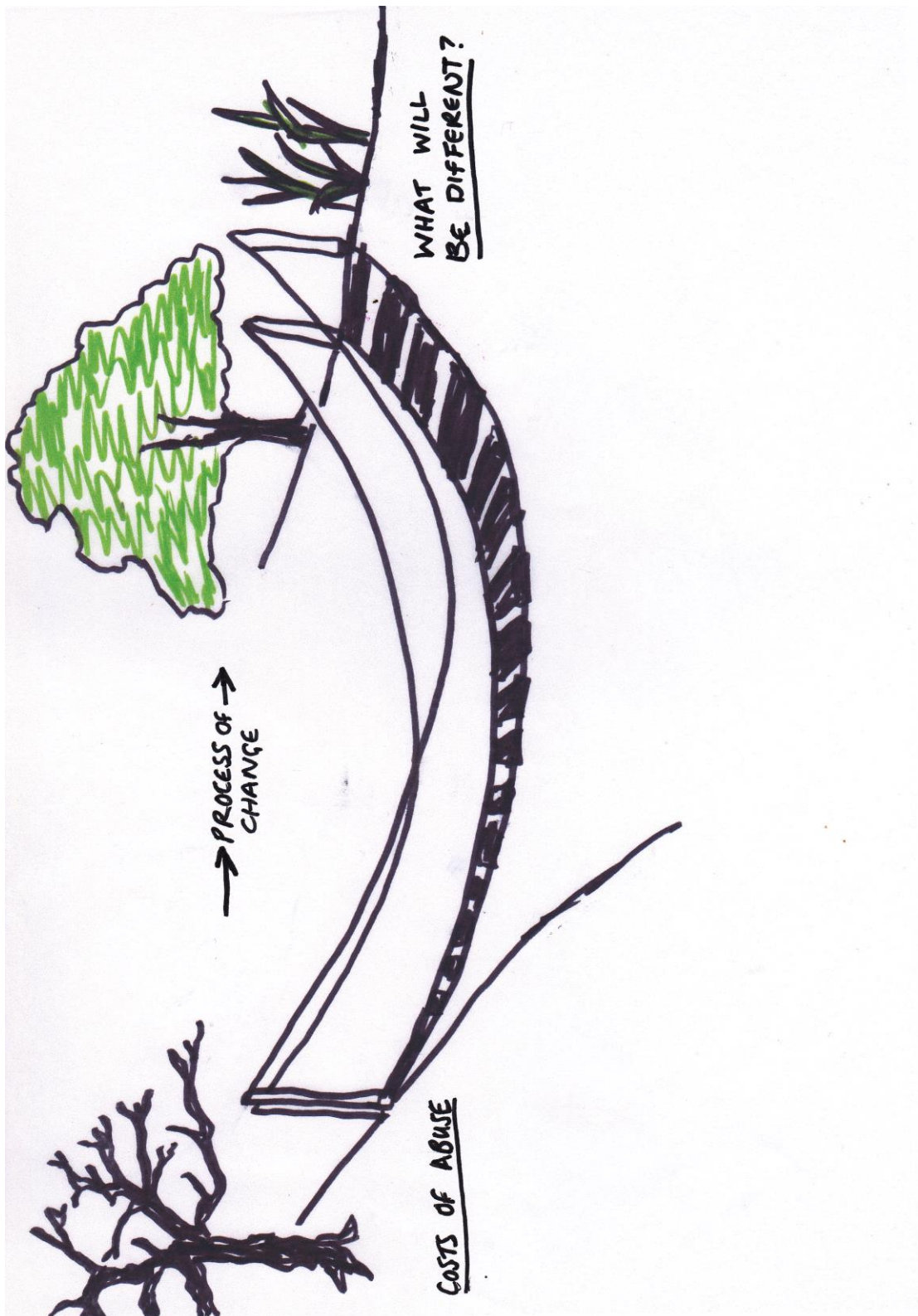
*Fill the list out on the left side of the bridge as costs. (eg. social services got involved / your partner's left you / your children won't talk to you / partner depressed etc).*

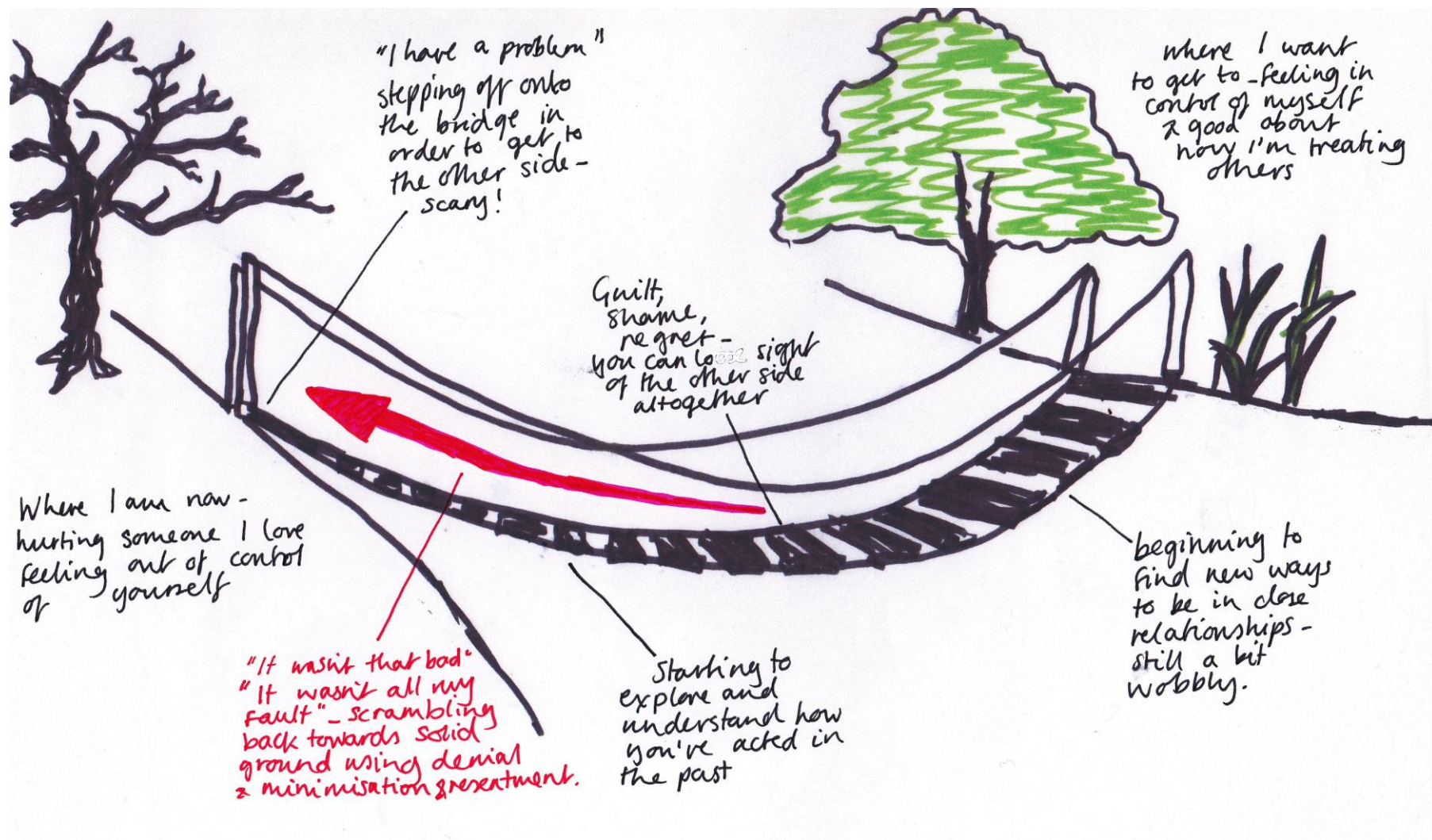
*In order to allow your life to flourish again – and those of the people you love – you need to make a journey. Imagine you've completed all this work, you've made all the changes that you want to make.*

- *What do you imagine will be different?*
- *How do imagine you might feel differently in yourself?*
- *How might people respond to the changes in you? – your partner, kids, others?*

Make some notes on this on the far side of the bridge. Then show the next rope bridge handout which shows some of the stages towards change.

## Handout 14.1 – the rope bridge to change





Point out to your client that they've already begun the journey towards change. They have already had to step onto the bridge – to start talking to people and acknowledging what they've done and that they have a problem.

*What was it like to begin talking about this?*

Admitting that there's something you need to change is scary; it puts you on wobbly ground. It's horrible to feel badly about something you did. It's hard to bear criticisms or recriminations from others. Sometimes even feeling that someone (your partner, your kids, your family, your social worker) is looking at you in a way that feels 'judgemental' can be painful.

When you come forward to face up to your actions and people don't respond quite as you want it's as if the bridge begins to rock and swing. You might begin to feel panicked, a loss of control and stability. You might fear a fall from grace – hurtling downwards towards shame and dishonour. You fear the imagined consequences of your actions (losing your family, going to prison) and these loom below you.

It's an absolutely natural reaction to begin scrambling back towards solid ground – this can be achieved by minimising and denying what you did, justifying and blaming it on others. Sometimes the very hostility that fuels our blame of others can lead us to be even more violent again. Sometimes we attack ourselves. Either way, we do more and more damage and our situation becomes more and more hostile and miserable to live in.

- *What kinds of thing / situation make you feel most defensive about what you did?*
- *How are you likely to do this – what would I see if you were on your way back in this direction?*

Refer back to the last session on denial and minimisation.

In actual fact, the only way to get away from this is to just hold on and keep moving forward over that bridge – no matter how unstable it feels, no matter that you lose all sight of the other side at times and feel like you'll never get over. You just need to hang on – and though you may not be in control, you will survive.

*What can you tell yourself to keep on moving forward despite these knocks?*

Soon enough you'll find you are more in control of your temper and are trying different ways to behave in your close relationships. This will remain a wobbly process for some time – just like learning to drive, it'll be clunky for a long time before it feels like it comes naturally.

As time goes on you'll begin to feel good about the way you're acting – even in difficult and conflictual situations. You'll begin to see those you hurt healing. One day you'll realise you're back on solid ground on the other side.

#### **Activity 14.2– Alternatives role play**

Ask your client to pick an incident that somehow relates to the area s/he still needs to work on and do an alternatives role play based upon it.

## Session 15 - Empathy role play

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
30 mins	15.1 – Partner empathy role play
10 mins	15.2 – Self soothing

### Aims

- To increase your client's understanding of the effects of domestic abuse and to develop their cognitive and emotional empathy.

One of the aims of this work is to increase the capacity for empathy-based guilt - the painful sense of discomfort that is felt when we harm another person. Whilst an insensitive and accusatory approach to this topic could lead to your client either shutting off from feelings of regret and guilt, or of moving into a position of 'toxic shame', both common sense and academic research indicate that feelings of guilt about behaving badly towards one's partner are linked with more consideration of partner's needs and a desire to make amends<sup>2</sup>.

Before a person is able to experience regret and guilt, it is first necessary to realise one has harmed another. It is then necessary to hold that realisation in mind and to process the experience in such a way that it is likely to lead to positive, prosocial action rather than angry dismissal and externalisation of blame.

Another aim is to increase your client's sense of dissonance – the discomfort felt when we realise we have acted in a way which is not in line with our preferred self-image and how we want others to see us.

### Note

Be sure not to rush this session – difficult emotions may be aroused and it is important to leave time at the end to debrief.

### Activity 15.1 – Partner empathy role play

Start by saying that it's often difficult to understand our partner's experience, especially if the relationship is difficult and you are experiencing angry feelings towards her.

One way to do this is to put ourselves in our partner's shoes through imagination. Ask if the man is willing to try this out. If he agrees, explain that you are going to play the role of a support worker and he will play the role of his partner, coming to the office to talk to this worker for the first time.

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<sup>2</sup> See Baumieister R Stillwell, A and Heatherton T (1994) Guilt, an interpersonal approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115, 243-267 for a review.

### **Step 1 – the empathy role play**

Ask the man to change chairs, and to sit how his partner would sit. Ask what she might wear. Then say that you are going to ask him to imagine that he is his partner. Explain that you know that he can't do this completely accurately, and that all he'll be able to do is the best he can.

Explain that you will now address him as (his partner's name).  
Start by asking some neutral questions to get him in role...

*Hello (woman's name), I'm ...*

- *How did you get here today?*
- *Where do you live?*
- *Do you like living there?*
- *What's good/not so good about it?*
- *What do you do to relax?*
- *I'd like to ask you a few questions about your relationship with X, is that OK?*

Then move into asking questions about this woman's relationship with the man. The role play should not last for more than about 10 minutes.

Important point - The aim is not to gain information, but to promote an emotional connection with his partner's experience. So for each question that elicits information, ask at least one other which focuses on what it felt like for the woman to be in that situation. If the man in the role of his partner moves away from this, gently refocus and ask the question about feelings again or in a different way.

Rather than using a scripted series of questions, think of the following as 'beacon questions' indicating an approximate path to take:

*Start with what was good about the relationship at the beginning*

- *When did you meet?*
- *What did you like about him?*
- *How did he make you feel?*
- *What were your hopes back then?*

*Go on to asking when she was first hit or hurt by him...*

- *What was that like?*
- *How did you feel, right there and then after he hit you?*
- *What were you seeing when you looked at him then?*
- *How did you feel the next day, when you remembered it?*
- *What did he say about it?*
- *Did he apologise?*
- *How did that make you feel?*

*Ask how things have changed over time...*

- *Has the violence got worse? What is that like for you?*

- *Do you know when the violence is going to happen? What is that like, knowing/not knowing when it's going to happen?*
- *What was the worst incident for you?*
- *At what point did you first sense he might hurt you?*
- *What did you feel when it was inevitable he was going to hit you?*
- *What did you see/feel as he hit you?*
- *Who comforted you?*
- *Where were the children?*
- *What was it like for you knowing they were there, that they could hear it / keeping it from them and pretending things were normal?*

*Ask questions about who she can turn to...*

- *Did you tell anyone? Who can't you tell? Why not?*
- *What did you feel like when other people found out you'd been hit?*
- *What do you imagine they would say or do if they did find out?*
- *What does it feel like keeping all this to yourself?*
- *Do you feel a bit ashamed about all this? Whose shame should that be?*

*Ask about the effects ...*

*How has this changed you?*

*How do you think it's affected the children?*

*Has it affected the whole family and the way you all relate?*

*Question about changes in her relationship with him...*

- *Why did you choose X?*
- *So you didn't choose him because of the violence?*
- *Why do you think he does it?*
- *What's it like not knowing why he's doing this?*
- *How did you feel about him when you met...and now?*

## **Note**

If the man is completely unable or unwilling to do this exercise, you can:

First be persistent – asking “What do you guess she would say? What do imagine her saying if she was in that chair?” etc. If however he is not just struggling, but seems to be misrepresenting his partner – acting as a kind of nasty ‘parody’ of how he sees her – then you should stop the exercise. Explore what was difficult about it. Acknowledge the difficulty, but revisit the explanation of why this is important that was given at the beginning of this section. Ask what it means if he can't put himself in his partners shoes, imagine what she feels? Does that make it easier or harder to be abusive to her? (It may be that you need to reassess entirely where the man has got to and back-pedal to the introductory and goal sessions again before trying to press onwards.)

## **Step 2 - De-role / attention shift**

Be sure to de-role the man. This involves bringing him back to being himself and to his own life – it could involve telling you about some aspects of himself or his life not related to this setting. Follow your curiosity – what was his most fondly remembered

holiday? What is he talented at? What is his favourite room in his house and what does he like about it?

### **Step 3 - Debrief**

*What was it like to do that?*

What feelings did he experience? (It is useful to explore feelings that he had 'as his partner', insights he had about his partner's position and the feelings these insights aroused in him such as empathy, guilt, shame, or whether he noticed himself avoiding, dismissing or shutting down in reaction to these emotions.

