

# The Ubiquitous Clinical Problem of Adult Intimate Partner Violence: The Need for Routine Assessment

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## Appendix A

### Initial IPV Screening Questions

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- How do arguments usually begin?
- Why do you think these arguments keep happening?
- During your last argument, where were you? (Give as much detail as you can, such as where you were standing and where your partner was located).
- How long did the incident last?
- How did it end?
- What happened when it was over?
- During your arguments, did you or your partner ever (be VERY specific):

Slap	Grab	Punch	Kick	Bite
Push	Push to ground	Pin to ground/wall	Pull hair	Hold
Twist arm	Hit with an object	Break objects	Tear clothes	Throw food
Punch fist through wall	Break down door	Strangle/choke	Beat up	Use gun
Use knife	Use other weapons	Force sexual activities	Threaten to hit	Threaten to kill
Harm/neglect kids	Harm/neglect pets	Threaten kids/pets	Threaten others	Threaten suicide

IF CLIENT SAYS THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE VIOLENCE OCCURRED, ask if it has EVER occurred since the relationship started, or in past relationships.

IF NO, you may end the screening. Go on to the other partner and complete the next screening.

IF YES, complete the full-scale assessment (see below).

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## History Taking

### Intimate Partner Violence Across Time

- What is the FIRST incident you remember?
- What is the WORST incident you remember?
- What happened during the MOST RECENT incident?
- Were there any injuries? If so, to whom and what kind? How were they handled?
  - Were children involved in these incidents, or did they observe what happened?
  - Were you (or your partner) pregnant during any of these incidents?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever been stopped from getting help or accessing emergency services (locked in house, phone pulled from wall, etc.)?
  - Were you afraid for your safety? Why or why not?
  - Are you (or your partner) currently considering leaving the relationship? Are you currently separating?
  - If your partner were here, how would he/she describe the incident(s)?

### Intervention by Others

- Was there any outside intervention during the incident(s)? Did someone try to stop it (children, family, friends, neighbors, police, etc.)?
  - Were the police called after any of these instances?
  - If yes, have you seen the police report? If I had the police report in front of me, what would it say?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever been arrested/convicted of domestic violence? If so, where and when?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever been arrested/convicted for any other criminal activity? If so, what, where, and when?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever hurt someone or been violent in front of others? If so, who, where, and when?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever threatened or harassed family members, friends, or coworkers? If so, who, where, and when?
  - Have you (or your partner) ever obtained a protection order against the other? If so, where was it obtained and for what?

(Appendixes continue)

- Have you (or your partner) ever violated a protection order or ignored the orders of a police officer, judge, or probation/parole officer? If so, where and when?

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Issues

- Were you (or your partner) drinking or using any other drugs at the time of the incident? If so, what and how much?
- Have you (or your partner) ever received treatment for a mental health issue? If so, when was it obtained, and for what? (Consider obtaining release of information to talk with other provider.)

- Have you (or your partner) ever received treatment for domestic violence? If so, when and with whom? (Consider obtaining release of information.)
- Have you (or your partner) ever been treated for depression or past suicidal thoughts or attempts? If so, when, where, and how? (Consider obtaining release of information.)
- Have you (or your partner) ever said you would kill yourself or others? If so, when, where, and how?
- Do you (or your partner) have access to weapons of any sort, or have you (or your partner) received weapons training in the past?

Appendix C

Primary Batterer and Victim Assessment

Client Meaning Making of IPV Incidents

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- Given that the violence has been going on for a while, what is different right now that has led you to seek help?
  - How is this situation a problem for you?
  - What do you think has caused the violence?
  - What seems to keep the violence going?
  - What needs to change for the violence to be reduced or solved?
  - What do you think will happen if the violence is not stopped?
  - What do you want to see happen?
  - What is the best/worst that could happen?
  - What would be the long-term result of the best/worst that could happen?
  - What would the best/worst outcome say about you, your partner, your children, your family, and so forth?
  - What has been tried to stop the violence? Who tried it? Was it successful? Why or why not?
  - Who else knows about the violence? Why do others know, or why not?
  - If your partner (parents, children, friends, neighbors, etc.) were here, what would she/he (they) say about the violence?
  - Do you think this relationship will continue?
  - How are decisions made in your relationship?
  - What do you expect of your partner?
  - What would happen if you changed your regular role in the relationship?
  - What has been the effect on you (Changes in eating, sleeping, weight, activities, energy, anxiety, depression, time alone, work or school activities, friendships, etc.)?
  - How do you explain these effects on you?
  - Who is responsible for the violence, as well as the effects on you?
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*Note.* This material is liberally expanded on and synthesized from *Training/Reference Manual for Volunteers and Interns*, by Artemis Center for Alternatives to Domestic Violence, 1992, Dayton, OH: Author; and from "Using Feminist MRI Brief Therapy During Initial Contact With Victims of Domestic Violence," by K. A. McCloskey and J. S. Fraser, 1997, *Psychotherapy*, 34.

