

## The Process of Changing Battering Behavior: An Integrated Approach

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### *Introduction*

The insights of sociology...are imaginative reconstructions of life whose truth depends upon the competence of the mind that makes them to embrace the chief factors of the process studied and reproduce or anticipate their operations. This requires native ability, factual knowledge, and training in a particular technique” (Cooley, as cited in Cooley, 1998, p. 125).

This critical analysis includes an examination of the process of change that individuals who batter undergo to become nonviolent; the ability of current programs for those who batter to enhance this change process; and potential improvements for such programs. Current research and batterer intervention program practices are examined in relation to understanding the influence of community, group, and the individual on an individual’s transformation process. Through application of the works of Cooley (as cited in Cooley, 1998), Mead (1964), Bandura (1973) and various feminist perspectives of change identified by Teske and Tétreault (2000) and Wilkins (2000), a further understanding of program elements needed to enhance the change process is obtained.

### *Current Challenges to Understanding*

Understanding why some who have been violent to a family member accomplish a transformation to nonviolence, while, for others, this goal remains elusive has been the focus of considerable curiosity and research in recent years. While there has been progress in developing an understanding, some of the factual

knowledge that Cooley perceives as critical is elusive. Important questions remain. Although the majority of research projects regarding attrition rates indicate that younger batterers are more likely to drop out of treatment (Gerlock, 2001; Saunders and Hamill, 2003), a study of military personnel indicates that older perpetrators are more likely to quit treatment (Gerlock, 2001). Although a structured group format has risen to the forefront as the most effective venue for change (Aldorando, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash and Dobash, 2000; Dutton, 1998; Saunders and Hamill, 2003), the debate on the most effective type of group therapeutic approach continues to rage, with little or no conclusive evidence regarding which is best (Jackson, et. al., 2003; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). Although progress has been made in testing psychology-based batterer typologies, nonpathological profiles remain incorrectly sorted almost 50% of the time (Lohr, et. al., 2005). Current typologies fail to explain the abusiveness, and have not held up to rigorous research (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Bancroft, 2002; Levesque, Gelles, and Velicar, 2000). Furthermore, current typologies do not prescribe specific interventions (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Bancroft, 2002; Levesque, Gelles, and Velicar, 2000; Loft et. al., 2005). Although it appeared logical to believe that those in precontemplative and contemplative stages of change upon entry into a batterer's intervention program would likely finish the stages of change behind those who were already in the action stage upon entry into the program, the different groups had only inconsequential differences upon completion (Scott and Wolfe, 2003). Grana's (2001) attempt to determine sociostructural factors related to domestic femicide explored a wide variety of factors including such things as poverty, crime rates, and state

standards related to batterer intervention programs. Once controls were utilized, only the size of the state population had a correlation with domestic femicide.

However elusive conclusive evidence is in some particular areas, there is growing agreement that some who batter go through a process of change. (Aldorando, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash and Dobash, 2000; Dutton, 1998; Gondolf and White, 2001; Gover, MacDonald and Geoffrey, 2003; Jackson et. al., 2003, Saunders and Hamill, 2003) This change process can be positively influenced by completing a batterer's intervention program if certain aspects are present in the program and community (Aldorando, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash and Dobash, 2000; Dutton, 1998; Gondolf and White, 2001; Gover, MacDonald and Geoffrey, 2003; Jackson et. al., 2003, Saunders and Hamill, 2003). Nevertheless, some who batter are not going through the change process effectively with current intervention, or change only temporarily (Aldorando, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Gondolf and White, 2001; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). This opens the door to consider what other aspects, or other combination should be considered to enhance the change process.

#### *A Changed Focus on Community*

Many programs currently operate with limited community involvement in program goals; where there is involvement, it is usually limited to involvement with the criminal justice system. This section examines this practice and identifies some areas of change needed in relation to community involvement to enhance the individual change process.

#### *Societal Influence*

Cooley (1998) provides an understanding of the individual change process as highly affected by societal influences. The ability of the individual to change without social interaction is nonexistent, according to Cooley. He identifies change as a process that is social in nature, requiring influence by others. An individual's understanding of self is reliant upon the image of self that is provided through interactions with others (Cooley, 1998). A common misperception is that those who batter will, by relying upon the image of self provided through ongoing interaction with the victim, be motivated to change when they see the damage their violence has caused their loved one. The beliefs, attitudes, and thought processes used by those who batter to initially justify their violence also prevent the impact of the violence on their victim to be a motivation for change. This can be understood by examining it in the broader context of social learning theory. Individuals can methodically become killers and remain sane by learning through societal influence to devalue their victim (Bandura, 1973). In times of war, it is common for the military to dehumanize their opponents in order to get military personnel to justify killing them, and to keep empathy for the victims from interfering with military goals (Bandura, p. 215). Likewise, when individuals within a society are devalued, violence can occur without empathy for the victim and without damage to the perpetrator's self-image (Bandura). It is common for those who batter to dehumanize their victims while justifying self-serving behaviors (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash and Dobash, 2000; Dutton, 1998; Eigenberg, 2001). This dehumanization creates both lack of empathy for their victim and a consequential lack of influence by the messages they receive from their victim. "It is easier to reduce the discomfort by designating the victim as a bad person

than to challenge bad practices that are an accepted part of the social order” (Bandura, p. 214). Those who batter are far more likely to be influenced by the messages they receive from others within their community.

Since those who batter are not effectively challenged to stop their violence through interaction with the victim, one might surmise that community interaction would prompt change. Yet, community interaction can be detrimental to change. If the individual perceives through social interactions that violence is appropriate and will enhance the ability to meet needs and wants, then there is a strong likelihood that violence will occur (Bandura, 1973). Aldarondo applies this logic to the difficulty batterer intervention programs face when attempting to serve their clients:

The most pressing problem arises in the form of a conundrum. Many of the determining factors for domestic violence—gender inequality, uneven distribution of wealth, social isolation and dislocation, male entitlement, the instrumental value of aggression in the pursuit of self-interest—are rooted in society, itself. How are we to promote a change process that runs counter to the prevailing ethos of our society and its complex social structures, norms, institutions, and culture (p. 3-16)?