### **Activity 15.2 - Self soothing**

Explain that when we get knocked off balance our ability to be rational and to regulate ourselves emotionally is temporarily disrupted. Think of a baby when something happens – in babies you can literally see the dis-regulation – they flap about in a rather uncoordinated way at first when something 'bumps' them (if your client doesn't get what you mean then you can show them a brief snip of a youtube clip on the freeze face experiments such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEbZht0> where we see a baby having her expectations suddenly undermined). As we grow up we don't grow out of this – we do kind of grow over it – getting better at physically hiding the 'flapping' we feel internally. Just as a mother soothes her child, so we need to learn to be self-soothers. When we're angry, vulnerable or distressed we need to take care of the 'inner flapping baby' and calm it so that our adult rational thinking can kick back in. Ask your client how they think they already do this? What helps? Add some ideas and come up with something to try in the coming week. This could include any number of things such as:

- Talking to a friend
- Doing a breathing or other kind of meditation
- Rocking yourself
- Going to the gym
- Telling yourself 'you're okay, it'll be okay'
- Going for a long walk
- Swimming
- Having a shower

## Session 16 - Jealousy

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
45 mins	16.1 – Exploring jealousy

### Aims

- To make your client more aware of the ways in which they might be discouraging their partner from having contact with others.
- To make the link between jealous behaviour and the intention to isolate and keep a partner close.
- To help them recognise that jealous behaviour is ultimately self-defeating.

### Note:

For some people, jealousy is the main driver of almost all of their abusive behaviour. Not only should this come up in other sessions (e.g. Storyboards and icebergs) but you may also need to extend the specific focus in this area. On the other hand, you may begin this session only to find that your client isn't a particularly jealous person at all. In that case you can pass over this module and move onto something more relevant.

### Activity 16.1 – Exploring jealousy

#### Step 1 – Jealous behaviours

Take a large sheet of paper (flipchart sized). The first heading – which should take up around ¼ of the sheet will be filled in this first exercise.

Take your client through the following trajectory of questions – each may become an in-depth exploration in itself so don't rush. The general trajectory of this conversation is what counts so also don't read the questions parrot fashion; try to make them your own...

- *Can you think of one or more people with who you'd rather your partner saw less or not at all? Almost everyone can think of someone.*
- *How do you show this?*
- *If your partner was here, how would they say they'd know that you were jealous?*
- *What kinds of things do you do when you are jealous?*

Make some simple notes of the ways your client shows jealousy in the first quarter of the sheet of paper. When you're done, add the title 'Behaviours'.

## Step 2 – Intents of jealous behaviour

Continue the conversation with the following questions:

- *What do you think this is all about?*
- *What might people be trying to achieve when they act jealous? What do they fear?*

At this point you are looking for some recognition that jealous displays are about isolating their partner from certain others – usually others who are seen to pose a threat to the relationship. This perceived threat may be to do with them not liking your client or offering a version of things that your client fears will alienate their partner from them (such as when friends or family seem supportive of helping a woman leave an abusive relationship). The perceived threat may equally be about sexual jealousy and the idea that the partner will sleep with or go off with someone else.

Write a note or two on your clients intents in the second quarter of the sheet of paper and add the title 'Intents'

Reflect back to your client that in either case, jealousy is usually about trying to keep someone close – to stop them leaving, to get 'more' of them.

## Step 3 – Effects of jealous behaviour

Continue the conversation with the following questions:

- *What effects do your jealous behaviours have on you, your partner and the relationship?*
- *When you've questioned her, do you feel less jealous and more secure?*
- *Do you feel better if she says your fears are true?*
- *If she reassures you, do you believe her or do you just think, "She's saying that to reassure me"?*
- *How does your jealous behaviour make her feel?*
- *How will this affect the relationship?*
- *How will this affect her behaviour?*
- *Will she be more likely to stay in the long run?*

Note the intents in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the sheet of paper and add the title 'Effects'.

Reflect back that jealousy is almost always counterproductive in the long term – pushing the love object away and making her less available to him. There may be a short-term pay-off to jealous behaviour, in that she doesn't go out with someone he feels jealous about, for example. But in the longer-term trying in any way to control his partner's behaviour is likely to drive her away and make your client feel worse about himself.

## Step 4 – Jealousy is mostly about you

### Note:

There are rare occasions when someone was not jealous at all until they were with their current partner who then repeatedly betrayed their trust. In such cases simply miss out this step of the exercise.

For people who cannot claim this pattern go ahead with the following questions:

- *When do you first remember feeling jealous in any way?*
- *Do you feel more jealous when you're feeling badly about yourself?*
- *How do you imagine the 'other guy' is going to attract your partner away – what have they got that you don't?*
- *Do you know people who are just not very jealous people and people who are very jealous?*
- *Where do you place yourself on this continuum of jealousy?*

Draw your client's attention to the fact that jealousy is usually about us, not our partner.

The reason that some people are very jealous while others aren't is to do with a combination of attachment styles, social norms and expectations, and self-esteem. These are explained in some more detail below and you should decide on an individual basis whether your client would make use of some further explanation.

**Attachment styles** – some of us found it hard to get enough of the response we needed from carers in our early years and developed rather clingy ways to try to get our needs met. This doesn't mean we love our partners more in later life, just that the way we do close relationships – our style of bonding – is to want our partner very close. This often comes from and goes with abandonment fears. The distance we try to keep our partners at differs from person to person – the amount of intimacy we want is variable due to these early childhood factors. There is no right or wrong about it until it clashes with our partner's wants.

**Social norms and expectations** – some of us find social norms and justifications that appear to justify our expectations of our partner's contact with others. We are brought up to believe things like 'married people should not talk to those of the opposite sex' or 'people should not retain contact with their ex's'. These kinds of belief are fine so long as they are shared by our partners and so long as they don't encompass double standards (e.g. Married Women shouldn't speak to other men, but married men can speak to other women). Again, when they clash with our partner's expectations we have problems.

**Self-esteem** – for most of us jealousy is related to feelings of inadequacy. When we feel bad ourselves we expect our partners might find others who are more attractive, attentive, exciting or richer than we are. Sometimes our levels of jealousy go up and down with our self-esteem. Sometimes our self-esteem and trust have been damaged by past betrayals.

### Step 5 – Alternatives to jealous behaviour

The final tranche of questions should be based on the following:

- *Given that jealous behaviour is counterproductive and mostly about you, not them, what can you do to feel better when you get jealous?*

Point out to your client that what you're looking for are ways to counteract the 'feeling bad about yourself' or deal with the needy attachment-style without trying to control their partner. This is the only real way to interrupt the vicious cycle of jealous behaviour leading to even more jealous feelings.

#### Example answers

- Building up emotional muscle (the ability to tolerate feelings of neediness and dependency).
- Building up social networks that won't support your jealousy. Which friends do you have who wouldn't collude?
- Positive self- talk, especially accepting that this is the way you feel, and that she's not making you feel like that – she's not making you jealous.
- Accepting that it won't work in terms of getting what you want, if that is to feel more secure.
- Recognising that you're jealous and that your beliefs about what is going on are likely to be warped by this, and using that energy on something constructive to feel proud of. For example, you can go to the gym, take the children out, make something or learn something.
- Doing something you've always wanted to do.
- Letting go the beliefs that we can control who our partners see or what they do. Your partner is in a relationship with you because she chooses to be. If she stops choosing to be in it, there is nothing ultimately that you can do about it. You will survive it.
- Jealousy can be related to people's early attachment styles – even if you stop acting jealous you may well still feel jealous – this may be amenable to longer term psychotherapeutic support.

Write some notes on your client's ideas into the final quarter of the sheet of paper, which should now look like this:

Behaviours
Intents
Effects
Alternatives

## Session 17 - Intimacy and Respect

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
10 mins	17.1 – sexual codes
20 mins	17.2 – sexual pressuring in relationships
5 mins	17.3 – knowing if your partner is receptive
10 mins	17.4 – alternative routes to intimacy

### Aims

To convey the following messages:

1. Violence and fear have an impact on a couple's sexual relationship and on a victim's options for safely saying no to sex.
2. To increase sexually respectful attitudes and behaviours.

### Note:

**This session is gender specific** – it is not suitable for female perpetrators.

### Note:

**Acknowledge that this can be a difficult subject to talk about.**

In the programme so far we have looked a lot at the effects of domestic violence, on our partners, on our children, on the people around us, and upon ourselves. You have probably seen that the effects of violence don't stop on the day that the violence happens, that they spill across our lives and the lives of those around us.

A very important part of most relationships is our sexual lives – so in this session we are going to look at the idea of sexual respect. It's especially important to think about this because sexual trust and respect can be damaged by violence or intimidation of any kind.

### Note:

Be aware that some men may have been abused sexually at some point in their lives and you should hold this in mind throughout this session. It is good to have resources for men who have suffered sexual abuse or assault routinely available.

## Activity 17.1 – Sexual codes

### Aims

- To increase your client's awareness of where some of their attitudes and beliefs about sex come from.
- To point out that there are various messages about sex 'out there', so that what sex means to one person may not be the same as for another. In particular, men and women may understand it very differently.
- To get your client talking openly about the subject.

Draw a box entitled 'masculine sexuality'. Ask your client to think back to their adolescence; which is when we learn most about our society's codes as to "how sex should be". With your client, brainstorm and write into the box all the behaviours, attitudes and sexual codes that would have lead them or a group of their peers to think of someone as a 'high status male' sexually – you might alternate adding items to the box. You may also use some of these prompt questions to help the discussion along:

- *What is in the box, and what is out of the box?*
- *What constitutes a high status male sexually? Can you think of one or two boys who were seen like this?*
- *What sexual behaviours made a boy high status?*
- *Did he have a lot of sex or a little?*
- *Did he have many or few partners?*
- *Did he talk about sex a lot – who with and how?*
- *Did he often initiate sex?*
- *Did he take responsibility for safe sex?*
- *Was there any idea of sex as scoring – as conquest?*
- *Did he focus more on his pleasure or hers?*

Draw out the point from the mass of information that male sexuality is about chasing and overcoming resistance and usually does not involve any dialogue about what the woman wants. As a result, even for a 'normal' or 'high status' man, he is likely to grow up with some attitudes and beliefs which might make him sexually inconsiderate in his relationship. It is this kind of thing (and NOT hanging out in raincoats and sexually assaulting strangers) that the rest of this section is directed towards.

## Activity 17.2 - Sexual pressuring within relationships

**Note:** this section is culturally specific. If your client comes from somewhere such as North Sudan, where there is a dominant discourse to the effect that sex is for procreation, that female sexual pleasure is irrelevant (and often impossible due to FGM) and that there is no concept of rape within marriage (as at 2014), and if your client subscribes to this dominant discourse, then the following exercise is less likely to be helpful.

Try to elicit answers to the following points...

- *So tell me – what do people generally get out of sex in an ongoing relationship – beyond baby-making and over and above what you could get from masturbation?*
- *Have you had a relationship in which you and your partner's libido / sexual tastes were well matched? Do you have times in your relationship or have you had relationships where they weren't well matched? What effect did that have?*
- *If you get past the time you think is reasonable to go without sex – roughly how long is that? How do begin to show it? How would your partner know? How about if you try to initiate sex and find she isn't into it – how do you feel then? How have you shown that? Do you think you are ever more moody or distant? In what other ways do you think you've ever sexually pressured a partner? How else do people in general pressure for sex?*
- *How does that affect you?*
- *How does it affect her?*

The idea is that what people want to get from sex - usually, warmth, a feeling that all's okay with their partner, showing love, feeling loved, intimacy etc. – is totally undermined when they pressure for sex. In effect sexual pressuring is counterproductive – it gets the opposite of what we're after. In this sense it has something in common with jealousy (where we push our partner away in an effort to hold them closer).

### **Activity 17.3 - Knowing if your partner is receptive**

The following questions are designed to start talking about talking about sex. Different people approach this with totally different levels of ease and in very different ways. Be matter of fact, yet straightforward and exploratory in your own approach.

- *If you get moody without sex and you feel closer and fonder when you're getting sex then how do you know when you're partner(s) is receptive rather than just wanting to keep you sweet and safe? How would you tell?*
- *Has she ever been able to tell you things she wants less of or different? How have you responded? Is this something you could possibly talk about and how – how could you raise it in a way that would be bearable for you and for her?*

### **17.4 - Alternative routes to intimacy**

- *What stuff other than sex has made you feel close or intimate?*
- *How else do you/ could you show your partner love and care? (make a list together with your client)*
- *What else could you then do with the desire for intimacy with her? (suggest that something may need talking through)*
- *Are you affectionate without it ending up with sex?*
- *If she doesn't feel like sex does that mean she doesn't love you?*
- *How do you think you could become more sexually respectful with her?*

### Handout 17.3 - 100 ways to show your love

1. Ask her directly what makes her happy. Listen, remember those things, and give them to her regularly without being asked.
2. Tell her she is beautiful and always will be in your eyes. Do this often.
3. Write a love note and leave it on her pillow.
4. If she's a mother, remind her what a wonderful parent she is and how much you appreciate that.
5. Sit next to her when you are watching TV. Put your arm around her or hold her hand. Let her hold the remote.
6. Hire a babysitter and take her out for the evening.
7. Read out loud to her at night in bed from a book you both enjoy.
8. Handle one of her daily chores for her without being asked.
9. Listen when she needs to talk — without offering solutions.
10. Plan a weekend getaway to a romantic destination and handle all of the details including childcare.
11. Learn and apply healthy and mature relationship behaviors, especially when the going gets rough.
12. Bring her coffee or tea in bed in the morning.
13. Contact one of her best friends and arrange to have her visit as a surprise.
14. Clean the house before the best friend arrives.
15. Talk about how wonderful and beautiful she is in front of her and a group of other people. Always speak highly of her in front of others.
16. Brush her hair.
17. Get tickets for the two of you to go to a show she will love, even though it might not be your favourite.
18. Slow dance with her at home for no reason.
19. Stop what you are doing if she needs to speak with you and give her your attention — or ask her to wait until you can give her your full attention.
20. Eat breakfast with her.
21. Ask her about the details of her day, her work, even some of the boring minutia.
22. Show genuine pride in even the smallest accomplishments.
23. Be silly with her. Find ways to make her laugh with you.
24. Solicit her input and ideas, even in areas that aren't her expertise. Include her in decisions.
25. Ask her what she likes in bed and give it to her if it feels okay.
26. Tell her what you like in bed but let her know that she you don't want her to do anything that would feel uncomfortable for her.
27. Show **real intimacy and connection** in bed through loving words, tenderness, and touch.
28. Be respectful to her parents and kind to her siblings.
29. Give her a back rub or foot rub without being asked.
30. If you have children, be a kind, loving, and active father.
31. If you are going to be late, call.
32. Take a bath or shower with her.
33. If she is sad, scared or insecure, hold her and tell her it will be OK and that you have faith in her.
34. Be an **old-fashioned gentleman**. Hold the door. Help her with her coat. Offer your seat.
35. Stay in shape. Take care of yourself.
36. Find a balance with your work and home life. Don't let work take precedence over your relationships.
37. Go to the park together.
38. Take her for a long walk and just talk.
39. Create a scrapbook of photos and memento's of your favorite occasions with her.
40. Take her to a photo booth and make crazy faces for the camera.
41. Go to an amusement park and ride a roller coaster together.
42. Take her back to revisit a 'special place' for your relationship.
43. Don't sit and watch sports all day every Saturday. Turn off the TV and do something fun with her.
44. Suggest enrolling in a fun class together — something at the gym, woodwork, pottery or tennis lessons.
45. Be patient when you are teaching her something new that she doesn't understand.
46. Bake some cookies and bring her one fresh from the oven with a cup of tea.
47. Take the initiative to invite friends over for dinner, and help prepare it and clean up after it.

