

EFFECTS OF DATING/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE VICTIM

Loss of appetite, eating disorders	Mistrust of self and others
Weight loss, Gastrointestinal disorders	Feelings of worthlessness, low self-esteem
Headaches, Nervous, Anxious	Sadness, Depression
Bruises, broken bones	Suicidal
Central nervous system disorders	Fear
Self-blame, Guilt, Shame	Terror
Confusion	Death

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Flashbacks
Nightmares
Anxiety
Emotional numbing
Insomnia
Hypervigilance
Avoidance of traumatic triggers and talking about the problem
Feeling detached and estranged
Explosive or inhibited anger
Helplessness
Sense of being different from others
Attribute total power to perpetrator or become preoccupied with relationship to them, including preoccupation with revenge
Isolation, distrust, or repeated search for a rescuer
Sense of hopelessness and despair
Substance abuse
Self-mutilation, self-harm

BATTERED WOMEN'S SYNDROME

1. **Believe violence is their fault.**
2. **Inability to place responsibility for violence elsewhere.**
3. **Fears for her life and/or children's lives.**
4. **Irrational belief that abuser is omnipresent and omniscient.**

Adapted from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, National Center for PTSD

The psychological effects on the victim are devastating. They are truly brainwashed through mind control and manipulation. They are made to believe that everything is their fault; they feel worthless; they believe they are not a good person; and they feel no one else will ever be interested in them. They have difficulty knowing who to trust due to the isolation created by the abuser. The abuser continually puts down the victim's family and friends and tells the victim that their family and friends do not care about the victim. The abuser tells them that they are the only one who really cares about them. Gradually the victim becomes very angry, usually not recognizing the abuse as the source of their anger and they displace that anger on their family and friends. They become extremely confused and do not know who to trust. Together with the fear instilled in them by the abuser (by breaking their possessions, battering them, threatening them, calling them the worst names) they become psychologically destroyed.

BARRIERS TO LEAVING

1. **Love** – part of them still loves the abuser, they see the “good” in the abuser, they don't want the abuser to suffer more
2. **Hope:** the victim may believe the abuser will change or that they can change them
3. **Fear:** the number one reason why victims don't leave is they fear for their lives
4. **Embarrassment, humiliation, shame**
5. **Lack of support: financial, emotional**
6. **Lack of self-esteem and confidence, abuser brainwashes them into believing they are worthless, everything is their fault, they cannot make it on their own, and no one will ever be interested in them**
7. **Lack of knowledge: about healthy/unhealthy relationships**
8. **Lack of knowledge: about community resources**