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Domestically Abusive Individuals

Are domestic abusers mentally ill? It was once said by Dr. Edleson, of the University of California, Berkeley, “Men who successfully reform are at the stage where they can accept that they have a problem and are motivated to make change.”(Bernstein) It is said that a woman is beaten every 9 seconds and women are 70 times more likely to be killed in the two weeks after leaving than at any other time during the relationship.(ncadv) The website English Oxford Living Dictionaries states, “Domestic violence is known as violent or aggressive behavior within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner.” No one really cares about this problem unless it is happening to them or someone who is close to them. What we don’t realize is women of all cultures, races, occupations, income levels, and ages are battered by husbands, boyfriends, lovers and partners everyday. Although men and women are equally violent, the website ncadv (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence) stated that 95 percent of domestic violence is reported by women, perpetrated by their male partner. The domestic violence law provides criminal rules, punishing those who cause emotional or physical harm to whom they share a family or other close relationship. Treatment should be enforced to domestic abusers before, during, and after jail time. Some may think that people who domestically abuse their partner are generally violent and can’t or will not change their violent ways. However, giving abusers treatment will lessen the chances of domestic violence after the abuser is released.

Making the victim and the abuser aware of the treatment centers can be the first step in making a difference. If not doing so the following problems that both the abuser and the victim face could be a physical, mental and financial burden. An article titled "Long-Term Effects of Domestic Violence" states, "Battered women lose their jobs because of absenteeism due to illness as a result of violence." Victims can be abused to the point where they are physically and mentally unstable to work. When women are beaten they can develop long term illnesses. The article also mentioned, "Although the long term effects of domestic violence have not been documented to its fullest, study shows that women who were battered develop illnesses such as arthritis, hypertension, and heart disease." The article also states, "Battered women often lose family and friends as a result of the battering." Victims can be abused to the point of denial, which can isolate them from the important people in their lives. When women avoid family and friends, they often become unhappy which might lead to depression. These victims who are abused generally distance themselves from the people close to them in order to avoid embarrassment or shame. Having abusers receive treatment will lessen the chance of sickness for women and also the loss of loved ones.

Some say that people who abuse their spouse, partner, or significant other are mentally unstable. People with abusive tendencies generally turn violent when they feel as though they are out of control. A section titled "Emotionally Abusive Men and Women Seek Control" stated, "Ironically, many people who emotionally abuse do so because they themselves are scared of being controlled." Abusers abuse their significant other because they never had control over their lives and once they try, it results in a violent matter. Abusers are generally more violent because they themselves were abused, maybe even as a child. Another section titled "Personality

Disorder and Emotionally Abusive Men and Women” states, “It is also known that many emotionally abusive men and women have a type of mental illness known as a personality disorder.” The personality disorder can make the abuser feel as though they are always right and have little regard for rules or laws. Abusers can also sometimes be suicidal or self harming to avoid abandonment.

Offering treatment to abusers would be a great opportunity in hopes that the abuser won’t return to their violent ways. An article titled “Domestic Abusers Can Reform, Studies Show”, states, “To sit in a room and see men talking in ways that broaden a definition of what men can do, that, is a key part of the change process, Dr. Wexler says”(Bernstein). When abusers talk about the hurt and pain they can cause, it can open their eyes to something completely different in a way that they won’t feel the need to be in control. Once abusers can admit they have a problem, the changing process will be much easier and will be run more smoothly. This could be one of the major steps in beginning the changing process.

In conclusion, enforcing treatment before, during, and after jail time will give abusers the chance to have a new start where they can be with someone they care about without wanting to be, or feeling like they should be in control. Abusers who want to change are most likely to do so with the proper treatment. So the real question is, are people who domestically abuse others able to make change?

Work Cited

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