48. Go for a his and her's massage.
49. Manage your own stress so that your worries don't impact your relationship. Figure out how to do this before you get overwhelmed.
50. Get up early with the kids and let her sleep in.
51. Make up the bed a few times a week.
52. Develop good male friendships and encourage her to spend time with her friends.
53. Don't stonewall. Speak honestly and reveal yourself to her.
54. Apologize when you should.
55. Exercise together.
56. Invite her to create mutual goals and a vision for your life together.
57. Have a passion. It makes you more attractive.
58. Don't flirt with other women, especially in front of her.
59. Allow her to do it her way, even if you think your way is better.
60. Write her a song and sing it to her.
61. Buy her something she admired in a store and surprise her with it.
62. Wrap it.
63. If you need her to stop doing something or to do something differently, ask her kindly without put-downs.
64. Have a dream together — for a holiday, a new home, whatever. Plan and work toward it together.
65. Don't make big purchases without consulting her.
66. Bring her a single red rose.
67. Put together a CD of her favorite songs to listen to in the car.
68. Get her car washed for her.
69. Reminisce with her about wonderful events and occasions from your past.
70. Be willing to try new things that she suggests.
71. Suggest new things yourself.
72. Invite her to a baseball or football game with you.
73. Remember her birthday, your anniversary, and Mother's Day and do something special for her, even if it's small.
74. Write down 20 reasons you love her and send it through the Post
75. Paint her toenails.
76. Surprise her with a real adventure — a hot air balloon ride, a white water rafting trip, a snorkeling trip.
77. Go to a museum or art gallery with her.
78. Take her on a shopping trip and be patient while she tries things on.
79. Take her to a champagne brunch.
80. Say yes when you'd rather say no – and do it with good grace!
81. Learn to manage your anger if you have a problem.
82. Be appropriately generous with your friends and family. Pick up lunch or dinner on occasion.
83. Dress nicely. Pay attention to your appearance and hygiene.
84. Light candles.
85. Be the first to make up.
86. Put the lid down.
87. Turn off the TV and play some great music instead.
88. Text her once just to say you are thinking about her.
89. Show interest in her ideas and interests.
90. Let it go sometimes. It's probably not worth fighting about.
91. Have a beautiful photo taken of the kids or the two of you and give it to her framed.
92. Buy her a book by an author she loves.
93. Hold her hand in the movies and when you walk to and from the car.
94. Initiate real communication and sharing with her regularly.
95. Be willing to be vulnerable with her.
96. Smile at her when you see her, the way you did when you first met.
97. Cook for her.
98. Make her something.
99. Read to her in bed.
100. Show her you love her in some small way every single day.

## Session 18 - 19

### Taking apart an incident of violence or abuse.

#### Session plan

Timing	Activity
20 mins	18.1 - Drawing the story board
10 mins	Step 1 - Working with Scene 1 “How it started” using sore points and signals
20 mins	Step 2 - Using the Iceberg metaphor to explore what was happening just before the violence
10 mins	Step 3 - During the Violence
10 mins	Step 4 - The Aftermath
20 mins	Step 5 - What I Would Like to Have Done

#### Background on Storyboards

This part of the work uses a basic storyboard format to unpack an incident of abuse, and in particular to consider how an individual’s self-talk influences their feelings and, ultimately, their behaviour. It also revisits and revises most of the significant earlier steps of the programme by way of consolidating the learning just before you close with your client.

You can explain that what you are going to do is similar to what a football coach does after a match that hasn’t gone well; they get the team in and go back over a video of the match, replaying and looking in detail at what went wrong and what they could have done differently.

Figure 1 shows an example storyboard and how you might work with each stage. The scenes in the example storyboard show:

- how the incident started
- what was happening just before the violence
- what happened during the violence
- the aftermath of the violence or abuse
- how the situation could have been handled differently

#### Materials

There are a lot of handouts required for this session – make sure you have copies of all of them as well as some A3 or flipchart paper for your client’s own work.

#### Activity 18.1 – The storyboard

You will use the example scenes as prompts to help your client draw their own storyboard. Then each scene will be looked at in detail, to help you and your client understand their actions, thoughts and feelings better and think together about ways to act differently.

*(Whilst we have set out an incident of violence here, you can use this technique to unpack any incident of physical or verbal aggression or emotional abuse).*

We begin with the example storyboards, which relate to a man called Carl, his partner Pat and their child Ali (aged 2). (When doing this kind of work we have found it useful to start out by working on a third party example, rather than the clients own situation. This way the client can start to explore the thoughts and feelings that are associated with abusive behaviour without their own emotions getting in the way. Once you have unpicked an imaginary example, it is easier to move on to the client's own situation.

In the example (see Carl's Storyboard Handout 18) Carl has drawn a series of scenes relating to a time he was abusive to Pat, and has written a brief description of what was going on at each stage.

After you have shown Carl's scenes, your client should be ready to sketch and describe their own (they can add in extra scenes if they think that is helpful). If they are unwilling or unable to attempt this, then do it for them under their direction – drawing skill is not relevant to this exercise AT ALL! It is good to do this on a large piece of paper so there is lots of room for ideas.

**Hints and tips:** When you take a description of each stage of the incident, try to get your client to leave out value judgements such as "She was flirting" or "She was disrespecting me" and see if they can instead describe the behaviours they call 'flirting' or 'disrespecting'. For instance:

"She was flirting with all the men at the party." → "She was talking and laughing with some of the men at the party."

"Her daughter Kelly was disrespecting me." → "Kelly looked at me blankly then walked out of the room."

This ensures you're not tacitly colluding with these value judgements, and leaves the possibility open that your client also might come to interpret events in a different way.

You can now set about doing different bits of work with each picture in the storyboard. See Figure 1 for a summary of how you would work with each stage.

### **Step 1 - Working with Scene 1 "How it started" using sore points and signals**

Ask the client what he might guess are some of Carl's sore points and signals. Then show Carl's own answer (handout 18.1a) and go on to complete this stage for your client's own storyboard.

### **Step 2 - Using the Iceberg metaphor to explore what was happening just before the violence**

Draw a simple iceberg, like the one in the diagram below, on a big sheet of A3 paper. Explain that people are a bit like icebergs, in that you only see a small part of them (their words and actions). Most of what is important can't be seen and happens 'beneath the surface'.

Get your client to help you to fill in an iceberg for Carl using handout 18.1b as your template. In the top section of the iceberg, above the surface of the water, fill out details of Carl's behaviour - his abusive actions and words. You can ask the client to imagine what Carl said and did in the build up to being violent to Pat. Under the surface you will guess at some of Carl's feelings, thoughts and beliefs during the argument.

Then show them Carl's own attempt at the iceberg – handout 18.1c.

Note in particular the powerful emotions (in red) that usually drive the abuse and do get expressed and the vulnerable emotions (in green) that tend to get filtered out and remain unexpressed (such as fear or shame).

*“What effect did this negative self-talk have on the way Carl was feeling at the time?*

*And what effects did his feelings have on his self-talk?*

You can also briefly discuss Carl's beliefs, expectations and fears. You could discuss whether these are accurate or reasonable.

Finally take another copy of the empty iceberg (handout 18.1b) and look together at your client's own picture of 'just before' the incident. Then help them fill out the iceberg for their own incident.

### Step 3 - During the abuse

Show Carl's picture 'during the abuse' (handout 18.1). Ask your client how Pat might have felt in this scene, and what he thinks Carl was saying or shouting during the abuse. Also ask how Ali might have felt if he'd woken up to hear this. Then show your client Carl's responses to these questions – handout 18.1c.

### Step 4 – The aftermath

Show Carl's picture of the aftermath. Ask what might have been the impacts on Carl, on Ali and on Pat. Then show Carl's own answer (handout 18.1d)

Ask your client to fill out the impacts on their own picture of the aftermath. Ask them *“When you look at all this, what are you realising?”*

Give your client time to think about this and to answer with as much consideration and depth as they can. If they show remorse here, empathise with the painfulness of

these realisations and praise them for their honesty and courage (where relevant) in doing this work.

### **Step 5 - What I Would Like to Have Done**

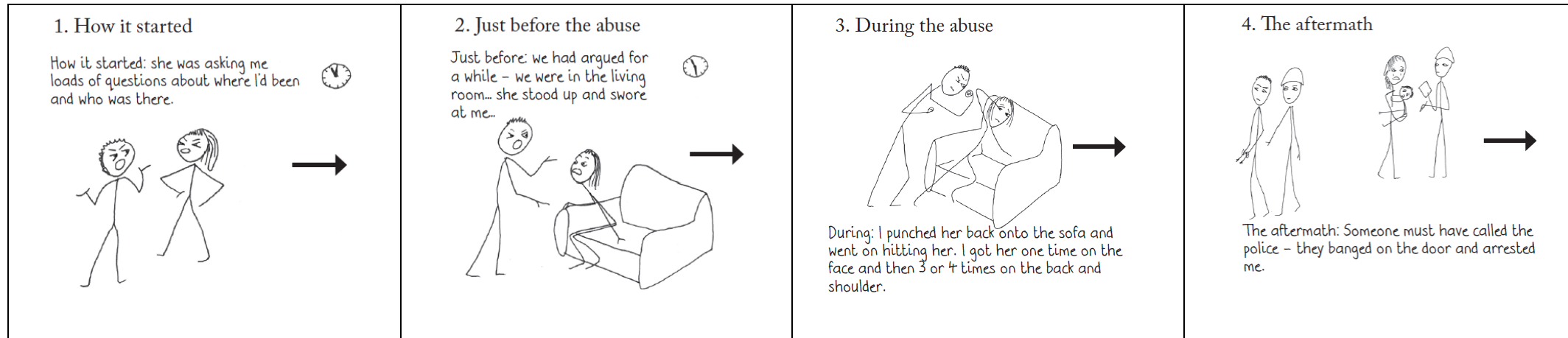
Show your client Carl's picture of what he wished he could have done (Carl has described this as what his 'ideal me' would have done).

Then ask your client what kinds of things Carl would have had to tell himself or think about to make himself behave in this way.

Show Carl's version of the self-talk he'd have needed (handout 18.1f). Note that some of it is verbal but some is pictorial – he found it helpful to hold in mind an image of his child being scared by the violence, and an image of Pat at a moment when he'd felt really loving towards her.

Finally – ask your client to sketch what they'd have liked to have done differently and to detail the self-talk they'd have needed to do this.

## Handout 18 – Carl's storyboard



## 5. What I would have



liked to have done differently

## Stage

## How to work with this stage

### 1. How it started

How it started: she was asking me loads of questions about where I'd been and who was there.



Sore points  
and signals of  
build-up

### 2. Just before the abuse

Just before: we had argued for a while – we were in the living room... she stood up and swore at me...



Iceberg

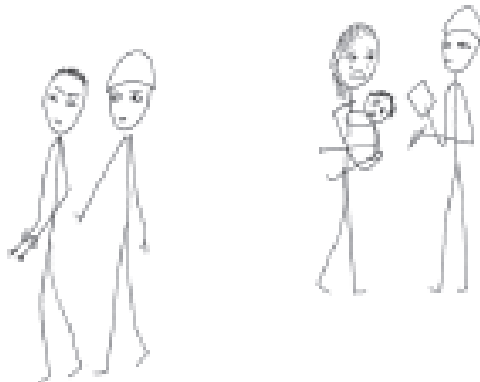
### 3. During the abuse



During: I punched her back onto the sofa and went on hitting her. I got her one time on the face and then 3 or 4 times on the back and shoulder.

What did he do/say?  
How did she feel? Let's imagine the kids heard this – how would they have felt?

### 4. The aftermath



The aftermath: Someone must have called the police – they banged on the door and arrested me.

How did this affect him/ the children/ her? What is he realising when he looks at that?

### 5. What I would have liked to have done



What I would like to have done: Apologised for not pre-planning my night out with her, said I understood why she was mad at me, reassured her I love her, not this other woman, tried to make up for it by offering her a night out while I babysit.

Positive self-talk

## 1. How it started – Sore points and signals



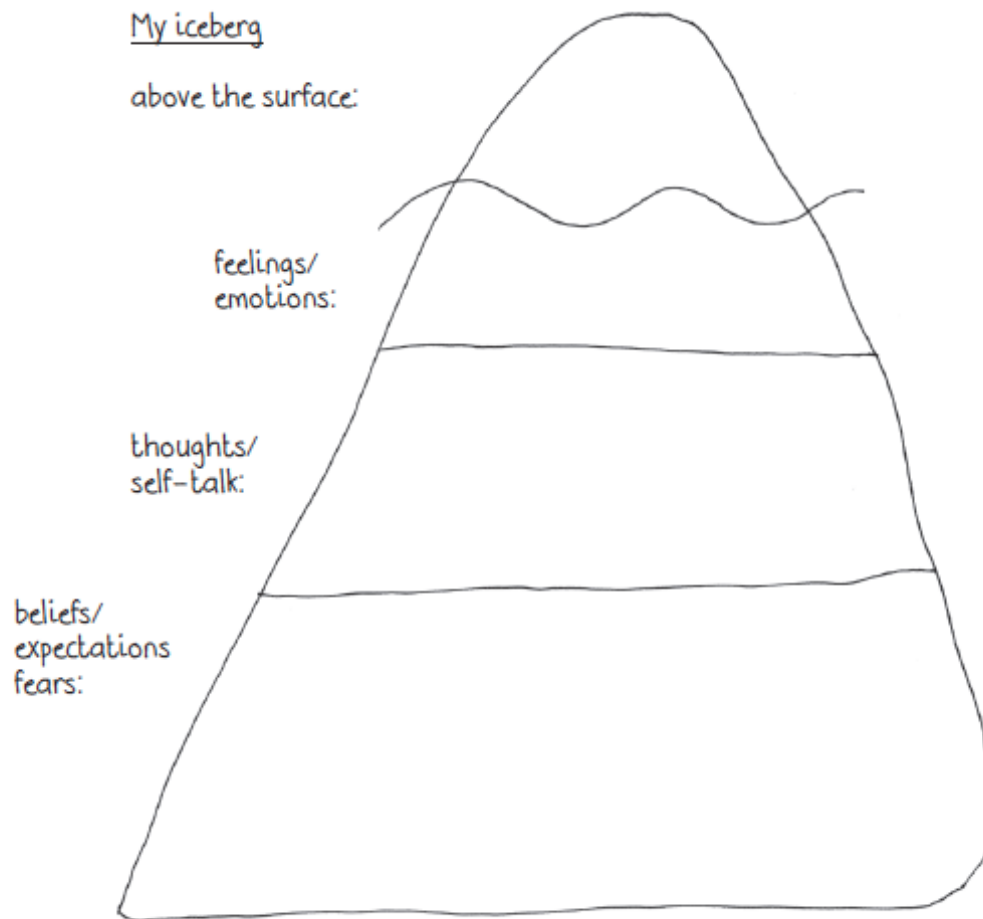
### Sore points

- It was late
- I was tired
- I'd been drinking
- Being questioned about where I've been
- Feeling 'caught out' (I know she wouldn't like who I've been out with)

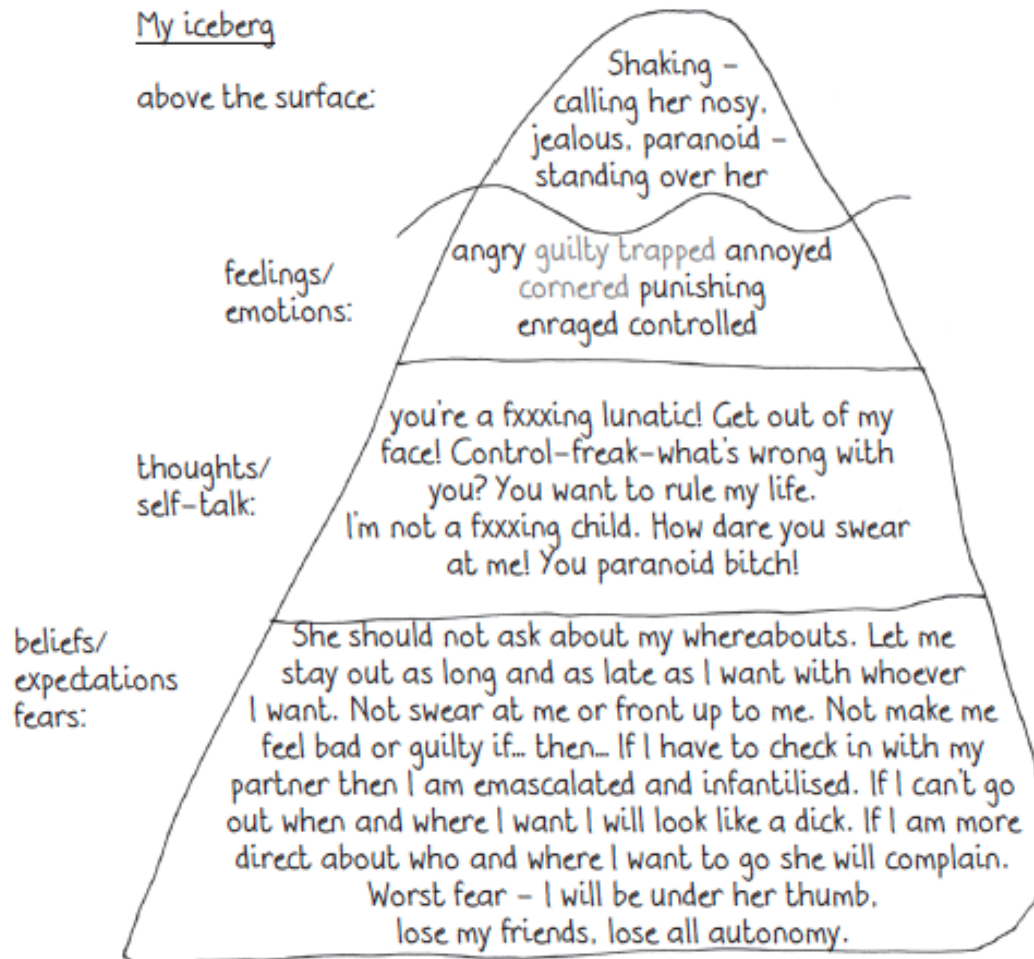
### Signals

- Physical – heating up, increased heart rate, tense jaw and shoulders.
- Behaviour – getting louder, gesticulating, frowning, glaring, pacing about.