One of the biggest challenges to the creation of positive change for those who batter is their social environment. “Injurious forms of aggression can ...be most effectively eliminated by removing the social conditions that instigate them and the positive reinforcements that maintain them” (Bandura, p.221).

Attempting to provide services to those who batter without clear recognition of community influences can result in programs that have unrealistic expectations of change (Aldarondo, 2002), as well as their operation in a vacuum without a link to the client’s experience. Such a link is critical if the client is to apply what is learned

(Bandura, 1973). Additionally, failure to understand community influence reduces the emphasis on community involvement.

### *Community and Leadership*

Mead (1964), Cooley (1998), and Bandura (1973) identify the importance of influential leadership in the process of change. When someone who batters receives a message that his violence is inappropriate from the law enforcement officer who initially intervenes, the prosecuting attorney, the judge, and the batterer intervention program provider, the message is strengthened through repetition. Those who batter who have a high stake in conformity are likely to become motivated to change their behavior (Aldorando, 2002; Bandura, 1973). Gover, MacDonald, and Geoffrey (2003) also found that an aggressive judicial approach that creates prompt accountability decreases recidivism. Programs for those who batter that are operating within a coordinated judicial response against domestic violence have the most positive outcomes in reduction of recidivism (Aldarondo, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Eigenberg, 2001; Gover, MacDonald, and Geoffrey, 2003).

Although the judicial response is influential, as noted previously, those who batter are influenced by many other factors in their community. Teske and Tétreault (2000) identify community as “a source of identity that is shared with others” (p. 12). As community leadership changes toward embracing nonviolence in its institutions and public awareness, an individual within that community has less social influence to be violent, and therefore less inclination toward violence (Bandura, 1973; Staggenborg, 1998; Tétreault and Teske, 2000). Mederos (2002) identifies “preventative, community-based educational campaigns” as an essential component

for communities that are attempting to reduce domestic violence (p. 1-23). Steeves (2000) and Bandura (1973) identify mainstream mass media communications as damaging the health of communities worldwide. Steeves emphasizes the importance of media being community-based, so that they can present meaningful dialogue regarding all forms of oppression and privilege occurring within the community. Programs for those who batter benefit from the local media being linked with a coordinated community-wide response. The greatest likelihood of success occurs when the media operate within a community-wide coordinated response that includes a strong focus on preventing violence through changing social norms, as well as intervention.

#### *Community and Social Movements*

Socioeconomic and political changes provide opportunities for changes in family and gender relations, but social movements are necessary to bring new ways of living into peoples' lives (Staggenborg, 1998). The strength of the women's movement and its voice for nonviolence in family interaction is important in communities with batterer intervention programs, and batterer intervention programs need direct ties to this voice (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Pence, 2002).

Communities that have men active in the movement for equality have a distinct advantage in providing the necessary community support for changing relationship dynamics and stopping domestic violence. If a program can tap into such a movement within the greater community, then the program can become a stepping stone in the journey toward nonviolence, rather than being perceived unrealistically as the final

step. This can occur through the co-development of mentorship for graduates, and mentorship for program participants from this greater community.

### *Creating Community in Group Work*

Since their inception, there have been many conflictual influences and demands on batterer intervention programs (Merry, 2001). Defense attorneys and some judges want shorter programs, but women's advocacy groups and some in the criminal justice system have demanded longer lengths of time for program participation. Other points of contention have included whether or not to include women in the target population; the utilization of a feminist or psychological approach; and whether or not batterer intervention programs should contact victims. These outside pressures have required programs to develop resistance in order to maintain an element of integrity in their approach (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002). An undesired consequence has been a built-in strong resistance to any change (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002). The following section describes some suggested changes in the conceptual framework of programs for those who batter.

### *A Changed Concept of Power*

Most batterer intervention programs focus on the negative aspects of power and control in relation to abuse (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002). Both psycho-educational and feminist based batterer programs are likely to use the Power and Control Wheel. This is an instrument developed by Pence & Paymar, (1990) as an illustration of the various abusive tactics a male abuser uses in his quest for power and control. The Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) curriculum includes a

second wheel, the Equality Wheel (Pence & Paymar, 1990). This wheel illustrates the changed behaviors that those who batter work toward in achieving healthy relationships and ending the abuse.

These wheels provide a helpful illustration of the many behavioral changes necessary to succeed in this change process. However, the use of the word, “power,” in this context is restrictive and fails to provide a helpful, alternative vision to those who are seeking power in destructive ways. In the Power and Control Wheel context, the definition of power appears to be similar to Max Weber’s definition of power (as cited in Kernohan, 1998, p. 16), “the possibility of imposing one’s will upon the behaviour of other persons”. This definition includes all three of Galbraith’s power distinctions: condign power, compensatory power, and conditioned power (as cited in Kernohan, 1998, p. 14). Condign power includes the use of domination and negative sanction to control; compensatory power includes inducements and incentives; and conditioned power is obtained by changing beliefs in a way that makes it seem right or part of some natural order to submit to the will of another. These definitions of power do not include the concept of power other than through domination and submissive cooperation.

As noted by Tétreault and Teske (2000, p. 6) “if feminists are to transform systems of oppression and domination, they will have to bring new understanding to the concept of power.” This new understanding must be broader than viewing power as power-over, or domination, and power-with, or cooperation. Feminists must include an understanding of power that includes power-against, or the power of resistance. Those who batter can relate to this, as they sometimes experience their

victim using this form of power. Tétreault and Teske (2000) liken it to Simone Weil's concept of power, arising out of the ideal of loving one's enemy, including "shaming him, leaving him, or ultimately dying in preference to becoming like him" (p. 6). The effectiveness and power of organized resistance to violence is well documented through the lives and actions of Mohandas (Mahatma) Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela. The history of Mennonites, Quakers, and other religions also gives testimony to the power of nonviolence. Arendt furthers this understanding, viewing power and violence as incompatible:

It is insufficient to say that power and violence are not the same. Power and violence are opposites; where one rules absolutely, the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course it ends in power's disappearance (as cited in Tétreault & Teske, 2000, p. 7).

