

# The Change Process for Domestic Violence Victims: What It Is and How to Work With It

Stage	Thoughts	How It Appears	How To Work It
1. Pre-Contemplation	<p>“It’s my fault”                      “How can I make it stop?”                      “It’s not so bad”</p>	<p>Shame, isolation, depression, fear, numbness.                      Cycle of Violence</p>	<p>Education to reframe and raise consciousness and arouse emotions                      Crisis Intervention</p>
2. Contemplation	<p>“Maybe it’s not my fault”                      “I’m not alone”                      “Could I make it on my own?”</p>	<p>Less shame, isolation, more fear, anger, ambivalence, confusion, “unfreezing”, overwhelm. Still cycle of violence, but with new awareness</p>	<p>Continue education to reframe. Help client gain access to emotions, or contain them if overwhelmed. Help client find and access support systems and helping relationships.</p>
3. Preparation	<p>“I’m going to live violence-free”                      “I’m going to leave”</p>	<p>Resolve, fear of danger, retaliation, being alone, anger, hope, strength.                      Decision-making, planning</p>	<p>Practical problem-solving and planning assistance.                      Mirroring, containing, channeling emotion</p>
4. Action	<p>“I am ready”                      “I’m doing it”</p>	<p>Resolve, fear, anger, vulnerability. Leaves, institutes change, (also: goes back)</p>	<p>Practical assistance in moving, getting TRO. Give extra support, often more frequent contact needed</p>
5. Maintenance/ Healing	<p>“I am in charge of my life”                      “It’s time to focus on me now”                      “I will never let myself be abused again”</p>	<p>Relief, sadness, loneliness, self-doubt, elation, empowered.                      Tries new behaviors, sets new priorities</p>	<p>Continued education, mirroring, containing, channeling, help with emotions</p>

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