

Women Beaten and Battered: Recent Empirical Research Findings

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ABSTRACT

Battered woman syndrome, which is also sometimes called battered wife syndrome, is measured a subcategory of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). With battered woman syndrome, a woman may progress a cultured helplessness that causes her to trust that she deserves the abuse and she can't get away from it. Battered woman syndrome (BWS) is a mental complaint that grows in victims of internal violence as an outcome of serious, enduring abuse. BWS is dangerous as it can lead to what some scholars say is "learned helplessness" or psychological paralysis; where the victim becomes so depressed, defeated, and passive that she believes that she is incapable of leaving the abusive situation. Although, it may seem like an irrational fear, it feels actually real to the victim. Feeling fearful and weak, and even sometimes still holding onto the hope that her abuser will stop hurting her, the victim remains with her abuser, continuing the cycle of domestic violence and strengthening her existing BWS.

Keywords: battered women, empirical research, research updates

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INTRODUCTION

Women who are sufferers of intimate-partner violence have been recognized by the mental health field for added than 30 years now. It is presumed that domestic violence is part of gender violence, and that many more women than men are the victims of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. Many women are caught in abusive relationships [1]. Therapist should recognize the symptoms of battered woman syndrome and break the cycle of abuse.

Definition

A Battered woman is one who is regularly subjected to any forceful physical or psychological behavior by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants her to do without concern for her rights [2].

Statistical Report

- Physical or sexual violence is a community health problem that touches more than one third of all women internationally.
- About 35% women will experience either intimate partner or non-partner violence.
- 38% of women who were murdered by their intimate partners.
- 42% of women who have knowledgeable physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner had practiced damages.
- Women who have experienced partner violence being relatively twice as likely to experience depression compared to women who have not experienced any violence.

WHO 2013

FORMS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

- Acid throwing
- Bride burning
- Domestic violence and pregnancy
- Dowry death
- Honor killing
- Murder of pregnant women

Psychological Abuse

- Bullying
- Embarrassment/Humiliation
- Emotional blackmail
- False accusation
- Gaslighting
- Intimidation
- Isolation
- Mind games
- Nagging
- Narcissistic abuse
- Passive-aggressive behavior
- Setting up to fail
- Superficial charm

Emotional Abuse

- Silence
- Blaming
- Shaming
- Controlling behavior
- Degradation

Sexual Abuse

- Rape
- Deliberately causing pain during sex
- Assaulting the genitals
- Forced sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases
- Forcing A woman to perform sexual acts
- Unwanted touching
- Unwanted exposure to pornography
- Sexual jokes
- Withholding sex as punishment

Verbal Abuse

- Yelling
- Name-calling
- False accusations

- Lying

Financial Abuse

- Rigidly controlling finances
- Withholding money or credit cards
- Making account for every penny she spend
- Withholding basic necessities (food, clothes, medications, shelter)
- Restricting allowance

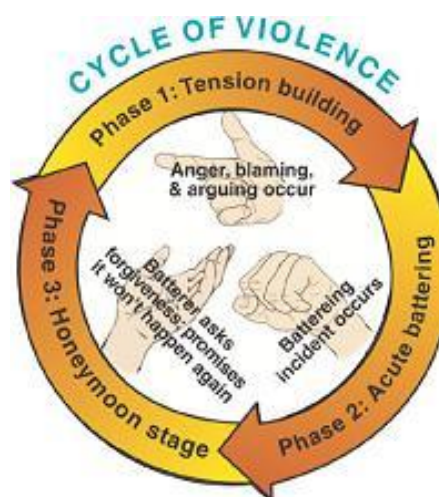


Fig.1. Cycle of violence, Copyright 1993 - 2006 University of Missouri. Published by MU Extension

Syndrome Manifestation

- Nightmares and Insomnia
- Anger Depression
- Hopelessness and Worthlessness
- Intense Feelings of Fear and anxiety
- Flashbacks
- Avoiding situations reminiscent of the abuse

DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR BATTERED WOMAN SYNDROME

- **DSM-IV-TR Criteria for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder**

Battered woman syndrome has been identified as a subcategory of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

- **Six Recent Criteria for Battered Woman Syndrome**

- Recollections of the traumatic events
- Hyper arousal and anxiety

- Avoidance behavior
- Disrupted interpersonal relationship
- Body image distortion and physical complaints
- Sexual intimacy issues