Whether or not those who batter will view power and violence as incompatible, their viewing of power and nonviolence as compatible is important. In addition to including the concept of power-against, the power of choice and individual empowerment need to be included in the definition of power. Hrezo (2000) also provides an interpretation of Simone Weil's perspective, "For her, power is the individual's ability to think, to make moral choices based upon that thought, and to accept the consequences of those choices" (p. 97). Weil does not believe in power-over or power-with, and takes the position that power is not force (Gray, 2001; Hrezo, 2000, Tétreault, 2000).

Cooley (as cited in 1998) addresses the need all humans have for power, "the need to exert power, when thwarted in the open fields of life, is the more likely to assert itself in trifles" (p. 161). Those who batter will be more motivated to change

after they develop an understanding that they have the opportunity to gain power (in the broader definition) by letting go, rather than dominating over their partner. Stosny (2002, p. 9-5) relates this to an abuser's actions: "the human brain loathes states of powerlessness...it is not a question *whether* abusers will empower themselves, but *how*." It is difficult to teach how without broadening the definition of power. A clearer distinction occurs when domination is linked with control rather than power with control. "Power defined as control, as the ability to dominate and to prevail, results in winners and losers. The goal of nonviolent power is not to have a winner, but to change the situation itself—to change the context" (Teske, 2000, p. 116).

As those who batter develop a heightened understanding of power, they can understand the price that domination and control have on them. As noted by Spence, "For no one fettered to those he holds captive is ever, himself, free" (1986, p. 11). In order to create the best opportunity for change to nonviolence, a program for those who batter needs to conceptualize power as something other than physical force, domination, or control. The concept of power needs to be used by programs in a way that engages those who are abusive to empower themselves through means other than violence.

#### *A Changed Approach to Assessment, Accountability and Safety*

Accountability and safety are linked with feminist-based and cognitive-behavioral intervention programs, and have become recognized as critical components of programs for those who batter (Aldarondos and Mederos, 2002). Accountability is an essential element for both positive change in the participant's behavior as well as safety of the victim (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Bancroft and

Silverman, 2002; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, Lewis, 2000; Pence, 2002; Pettit and Smith, 2002). It often consists of the program involving the criminal justice system when there is noncompliance with program standards, known violation of restraining orders, or known violation of probation (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002). While such program criteria for accountability are functional for the maintenance of a program, this framework limits the ability to pursue feminist-based values. Without additional accountability measures, both safety of the victim and accountability of those who batter are marginalized; victim experiences are not adequately valued; and programs are likely to fall short of their goals (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, and Lewis, 2000).

A program cannot hold someone accountable for either past or present violence that is unknown. Adequate reporting of noncompliance to the criminal justice system assumes that the program will have access to this information. To create this level of accountability, a thorough assessment is needed prior to assignment into the group setting (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002). Failure to assess adequately results in collusion with the perpetrator and indicates that he is not responsible for his violence (Hamberger, 2002).

An assessment needs to include the context in which the violence occurs (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Cano, 2003; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh and Lewis, 2000; Hamberger, 2002); past behaviors; and environmental predictors (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Hamberger, 2002; Saunders and Hammill, 2003). These behaviors and predictors are not likely to be detected

through psychological testing (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Gondolf and White, 2001; Saunders and Hammill, 2003). Aldarondos and Mederos further explain:

Determining whether someone is a “batterer” is not a clinical decision. It is not a diagnosis of a psychological disorder, but a determination based on reviewing information provided by collateral sources (such as social service reports and criminal, mental health, and medical records), by the alleged abusers and victims, and by observing and documenting abusive or coercive conduct that appears in meetings with practitioners, clinicians, and other relevant personnel...It is important to stress that “physically abusive man,” “abuser” and “batterer” are neither psychological diagnoses nor adjudicated designations dispensed by the criminal justice system. (2002, p. 2-4).

Just as a psychological based assessment is too narrow, Aldarondo and Mederos noted that reliance on the criminal justice system for assessment is also too narrow. Using conviction or criminal records for inclusion or exclusion into a group, or for assessing the level of violence, is inadequate because this system is incident driven. It only records those incidents where there is sufficient evidence to prosecute in an adversarial legal environment (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002, p. 2-4). The criminal justice system cannot adequately capture the presence or lack of an ongoing pattern of coercive control inherent in domestic violence. It is for this pattern that accountability is needed if change is likely to occur.

Program reliance for assessment on those who batter to sufficiently disclose violence is also inappropriate (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, and Lewis, 2000; Hamberger, 2002). Due to denial, minimization, beliefs, and attitudes, attempts at self-disclosure remain insufficient, as explained by Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh and Lewis (2000):

Even the most candid of men provide revelations only of injuries they can see or are willing to admit or that have been pressed into their

consciousness through the comments of the women, medics, or police. Other injuries simply “do not count,” “have not occurred,” or “could not be that bad” (p. 20).

The most reliable single source for information related to context of the violence, past behaviors and environmental predictors is provided by victims (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, and Lewis, 2000). The use of multiple sources of information, including police records, victims, those who batter, and their families, is widely recommended by experts (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002).

Victim involvement enables programs to help those who batter gain a realistic concept of their level of violence and hold them accountable for further violence. It also improves the program’s ability to expand the concept of accountability to include holding those who batter accountable for understanding the impact of their violence (Dutton, 1998). This is an essential component for stopping aggression of all types (Bandura, 1973), and fits well specifically with transformation of those who batter:

Obviously, any intervention directed at stopping this violence would need to address the problem that men do not see it as a problem; do not believe that it truly harms others; imagine that there are no effects beyond immediate injuries; and harbor the notion that once the violence stops everything is immediately solved, all is forgotten, everything is repaired (Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, and Lewis, 2000, p. 23).

In addition to the need for victim contact related to accountability, there is also a need for victim safety. Information can be provided to victims that empower them and increases their ability to develop safety plans (Elinoff-Acker, 2005; Hamberger, 2002). Supplied information also limits the ability of those who batter to use the program as a tool against victims (Elinoff-Acker, 2005) and improves

victims' understanding of realistic expectations regarding program participation (Dutton, 1998; Elinoff-Acker, 2005; Hamberger, 2002). Assessing potential danger primarily through intake is not sufficient; ongoing adequate assessment requires an ongoing relationship with the victim (Jones and Gondolf, 2001; Elinoff-Acker, 2005). Another advantage of having an ongoing relationship with the victim is that it allows the program to maintain the victim's current address and the phone numbers that are needed to warn the victim, if necessary. Without this information, it is unlikely that the program will adequately fulfill the duty to warn victims.