## 2. Just before the Abuse – Carl's iceberg



## 2. Just before the Abuse – Carl's iceberg



### 3. During the Abuse – Empathy



If our little one had heard he  
would've felt confused, terrified,  
scared, unsafe, helpless, frozen

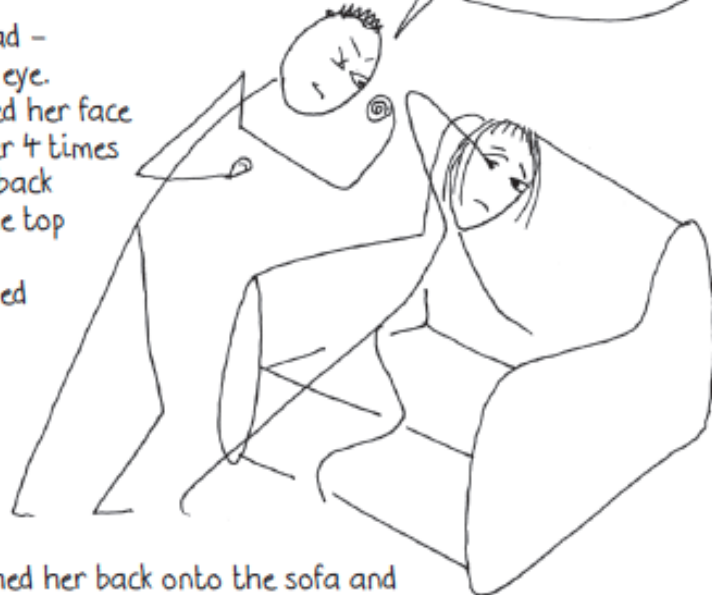
What she might've felt  
shocked, terrified, pain,  
powerless, weak, helpless

What I did:

I punched her  
hard to the head –  
she got a black eye.  
Then she covered her face  
so I thumped her 4 times  
– twice on the back  
and twice on the top  
of her arm –  
both were bruised

What I said:

Don't you dare  
fuxxxing swear  
at me! Go on  
– swear at me now  
you bitch!



During: I punched her back onto the sofa and  
went on hitting her – I got her one time on the  
face and then 3 or 4 times on the back and shoulder.

## 4. The Aftermath – Impacts

### impacts on me:

Ashamed  
restricted contact with  
child – social care involved  
held overnight in cell  
loss of home  
damage to relationship

### Impacts on her:

hurt – physically and  
emotionally.  
Alone, ashamed.  
Social care involved  
torn (wanting the relationship  
but angry)  
Depressed, unloved



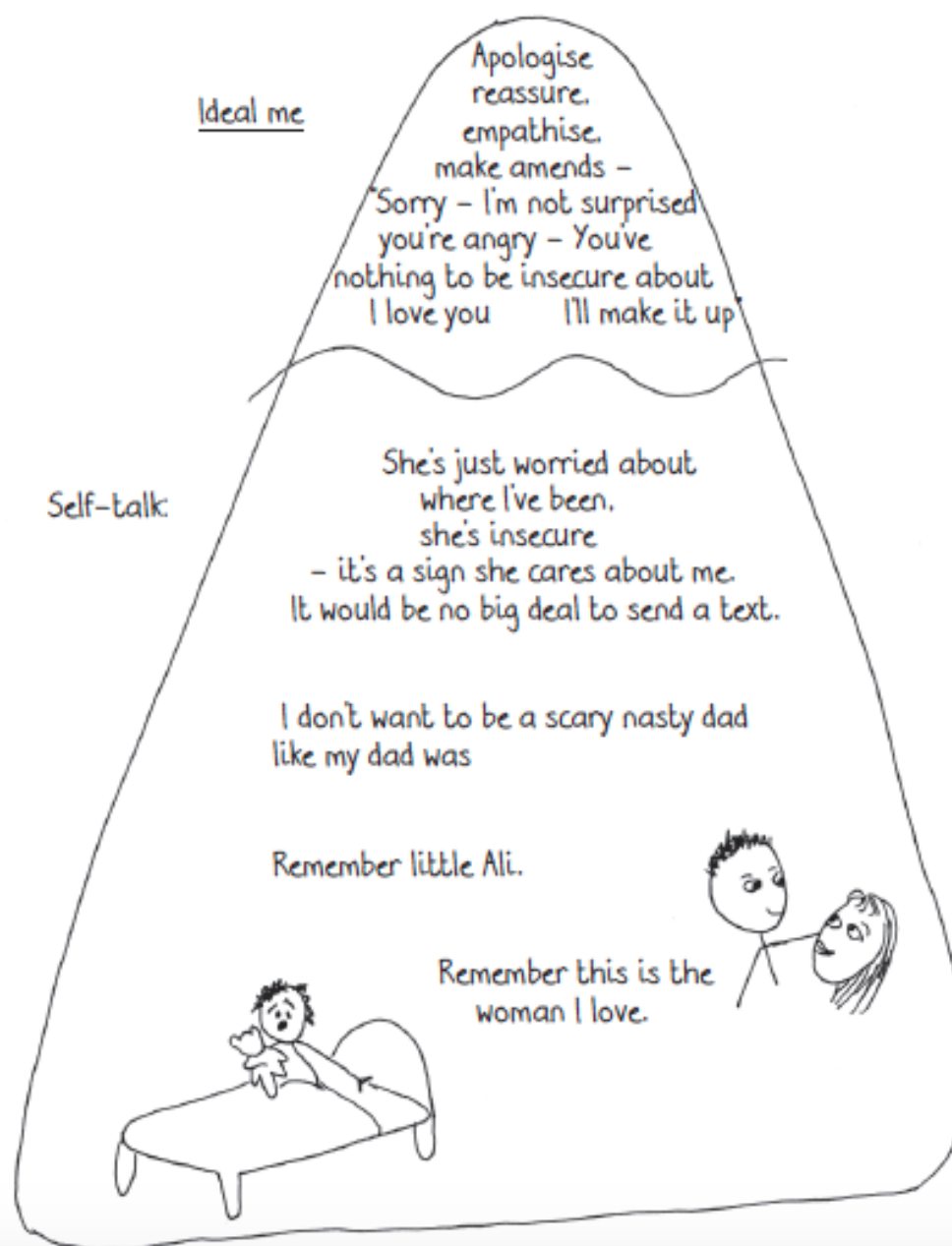
### impacts on child

confusion  
loss of daddy  
scared of daddy  
mummy so sad  
Police big and scary  
very insecure  
involvement  
with childrens  
social care



4. The aftermath: Someone must have called  
the police – they banged on the door and  
arrested me.

## 5. What I would have like to have done – Positive self talk



## Session 20 - Review and close.

### Session plan

Timing	Activity
20 mins	20.1 – review
20 mins	20.2 – close

### Aims

- To leave your client with a sense of closure, efficacy and increased resolve to continue on their path towards respectful and peaceful relationships.

### Activity 20.1 – review

Return to the handout 2.1 that your client filled out at the start of this programme. On it they should have set some goals for themselves. Discuss with them how far they've come against these goals and mark this onto handout 2.1.

Discuss where they'd like to make ongoing improvements over the coming year.

Ask your client what they've found useful from the programme and what they'd want to remember (you could add some of this to the feedback letter to follow).

You may also have some end of course evaluation to do with them.

### Activity 20.2 - Close

For this final meeting in this phase of your clients change work, you need to offer some feedback to them, to do this well it will need to be prepared before the session. This is something you'll verbally present to them for discussion and negotiation. Ensure that if you feel they need to signposted to other services, you have left time for this, and that they know how to get further support should they need it (you might include some of this information on this as part of the feedback).

The feedback may include the following:

- When I met X s/he was struggling with...
- As I got to know X I came to appreciate .....
- As we worked together X achieved .....
- X is still working on .....
- And has the following strengths to help them to succeed with this.....
- I am honoured to have worked with X

# Masculinity

## Aim of the work.

- To identify the limits that some constructions of masculinity set on our ability to have respectful intimate relationships.
- To reframe the concept of masculinity in such a way that it is less restrictive, and provides a positive base for relationships with women and children.

This is a theme which runs throughout the work. Gender is one of the fundamental aspects of identity, and our core beliefs about what it is to be a man, or a woman, are a powerful influence on our responses within intimate relationships.

Regardless of whether or not a particular man's violence is driven by explicit gender role expectations, many of the changes that we are asking men to make are likely to run counter to common scripts about what it is to be a man – for instance being prepared to tolerate vulnerable emotions, backing down, or ceding control to their partners in some areas of life. If the man's idea of what it is to be a man is one of the factors which limit his capacity for positive relationships, then reframing his image of masculinity will form an important part of the work you do together.

## 01 - The masculinity 'box'.

Ask the man what messages are out there in society about what it is to be a man. (You could also ask the man the week before to look out for images of masculinity in the media, and have some of these available yourself in the session).

Discuss together the classic features of what it means to be a traditional man; a "real man". Do this quite quickly to get a list of attributes, activities, roles and emotions which are considered 'masculine'.

Write the attributes in a box (see example below).

Then ask –

*What do you get labelled as if you step outside of the box?* These are the names and actions that are used to 'police the boundaries of masculinity and push you back inside.

*How did we learn this?*

*Were you ever shamed for stepping outside the box?*

*Explore early memories of this*

*How is this maintained to this day?*

*Are there voices in your own head keeping you in the box – what do they say?*

- *What qualities have been taken from men in general, and from you in particular, by the way men are socialised? Can we find positive ways to describe what's outside the box?* For example, when 'tough' is inside the box this may leave positive things outside such as able to talk about emotions,

caring, loving and empathetic outside. If 'in control' is in the box then 'under the thumb' is outside the box but so equally are able to negotiate and be flexible. Point out that many of the capacities and behaviours outside the box are exactly what is needed for close relationships.

- *What kind of man do you want to be?*
- *What qualities would you keep, which would you change or transform, which would you throw away?*
- *What does it take to be your own man?*
- *What would it look like to be a man but to show weakness?*
- *To say when you are hurt by your partner?*
- *What would it look like to openly say what you want in a relationship? BUT - without scaring your partner, or putting her down, or pressuring her, or sulking or expecting her to work out what it is you want without you telling her.*

[You can also do this exercise around what it is to be a woman – what do women get called if they move outside the box? How does it feel when you see a woman who isn't behaving in that way? Who might tell her (both men and women)? How does the pressure work?]

<b>Thoughtful</b>	woman , layabout sponger		wimp	
<b>Expressive</b>	under the thumb	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Strong</b>  <b>Hides (vulnerable)</b>  <b>emotions</b>  <b>Provider</b>  <b>Self sufficient</b>  <b>Can fight, defend</b>  <b>himself</b>  <b>Has authority</b>  <b>Calm</b>  <b>King of the castle</b>  <b>In control</b> </div>	pussy	<b>Caring</b>
<b>Generous</b>	queer		coward	<b>Emotional intelligence</b>
<b>Egalitarian</b>	girl		weak	<b>Flexibility</b>
<b>Can compromise</b>	gay		hysterical	<b>Understanding</b>
<b>Good listener</b>	wasteman		bitch	<b>Patience</b>

(Note: This exercise is another way of eliciting constructs. The qualities which are 'in or out of the box' are the two extremes of a set of bipolar constructs to do with masculinity, some of which may have emerged earlier when looking at the repertory grid in Stage 1 – especially if elements such as 'a man I admire', 'men in general', and 'my father' were included in the grid.

These are important to explore because of the tendency towards 'all or nothing' thinking in men who are abusive in intimate relationships. For instance they may act

as if only two positions are available, completely in control or completely under the thumb. If this were true, then backing down on even the smallest issues is the beginning of a slippery slope towards a situation where they are totally controlled by their partner. These beliefs are obviously irrational, but nevertheless may have a powerful effect on the man's emotions and behaviour. Luckily, for many men, beliefs like this tend to look less plausible when said out loud.

# Accountability

## Aims

- To help the man come to an understanding of accountability
- To reinforce the idea that accountability is an important step in the man's own process of change
- To increase awareness of the effects on his partner and children if he continues to directly or indirectly avoid responsibility for the harm he has caused.

## How are you accountable currently?

To introduce a general discussion on accountability it may be useful to use some of these general questions to find out about how accountable or not the man has made himself to date?

- *How do you feel right after a violent incident?*
- *How do you show it?*
- *Did you say sorry? If so what do you think you meant by that?*
- *Did you want forgiveness? If so what do you think that might involve?*
- *Who have you talked to about it and how did you describe it?*
- *Have you owned up to what you did before coming here?*
- *Was that difficult? Why?*
- *What does it mean about you that it is difficult?*
- *If it wasn't difficult what would that say about you?*
- *When did you first talk to your partner about it? How were you about it then?*
- *What kinds of different ways have you talked about it with her since then?*
- *Did you do anything to make amends?*
- *What have you done since to try to rebuild her trust / help her to heal?*
- *What have you done to address the effects on the children?*

## What is accountability?

To stimulate discussion about what full accountability might be like you can look at part of the AA 12-step programme and discuss it. In particular, ask the man what these steps might look like applied to his own case:

### **Step 4**

*Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

### **Step 5**

*Admit to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*

### **Step 8**

*Make a list of the people we have harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all.*

### **Step 9**

*Make direct amends to them wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

### **Carrying the ongoing effects of his abuse**

Accountability isn't just about acknowledging what he has done, saying sorry and making amends – but also about helping him to carry the effects of what he has done rather than leaving her to carry them all – asking him what this might involve might lead to a discussion of his being the one to remember and acknowledge what he did to her, and certainly to hear, support and reassure her when her fear and anger about it are aroused. Insisting she shut up about it won't speed up her healing or take her feelings away – in fact most likely the opposite.

Explore what the fear is behind hearing how his abuse affected her. There may be a worry that if he has to step back from a current argument to a position of accountability for past abuse, that he can't then hold his ground. This needs to be deconstructed by exploring ways to hear and acknowledge these things without that meaning that he has to 'give in' or relinquish all boundaries in the current argument. Offer him the following example:

*Sandra and Sami are arguing. Sami is insisting that it is important for him to go away on a training course for work but Sandra is adamant that this is just his avoiding helping her with the kids and that he spends too much time at work already. At some point in the argument Sami raises his voice and immediately Sandra begins to accuse him "Oh yeah – just go and hit me again. You haven't changed at all." And so on.*

How can Sami pull back from the current argument, be accountable for past violence, and then return non-abusively to the current argument without giving up his position?

How could he go on to negotiate without frightening Sandra again and with a willingness to hear her point of view and to genuinely consider compromise. What would this take for Sami both internally and in terms of what he would need to do / say?

It is possible that the man may get despondent about the fact that his partner is unlikely to forget quickly, but let him sit with this feeling, and ask how long he thinks it takes to forget (see the session 17 where this is discussed more fully). You can, if it feels right, tell him that the longer he avoids violence, the sooner the effects will start to heal – but it is important to emphasise that he can't force this process to happen.

# Jealousy

- To make the man more aware of the ways in which he might be discouraging his partner from having contact with others.
- To make the link between jealous behaviour and the intention to isolate.
- To help the man recognise that jealous behaviour is ultimately self-defeating.

## **Intents and effects of jealous behaviour**

Ask the man to think of one or more people with whom he would rather his partner did not have contact. Almost everyone can think of someone. However if the man isn't a particularly jealous person then you should pass over this module and move onto something more relevant.