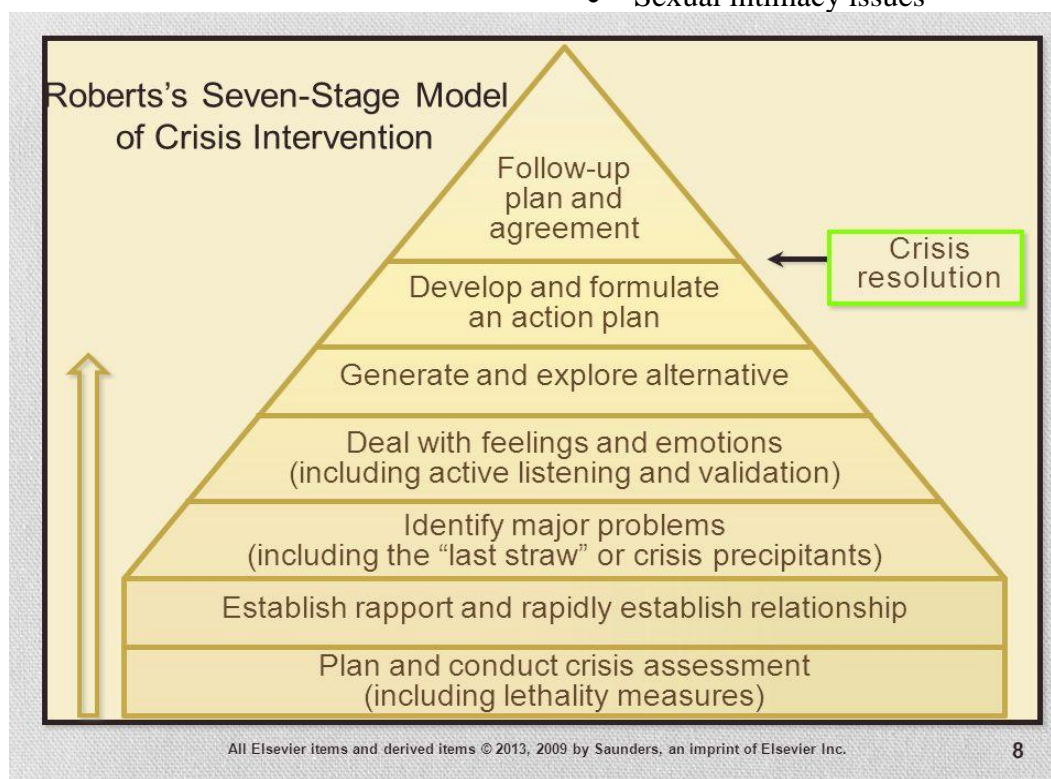


Fig. 2. Roberts' seven-stage crisis intervention model and battering severity continuum, 2013, 2009 by Saunders, an imprint of Elsevier Inc.

Typology of Battered Women's Coping Responses



Fig. 3. Typology of battered women's coping responses

How to Treat Battered women?

Evaluating situation
 Ensure safety
 Getting professional help
 Consider taking medication
 Address drug abuse
 Protect legally

Battered Woman Syndrome LAW

Battered woman syndrome is now familiar in legislation by many conditions and is measured when shielding battered consorts

who murder or harm their insulting partners [3]. For the courts, BWS is an indication of the defendant's state of mind or may be considered a mitigating circumstance (Figure 1 to 3).

Nurses Role Assessment

Physical injury
 Broad questions
 Direct questions
 Clinical observation

Respond

Listening

Communicating belief

Validating to disclose

Emphasizing the unacceptability of violence

Assisting Safety and Action

Nurses assist in ensuring safety and intervening clients, victims and abusers

RECENT EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS IN BATTERED WOMAN SYNDROME**Most danger when victims leave abusers**

Victims leave and return to a relationship an average of seven times before they leave for good or are killed. Parting is the most unsafe moment for a target, because the addict suddenly aspects a loss of controller and may stroke out [4]. Many people focus on why the *victim* would voluntarily stay in an *abusive* relationship, principally if the person returns to their *abuser* more than once. What most people don't realize is that *leaving* can be one of the *most dangerous* times for a *victim* of *abuse*.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder as a systemic Disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a systemic illness, but not a mental disorder. A considerable and still collecting body of indication about the extensive psychophysiological and somatic comorbidities of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), however, now challenges this impression, suggesting the need to re-conceptualize PTSD as a systemic disorder rather than one confined to the mental illness [5].

Lack of Valid Scientific evidence for Battered Woman Syndrome

Battered woman syndrome lacks a standard definition and evidence of scientific validity. Battered woman syndrome defense is now accepted as a legitimate extension of self-defense in Canadian courts. This defense hinges on

the expert testimony that a battered woman who is accused of murder or aggravated assault. Scientists were unable to find any valid reason for the imposition of a custodial sentence and allowing evidence of battered woman syndrome places domestic violence in the realm of science.

CONCLUSION

Battered woman syndrome symptoms may reoccur even after recovery if a new stressor or trauma is experienced. Some women may be entitled by receiving a prohibiting order or by taking actions that lead to the arrest of the batterer. For other women, litigation mainly combative child protection cases may worsen stress. Mental health professionals can help abused woman get over these stressful times by making sure that the risk of further abuse is as low as possible. Fortunately, most battered women with BWS rebuild, upsurge their children, and go on to living imaginative lives once they are innocent from the batterers' misuse of influence and control.

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