Table C1  
*Conceptual Indicators in Determining the Primary Victim and Batterer*

Indicator	Exceptions
	Primary victim
<i>Fear:</i> Victims express genuine fear of what partner will do next; they may describe a long-standing pattern of living in fear of their partners' behavior.	Batterers may express fear if they believe it will convince others of their own victimization, or in the presence of victims' weapons.
<i>Takes Responsibility:</i> Victims assume responsibility for partner's violence (e.g., "I said the wrong thing . . . I knew not to do that . . . I started the argument.").	Batterers rarely take initial responsibility, although this is possible in latter stages of treatment.
<i>Admission of Own Violence:</i> Victims admit to their own violence in self-defense or retaliation; they will also admit to hitting first.	Batterers rarely admit to their own violent behavior in the absence of confronting evidence.
<i>Pattern of Abuse:</i> Victims usually report numerous violent or abusive incidents and can identify a pattern of escalation and what typically precedes the incidents.	Batterers rarely perceive a pattern unless it is pointed out by others, can not identify preceding situations.
<i>Being Threatened:</i> Victims report that partners have threatened to harm them, children, pets, family members, coworkers, and so forth.	Batterers may identify partners' statements about ending the relationship as a threat; in extremely violent situations, the victim may also issue physical threats to the batterer in self-defense.

SPECIAL SECTION: ASSESSING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Table C1 (continued)

Indicator	Exceptions
Primary victim (continued)	
<i>Trauma Effects:</i> Victims report dissociation, somatic complaints, depression, anxiety, sleep problems, hypervigilance, startle response, and so forth.	Batterers rarely report trauma effects unless they believe it will convince others of their own victimization.
<i>Goal of Services:</i> Victims' typical goal is to "stop the abuse" and keep the relationship intact; they may wish to access help to get safe or to leave the relationship.	Batterers rarely address the violence in goal setting; they usually want help to keep things the same in the relationship.
<i>Patterns of Injury:</i> Victims' reported injuries are consistent with being attacked by another: black eyes; bruises on head, back, stomach, thighs, and upper arms; grip or slap marks on skin, and so forth.	Batterers easily report injury, yet usually of a defensive nature; do not use these reports alone because determination is accurate only by comparison to partner injury.
<i>Strangled or Choked:</i> Victims reports of being strangled by their partners at some time in the relationship are common; visible injury is not apparent until a few days later (if ever), whereas there is the report of defensive injuries on batterers.	Batterers rarely report being strangled or choked by victims.
<i>Admission of Arrests:</i> Victims will admit criminal history and give details, can describe socially unacceptable behaviors toward police during incident that may have led to arrest (for women, there may have been a gender bias operating at time of arrest).	Batterers rarely admit to a criminal history, exceptions include justification for own violence or victims' use of weapons.
<i>Criminal Investigation Sounds Incomplete:</i> If applicable, arrests of victims usually result from the lack of a full narrative, incomplete evidence, or failure to interview witnesses.	Batterers may also report or show incomplete investigative reports; thus, do not use alone.
Primary batterer	
<i>Calm, Cool, and Collected:</i> Batterers are overly calm and confident and have no fear or apprehension about violent incidents (or court process, if applicable).	Victims may dissociate or present with little or no emotion. Cultural barriers can also cause this.
<i>Vague Accounts and Inconsistent Chronologies:</i> Batterers give vague generalized accounts lacking in detail and timelines that do not hold; they may say, "My partner just acts crazy."	Victims may have memory impairment or may have been under the influence at the time of the incident. Cultural barriers may also result in reduced disclosure.
<i>Denial:</i> Batterers give outright denial of violence against partner.	Victims may deny presence of violence because of fear, shame, guilt, and so forth.
<i>Minimization:</i> If confronted with evidence of their own violent behavior, batterers will minimize the impact: "I didn't do it, but if I did it was no big deal" or "I may have put my hands around partner's neck, but I didn't squeeze."	Victims rarely deny their own retaliatory or self-defensive violence.
<i>Persuasion:</i> Batterers will try to convince clinicians that they are the injured parties, will try to ally with therapist, and will sometimes try to ingratiate themselves with "wink-and-nod" presentations.	Victims who are beginning to understand their victimization or who blame themselves may also do this.
<i>Angry or Demeaning:</i> Batterers will aggressively criticize their partners, namecall, or refer to their partners in demeaning ways.	Victims fully experiencing anger may do this, although it is rare.
<i>Ownership of Partner:</i> Batters convey strong sense of ownership, jealousy, and/or obsession concerning partner.	Victims may feel these things, and this should not be considered alone.
<i>Revenge:</i> Batterers are focused on extramarital affairs, child custody, or money issues; they may be smug or gloat over negative results of violence against partner (including criminal charges); ulterior motives are common.	Victims may sometimes focus on infidelity or express fears around child custody (especially perpetrators' threats to remove children).
<i>Power and Control:</i> Batterers state that they have power and control over their partners (make decisions, control money, set relationship rules and enforces those rules, etc.).	Victims may control some parts of relationship or may overreport control to feel safe or because of cultural norms (i.e., the need to appear "tough").
<i>Goals of Therapy:</i> Batterers want to get partner to do what client wants but do not necessarily want to reduce violence; they want help in convincing partner to stay in relationship, want to maintain "the status quo" in their relationship without getting in legal trouble.	Victims may also want help in keeping relationship intact but also want violence to stop.
<i>Size Difference Inconsistent With Facts:</i> Batterers report IPV incidents inconsistent with their size or that of their partner.	Never use size differential alone, especially with same-sex partners and in instances with weapon use.
<i>Defensive Injuries:</i> Batterers have scratches around arms or hands, bruised hands or feet; their injuries should be compared with injuries of their partners.	These injuries must be compared with injuries reported from other partner and can not be considered alone.
<i>Criminal Record or Court Knowledge:</i> Batterers have a history of arrest or conviction and/or of violating court orders; they are very familiar with the justice system and are vague in describing criminal history, whereas partners know history well.	Some victims have been arrested, even though they were acting in self-defense, and thus they know the court system.