Many programs do not gain information directly from victims in the assessment process because of liability concerns, lack of funds, and concerns for the victim's safety and right to privacy. Although victim contacts need to be carefully managed in consideration of these concerns, the contacts can be advantageous to the program's effectiveness with those who batter and enhance the ability to protect victims (Arias, 2002; Dutton, 1998; Elinoff-Acker, 2005; Hamberger, 2002). To assure safety and protection, it is critical that victim participation be voluntary, and that victims have the right to keep information they disclose confidential (Dutton, 1998; Elinoff-Acker, 2005; Hamberger, 2002).

### *Communal Responsibility*

No matter how diligent the coordinated community response is, many societal factors that reinforce violence and heighten stress are likely to remain in the community in which those who batter live and work. Many impoverished and oppressed batterers will be influenced through favorable images of violence presented by family, friends, and mass media (Steeves, 2000). Those who batter can go through

the process of change more readily when they are immersed in a small community that is invested in the particular change process related to nonviolence (Bandura, 1973). Perilla and Pérez (2002) explain the importance of communal responsibility for an individual's change process:

Real and long-lasting changes are possible only when individuals begin to change their view of themselves not as living isolated or in a vacuum, but as communal participants who affect the well-being of the community and are affected by it. We therefore need the formation of communities of people who have begun their own processes of individual transformation and are willing to support and challenge one another's ongoing processes (p. 11-5).

Programs for those who batter must build such a community within the group experience to be successful at creating positive change. It is for this reason that the use of the open, rather than closed group is advantageous. With different members coming into and leaving the group at different times, there are members who are nearing the end of their group experience who can take on the leadership and mentorship roles in the group. This includes challenging new members' beliefs and attitudes that lead to violence, encouraging their participation, and providing them with a vision of how their change can occur. When new members become acculturated as communal participants, they begin to identify more and more with the older members. This leads to new members becoming more invested in nonviolence. They begin to challenge themselves as well as others in thoughts and behaviors that lead to violence, and eventually become the seasoned members of the group who provide leadership and mentorship for the new. This group design allows transformation to occur within a relatively stable group culture, regardless of the idiosyncrasies and characteristics of individual group members. It is also effective

regardless of which stage in the transformation process members are in when beginning the group process. As the program ages, a beneficial component can be the return of graduates as group facilitators after living years without violence. Their presence creates an extension from the program community to the outside community, as well as strong mentorship for current members.

#### *A Changed Focus on Types of Abuse*

Most batterer intervention programs accept only those who have been physically, emotionally, and/or sexually abusive to their spouse or partner, and base the majority of the curriculum on stopping these types of violence (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002). Although it is recognized that there is a high co-occurrence of child abuse and partner abuse (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002; Edleson, 2004; Kelly and Wolfe, 2004), intervention with maltreating fathers has received limited focus by batterer intervention programs (Mederos, 2002). This creates a service gap because communities do not provide adequate services for maltreating fathers through other means (Kelly and Wolfe, 2004; Scott and Crooks, 2004). While most communities have a variety of services for high risk and maltreating mothers with the intent of supporting their change efforts, the response to maltreating fathers is less focused on assisting their change efforts (Kelly and Wolfe, 2004). The systemic response to maltreating fathers, if there is one, is likely to be “separating them from their families and using coercive measures to ensure that these men are limited in their access to their children” (Kelly and Wolfe, 2004, p. 116). This response reflects the societal bias that maltreating mothers are likely to change and maltreating fathers are not.

Helping maltreating fathers change often includes helping those who batter. After conducting a review of related studies, Bancroft and Silverman conclude that batterers are several times more likely than are nonbattering men to physically abuse children (pp.42-43). Although the majority of batterers do not sexually abuse their children (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002), about one-half of incest perpetrators batter the child's mother (Bancroft and Silverman), and daughters of batterers are over six times more likely than other girls to be victims of father-daughter incest (Paveza, as cited by Bancroft and Silverman, pp. 85-86).

The co-occurrence of psychological abuse of children and battering is of particular concern. In addition to the psychological abuse an individual can choose to perform on other family members or partners, batterers can subject children to additional types of psychological abuse simply because they are their children. Having a child experience the abuse of their mother or caretaker, parenting through intimidation and domination, creating trauma bonding, and purposely damaging the child's relationship with their mother or caretaker are all common forms of psychological abuse employed by batterers (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002).

While some children exhibit more difficulties than others due to this type of abuse (Edleson, 2004), many children experience negative impacts well into their adulthood (Dutton, 1998; Kernic, Monary-Ernsdorff, Koepsell, and Holt, 2005). There has been considerable use of the legal system by batterers to continue to maintain control over their victim through the use of parental rights, damaging the children in the process (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002). As noted by Zorza and Rosen (2005):

Batterers are far more likely to fight for custody than are other fathers. They do so often with no prior interest in the children or real interest in winning, but rather to control, hurt, or demoralize or impoverish their victims, waging intensive campaigns against them” (p. 986).

A particularly damaging legal tactic is the misuse of Parental Alienation Syndrome (Drozd, Kuehnle and Walker, 2004; Drozd and Oleson, 2004; Johnston and Kelly, 2004; Zorza and Rosen, 2005). Although this syndrome lacks scientific basis (Johnston and Kelly, 2004; Zorza and Rosen, 2005), it has been successfully used to change custody arrangements and give those who batter custody of the children. The non-offending parents are susceptible to two different types of charges: if they do not take action that keeps their children safe from the batterer, they can have their children removed due to failure to protect; however, if they try to take action to protect their children from the violence of the other parent, they can have their children removed from their care due to participating in alienating the children from the violent parent. Furthermore, this often results in the children being placed with the violent parent. This has occurred in cases where the violence of the batterer includes previous violence to the children and or mother and the batterer has a prior conviction for other violence. In some cases this includes prior conviction for sexual abuse (Johnston and Kelly, 2004). The ability of the batterer to gain legal custody of the children is common. For example, “in Florida, violent fathers were more likely to get sole custody of their children than the mothers who were the victims of domestic violence” (Zorza and Rosen, 2005, p. 989). The ability to use the children as pawns to control and punish their primary victim, as well as the ability to gain primary or sole custody of these children, gives batterers the opportunity to continue to damage

their children psychologically long after dissolution of the intimate relationship with the children's other parent.