Now ask how he shows this. *How would she know that you were jealous? What kinds of things do you do when you are jealous?*

Ask him why he might try to isolate their partners. What does he fear?  
Reflect back that jealousy is usually about trying to keep someone close – to stop them leaving, to get 'more' of them.

Ask what effects the jealous behaviours have and reflect back that jealousy is almost always counterproductive in the long term – pushing the love object away and making her less available to him. There may be a short-term pay-off to jealous behaviour, in that she doesn't go out with someone he feels jealous about, for example. But in the longer-term trying in any way to control his partner's behaviour is likely to drive her away and make him feel worse about himself.

The kinds of questions you could ask are:

- *When you've questioned her, do you feel less jealous and more secure?*
- *Do you feel better if she says your fears are true?*
- *If she reassures you, do you believe her or do you just think, "She's saying that to reassure me"?*
- *How does your jealous behaviour make her feel?*
- *How will this affect the relationship?*
- *How will this affect her behaviour?*
- *Will she be more likely to stay in the long run?*

## **Externalising jealousy**

It can be really useful to 'externalise' the jealousy as follows in order to explore it more. The man is to personify and externalise the problem they want to think about – in this case jealousy.

- *If your jealousy was a character what name would you give it?*

- *What would it look like?*
- *Describe its energy and posture – imagine it on that chair – how does it sit? How does it feel to have it around?*
- *When did [Mr Jealousy] first appear in your life? – was he around in your family?*
- *What things did he tell you to convince you to let him in?*
- *What purpose did he serve for you early on?*
- *In what ways did he help you?*
- *Now what does he come to do?*
- *Is he a friend or foe?*
- *What things does he convince you to do?*
- *How does he do that?*
- *How do you frustrate or sabotage him when he is up to his tricks?*
- *What do you tell yourself to keep him at bay?*
- *Are there times in your relationship when he is more often present or not present?*
- *Is it better when he's around?*
- *What things have 'called him in' and what have generally kept him more at a distance?*
- *Do other people ever do or say anything to deflate him a bit?*
- *How does he brainwash you or others?*
- *What does he whisper in your ears?*
- *What's his cleverest trick?*
- *How do his tricks affect you and your life?*
- *If he were to pack his bags and leave your life altogether, what would you miss the most about him?*
- *What have you learned from him that can be useful in your life?*

Discuss the points that come out of this. It's likely that jealousy comes along with a little warped belief system about the way the world is – for example:

- *If she is allowed to flirt with other men she will leave me.*
- *All other men are predatory and trying to get her to sleep with them.*
- *If she wants to flirt with other men she wants to sleep with them.*
- *Smiling at another man is equivalent to flirting.*
- *If she flirts with or is attracted to others there will be 'less of her' available to me...*
- *If she flirts with others then I will be a laughing stock.*
- *Most people have affairs given half a chance.*
- *Relationships cannot survive affairs.*
- *If she has sex with someone else this is the worst thing in the world.*
- *If she 'betrays' me I will not survive.*
- *If she 'betrays' me I will be terribly humiliated.*

The roots of these kinds of beliefs in the man's history need examining as do their cultural roots. Most of all the man needs to be encouraged to think outside the box.

- *Imagine a world where that wasn't true. Some people live this way now. Some people don't mind if their partners flirt with other people – even feel*

*proud that people are attracted to her – without feeling threatened in any way by that. How do you think they manage that?*

- *Do you know anyone who is in a relationship that survived an affair?*
- *Have you ever enjoyed a mild flirtation but wouldn't want to sleep with that person?*

### **The other guy**

Ask the man what the imagined 'other guy' is like – what he looks like, how he treats her, and so forth. Do these characteristics say more about ways in which the man feels low on self-esteem rather than much about her or her tastes and needs?

### **Alternatives**

Acknowledge the difficulty in finding alternatives to jealous behaviours. These might include that:

1. If you do all this stuff, she may want out all the more but if you stop, she may have more chance of getting out.
2. If you stop, you may be left with incredibly difficult and uncomfortable feelings and obsessive thoughts. However, the reality is that the more you fuel your obsessive jealous feelings by checking up on and questioning your partner, the longer those feelings will continue.
3. And finally – sexual infidelity is common enough that if you make it an excuse for violence and abuse you would have to allow almost everyone to attack intimate partners at least a few times.

Those who get jealous need to find a way to express themselves or to change their feelings so that they don't impact on their partners.

Given that you have established the link between jealousy and self-esteem, what can the man do to feel better about himself when he gets jealous?

This is the only real way to interrupt the vicious cycle of jealous behaviour leading to even more jealous feelings.

### **Example answers**

- *Building up emotional muscle (the ability to tolerate feelings of neediness and dependency).*
- *Building up social networks that won't support your jealousy. Which friends do you have who wouldn't collude?*
- *Positive self-talk, especially accepting that this is the way you feel, and that she's not making you feel like that – she's not making you jealous.*
- *Accepting that it won't work in terms of getting what you want, if that is to feel more secure.*
- *Recognising that you're jealous and that your beliefs about what is going on are likely to be warped by this, and using that energy on something*

*constructive to feel proud of. For example, you can go to the gym, take the children out, make something or learn something.*

- *Doing something you've always wanted to do.*
- *Letting go of the beliefs that we can control who our partners see or what they do. Your partner is in a relationship with you because she chooses to be. If she stops choosing to be in it, there is nothing ultimately that you can do about it. You will survive it.*
- *Jealousy is commonly related to peoples early attachment styles – even if you stop acting jealous you may well still feel jealous – this may be amenable to longer term psychotherapeutic support.*

## Extra session 21 - Work with (ex)-servicemen

### Aims

- To identify if the man's abusive behaviour is related to combat stress or PTSD, and if so to offer education and information about specialist resources.
- To explore the effects of service life, and active service if applicable, on the man's self-image and relationships.

### Note

If you are working with an (ex)-serviceman, you may need to spend two to three sessions working on this material. You should also explore his experience of military service and associated beliefs and values when using in the repertory grid, genogram, and lifeline in the early sessions of the programme.

### Note

#### Hearing resentments / experiences

Be willing to hear about ex-servicemen's experiences and feelings at length. These may substantially exacerbate their issues with violence and abuse (see below on PTSD) and act as an obstacle to change unless they receive the compassion and healing they require. Note that PTSD is not the only way in which being in the military can exacerbate DV. Military training (making people more aggressive and more effectively so through repeated rehearsals of aggression), being in 'macho' environments (where traditional gender behaviours and expectations are encouraged), and being away for protracted periods (often fuelling obsessive jealousies) can contribute equally.

### Activity 21.1 – Externalising the abuser

This technique comes up in the jealousy section too and can generally be a useful way to explore constructs. The man is to personify and externalise the side of them they want to think about – in this case the side of them who is violent and abusive to their partner. The aim is to investigate and evaluate the effects of his abusive side on his life and those around him.

- *If the side of you who is sometimes violent and abusive to your partner was a character what name would you give him?*
- *What would he look like?*
- *Describe his energy and posture – imagine him on that chair – how does he sit? How does it feel to have him around?*
- *Is he a friend or foe?*
- *What things does he convince you to do?*
- *How does he do that?*
- *How does he get you to see your partner as an enemy?*
- *How does being in the military encourage him? Do other people in the military seem to understand and agree with him?*
- *Are there things that people say and do in the military to encourage or affirm him?*
- *In what ways does he think as soldier?*
- *How do you frustrate or sabotage him when he is up to his tricks?*
- *What do you tell yourself to keep him at bay?*

- *Are there times in your relationship when he is more often present or not present?*
- *Is it better when he's around?*
- *What things have 'called him in' and what have generally kept him more at a distance?*
- *When you are on operations and away how does this affect him?*
- *Has he gotten stronger and louder when you have seen active duty?*
- *What is he like when you come back?*
- *Does his way of seeing the world have some place for you in military combat situations?*
- *Does his way of seeing the world help you in intimate relationships?*
- *How do you know when he has come on the scene 'back home' with your partner?*
- *What could you do to keep him in his place?*
- *What might he then try to whisper in your ears?*
- *What's his cleverest trick?*
- *Do other people ever do or say anything to deflate him a bit?*
- *If he were to pack his bags and leave your home life altogether, what would you miss the most about him?*
- *What have you learned from him that can be useful in your life?*

Discuss the points that come out of this. Pay attention to identifying where the man leans towards a model of his relationship and the conflicts therein as military combat - with hierarchies, winners, losers, dangers, enemies and conquests. He needs to be encouraged to think outside the box: Can he imagine a conflict feeling differently – two people having a conflict without feeling themselves as enemies and without trying to win – what might that look or feel like? Does [Mr Abuser] have a protective role in some aspects of his military life? Does he have a place where his is appropriate and where he isn't?

### Activity 21.1- Informing about PTSD

Being able to relate consider in what ways PTSD has exacerbated the man's use of violence will be helpful. This is not to excuse the use of violence and abuse in relationships, or to override the idea that it is about power and control. Rather we are suggesting that just as severe attachment disorders may contribute to a man using violence to control the proximity of his partner, so PTSD may lead him to use violence to control things his partner does that re-stimulate traumatic events or punish her for his feeling bad.

The following – adapted from the National Centre For PTSD website – may be useful to you so that you can talk to the man about PTSD. After a trauma or life threatening event it is common to have upsetting memories of what happened, to have trouble sleeping, to feel jumpy, or to lose interest in things you used to enjoy. For some people these reactions do not go away on their own, or may even get worse over time. These people may have **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**. Anyone who has gone

through a life-threatening event such as in combat or military exposure can develop PTSD. Strong emotions caused by the event create changes in the brain that may result in PTSD.

Most people who go through a traumatic event have some symptoms at the beginning. Yet only some will develop PTSD. If the symptoms last longer than 4 weeks, cause you great distress, or interfere with your work or home life, you probably have PTSD. It isn't clear why some people develop PTSD and others don't. Many people who develop PTSD get better at some time. But about 1 out of 3 people with PTSD may continue to have some symptoms. Even if you continue to have symptoms, treatment can help you cope.

Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be terrifying. PTSD symptoms usually start soon after the traumatic event, but they may not happen until months or years later. They also may come and go over many years. There are four types of symptoms: reliving the event, avoidance, numbing, and feeling keyed up.

**1. Reliving the event (also called re-experiencing symptoms):**

Bad memories of the traumatic event can come back at any time. You may feel the same fear and horror you did when the event took place. You may have nightmares. You even may feel like you're going through the event again. This is called a flashback. Sometimes there is a trigger: a sound or sight that causes you to relive the event. Triggers might include:

Hearing a car backfire, which can bring back memories of gunfire and war for a combat veteran.

Seeing a news report of a violence and combat.

**2. Avoiding situations that remind you of the event:**

You may try to avoid situations or people that trigger memories of the traumatic event. You may even avoid talking or thinking about the event. You may become enraged when someone or something reminds you of the event such as watching television news, hearing lots of loud noise or simply having that 'out of control' feeling in an argument. You may keep very busy to keep them from having to think or talk about the event and this may have effects on your relationships with your family and those around you.

**3. Feeling numb:**

You may find it hard to express your feelings. This is another way to avoid memories.

You may not have positive or loving feelings toward other people and may stay away from relationships.

You may not be interested in activities you used to enjoy.  
You may forget about parts of the traumatic event or not be able to talk about them.

#### **4. Feeling keyed up (also called hyperarousal):**

You may be jittery, or always alert and on the lookout for danger. This is known as hyper-arousal. It can cause you to:

- Suddenly become angry or irritable
- Have a hard time sleeping.
- Have trouble concentrating.
- Fear for your safety and always feel on guard.
- Be very startled when someone surprises you.

People with PTSD may also have other problems. These include:

- Drinking or drug problems
- Feelings of hopelessness, shame, or despair
- Employment problems
- Relationships problems including divorce and violence (you can see how this links with 2, 3 and 4 above)
- Physical symptoms

#### **What treatments are available?**

There are good treatments available for PTSD. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one type of counseling. It appears to be the most effective type of counseling for PTSD. There are different types of cognitive behavioral therapies such as cognitive therapy and exposure therapy. A similar kind of therapy called EMDR, or eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, is also used for PTSD. Medications can be effective too. A type of drug known as a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), which is also used for depression, is effective for PTSD.

#### **How common is it**

Experts in the USA think PTSD occurs:

- In about 30 out of every 100 Vietnam veterans.
- In about 6% to 11% of veterans of the Afghanistan war (Enduring Freedom), (about 6 to 11 veterans out of every 100).
- In 12% to 20% of veterans of the Iraq war (Iraqi Freedom), (about 12 to 20

veterans out of every 100.)

Other factors in a combat situation can add more stress to an already stressful situation and may contribute to PTSD and other mental health problems. These factors include what you do in the war, the politics around the war, where it's fought, and the type of enemy you face.

### **Activity 21.3- Knowing your own sore points**

Work with the man to recognise the sore points and triggers for his violence – especially to help him understand these insofar as they relate to PTSD. Ask him how he has been able to contain himself at such moments and what he needs to be able to tell himself so as not to be violent and abusive. Reminding himself that this is not about his partner but about his intolerance of conflict, for example, following combat trauma, may help him to stay collected enough to take a time out. Cover alternative self-talk and strategies to calm himself down. Do not lose sight of the fact that he may also need to seek specific therapy around PTSD. For specific help and advice around PTSD, you can recommend the military charity, Combat Stress.

Telephone Number: 01372 841600. Website:

<http://www.combatstress.org.uk>/Email: [contactus@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:contactus@combatstress.org.uk)

## Extra session 22 - Working with Fathers

### Aims

Beginning the subject of parenting by finding out about the children serves two purposes:

- Firstly the worker can 'assess' the man's parenting needs which will help them to pick and choose from a range of tools and exercises as needed.
- Secondly, in doing the exercise the man already begins to find out more about their children and to think of them in different ways.

This manual offers two worksheets which can be done between sessions as 'homework' – *Positive Regard for My Child* and *How Well Do I Know My Child* (see below).

Additionally the man might want to bring in a picture of his children.

### Activity 22.1 - Parenting needs assessment

The worker will also need to ask a small range of questions to assess the man's parenting needs as outlined above such as:

- *Why did you want to be a parent?*
- *How did you hope it would be?*
- *What's working?*
- *What are the best times for you?*
- *I bet at some point you began to doubt your dreams would come true - when did you first have those doubts?*
- *How has your child been affected by your violence and abuse?*
- *What do you say to each other about it?*
- *What do you find hardest about each child's behaviour?*
- *How do you try to manage that?*
- *Do you wonder if it's too late to turn this around?*
- *Are there reasons to hope?*

*Once you have done the assessment, use the table below to make a plan of work around parenting and awareness of the effects of domestic violence on children.*

<b>Assessment question</b>	<b>Which tools are indicated</b>
Does he know his children?	Positive regard for my child How well do I know my child?
He is in denial / lacks empathy for his children's needs and the effects of his abuse on them?	Icebergs Hearing domestic violence Child empathy role-play Own parents
Does he lack knowledge about how DV can affect children?	Choose sections from educational input as relevant.
Has he got realistic age-appropriate expectations of his children's developmental abilities?	Didactic input on developmental stages
Is he able to talk about his violence and abuse in ways which support his children?	Talking to your child
Is he directly abusive / violent to the children? Is his relationship with his children embattled? Is he likely to be using put-downs with them?	Aims of child discipline Steps for behaviour management Child centred parenting
Is his angry at his partner, the family courts or social services leading to abusive or self-destructive behaviour?	The wall
Does he find it difficult to cope with his child's behaviour, and you think this might be a result of the child 'acting out'?	Parenting a child who is 'acting out'

## Handout 22.1a - Positive regard for my child

Fill out one for each child

Name of child..... Age of child.....

The following are some of the qualities I love about my child:

The following are some of the things my child is good at:

The following are some of the qualities / talents I think my child is proud of:

The following are some of the ways I am a good parent / some of the things I think my child loves about me:

I think my child feels angry / upset with me because of the following:

The following are some of the ways I think my child wants support from me:

If I kept in mind these things I would behave differently as follows:

## Handout 22.1b - How well do I know my child? - Pre-school age

Describe your child physically

What are your child's favourite toys?

What is the latest developmental step your child took (e.g. speaking, crawling, etc.)?

What is your child most interested in learning about?

What activities can your child do for a long time without getting bored?

What does your child most like to do with you? / his mother?

How can you tell when your child is upset?

What things upset your child?

What is your child's biggest fear?

What is most likely to make your child happy?