*Note.* This material is liberally expanded on and synthesized from *Training/Reference Manual for Volunteers and Interns*, by Artemis Center for Alternatives to Domestic Violence, 1992, Dayton, OH: Author.

## Appendix D

### Lethality Assessment

#### Severity of Violence

- Serious injury
- Attempts to kill (partner, children, pets, others)
- Threats to kill (partner, children, pets, others)
- Violence/threats in public
- Use of weapons
- Threats with weapons
- Sexual assault/abuse
- Repeated/escalating violence
- Strangles/chokes partner
- Sadistic/terrorist/hostage acts
- Violence during pregnancy
- Child abuse
- Violence in presence of children
- Threats to abduct child
- Property damage to intimidate and control
- Forcible entry to gain access to partner
- Pet abuse

#### Other Criminal Behaviors

- Assaults on others
- Threats/harassment of others (family members, friends, coworkers, neighbors, etc.)
- Previous criminal charges
- Pending criminal charges
- History of other criminal behaviors

#### Failure of Past Interventions

- Family members, children, friends, neighbors, coworkers have intervened but violence continues
- Numerous police calls
- Prior intimate partner violence (IPV) arrests/convictions
- Ignores police/court/probation orders

- Violates protection or restraining orders
- Prior IPV treatment

#### Obsessive and/or Stalking Behaviors

- Following (to work, school, store, daycare, etc.)
- Watching (frequent drive-bys, drop-ins at work/school, etc.)
- Monitoring (checking telephone bills, caller ID, credit cards, computer log-ins, listening in on conversations, etc.)
- Enlisting others to follow/watch/monitor
- Telephone harassment (home, work, etc.)
- Requiring frequent “check-ins” when partner is away (work, school, store, etc.)
- Requiring debriefing after absence (partner must recount time spent away in great detail)
- Isolation of partner (physical, social, financial, etc.)
- Ownership: partner as property

#### Psychological Risk Factors

- Previous homicidal/suicidal attempts
- Homicidal threats
- Suicidal threats
- Previous mental health hospitalizations
- Severe depression
- External life stressors (job loss, death in family, etc.)
- Drug/alcohol abuse or addiction

#### Other

- Victim attempting separation from batterer
- Interference with victim access to emergency services or other help (pulling phone from wall, etc.)
- Weapons access
- Weapons training
- Any other unusual or concerning behavior reported by victim

## Appendix E

### Barriers in the Environment

#### Concrete Environmental Forces

1. Legal system and laws
  - Mandatory arrest laws
  - Mandatory sentencing
2. Police/court responses
  - Enforcement of laws
  - Enforcement of protection orders
  - Diversion vs. time served
3. Medical/mental health responses
  - Identifying causes of injury
  - Believing battered women
  - Counseling to keep marriage intact
4. Shelter availability
5. Advocacy center availability
6. Local social oppression against minorities and/or immigrants
7. Money
  - Batterers' control over finances
  - Woman's employment

