Cycle of Abuse

The cycle of abuse is a reoccurring pattern of behavior frequently seen in abusive relationships. Within the cycle, an abuser swings between affectionate, remorseful, and calm behavior to periods of tension that grows into physical, sexual or emotional abuse. The cycle of abuse can happen hundreds of times in an abusive relationship. Each stage lasts a different amount of time, though abusive incidents tend to occur more frequently and become more severe over time. Often, as time goes on, the honeymoon stage will disappear altogether. It is important to note that not all abusive relationships will fit this pattern.

Says "I'm sorry" · Begs forgiveness · Promises to get

Abuser:

counseling · Sends flowers and presents · Say "I'll never do it again" · Declares love · Blames victim · Denies abuse

Victim:

E Store Phase Agrees to stay, return or take abuser back · Attempts to stop legal proceedings · Sets up counseling appointments for abuser · Feels happy, hopeful

Abuser: Moody · Nitpicks · Isolates · Withdraws affection · Yells · Abuses alcohol or drugs Threatens · Destroys property

Tension Building Phase Victim: Attempts to calm abuser · Avoids family and friends · Pacifies · Keeps kids quiet · Withdraws · Tries to reason · Feels like they are "walking on eggshells"

Abuser:

PHYSICAL · SEXUAL · EMOTIONAL ABUSE Hits · Chokes · Humiliates · Imprisons · Rapes · Uses Weapons · Verbally assaults · Throws things

Victim: Protects self and children · Calls police · Tries to stay calm · Tries to reason · Leaves · Fights back

Explosion Phase

Cycle of Abuse Over Time