Violent parents who share custody, are the non-custodial parent, or the custodial parent can benefit from a batterer's intervention program including a thorough exploration and confrontation of abuse of children. Rather than focusing on children's issues as a portion of one segment of the curriculum, as is currently commonplace, programs could improve by integrating this focus throughout the curriculum. Co-occurrence of child maltreatment and partner abuse indicates the need to address both issues if the goal of a batterer intervention program is to assist those who batter in changing to nonviolence (Mederos, 2002). If both child maltreatment and partner abuse are effectively integrated into the curriculum, the curriculum can be beneficial to those who are abusive to children; those who are abusive to partners; and those who are abusive to both.

This comprehensive approach also needs to be considered because there are few other options available to address child maltreatment effectively. Making referrals to parenting programs will likely not help, and could put the children at greater risk of harm (Scott and Crooks, 2004). Current parenting programs are a mismatch in treating men who maltreat their children because the focus is on the development of child management skills that tend to validate these father's dominating, oppressive, and over-controlling approach (Bancroft, 2002; Kelly and Wolfe, 2004; Scott and Crooks, 2004). Maltreating fathers need intervention by those with "a thorough knowledge of the issues of child welfare and batterer-intervention dynamics and practice" (Kelly and Wolfe, 2004, p. 117). This knowledge is needed to

be able to confront the abusive behavior and hold those who batter accountable while teaching them to become child centered (Kelly and Wolfe, 2004; Scott and Crooks, 2004). Scott and Crooks (2004) report that if a parenting program fails to take into consideration the co-occurrence of child abuse and spouse abuse, it is both inappropriate and insufficient (p. 103); this could apply to those who batter, as well.

All in all, programs for those who batter need to expand their curriculum focus on child abuse and parenting issues related to control and domination. This should include providing child-centered parenting approaches, exploration of parenting practices, and accountability for parenting practices that are abusive or lack child-centeredness.

#### *Understanding Similarities and Differences*

Those who batter their partner have different beliefs and characteristics motivating them to dominate and control their victim (Aldorando and Mederos, 2002; Dutton, 1998; Gondolf and White 2001; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). Although differences are recognized by practitioners, no specific typology has been developed that has been confirmed by independent research (Aldarondo & Mederos, 2002; Levesque, Gelles, and Velicer, 2000; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). While Loft et al. (2005) determined that pathological batterers could be appropriately clustered by a psychological typology under stringent circumstances, nonpathological batterers could not. Although it is likely that those who suffer from borderline personality disorder may become motivated toward violence due to fear of abandonment, and an individual with antisocial personality disorder may not perceive any reason not to be violent (Pettit and Smith, 2002), a typology built upon pathology is not adequate for

determining appropriate categories for all batterers (Gondolf and White, 2001; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). Additionally, attempts to utilize such a typology to determine risk factors such as level of violence or tendency to reassault has repeatedly failed (Gondolf and White, 2001; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). While a high percentage of those who reassault their partner have psychopathic tendencies and are almost twice as likely to show antisocial tendencies, they do not have a significantly higher pathological dysfunction than others who batter (Gondolf and White, 2001).

The lack of ability to identify appropriate typology categories is possibly the result of examining the problem through a psychological lens, focusing on diagnosis without paying adequate attention to factors other than pathology (Gondolf and White, 2001, Waltz et. al., 2000). Psychological perspectives appear to be the most familiar to clinicians interested in determining batterer types, as there is societal pressure to conform to the usage of a psychological approach rather than a feminist based approach in this work (Merry, 2001); yet, psychological theoretical perspectives do not fit well with the overall dynamics. Without merging the social, environmental, and other motivational factors, an adequate typology is unlikely to be reached. Bandura (1973) notes, “A social system gets its members to aggress, whatever their personal makeup, by legitimizing, modeling, and sanctioning such behavior, not by inducing emotional disorders in them” (p. 267).

Nevertheless, understanding those who batter is not accomplished by assigning the same characteristics and motives to them all. Victims report varied

experiences due to differences amongst those who batter (Dobash et. al., 2000; Dutton, 1998). As noted by Bandura,

People aggress for a variety of reasons. Some resort to force to appropriate tangible resources they desire. Some behave aggressively because it wins them approval and status rewards. Still others may rely on aggressive conquests to bolster their self-esteem and sense of manliness. And some may derive satisfaction from seeing the expressions of suffering they inflict on their victims. Essentially the same aggressive actions thus may have markedly different functional value for different individuals and for the same individual on different occasions (p. 184).

Bandura's explanation is applicable to those who batter and provides understanding of their different motivations and characteristics. Batterers are a diverse group exhibiting many conflictual characteristics in their external portrayal as well as their sense of self. Some perceive themselves as superior, some inferior (Dutton, 1998; Saunders and Hamill, 2003). Some appear sadistic, enjoying the torture of their victim. Others appear desperate, as if their very survival depends on keeping their victim with them (Dutton, 1998). Most, however, do not appear sadistic or desperate. Rather, they appear to view themselves as entitled to get their way, and justify doing so through the use of violence, domination and control (Bancroft and Silverman, 2002).

Although different characteristics and motives create considerable diversity in the group (Dobash et. al., 2000; Dutton, 1998 ), most have attitudes and beliefs consistent with male privilege (Dobash et. al., 2000; Dutton, 1998, Bancroft and Silverman, 2002 ). This appears to hold true whether the batterer is male or female, heterosexual or homosexual. As noted by Sinclair,

We do not attribute the violence to the gender per se, but to the role expectations associated with the assumption of superiority. Thus, the concept applies to men's violence against men and women's violence towards women and men. Gays and lesbians are raised in the same society heterosexuals are and learn the same values of power in relationships. From childhood, in every nation throughout the world, we learn to live up to cultural standards of domination and submission based on male-role power" (Sinclair, 2002, p. 5-3).

