

Toward Change, Healing & Restoration

The Church is vital in supporting both abused and abusive partners by providing safety & accountability, supporting change & restoration as each partner walks their path toward healing.

Abused Partner	Church & Community		Abusive Partner
<p>Safety & Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect herself and her children (emotionally & physically) • Identify sources of support • Identify the ways in which she has been abused and its impact on her & her children 	<p>Education & Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate itself about abuse: cycle, patterns, types and impacts • Be aware of community resources 		<p>Confession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admit fully to history of abusiveness • Acknowledge abuse was wrong • Recognize his behavior was a choice, not a loss of control • Seek out appropriate professional help • Recognize the short-term and long-term impact of his abuse on his partner, children and others • Identify his pattern of controlling behaviors and entitled attitudes
<p>Healing & Discernment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather evidence to discern if changes in partner are real and lasting • Have control over how to communicate and make contact with partner • Take time to heal 	<p>Protection & Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↳ Hear, believe and affirm her ↳ Ensure her security ↳ Receive her permission before taking action ↳ Work with shelters, advocates and counselors to provide support ↳ Support & accompany through the legal system ↳ Provide help with housing, moving, food, finances, childcare, etc. ↳ Encourage and trust her to make her own decisions ↳ Don't pressure to forgive ↳ Acknowledge pain and loss; mourn & lament with her 	<p>Hear Confession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Help him examine and admit to his behavior Help him recognize the impact of his behavior on his partner & children ⇒ Help him find professional counseling & support 	<p>Repentance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop all forms of abuse • Develop respectful behavior and attitudes • Re-evaluate distorted image of partner and replace it with a positive view • Accept the consequences of his actions • Admit abuse to friends and family • Recognize and give up privileges • Communicate respectfully and negotiate fairly terms of separation, custody & access, etc.
<p>New Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the pace for restoring the relationship • Continue to listen to her "inner voice"- the spirit of discernment • Take joy in new beginnings such as home, job, sense of self, etc. 	<p>Restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↳ Affirm new beginnings ↳ Affirm and respect her choices ↳ Ensure movement toward reconciliation is mutual ↳ Support steps toward reconciliation 	<p>Restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Celebrate and affirm change ⇒ Continue to hold him accountable ⇒ Support continuing growth and healing 	<p>Restoration & Restitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate long-term commitment to ending abuse • Be willing to be accountable for his actions—past, present and future • Adopt & demonstrate respectful, equal & mutual attitudes • Acknowledge his partner as the "expert" on how to be in a mutual relationship and learn from her • Make restitution in every way possible – financially, socially, etc. • Work continually to rebuild trust • Accept that overcoming abuse will be a life-long process • Actively support partner's healing and restoration
<p>Social & Cultural Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider ways it condones or fails to challenge abuse • Consider how its culture permits the misuse of power and subtly encourages abusive attitudes and behavior 			