Who is important to your child?

## Handout 22.1c - How well do I know my child? - school age

Describe your child physically

What are your child's favourite toys / games?

What does your child want to be when s/he grows up?

What is your child most interested in learning about?

If it was your child's birthday tomorrow what would they most want?

What does your child most like to do with you? / their mother? Their friends?

How can you tell when your child is upset?

What things upset your child?

What worries your child most? What is your child's biggest fear?

What embarrasses your child?

What is the most recent disappointment they have faced?

What do they take most pride in?

Who is important to your child?

## Handout 22.4 - How well do I know my child? - Teenage

Describe your child physically

What is your child favourite and least favourite subject in school?

What's their favourite music group?

What does your child most like to do with you? / their mother?

Who are their best friends and what does your child most like to do with them?

How can you tell when your child is upset or worried?

Who does your child confide in when s/he is upset?

What worries your child most? What is your child's biggest fear?

What embarrasses your child?

What is the most recent disappointment they have faced?

What do they take most pride in?

(adapted from Caring Dads, London Ontario)

### Activity 22.2 - Setting goals around parenting

Ensure that your discussion of goal setting covers the following:

- hopes for their relationship with their child.
- hopes about how they would like to relate better to the child's mother.
- and relating better to the child contact / protection system where relevant.

Use handout 22.2 to fill out some specific goals that can be reviewed in the closing session.

## Handout 22.2 - Improving my relationship with my children.

Choose and label 3 aspects of your relationship with your children which you want to improve and over which you have some control.

**Goal 1**.....

Where this is currently at from 1 to 10:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

Where I would ideally like it to be:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

What I would realistically be happy with:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

**Goal 2**.....

Where this is currently at from 1 to 10:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

Where I would ideally like it to be:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

What I would realistically be happy with:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

**Goal 3**.....

Where this is currently at from 1 to 10:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

Where I would ideally like it to be:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

What I would realistically be happy with:

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9----10

### Activity 22.3 - The wall

This exercise is to be used when a man is very angry at the child protection system

- *What / who are obstacles between where their lives are now and how they want them to be? (This might, for example, be about what stands between them and their contact with their children) – These are the bricks in the wall (you can draw it or build it or just talk about it.)*
- *When they face this wall how do they feel? (For example, anger, helplessness, shame.)*
- *How might they act when these feelings are strongest? (What are they tempted to do and say?)*
- Which actions would help to dismantle the wall and which would only serve to reinforce it?

### Activity 22.4 - Child empathy role-play

Get the man to play the role of his child. To get this man into role so that he can answer as his child, ask him to sit in a different chair and as s/he might sit and say a bit about 'him/herself' as the child. Ask for a description of him/her, and ask a few other questions such as *"What's your (her) favourite TV programme? What's your favourite game?"*

Use the prompt questions loosely. Stick with eliciting feelings rather than facts. Don't get into safety planning, problem solving or trying to make this child feel better – remember this is not a real child. For each question you ask about what happened, ask another about what that was like for her and how it felt.

After the role-play, be sure to de-role the man again. This involves getting him to agree that he is no longer playing the role of his child, and to talk about the ways he differs from him/her. Ask one or two questions to get him 'back to himself', such as *"What's the first thing you'd do if you won the Lottery?"* Allow time for him to say what the exercise was like for them.

For this exercise we're not expecting to get an accurate version of what his child thinks or feels – just to get him to say what he imagines the child would say. Take care to point out that this is all we can possibly get at.

Some men simply won't be able to get into role or empathise with their child. In this case simply point out how hard the exercise is and that perhaps he is not ready for it at this stage.

## Useful prompt questions for the 'children's worker' role

- *What do you like doing best with your dad?*
- *Tell me about a special memory you have of your dad*
- *What's it like for you when mum and dad argue?*
- *Where are you normally?*
- *What do you do?*
- *That sounds really scary – what do you think when that's going on?*
- *Have you ever told anyone about it?*
- *Why haven't you told more people?*
- *What do you fear they might think?*
- *How do you think things might feel different with your friends or granny (etc.) if you didn't have this secret?*
- *How do you know an argument is brewing in your house?*
- *What's been the scariest time?*
- *Where were you?*
- *What did you do?*
- *How did you feel?*
- *What was going through your head at that time?*
- *Did you feel differently after that?*
- *Did you feel differently about yourself / your mum / your dad/ your brothers and sisters?*
- *What happened afterwards?*
- *Who comforted you?*
- *Why do you think he does it?*
- *What's it like not knowing why he's doing this?*
- *What do you start to say about yourself?*
- *Is he too strict with you?*
- *When does he scare you?*
- *How do you deal with that?*
- *How do you think all this affects you?*
- *Can you tell your dad how you feel?*
- *Why not?*
- *What sort of relationship do you want with your dad?*
- *If you could say one thing to him here and now what would it be?*

## Activity 22.5 - Educational input on impacts of DV on children

Teach the following about DV impacts on children didactically insofar as it appears relevant to the man's children. Always keep asking "does this trigger any thoughts about your own children?"

### **Trauma – including ADHD and low stimulus response threshold.**

Human beings are born undercooked compared to other mammals which come out walking about etc. As well as the physical development the hard-wiring of our brains is still forming in the first 18 months of life. The systems of our brains most used at that time become the most emphasised and active. The flight fright freeze or stress response system is one of those still forming up to 18 months and if the baby is repeatedly traumatised in that time this system ends up over-active. The child may then grow up very frozen, very jumpy or very angry. As a school child the jumpiness and poor concentration often lead to a diagnosis of ADHD. As a teenager we see that some of us have lower 'stimulus-response thresholds' than others. Some of us get much angrier at much smaller things or much more scared. Our adrenalin is pumping already while others may still feel calm. This makes it harder to deal with difficulties without hitting out, but of course not impossible.

We can still learn to calm ourselves down or express our anger other ways.

### **Social learning – conflict resolution, gender etc.**

We are also affected by domestic violence in the more obvious way that we learn it's a normal or okay way to settle conflicts and that if you aren't the abuser you will be the abused. Those of us who learn this might kick off whenever we feel angry or disagree. Others of us learn that conflict is dangerous – potentially catastrophic – and we avoid it at all costs throughout life – trying over-hard to please others. We also learn from mum and dad how men and women should behave in relationships with each other etc. We need our parents to model other styles of conflict resolution and gender relationships. That means no hitting or physical discipline and the modelling of shared respectful parenting and household roles.

### **Resilience**

Of course, none of these effects is inevitable. Though DV will definitely hurt the children they might be able to flourish despite – even partly because of - the adversity (what don't kill you makes you stronger). Things that help kids do ok despite having lived with DV are:

Contact with lots of supportive adults who know about what's happened and will offer tonnes of love.

Permission to talk to others freely.

Contact with peers who've gone through similar.

The best possible relationship from now on with both parents.

Anything that increases their self-esteem – extra-curricular activities, running clubs, and drama shows etc.

Getting therapy or specialist help to understand and express themselves better.

Mum and dad give a clear understanding of what happened and why – no excuses.

Mum and dad get support to understand and parent kids.

Helping others through voluntary work, mentoring etc.

Having a safety plan so they have some control over their safety if it happens again.

**You can start to heal your children and your relationship with them starting from today.**

## Handout 22.6 - Own parents.

3 parenting behaviours I appreciated and would like to do the same as one or both of my parents (or main carers) did:

1.....

.....

2.....

.....

3.....

.....

3 parenting behaviours I did not like and would like to do differently from one or both of my parents (or main carers):

1.....

.....

2.....

.....

3.....

.....

### Activity 22.7 - Educational input on developmental stages

The worker should go through the sections of the handout that apply to the ages of the man's children. In particular they should explain the preamble to the handout –

Children develop through a series of stages – they may progress slowly or quickly but they don't skip any stages altogether.

Just because your child's behaviour doesn't fall into the age range associated with the developmental stage, their behaviour may still be considered 'normal'.

There is a spiralling progression with occasional steep upwards steps. Mostly children move gradually from one stage to the next, initially showing more behaviour from the lower level stage and eventually showing more from the higher level stage.

Our early (childlike) responses are rarely left behind altogether. People often speak of 'our inner child' – the scared or angry or abandoned toddler who sometimes runs the show in adulthood unless well taken care of.

It's also evident that we all regress under stress to a time when our needs were better met; adults do when ill, toddlers do when another baby is born and trauma often leads to regressive behaviours.

'Understanding' proceeds 'thinking' and 'doing'. Your child will understand higher stage reasoning in discussion with you but will 'think' at a lower stage when making decisions on his/her own.

Development may stop at any stage. This might be because your child has reached his or her mental or physical limit, because of trauma or because there are emotional obstacles or preoccupations preventing further development.

*As they talk through the handout the worker should find out what resonates with the man – what is recognisable? As far as possible they should ask the man for stories and examples of the ideas relating to the man's own children.*

## Handout 22.7 - Developmental stages

Children develop through a series of stages – they may progress slowly or quickly but they don't skip any stages altogether.

Just because your child's behaviour doesn't fall into the age range associated with the developmental stage, their behaviour may still be considered 'normal'.

There is a spiralling progression with occasional steep upwards steps. Mostly children move gradually from one stage to the next, initially showing more behaviour from the lower level stage and eventually showing more from the higher level stage.

Lower levels are rarely not behind altogether. People often speak of 'our inner child' – the scared or angry or abandoned toddler who sometimes runs the show in adulthood unless well taken care of. It's also evident that we all regress under stress to a time when our needs were better met; Adults do when ill, toddlers do when another baby is born and trauma often leads to regressive behaviours.

'Understanding' proceeds 'thinking' and 'doing'. Your child will understand higher stage reasoning in discussion with you but will 'think' at a lower stage when making decisions on his/her own.

Development may stop at any stage. This might be because your child has reached his or her mental or physical limit, because of trauma or because there are emotional obstacles or preoccupations preventing further development.

### Baby Development from 0 to 2

#### **Omnipotent – 'limit? What's a limit?'**

Your child is developing movement and co-ordination.

S/he is mostly developmentally unable to respond to commands

The brain is still developing and the areas most used will end up more developed.

Your child is watching and starting to interact (crying, first smile at about 2-3 months etc). The rapport you establish will give the child a template for future close relationships (often called an 'attachment style').

It is easy to expect too much of your 1-2 year old – despite their mobility they may totally lack a sense of danger or fear.

Do not expect the toddler to share toys, wait for his or her food in a restaurant, or be patient while you try on clothes or go food shopping.

Aggressive behaviours - hitting and biting - are common at this age. How parents respond to this behaviour determines if it will continue.

Some children show readiness for toilet training between 18 and 24 months but most don't.

#### **Parenting**

Always check your baby when he or she seems uncomfortable, to make sure the infant is not too hot, too cold, hungry, wet or needs to burp and do not worry about 'spoiling' at this age.

Parents cannot always console their baby. Expect this.

Hold, cuddle, talk to, sing to and rock your baby as much as you can. A lot of your infant's development depends on his or her interaction with you. Play face to face with your baby – s/he will begin to develop a sense of trust and the beginning elements of learning through games like peekaboo. While positive interaction

stimulates the baby's normal brain development, scary or neglectful parenting can stimulate the stress response functions to over-develop leading to an exaggerated flight-fright-freeze response.

Encourage your baby to "speak" by talking to him or her lots

Stimulate your child with age- appropriate toys. So that your infant can begin watching and reaching. Babies like to bounce, swing, reach for you, pick up and drop objects, and bang things together.

Provide opportunities for safe exploration.

Make sure you get adequate rest. Encourage dad and other family members to help care for the infant. Keep in contact with friends and relatives.

## **Discipline**

From around 6 months parents can begin to set some groundwork for future discipline by using distraction, reducing stimulation and establishing routines e.g. a bedtime routine.

By 9 months you can begin to set limits by using verbal "no's", distraction, removing the object from the baby's sight or removing the baby from the object.

Consistency of discipline is very important.

Don't expect the infant to follow your commands – let alone to stick to your limits. Don't get angry with him or her for not doing so. You are only introducing the idea of a limit at this stage.

Praise the child for good behaviour.

Temper tantrums, are best handled by keeping the child safe (some parents firmly and gently hold their child from behind) but ignoring them. If this is not possible, isolate the child by placing him or her in a safe playpen or room for a "time-out." Never use shouting and spanking.

Keep rules to a minimum. Long speeches of explanation are completely useless. "Because I said so!" should be enough.

When disciplining, try to make a verbal separation between the child and his or her behaviour ("I love you, but I do not like it when you touch the TV")

Provide alternatives. "No, you cannot play with the telephone, but you can play with these blocks."

Avoid power struggles with your toddler. No one wins!

Don't start toilet training before the child is ready. This will only cause him or her to rebel and still be in nappies at 3 and 4 years of age. It is important not to shame them during toilet training.

## Pre-school Development 2-4

### **Egocentric - 'I should do / get what I want'**

#### **Testing boundaries**

Your 2-4 year old is finding and testing his/ her boundaries and will often attempt to assert independence.

Your 2-4 year-old is self-centred (egocentric) and thinks that what they want is right. They will say that it's 'not fair' whenever they don't get their own way.

Thinking is concrete (your child can't generalise between varying situations or hold rules in mind consistently)

Children of this age group take what you say literally

A 2-year-old is difficult, if not impossible, to reason with. As your child turns 3 and 4 you may find that this shifts a little.

S/he will understand the command when you give it but be unable to stop themselves breaking the rule when you're not around.

The 3-4 year-old will ask lots of questions.

Your child may well lie when caught – often blatantly and badly and without realising this is wrong.

Modesty and a desire for privacy begin to emerge as young as 4 years old.

Encourage but do not expect sharing at 2-years – by 3 children will sometimes begin to take turns and share but mostly need prompting to do so. The default is for them to think in terms of 'it's mine', 'I want it'.

By 3 years playmates are important. Allow your child to experience interaction with peers.

A toddler's appetite is rarely what most parents think it should be. Children can be 'faddy' and fussy with their choices. Feeding problems may arise if you make your child eat more than they need to, or show too much concern about what they eat.

### **Discipline and parenting**

Parents must teach the child that there are rules they must follow – you should show your child where the boundaries are.

Rules need to be concrete, specific, and consistent.

Do not waste time and breath arguing or reasoning. "Because I said so!" should still be enough at 2 years, but as they get towards 3 and 4 years old more explanations will be needed. They will be able to understand a higher level of reasoning which they can create or apply on their own.

Environmental controls should be used a lot

Lying should be discussed but not punished

Continue to Praise your child for his or her good behaviour

Don't use sarcasm or make extreme threats to your child (e.g. "if you carry on like that you're going into an orphanage") – at this age they may take what you say very literally.

Meaningless threats are ineffective. Follow through with the previously stated consequences when rules are broken.

When your child starts to want privacy of his or her own, let your child know that you think this is good.

Whenever possible, give reprimands privately – especially with 4 year olds upwards

Maintain a consistent bedtime and bedtime routine. Using a night light, security blanket or toy, are all ways to help lessen night time fears which are common at this stage.

Encourage your 2-4 year-old to make choices whenever possible, but the choices should be limited to those you can live with ("red shirt or green shirt.") Never ask a 2-year old an open question ("Do you want to take a bath") unless you are willing to accept the answer.

Provide alternatives. If your 2-year old is playing with something you do not want him or her to have, replace it with another object or toy that your child enjoys. "No, you cannot play with the telephone, but you can play with these blocks." This avoids a fight.

Avoid power struggles. The 2-year-old uses the temper tantrum when angry, tired, frustrated or not getting his or her way. Safely contain and ignore the tantrums.

Pick your battles. Don't make toilet training or eating your battle grounds. Decide on a few rules - most of which have to do with the child's safety - and enforce them.

### **Toilet Training**

Your child will learn to control his or her urine and bowel movements when s/he is developmentally ready, just as the child learned to sit, walk and talk. It takes an inordinate effort to speed up your child's schedule compared to 'catching that developmental wave' and teaching when s/he is ready. In fact, by over-training, you may delay the process by making your child tense and nervous, resulting in a rebellion. The last thing parents want to do is to make toilet training become a battle-ground which could possibly lay the groundwork for a real "toilet problem" in years to come. By age 4, 95 percent of children are bowel trained, 90 percent of children are dry in the daytime and 75 percent are dry at night.

Signs of toilet learning readiness include awakening from a nap dry, having bowel movements at the same time each day, being able to say "wee-wee" or "poopoo", etc., knowing when s/he has to go, and being able to take off his or her own clothes.