The commonality of cultural experiences related to male-role power creates the need for programs for those who batter to utilize a feminist-based approach, regardless of the identity of the individual. A feminist based approach, with a cognitive behavioral component can reduce the propensity of violence by "changing the valuation of combativeness to make it signify ineptitude rather than manliness" (Bandura, 1973, p. 256). It is within the feminist-based approach that beliefs and attitudes related to this male-role power can be examined through critical consciousness (Pence, 2002; Pettit and Smith, 2002; Teske and Tétreault, 2000; Wilkins, 1998), and the transformation to nonviolence can begin.

Transformational feminism is an advantageous theoretical model for programs attempting to create positive change in those who batter, as it "is the notion that both accountability and empowerment—competing moral stances—can and do coexist simultaneously in the same family" (Almeida and Hudak, 2002, p. 10-3). The lack of acknowledgement of this co-existence in liberal feminist theory has been a stumbling block in its effective application (Kernohan, 1998). Almeida and Hudak maintain that liberal feminism is primarily a westernized theoretical approach that compartmentalizes institutional and individual change and has limited effectiveness within many cultural frameworks. Almeida and Hudak's view that liberal feminism is limited in its effectiveness with cross-cultural application is supported by others

(Tétreault, 2000; Kernohan, 1998; Warkentin and Daly, 2000). Transformational feminism, on the other hand, “incorporates the anti-racist, anti-gay movements together with a class and diversity of women platform” (Almeida and Hudak, 2002, p. 10-2). It addresses violence through an active social justice perspective that empowers individuals through the use of community.

*A Changed Focus on Differences: Obstacle or Opportunity?*

The more obvious social differences among those who batter tend to be the dividing factors used in the formation of batterer intervention groups. Most groups accept only heterosexual males (Saunders and Hamill, 2003; Mederos, 2002). The trend has been toward increasing exclusivity regarding religion, class, race, ethnicity, and different types of disadvantages or oppression. The intent is to get rid of the obstacles that could hamper the men’s willingness to invest in the change process (Mederos, 2002, p. 1-15). There are separate programs designed specifically for Hispanic heterosexual males (Perilla and Perez, 2002; Hernández, 2002), incarcerated African-American heterosexual males (Donnelly, Smith, and Williams, 2002), Native American heterosexual males (Nevilles-Sorrell, 2005) heterosexual women (Manley-Smith, 2005) and gay women (Cayouette, 1999; Pettit and Smith, 2002). Some larger programs utilize one basic curriculum, but alter its application to meet the needs of specific groups of males from specific cultural backgrounds: the EMERGE program has groups for gay men, African-Americans, Caribbean-Americans, Vietnamese and Cambodian heterosexual males (Adams and Cayouette, 2002).

This trend toward exclusivity has several advantages. It acknowledges differences of societal and cultural experiences, and uses these experiences to

enhance the change process. According to Mead (1964), this encompasses a critical aspect of learning:

One of the blocks in our ability to transform our present-day culture is our failure to recognize the extent to which different individuals, different occupations, classes, and cultures depend on implicit learning from artifacts, on empathetic, imitative, and identificatory learning (p. 137).

Enhancing the feeling of communal unity in the group creates less defensiveness and more acceptance of information and the learning experience. Additionally, common historical roots can give a cultural understanding of the violence, as well as a cultural context for eliminating it.

Another advantage of exclusivity within a batterer intervention program is the reduction of barriers to accepting responsibility. For example, if an African-American male was confronted about his violent behavior in a diverse group, he might discount group input due to his belief that white group members are incapable of understanding his life experiences. If this same individual was confronted in a group consisting of African-American males only, his resistance to group input is probably reduced.

In addition to strengthening group positive interaction, exclusivity permits tailoring the curriculum to fit the person-in-environment. Emphasis can be given to the impact of slavery and oppression for the African-American group, the impact of immigration for the Hispanic immigrant group, and so forth.

While these advantages are noteworthy, there is reason also to consider exclusivity as disadvantageous. One of the disadvantages is related to practical

application. For every line of separation that determines inclusion and exclusion to a group, an assumption is made regarding each individual's feeling of belonging. That assumption might not hold true. For example, if groups are separated on the basis of race, then one assumes that individuals identify with their race more than class or some other distinction. If separated by religion or class, there are race differences within the group. If separation were to include gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion, many groups for those who batter would be far too small to be effective in all but the largest programs. If all of these separations were to be viewed as best practice, the particular strengths of rural and smaller programs would likely be marginalized. Rural and smaller programs would risk being considered sub-standard, or cease to exist.

More importantly, the idea of exclusivity can be viewed as fundamentally contrary to the development of a healthy respect for diversity. The more insight we develop about others, the more alike we seem (Cooley, 1998, p. 182). The use of such "separate but equal" learning environments has been widely viewed as disadvantageous to both the oppressed and the oppressors within the framework of public schools. The question remains whether those who batter have more benefit from such an artificial separation than from the communal experience of inclusive group membership. Inclusion offers all the diversity of the greater community in which those who batter live and work. Almeida and Hudak (2002) contend it can create a unifying understanding of violence while also dispelling many of the myths about others that perpetuate the violence and its devastating effects on group members' lives.

A cultural context model, developed by Almeida and Hudak (2002) illustrates this latter approach. Almeida and Hudak (2002) used transformational feminism as the basis for the development of a social justice model that extensively examines the cultural context in which violence occurs. Exclusivity due to diagnosis, problem, or cultural background is seen as limiting the opportunities to understand the larger societal framework in which violence occurs, and therefore reducing transformational change. This approach is similar to the organic view of process recommended by Cooley (as cited in 1998), rather than particularism, or “holding some one phase of the process to be the source of all the others” (Cooley, as cited in 1998, p. 147). In relation to male hierarchy and family systems Almeida and Hudak note, “dismantling this structure, or healing this system, depends on opening it up as much as possible” (p. 10-13).

Such inclusivity has its challenges when working with those who batter. There are those who batter only their partner; those who batter their partner and children; and those who batter only their children. Nevertheless, virtually the same attitudes, beliefs, domination, and controlling behaviors exist (Bancroft, 2002; Kelly and Wolfe, 2004; Scott and Crooks, 2004). More importantly, the same intervention techniques are beneficial (Scott and Crooks, 2004). A disadvantage of inclusion of those who batter their partner in a group with those who batter their child is the greater level of complexity in group processing. However, the advantages of inclusion, developing critical consciousness and creating transformation, are viewed as outweighing this difficulty (Almeida and Hudak, 2002). Creation of separate programming, when the same intervention techniques are beneficial, could be likened

to doing separate programming for those who physically abuse their partner; those who emotionally abuse their partner; and those who sexually abuse their partner. Compartmentalization can create artificial restraints that hamper the overall change process (Almeida and Hudak, 2002; Cooley, as cited in 1998).

