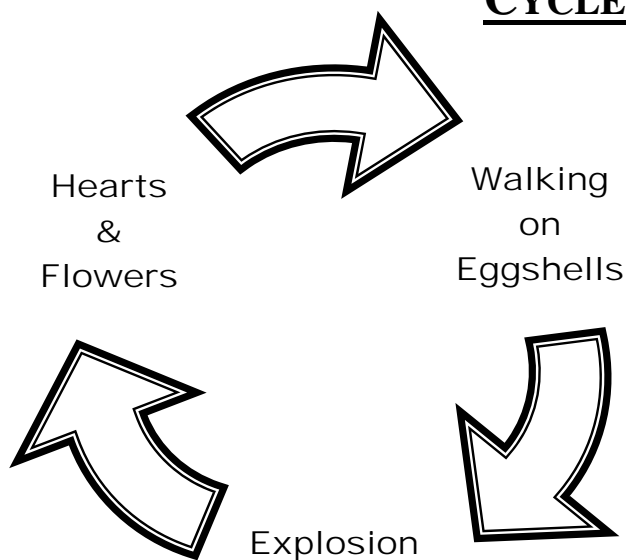


CYCLE OF VIOLENCE



In some relationships there is a pattern of behavior. The abuse is rarely a one-time-only event – usually the attacks will increase in number and seriousness.

No matter what you do – the abuser will always find new reasons to explode. The violence isn't about your behavior – it is about the abuser wanting power and control and manipulating you to achieve it.

"Hearts & Flowers": usually follows the explosion and typically the abuser apologizes, "I'm sorry. It will never happen again. I love you." The promises, crying, buying of gifts, or threatening suicide if the victim leaves – you want to believe it. The problem is minimized. The hope is that this time will be different... Things are often very good during this phase – this is the person you love and want to be with – you just want the other phases to stop and everything will be ok!

However, this good period can't last because nothing has changed – the same values, thoughts and habits are all still there. Being kind and loving just becomes a different way to control a manipulate you:

- ♦ His spurts of kindness and generosity help him feel good about himself.
- ♦ He hooks you back into the relationship by being warm and trusting – then uses that against you in the future.
- ♦ He uses the good periods to shape his public image – making it harder for people to believe you.

Remorse: the remorse is often genuine, but what he mostly feels bad about is:

- ♦ He damaged his image in other people's eyes.
- ♦ He feels he should be able to control you without resorting to abuse.
- ♦ He feels entitled to blame his outburst on you, thereby ridding himself of any guilty feelings.

Tension Building: Eventually the cycle begins again with tension building, where you feel like you are “walking on eggshells.” No matter what you do, it isn't right. Because it isn't about your behavior – it is about his need for power and control.

This phase begins with emotional abuse: belittling, nitpicking, jealousy, threats... It may or may not escalate to include forms of physical violence.

Explosion: is when the tension builds to the assault – this may be emotional, verbal, physical or take many different forms.

This cycle will happen over and over...and over again. It is NEVER the victim's fault for the abuse.