If your child has a bowel movement at the same time every day, you may sit him or her on a potty and "catch it." A favourable response from you sends a message to your child. If on the other hand, his or her bowel movements occur at irregular times during the day, watch for a characteristic expression and posture that indicates a bowel movement. When this occurs, pick up your child and put him or her on the potty. If nothing happens in a few minutes, or if your child is alarmed in any way, take him or her off the potty.

Your child's incentive to control bladder and bowel movements is to please you so praise your child's accomplishments. When your child has an "accident," stay calm and don't punish. If you act distressed or angry when the child fails, training may be delayed.

## Infant Development 5-6

### **Obedient – ‘I should do what I’m told’**

Your child is now more cooperative and focussed on what authority figures tell them is right – they still aren’t able to figure out the principles underlying the rules and tend to be morally simplistic (very ‘black and white’ about moral issues).

The 5-6 year old’s rule-following is out of obedience to authority and so it is very difficult to teach children this age about personal safety issues that involve protecting themselves from potentially abusive adults.

Children follow rules so as not to get into trouble and because they want to please authority figures.

Your 5-6 year-old may imagine that adults are all-knowing and can always catch them when they’re bad.

S/he may tell tales excessively because they see adults as the only source of authority. Children at this age tend to believe that if something bad happens to them, they must have done something bad to deserve it.

### **Discipline and parenting**

Parents have to teach the reasons underlying the rules without expecting the child to fully grasp these yet. Asking your child to explain why they think certain courses of action are right might help him or her to develop their reasoning – but don’t expect sophisticated answers yet.

Use praise and praise systems such as star charts which need not lead to more concrete rewards, to teach and modify your child’s behaviour. At this age these kinds of methods are very effective and also help build self-esteem.

*Avoid physical punishment* - it only promotes fear and guilt and teaches the child that violence is acceptable in certain situations.

Recognize that a child's sexual curiosity and exploration are normal.

You can role-play danger situations with your child giving as many concrete examples as possible. Don’t stress stranger-danger over danger from your friend, the parents of your child’s friends, family, and older children.

Your child should learn that genitals are private (not bad or shameful – just private). You can suggest that they never go off with anyone, touch anyone or allow anyone to touch their genitals without asking you first. This way they can combat one authority figure with a rule from another.

It is not unusual for a 6 year old to have occasional accidents at night and during play. Be understanding and do not make a big deal out of it. However, if it happens frequently, do discuss the matter with the child's doctor.

Adults play important roles in the life of children at age 6. Children will develop close relationships with teachers. It can be really helpful for your child to discuss things that make them sad, angry or anxious with their teachers. Actively let your child know that they can talk to their teacher or other family members about your family’s problems - even if you feel embarrassed for others to know about these.

## Junior Development – 7-11

### **Pre-adolescent – Consequence focussed; ‘what’s in it for me?’**

#### **Comparing; ‘If she can do it, why can’t I?’**

Your child is still focused on what you think is right but now also on the consequences of their choices and on concrete rewards.

The growing influence of peers often presents a challenge to parents. Your 7-11 year-old is beginning to value his or her peers' opinions as well as yours. But, at this age, parent opinion and values are still the strongest.

7-11 year olds increasingly believe that everything should be equal. This can lead to a lot of fighting and arguing amongst their peer groups.

Your child’s increasing belief that things should be equal may lead them to make constant comparisons, to want what they perceive their friends to have and to challenge parents’ when they don’t live by their own rules.

Relationships are seen as ‘deals’ – ‘you play with me because I played with you’

On the other hand, while their choices may be based on this kind of deal-making, their thinking is becoming increasingly abstract so that they begin to be able to learn values and to apply moral judgements to new situations.

The 7-11 year old is starting to think much more about what goes on for others – they can now ‘empathise’

They are also more skilled at using lying and cheating to get their way.

The 7-11 year old can appear very mature at some moments and very childish at others. They still often don’t think about consequences for themselves and others when in the midst of making choices and decisions.

### **Discipline and parenting**

Parents have to teach child natural consequences and Empathy – they have to learn how their behaviour impacts on themselves and on others

Concrete reward and consequence systems work particularly well at this age

You can appeal to your child’s ‘tit-for-tat’ thinking – “I did this for you, now you do this for me” or “if you want privileges, show some responsibility”

Meanwhile teach more abstract values and constructive ways to deal with conflict.

Parents have to continue to use praise a lot and to listen. Children who feel good about themselves are better equipped to withstand negative peer pressure.

Provide personal space for your child at home, even if it's limited and meet their increasing needs for bodily privacy

Find good friends for your child. Promote interaction and allegiance with peers through participation in social activities, community groups and team sports.

Help your child learn how to get along with his or her peers. Talk to your child about the enjoyable and difficult aspects of friendships.

While you should establish fair rules with respect to TV watching, outside activities, homework, bedtime, etc., the number of rules should be kept to a minimum. As the role of peers in the life of a 7-11 year-old builds, so they may increasingly resist adult authority.

Understand the importance of serving as a parental role model. Your child will now feel less afraid of challenging your opinions and behaviour and will expect you to follow the rules you set them (it’s part of their desire for equality).

Encourage age-appropriate independence and self-responsibility.

Do not wait until your child is mature to let him or her in on some of the changes taking place in their classmates. You are wrong if you think a 10-year-old is still too young to talk about such things. Prepare your daughter for menstruation. Prepare your son for wet dreams. Begin to teach the child about pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

## **Early adolescent Development 11-16**

### **Conformity – ‘what will my mates think?’**

#### **Separation - pushing the boundaries again**

Your early adolescent will bounce between childhood and adulthood, being irresponsible and responsible, testing parental authority and then depending on it.

Dramatic physical changes are the hallmark of early adolescence and these physical changes are important to your adolescent. They signify that he or she is developing like his or her peers. Since many young adolescents are unaware that the onset and rate of puberty vary greatly, they need reassurance that their own growth and development are normal. Many children this age need nine-10 hours of sleep per night.

They feel insecure about themselves, critical of others and in dire need of peer approval.

Many young adolescents, preoccupied with their attractiveness, will try to change their appearance through dieting or consumer fad food products. Anorexia and bulimia may occur especially among females.

Your 11-16 year-old can now judge behaviour more deeply – not just ‘does it fit the rules?’ and ‘who does it benefit?’, but also asking themselves ‘were the motives good?’

Even so, s/he is now focussed on what their peers think is right and on the consequences for him/herself – these will tend to determine the choices that s/he makes

Early teens often challenge adult authority – the subtle moral thinking might well be applied to your behaviour more than to their own.

S/he is gaining a sense of their own maleness or femaleness and broader identity. Curiosity about sexual matters begins. Teens begin having sexual feelings centred on their own bodies, rather than developing sexual relationships with the opposite sex. Accurate information needs to be made available.

With their increasing mobility and independence, there is potential for exploration of risky behaviours. Substance use and sexual activity increase with each successive year of high school.

### **Discipline and parenting**

Parents should teach their early adolescents to think for themselves and make good choices to problem solve and think about how to achieve own goals

Special athletic, artistic, academic, or musical talents may emerge and should be encouraged and supported as much as possible. This will help your adolescent to develop a good self-image.

Try to encourage reasonable independence, friendships and interests outside of the home, at times stepping aside a little in favour of mentor relationships

Get to know your teen's friends, and avoid making quick judgments based on appearances only. Whenever possible, avoid downgrading his or her friends and encourage him/her to invite peers home.

Use family rule meetings and give increasing responsibility to your adolescent for setting family rules and enforcing them.

Involve your teen in decision making regarding their role in family chores, supervision of younger sibling, etc. Once chores around the home are agreed, provide an allowance.

Take pleasure in your son's or daughter's abilities and achievements.

Respect your adolescent's privacy.

Do not criticize the other parent. A teen needs to love and respect both parents.

Pick your battles - minimizes criticism, nagging, derogatory comments and other belittling or demeaning messages.

Show respect. Listens to your adolescent's side without interrupting or judging.

Your adolescent will benefit from learning about body changes during puberty, including variations from individual to individual. S/he also needs to learn about birth control or sexually transmitted diseases as well as ways to say no to sex.

Be honest. Teens ask difficult questions which may need complex answers. These questions may also be disturbing for us to know exactly how to formulate answers. So tell them what you are experiencing. Allow them to understand how you are formulating the answers. This is a great way to encourage thinking through their own decisions, and helping them learn to decrease their impulsiveness.

Use humour.

Check with them how things are going. Ask questions, but don't expect answers.

Understand that their moods will change quickly and without warning. Try to stay with them and follow their lead.

Feelings of sadness and depression should not be dismissed as "normal" moodiness during this period. Situational losses—including the death of a pet, problems with girlfriends or boyfriends, school failure and parental disappointment—can lead to depression and even suicide. Learn the signs of adolescent depression and drug abuse. Discuss with your adolescent how to resist peer pressure and not just 'go' with the crowd. Role play how to say no to drugs and make possible contingency plans in the event that a car trip is necessary and the adolescent (or the person who is driving) is drunk or has taken drugs.

Don't believe that how your adolescent behaves is somehow a reflection on you.

Take joy in their creativity and express empathy for them in their struggle. Try to remember how you felt as a teenager, and consider what may have helped you through these trials and tribulations.

Be available to your adolescent without directing or controlling him or her. The time when he or she will want you is often at the teen's choosing, not yours. Be there if possible.

At toddler stage when you and your child had battles for control, you ultimately had to win. At adolescence the battles are on again, only this time your task is to begin to loose - to let go of control with grace – starting with the less important battles. Say 'yes' when you can but 'no' when you must.

## Young adult Development 17 – 19

### **Principle-focused – ‘respect all people’s rights’**

The older teen/ young adult has strong abstract sense of right and wrong – often ‘in principle’ with little allowance for practicalities and context. They begin to think about society in a very theoretical way, stepping back from their own society and considering the rights and values that a society ought to uphold. They then evaluate existing societies in terms of these prior considerations. Idealism is often at a height and their commitment to justice makes the rationale for civil disobedience stronger and broader.

At the age of 18, adolescents begin to recognise that parents can be their best friends. The peer group becomes less important to the late adolescent and is replaced by a few good friends. The young adult's interests now focuses on education or a vocational future.

They are more independent of peer pressure and have internalised values, empathy and a conscience.

### **Discipline and parenting**

The role of parents during this phase in their child's development should be one of support. Parents will usually find that their teenager has a better relationship with them now than he or she did in the early teen years. The adolescent may even seek out your advice.

Involve them in decisions and discussions about the family – ask their opinions and advice.

Encourage them to speak their minds and listen to them.

Encourage them to listen to and try to understand others’ decisions and opinions and accept differences where their own choices are not thereby dismissed.

Most young people have opportunities to experiment with drugs and alcohol by this stage, and parents have little power to prevent such opportunities from arising. A major objective should be to get adolescents through this stage alive and intact. Parents should be frank and realistic about the dangers of substance use and of mixing drinking and/or drugs with driving. Young people know too much about these issues for scare-mongering to work. You can offer to provide transportation no questions asked rather than have them take a lift with a driver who has been drinking or using drugs.

## Activity 22.8 - Aims of child discipline

Point out that discipline is related to words like disciple and the common stem is about teaching...

Ask the parent how he wants his children to turn out – if his discipline works what sort of things will they have learned and what kinds of people might we hope they will be? What characteristics will make him feel confident as his children become independent people in the world?

If the term 'respect' arises, make sure it is clearly defined. Respect that we want to foster in children includes their admiring positive behaviours and being polite. Respect we might not want to foster in them includes admiration for violence and power or obedience secured out of fear.

*Example answers:*

Happy, self-controlled, good values, kind, polite, successful, good self-esteem etc.

*Ask the parent whether smacking is likely to contribute positively towards such characteristics?*

We call 'child-centred parenting' the kind of methods that really do teach children to grow into the kind of people that can be happy, functioning individuals with values and the ability to consider and discern right and wrong for themselves while parent centred methods (smacking, shouting, shutting in room) teach children to fear getting caught and often have long term negative consequences such as for children's self-esteem, ability to make own moral judgements and ability to form healthy relationships.

## Activity 22.9 - Managing children's behaviour.

The man might really benefit from the kind of steps to behaviour management that are usually delivered in ordinary parenting programmes. The important thing about these are that they are steps, similar to rungs on a ladder. You can't use time outs without trying all the previous steps. Which also means that you don't blow all your tricks at once and devalue your discipline techniques by over using them.

### **Modelling**

This is the way we pick up most of what we learn about relationships and how to be in the world. It's vital not to use violence and put downs if you expect your children to do the same. Ask the man:

Who is important in your child's life?

What behaviours from you set good examples of how to communicate with these people, setting boundaries with them, staying safe and how to manage frustration?

How you rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 in communicating, setting boundaries, staying safe and managing frustration with others - especially those important to your child?

How can you appreciate others who are important in your child's life to the child (e.g. other parent, foster carers etc.?)

Giving clear instructions as to what you want the child to do. “Be good at Nan’s” is too vague. “Help Nan by washing and drying up all the pots, pans and plates after dinner. Get into bed by 11 without making her have to tell you and don’t read or keep the light on any later than 11.30” is better.

### **Giving praise and attention for good behaviour.**

It might be worthwhile getting the man to log the praise they give they give their child. Model yourself by praising the man’s qualities and constantly building up the side of them that is aspirational and wants to change. You can also let them to share ways they remember being put down or felt they were negatively labelled as a child.

- How did this affect them?
- How did they feel about the person that said those things to them?
- How do they do that to their own child?
- How can they praise their own child – both for specific skills and attributes but also for specific behaviours.

### **Ignoring bad behaviour**

*Confrontation* - “NO, don’t do that” followed by firm authoritative instructions

### **Consequences**

Offer choices and speak of the logical consequences first (e.g. If you make the choice to wear only a t-shirt then you will end up cold).

For more serious issues where you are not willing to allow choice, insist that the child must first do X before you will co-operate with her in any way.

Negative consequences for bad behaviours (e.g. Confiscation of toys for younger children).

### **Incentives**

Star charts work for younger children – set them up for agreed behaviours and maintain them consistently until better habits have formed. Incentives charts work on older children with agreed rewards when the child has earned enough points from agreed ‘goal’ behaviours. These rewards schemes mean that you don’t punish the undesired behaviour any more – only reward the good. This may substantially diminish the feeling of living in a battle ground. Contracts may also work with older children.

### **Family rule discussion – for older children**

Sit down as a family and discuss the problems. Gather your children’s ideas about what are the key problems and how to address them. Each choose things you want to see as rules for the whole family or things you want others in the family to change. Let those who the rule is primarily aimed at to set consequences for rule-breaking themselves. These should be strong enough to be deterrent but also realistically scaled. Try to reach compromise and agreement.

### **Time out**

Time out should not be an alternative to completing a task, but a consequence of bad behaviour.

## Activity 22.10 - Child centred parenting

### Aims:

To move a parent who is over-controlling and over-authoritarian and overly 'parent-centred' towards more child-centred parenting.

By child-centred we mean teaching the child only what it is in the child's interests to learn using methods which best serve the child's long term interests.

Usually child centred parenting takes patience and time and effort (modelling, teaching, discussing, explaining, listening, convincing, involving) while parent centred methods involve quick easy wins (smacking, shouting, shutting in room). Usually parent centred methods teach children to fear getting caught doing the undesired behaviour while child centred methods are aimed at getting children to internalise values in the longer term along with the ability to assess right or wrong for themselves rather than blindly obeying rules.

*When a parent 'disciplines' a child they can usually be seen to have multiple motivations.*

Using the continuums with the man allows you to acknowledge both their parent centred and child centred motives, then focus on how they can achieve only the child centred objectives using only child centred methods.

Start by looking at an example – Paul, Billy's dad cooks a healthy meal and when Billy doesn't want it he shouts at him to eat it. Paul's voice becomes louder and louder. Paul eventually sends Billy to his room for the night.

MOTIVES: Ask the man: What did Paul want those actions to achieve? What did he want the child to learn from them? - place each objective on the scale 'from child centred to parent centred'

Child Centred |-----| Parent Centred

Paul might have wanted to establish his control and insist on Billy's blind obedience, he might have felt rejected and angry himself - these would be parent centred aims. He might also have had child centred motives - and wanted Billy to eat a healthy meal and this would translate into a longer term aim of wanting Billy to become a healthy discerning eater.