To accomplish openness, Almeida and Hudak (2002) create culture circles, avoiding separation due to race, religion, or type of abuse that brought the individual to the program. Culture circles are developed as an extension of the community of people against violence. Trained volunteers from the greater community are used as sponsors to mentor men into a life of nonviolence. The use of socioeducation to achieve critical consciousness is utilized, with a family genogram developed and specific questions asked that lend understanding to each client's unique cultural context for violence. Family members and victims have a high level of participation in the process. Cultural consultants are used to provide a deeper understanding of a specific individual's cultural background and to help dismantle the idea that traditions of domination are the aspects of a certain culture that are most highly valued. The facilitator takes on an expanded role in which his or her own cultural consciousness is openly examined and requires ongoing development. It is from this openness, according to Almeida and Hudak, that lasting change can occur. The cultural context model includes the implicit learning from culture and an identificatory learning process that Mead (1964) perceives as essential. Inclusivity, within the proper framework, enhances both empowerment and accountability of its members. This creates the potential for transformational change toward respect for diversity and commitment to nonviolence.

The only area of exclusivity Almeida and Hudak (2002) identify as present in the cultural context model is gender separation. Although a woman may enter the men's circle in order to converse about a difficulty and have her male partner held accountable by his culture circle, gender determines culture circle participation. If exclusivity and compartmentalization is harmful, then it is reasonable to challenge the need for gender exclusivity, as well. Many of the gendered differences related to violence have little relation with sex/gender actual differences, and significant relation with resources and opportunity (Tétreault and Teske, 2000, p. 11). Resources, opportunities, understandings of ourselves, and understandings of our roles are cultural experiences. As Cooley notes, "the difference is neither in human nature nor in capacity, but in organization" (Cooley, as cited in Cooley, 1998, p.183).

If a program explores cultural context adequately, dropping gender exclusivity in group formation could reap the same benefits that are inherent in stopping separatism due to race, ethnicity, or class. To do so, the program would need to address the implications related to male privilege; recognize the difference between violence to control and self-defense or protection; and utilize a transformational feminist approach. Dropping gender exclusivity could be advantageous in helping those who batter develop critical consciousness regarding their violence in all forms.

On the other hand, if a program has limitations that do not allow it to explore cultural context adequately, then, regardless of inherent shortcomings, exclusivity needs to be considered. This can be done on the basis of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, types of abuse, or religion. Such exclusivity creates a comfortable and safe environment that is advantageous for personal reflection and the beginnings

of change when cultural context cannot be adequately provided. However, the further one departs from intervening in the context within which the violence arises, the weaker the results are likely to be (Bandura, 1973, p. 247).

### *The Individual Change Process*

Change is unsettling. No matter what difficulty or pain an individual's behaviors have produced, there is a sense of familiarity, and thus, comfort, in continuing to behave as in the past. Common reactions to the prospect of change are explained by Mead (1964):

The hazards of change are so great that men are likely to approach a new idea much as they approach magic, either by rejecting the new idea altogether as too dangerous or by regarding it as a panacea whose effectiveness is determined by absolute, blind faith (p 269).

Both scenarios, total rejection of the batterer intervention program philosophical views, or immediate, blind adoption of this philosophy are common initial responses from those who batter. As different as these initial responses are, they are both likely to be nothing more than an initial reaction. Neither response indicates a change or inability to change. The reasons an individual initially stops being violent are often unrelated to the reasons that same individual maintains nonviolence (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002, p. 2-17).

According to Bandura (1973), lasting change is likely to occur by helping individuals develop through three transformational stages: modeling alternative modes repeatedly; guiding, and providing ample opportunities to practice the modeled behavior; and arranging successful experiences for initial efforts (p. 253). While these behavioral components are included in varying degree in most batterer intervention programs, there is disagreement among both programs and research

findings regarding cognitive and affective components needed. Proponents of having a strong affective component which focuses on resolving past trauma and attachment issues include Dutton (1998), Stosny (2002), Johnson, (2001), Pandya and Gingerich (2002), Scott and Wolfe (2000), and Ronel (1999). Often, there are stages through which individuals progress in their transformation. For example, Johnson (2001) determined that men who completed their program were more likely than those who dropped out to have undergone a progression of stages which include: 1) accept responsibility for their violence and recognize it is not out of their control, 2) realize the cost of their violence outweighs the gain, 3) recognize a specific problem within themselves, which is different with each man, and 4) determine the therapeutic process most helpful in addressing the problem. Another commonality among the proponents of a strong affective component is the likelihood to view the work as treatment, rather than intervention. Dutton (1998) determined the clinical goals of treatment as “to get the man to recognize and accept responsibility for his abusiveness, and to develop control over and reduce his abusiveness” (p. 161). Although Dutton (1998) provides quantitative findings indicating considerable success, and other practitioners provide positive qualitative findings (Johnson, 2001; Pandya and Gingerich, 2002; Ronel, 1999; and Stosny, 2002), independent studies of psychological treatment based programs have been limited (Saunders and Hammill, 2003).

Those who favor a more feminist, community activist focus with emphasis on dialogue, persuasion, and challenging beliefs include Almeida and Hudak, 2002, Pence, (2002), and Sinclair, (2002). While Adams and Cayouette (2002), Dobash et

al.(2002), Hamberger (2002), Pettit and Smith (2002) and Saunders and Hamill (2003) also emphasize a feminist based approach utilizing dialogue, persuasion, and challenging beliefs, there is less emphasis on community activism and more on social-psychological perspectives. Feminist-based programs are likely to view their work as a core part of the community intervention, and consider their program as batterer intervention rather than as treatment. Pettit and Smith (2002) found that “the combination of letting them know that violence is wrong, imposing consequences, and then providing alternative strategies does work” (Pettit and Smith, 2002, p. 8-4). White and Gondolf (2000) reviewed 100 men’s level of functioning and nonviolence upon entrance, during, and after a batterer intervention program. They concluded that programs which utilize a gender-based cognitive-behavioral approach have the capacity to be quite effective with helping most men who batter to achieve change.