- Permanent food and shelter for family
  - Transportation
  - Social and legal aid
  - Knowledge of resources
8. Batterer himself
    - Woman physically isolated (locked in house)
    - Woman socially isolated because of batterer's influence
    - Increased risk of death/extreme violence by batterer during attempts to leave
    - Threats and violence against children

#### Family and Sociocultural Roles

1. The belief that being a good woman means putting yourself last
2. The belief that being a good mother means never raising children without a father
3. Religious beliefs and norms
  - Pastoral counseling to keep marriage intact
  - Beliefs about women's place

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4. Family beliefs and norms: breaking rules of family of origin
5. Beliefs about divorce
6. Violence as normal within relationship
7. Definition of self as victim
8. Degree of cultural identification

Consequences of Battering Relationship

1. Brainwashing
  - Results of repetitious violence and control
  - Psychological warfare
2. Posttraumatic stress disorder
  - Denial and numbing
  - Terror and fear are normal states
  - Exhaustion
  - Low emotional resources
3. Learned helplessness
  - Low self-esteem and self-worth
  - Extreme self-doubt/immobilization
4. Stockholm syndrome
  - Identifying with batterer
  - Taking on batterer's belief system
  - Prisoner-of-war psychological impact

5. Battered women's syndrome
  - Personality change as result of battering
  - May present as mental health problem
  - Recovery occurs after violence ends
  - Most women do not enter into another violent relationship
6. Cognitive deficits/other disabilities
  - Head trauma
  - Other physical injuries
7. Forced/coerced illegal activities
  - Prostitution
  - Illicit drug use/sale
  - Other criminal activity

Intrapsychic Forces

1. History of abuse: physical and sexual abuse as child
2. Personal variables
  - Resiliency
  - Strengths and weaknesses

*Note.* This material is liberally expanded on and synthesized from "The Barriers Model: An Integrated Strategy for Intervention With Battered Women," by N. Grigsby and B. R. Hartman, 1997, *Psychotherapy*, 34.

Appendix F

Safety Planning Hand Outs for Clients Who Are Victims of Intimate Partner Violence

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- Call police: 911 (program phone with these numbers).
- Go to shelter (address and phone number).
- If currently safe, consider contacting advocacy center (address and phone number).
- If in same room with abuser and violence occurs, avoid rooms with no outside doors and those containing weapons (kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, garage).
- Change locks, code on house alarm system, garage door opener, answering machine access code, log-in on computer, and so forth.
- Identify two or three persons who are your main supporters and know of the situation and who can help you if a crisis occurs.
- Stay with family or friends who will keep you safe (hidden from abuser).
- Inform neighbors of the situation. Ask them to call the police if they notice anything suspicious.
- Obtain protection order against abuser (civil or criminal).
- Develop safety plan with children: (a) stay in bedroom during argument. (b) leave house and go to friends or neighbors, (c) tell a relative, (d) call 911.
- Create a code word with children, friends, and neighbors so that they can call for help.
- Give school and/or day care written instructions about (a) who can pick up children and (b) copies of custody papers or protection orders.
- Pack a "safety bag," and put it in a safe, accessible place during a crisis. This should include extra cash, clothes, documents, extra sets of car and house keys, bus tokens, quarters for phone calls and laundry.
- Save a little money each week and hide it in a place only you know about (not in a car or a bank the abuser has access to). Open own bank account with statements mailed to a safe place.
- Important documents include the following:

Birth certificates  
School/medical records  
Welfare/immigration cards  
Social Security cards  
House deed/mortgage papers  
Medications/prescriptions  
Address book (friends etc.)

Marriage/driver's licenses  
Insurance information/forms  
Divorce papers  
Credit cards/ATM cards  
Keys for car/house  
Clothing (self and children)

Car title  
Bank account/savings passbooks  
Other court documents  
Lease/rental agreements  
Keys for safety deposit boxes  
Comfort items (self and children)

**THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS YOUR SAFETY!  
MAKE SURE YOU ARE SAFE BEFORE DOING ANYTHING ELSE.  
IF YOU OR YOUR CHILDREN ARE INJURED,  
MAKE SURE YOU ARE TREATED FOR YOUR INJURIES.  
REHEARSE THIS SAFETY PLAN REGULARLY.  
CHANGE THE PLAN AS NEEDED.  
TRUST YOUR OWN JUDGMENT ABOUT WHAT IS SAFEST AT THIS TIME—  
ANYTHING THAT WORKS TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN SAFE.**

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