- *Where might Paul's methods fit on the continuum?*

We can see that the sending away and shouting like that are not going to help Billy internalise long term values and are instead aimed at getting him quickly out of Pauls space – thus pretty parent centred.

ACTIONS: on the continuum from child centred to parent centred:

Child Centred |-----| Parent Centred

EFFECTS: - On the child, on Paul and on others.

*In the long term will Billy be likely to develop a taste for spinach lasagne (or whatever it is his dad has cooked?). And how will he feel about his dad and himself as a result of the incident?*

ALTERNATIVES: child-centred non-abusive ways to achieve the child-centred intentions identified above.

Ask your client:

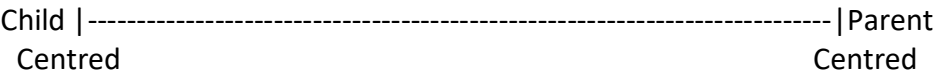
*What might be such alternatives?*

Paul could involve Billy earlier – taking him shopping, asking him his preferences (perhaps offering limited choices – all healthy). He could cook with Billy, educate him about healthy eating, and check Billy is hungry when he cooks his tea. Etc.

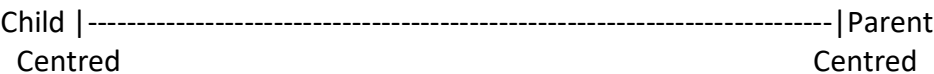
Having gone through an example with the man you can begin to take apart his own incidents with his child when he feels he might not have dealt with discipline situations well.

Handout 22.10 - Parenting log

ACTIONS: Briefly describe your actions and place them on the continuum from child centred to parent centred:



MOTIVES: What did you want those actions to achieve? What did you want the child to learn from them? Place these intents on the continuum from child centred to parent centred:



EFFECTS: What was the impact of your actions?

.....

ALTERNATIVES; child-centred non-abusive ways to achieve the child-centred intentions identified above.

.....

### Activity - 22.11 - Parenting a child who is acting out

If the man's child sounds as if s/he is regressive / acting out then the man will benefit from a greater understanding of their child's behaviour.

Ask them the following:

- *What might your child be trying to communicate?*
- *What can you / others say to child?*
- *What can you do?*

Use the following pointers to help guide you both:

- Don't allow the child to control the emotional environment of the home. Acting out tends to invite raging or terrified responses. As far as possible parents should try to avoid these responses by remaining empathetic.
- Parents may find it helpful to think about the root of the behaviour. If the parent can interpret the behaviour in relation to the child's history they may be able to take it less personally.
- Never ask 'why did you do that?' – The child will not know - but you can show curiosity rather than anger:
  - *"I'm interested in why you..."*
  - *"I'm curious / I wonder why...?"*
  - *"I wonder if..."*
- If you have a sense of what your child's behaviour means it will help if you can name this for the child e.g.:
  - *"I can understand why you feel like that....."*
  - *"I would probably feel like that if I had had lived through all that fighting by the age of six."*
  - *"I understand why you find it so hard to accept my love since I've not always been able to be there for you."*
  - *"I think you're feeling badly about yourself and it's not surprising since you were so affected by Daddy and Mummy's fighting."*
- Note the current triggers for the behaviour
  - *"Thank you for showing me how upset you still get at bedtime – I'm sure it scares you because you used to hear so many arguments at night time". – "There won't be any fighting tonight".*
- Work with the trigger situations differently - For example you might change the bedtime routine to make your child feel safer. You may find yourself having to treat a 10 year old more like a toddler in this respect.
- Make environmental changes.
- Set realistic – not punitive - consequences.
- Try to maintain a loving attitude – moving from "what has my child done to me?" to "What is my child trying to say to me" will help.
- Keep playfulness and good times in your routine with your child.

(Adapted from Family Futures)

## Activity 22.12 - Talking to your child

1. Ask the man what he has already said, if anything, to his child about his violence and abuse and what, if anything, they have said to him.
2. If he witnessed or experienced abuse or violence as a child, what would he have wanted the abuser to say to him?
3. Help him to consider, child by child, what his children might need to hear from him about his abuse.

Try to keep him on track in the following ways:

- Use developmentally appropriate ideas and language.
- Always be open to listening to your child and or discussing these issues when your child brings them up.
- Invite them to ask or talk or talk to you about these things and how they feel about them – say it might help to talk. Suggest your child talks to other people about this and discuss who they might be able to go to. Reassure them that that's okay with you.
- If you want to bring up these issues ask your child if it's okay to talk about with them. If they show discomfort (even though they may say yes) then say "maybe you'd rather not or you feel too uncomfortable right now" – give them a chance to verify whether or not this is so.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Acknowledge what you did and that it was your fault entirely.
- Reassure that not only was it not the child's fault but also that there wasn't anything they could have done about it either.
- Give clear messages that you were angry but being angry doesn't give any excuse at all to use violence or shout or scare anyone – it was totally wrong.
- Be respectful and not blaming about the child's mother.
- Tell them if you regret or feel sorry for what you did and for how it affected them.
- Tell them that you love them while acknowledging you aren't perfect.

*E.g. (in brief):*

*"I have done some things that were not right and that have hurt Mummy and you. I would like to talk with you about this – is that okay?"*

*I am so sorry I hit mummy and even more sorry that I scared and upset you so much by doing it.*

*There is no excuse ever for me hitting Mummy or you. Violence is wrong, no matter how angry you get and no matter what you do you don't deserve to be hit.*

*It isn't even a bit your fault - you're too young / small to be able to control them or stop an adult who is angry and not listening to you.*

*I am sure you have some very big feelings about this – maybe you feel angry or scared about it? Is there anything you want to tell me or ask me about it?*

*It would probably help to talk to someone about this – who do think you could talk to? I want you to know that's okay by me.*

*I am really trying to change and not do this anymore.*

*I really love you even though I have hurt you. I can see how confusing that must be."*

## Extra session 23 - Accountability

### Aims

- To help the man come to an understanding of accountability
- To reinforce the idea that accountability is an important step in the man's own process of change
- To increase awareness of the effects on his partner and children if he continues to directly or indirectly avoid responsibility for the harm he has caused.

### Activity 23.1 - How are you accountable currently?

To introduce a general discussion on accountability it may be useful to use some of these general questions to find out about how accountable or not the man has made himself to date?

- *How do you feel right after a violent incident?*
- *How do you show it?*
- *Did you say sorry? If so what do you think you meant by that?*
- *Did you want forgiveness? If so what do you think that might involve?*
- *Who have you talked to about it and how did you describe it?*
- *Have you owned up to what you did before coming here?*
- *Was that difficult? Why?*
- *What does it mean about you that it is difficult?*
- *If it wasn't difficult what would that say about you?*
- *When did you first talk to your partner about it? How were you about it then?*
- *What kinds of different ways have you talked about it with her since then?*
- *Did you do anything to make amends?*
- *What have you done since to try to rebuild her trust / help her to heal?*
- *What have you done to address the effects on the children?*

### Activity 23.2 - What is accountability?

To stimulate discussion about what full accountability might be like you can look at part of the AA 12-step programme and discuss it. In particular, ask the man what these steps might look like applied to his own case:

#### **Step 4**

*Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

#### **Step 5**

*Admit to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*

#### **Step 8**

*Make a list of the people we have harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all.*

**Step 9**

*Make direct amends to them wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others*

**Activity 23.3 - Carrying the ongoing effects of his abuse**

Accountability isn't just about acknowledging what he has done, saying sorry and making amends – but also about helping him to carry the effects of what he has done rather than leaving her to carry them all – asking him what this might involve might lead to a discussion of his being the one to remember and acknowledge what he did to her, and certainly to hear, support and reassure her when her fear and anger about it are aroused. Insisting she shut up about it won't speed up her healing or take her feelings away – in fact most likely the opposite.

Explore what the fear is behind hearing how his abuse affected her. There may be a worry that if he has to step back from a current argument to a position of accountability for past abuse, that he can't then hold his ground. This needs to be deconstructed by exploring ways to hear and acknowledge these things without that meaning that he has to 'give in' or relinquish all boundaries in the current argument. Offer him the following example:

*Sandra and Sami are arguing. Sami is insisting that it is important for him to go away on a training course for work but Sandra is adamant that this is just his avoiding helping her with the kids and that he spends too much time at work already. At some point in the argument Sami raises his voice and immediately Sandra begins to accuse him "Oh yeah – just go and hit me again. You haven't changed at all." And so on.*

- *How can Sami pull back from the current argument, be accountable for past violence, and then return non-abusively to the current argument without giving up his position?*
- *How could he go on to negotiate without frightening Sandra again and with a willingness to hear her point of view and to genuinely consider compromise.*
- *What would this take for Sami both internally and in terms of what he would need to do / say?*

It is possible that the man may get despondent about the fact that his partner is unlikely to forget quickly, but let him sit with this feeling, and ask how long he thinks it takes to forget (see the session 17 where this is discussed more fully). You can, if it feels right, tell him that the longer he avoids violence, the sooner the effects will start to heal – but it is important to emphasize that he can't force this process to happen.

## Extra session 24 - Substance misuse and DV

Some clients attribute their violence and abusive behaviour almost exclusively to their drinking or substance use, and feel that if they are refraining from alcohol use, there is no risk of them being violent or abusive again. Alcohol and drugs are certainly disinhibitors, and drinking and substance misuse are very likely to add to difficulties in intimate relationships. However we work on the basis that many people use alcohol or drugs but are not violent in their relationships, so there is something else for the client to explore and understand if he wants to make sure he does not hurt his partner or frighten his children in future.

This programme does not offer a comprehensive approach to substance misuse problems, and if your client's drinking or drug use is significantly impairing their capacity to benefit from the programme, they should be referred to a specialist programme and return when they have more control over their use.

However, it is important to explore the ways in which substance misuse and DV are linked for your client, and, if you feel this is needed, we have added resources to help you and your client develop a basic relapse prevention plan together.

### Activity 27.1 - How substance abuse and DV are linked for your client

Start by getting a detailed sequence of some incidents of violence involving substance use, tracking your client's actions, thoughts and feelings at different points in time. Use this to identify where the decision to use took place in the sequence. If he already knows that drinking/drug use is likely to cause problems with his partner, what are his 'permission giving thoughts' which persuade him that it's ok to drink or take drugs? Is his drinking a proactive excuse for abuse? – i.e. is he already angry with her before has had a drink, then later uses his drinking as an excuse for the abuse or as a way of claiming loss of memory?

### Activity 27.2 - Identify the function of the abuse, with particular reference to substance misuse

Do a 'costs/ benefits' analysis of his abusive behaviour, (or revisit this topic if you have done this earlier in the programme) and find out the ways in which abusive behaviour supports his substance use – for instance hurting or frightening her if she complains, being impossible to be around when he hasn't had his drug of choice, demanding or begging her for money for drugs/drink, stealing money from her, staying out using drugs and leaving the difficult bits of family life to her or exploiting her need for drugs or drink as a way of controlling her.

<b>Benefits (positive consequences) of being abusive:</b>	<b>Costs (negative consequences) of being abusive:</b>
She won't argue with me for drinking or using drugs.	She feels disappointed angry with me and keeps this feeling inside.
She'll give me money for weed even when the family hasn't got much money.	We don't have money for essentials, or for doing nice stuff together.
If I encourage her to use too, I feel less guilty about it.	The kids will be more hurt if we are both using.
I get the last word in arguments.	My partner resents me
I can carry on using.	I damage myself by being able to carry on using.

### Activity 27.3 - Identify the function of his substance misuse.

It is also important to identify both the benefits and costs of drinking or drug use – your client isn't going to stop misusing substances until the he comes to believe that costs of using outweigh the perceived benefits.

Benefits (positive consequences) of using	Costs (negative consequences) of using
Makes social situations easier	Partner hates it
It's what I do with my friends	I'm not fully there in my kids' life
Fills time	It costs a lot of money and we haven't got much
I like the buzz	I do things I regret
I avoid the difficult bits of family life and childcare by staying out and leaving it to my partner	I miss out on important parts of my kids growing up
Feeling good	I feel ashamed, the hangover or comedown is dreadful

If your client places all responsibility for the abuse on his drinking or substance abuse, find out the ways in which he has been abusive at times when he has not been drinking (it is useful to also get his partner's perspective on this). However, even if he says he is only abusive when stoned or drunk, don't let this discourage you from doing all the work on violence and abuse set out earlier in the programme – very few people have no memory at all of incidents of abuse, and your task is to help your client to identify those expectations, beliefs, emotional states and thinking patterns which distinguish this client from all the other people who drink, or use drugs, but are not violent to their partners.

Also, if he is still drinking, and he now knows he is risky when drunk or stoned, it is important to identify what plans he can put in place to stay away from his family when he is intoxicated.

### **Activity 27.4 - Triggers for drug use and situations where drug use is more likely**

#### **Identify triggers**

If your client wants some help in avoiding substance use and/or developing a relapse prevention plan you can use the form below to identify what for them are the situations where drug use is more likely and what kinds of environmental cues, moods or thinking patterns are most closely linked with the decision to drink or use – see *Discovering Triggers for your Substance Use* form below.

#### **Identify strategies for dealing with triggers**

Once you have done this, you can look how to handle triggers for substance use and situations where substance use is more likely.

There is a range of ways of doing this:

- Avoid the trigger or situation – for example take a different route home to avoid passing the house where you buy drugs, stop seeing a particular group of people, find a good reason to say no to drinking after work which won't involve losing face.
- Rearrange the environment – for example, get rid of items associated with triggers, such as rolling papers, alcohol in the house, pipes, syringes.
- Develop new skills and strategies to cope with those triggers you can't avoid (like drink adverts on TV) or unavoidable situations.
- Seek social support from non-substance-using friends and family.

### **Activity 27.5 – relapse prevention**

Lastly, use the Relapse Prevention Plan below to summarise the work you have done.

## Handout 27a - Discovering triggers of your substance use

Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List the places where you are most likely to use substances (examples: *at a particular friend's house, at the pub or club, at home*).

List the people with whom you are most likely to use substances (examples: *workmates, old friends who also use*).

List any times or days when you are more likely to use substances (examples: *at night, during lunch time at work, Friday nights, when my partner is at work*).

List any activities or events that make it more likely that you will use substances (examples: *stress at work, argument with my partner, parties with friends, seeing things or people that remind you of substance misuse, being asked out for a drink or offered drugs*).

Do you think that you use substances when you are feeling or thinking in certain ways? Read through the following list and mark the ones that seem relevant to you. For those you have marked, list specific examples from your own experience:

- *at the end of (or during) a tense day*
- *when you are depressed or fed up or sad*
- *when faced with something you fear*
- *when you feel like you got something wrong*
- *when you are faced with a tough problem (e.g., breaking up)*
- *when you want to be friendly*
- *when you feel like someone has taken advantage of you*
- *when you are bored*
- *when you wish your personality was different e.g. more outgoing, cool*
- *when you are in a social situation*
- *when you feel bad about yourself "I'll never be good enough"*
- *What thoughts and beliefs are linked with the decision to use?*

### **The other side of the coin**

List the places where you are unlikely to use substances (examples: *at home, at work*).

List the people with whom you are unlikely to use substances (examples: family members, members of church group, particular friends, partner/girlfriend/boyfriend).

List the times or days when you are unlikely to use substances (examples: *during the working day, when my family are around, at the weekend during the day*)

List the activities you are engaged in when you are unlikely to use substances (examples: *spending time with family in specific activities, when I'm with my children, at work, with certain friends, attending church, doing hobbies*).

Adapted from Budney, A. J., & Higgins, S. T. (1998), *A community reinforcement plus voucher approach: Treating cocaine addiction*. Rockville, MI: National Institute of Drug Abuse.

## Handout 27b - Relapse prevention plan

A relapse prevention plan sets out the steps you will take to ensure that you don't go back to your old destructive pattern of drinking and/or using drugs. Remember, relapse is a process not a single event: it doesn't just happen!

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**My substance of choice**

**My treatment method of choice**

**My substance use goal**

**My safe limit**

**What I got out of using**

**What it cost me and my children**

**My early warning signs or 'triggers'**

**Risky people, events or situations**

**Things I've done before to help me stay on track and get my mind off using or drinking**

**Friends, family and professionals I can call on to support me with my drinking / substance using goal**

**What safety steps I should take if I do decide to use?**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_