There are some differences in approach to individual change for programs with a psychological focus as contrasted with those programs that have a gender based focus. However, there also are differences between individual programs within each category, and similarities between programs from the different categories.

Mead’s (1965) perspective suggests that both categories of programs have strengths to offer in the process of change for those who batter. According to Mead, “the adult learner, like the child, can learn by empathy, imitation, and identification” (p. 141).

This recipe for learning can be achieved through a merging of the socio-feminist based program with some psychological aspects related to safety and trauma work.

*Imitation and Identification.*

A cognitive-behavioral, socio-educational approach can enable the group facilitators to teach specific domestic-related conflict resolution skills which can then be imitated through role play and other experiential learning activities (Bandura, 1973). A cognitive-behavioral, feminist-based approach also enables the facilitators to assist group members to examine both the underlying beliefs and attitudes that promote the violence, as well as the behavior itself (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Saunders and Hamill, 2003; Dobash et. al, 2000). Having a male and female facilitator can enhance the ability of group participants to observe healthy male-female sharing of responsibility and power, as well as provide group members with the opportunity to be challenged when they give deference to the male facilitator (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002).

Another important consideration regarding imitation is length of the program. Ample opportunity for role play is important (Bandura, 1973, p. 317). Although research is unclear in identifying an optimal length of time for a batterer's intervention program (Saunders and Hamill, 2003), there is indication that longer programs are more inclined to be beneficial in creating lasting change. Experimental design research found considerable differences in behavior between those who attended a 26-week program and a control group not assigned to treatment. This same research found virtually no behavioral differences between those who attended an 8-week program and the control group. The 8-week program covered the same material in the same number of session hours as the 26-week program (Jackson, et. al., 2003). The advantage that longer programs provide to participants is the time to process and integrate the material by applying the group experience to their daily life experiences.

This is explained through social learning theory; “if people behave in new ways, eventually their attitudes change in the direction of their actions (Bandura, 1973, p. 257). Longer groups enable the participant to imitate that which has been learned, report back to the group about successes and difficulties, receive feedback, and try again. As this process continues, the participant can begin to identify with nonviolence and become more comfortable with change.

### *Empathy*

Compassion is incompatible with abuse (Bandura, 1973; Cooley, 1998; Pandya & Gingerich, 2002). Violent men often derive self-satisfaction and enhanced feelings of self-worth from physical conquest (Bandura, 1973, p. 209). Initially, they can learn to not be physically violent when it is perceived that further violence will result in a significant personal cost. The ability to remain nonviolent physically, emotionally, and sexually for an extended period of time is more difficult. It can be enhanced through the development of an internalized resolve to stop the violence. An essential element of this resolve is the development of empathy for the previous victim (Aldarondo and Mederos, 2002; Pandya & Gingerich, 2002; Stosny, 2002).

The development of empathy is based in large part on the basis of a substantial self (Cooley, 1998, p. 167). This requires introspection, which is a normal and common process (Cooley, 1998, pp. 118-119) that is foreign to many who batter (Dutton, 1998). An understanding of self is not likely to occur solely through cognitive-behavioral approaches (Cooley, 1998). It requires an environment where one can feel safe enough to both explore past experiences and begin to process unresolved grief, particularly that which is related to attachment (Dutton, 1998;

Stosny, 2002). Dutton (1998) found that the biggest childhood contributors to adult abusiveness were all related to some type of unresolved grief or attachment difficulty. In order of importance, the top five contributors were: feeling rejected by one's father; feeling a lack of warmth from one's father; being physically abused by one's father; being verbally abused by one's father; and feeling rejected by one's mother" (pp. 144-145). Dutton also found that shaming experiences, particularly by the father, were strongly related to borderline personality organization, anger, trauma symptoms, and partner's reports of abusiveness (p. 152). As this information has become more recognized, it has spawned considerable interest and some change in programs. An approach has developed that focuses on increasing the ability to create a connection of those who batter with their previous victimization issues (Mederos, 2002). This requires programs that have previously maintained a rigid focus on a cognitive-behavioral approach to include an affective component. This allows group members to acknowledge the previous projection of their past difficulties onto their partner and to begin developing the ability to have empathy for their partner.

Through exploring their own victimization, group members can become more open to exploring the experience of their partner. Ensuring that this step occurs requires a mechanism within the program curriculum. A common concern about psychologically-based programs is that when so much time is spent on dealing with the batterer's own victimization, there is little time or focus on accountability. Feminist and cognitive-behavioral programs that do not have ongoing contact with the victim are also vulnerable to not having a strong enough accountability mechanism within the program. However, such a mechanism has been developed for

working with sex offenders. Saunders (2003) identifies similarities between working with sex offenders and working with those who batter, and the advantage of utilizing similar techniques (2003). Madanes (1995, pp. 93-119), developed a structured format for apology and reparation sessions between sex offenders and their familial victims. Madanes also adapted this process for use with those who batter (pp. 149-169). The steps taken in the process developed by Madanes maximize the accountability of the offender, and give victims a voice and added protection (Madhanes, 1995). Utilization of a similar approach, upon agreement of the victim and prior to the completion of group attendance, enables those who batter to be both held accountable and empowered. It also provides the tools to diminish the resistance to identification and empathy.

#### Conclusion

Those who batter have many obstacles to overcome in their quest to become nonviolent. Some obstacles come from the greater society; the surrounding community; and familial experiences. Other obstacles may come from the design of the very programs intended to help those who batter. Cooley, Mead, Bandura, and a variety of feminist theorists provide insights that call for considerable change in such programs to meet the needs of those who batter. Some of the more important areas of change include: a greater connection between programs for those who batter and the larger communities in which they operate; expanding the concept of power; expanding the types of abuse to be addressed to include an ongoing emphasis on children; renewed emphasis on both empowerment and accountability; the creation of cultural context in which the group members can relate; and provision of ample

opportunities to imitate, identify, and develop empathy. As programs are able to make these changes in beliefs, attitudes, and practice, those who batter can better receive the guidance and support necessary to change their beliefs, attitudes, and violent behaviors.

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