

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**Women's Refuge Clients'
Experiences of Social Responses to Domestic Violence
Including Interventions Informed by
Response-Based Practice**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of
Clinical Psychology

at Massey University, Wellington,
New Zealand

Jessica Juliet Reedy

2018

ABSTRACT

In Aotearoa New Zealand, transformation in thinking about and acting to prevent domestic violence is exigent. Response-Based Practice (RBP) provides a transformational framework for ethical social responses for families experiencing violence. RBP attends to ways discursive practices undermine or support victim safety and dignity. The current research involved developing, delivering, and evaluating a RBP group intervention at Women's Refuge. Evaluation privileged women's accounts of the intervention and entailed comparing discourses clients utilised to inform their understandings of violence and position themselves before and after Group participation. Implications of clients' positioning for enabling or constraining their safety and dignity are also considered. The project's design used feminist collaborative action research principles, and thematic analysis in the first study to develop the intervention. Five advocates were engaged in meetings, semi-structured interviews, document reviews, and focus groups. The second study used discourse analysis of women's pre- and post- intervention accounts of their domestic violence experiences and social responses to them. Four clients engaged in semi-structured interviews. Before Group participation, discourses that minimised and mutualised violence predominated, positioning victims as instrumental in provoking and preventing violence, and victims and perpetrators as pathological. Language often represented perpetrators' violence as accidental/uncontrollable and concealed victim resistance. Narratives engaged traditional gender discourses of men's dominance, encompassing coercive control and violence, and women's submission and self-sacrifice, as normative. Women's entrapment by victim-blaming discourses alongside threats of poverty and

condemnation from perpetrators, families, church and social agencies was evident. Following Group participation, resistance discourses prevailed. Clients challenged their positioning as pathological or blameworthy and re-positioned themselves as sensible, competent women. Group content and processes were constituted as privileging and legitimating women's unarticulated knowledge of how concealing violence, perpetrator responsibility and gendered social power relations diminish victims' safety. Narratives of domestic violence evinced increased recognition of patterns of coercive control, entrapment and other non-assaultive violence intersecting with harmful social responses and structural violence. Thus, the Group provided a safe and dignifying social and physical space for clients to collectively reconsider their responses to violence; and discover, discuss, and critique discursive practices that reveal violence, perpetrator responsibility, and victim resistances.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the participating Women's Refuge clients and advocates who shared with such open-heartedness their stories, experiences and knowledge. I am so grateful to each of you for your contributions to this research. I also thank your families who enabled your participation in this research. Their support of you affirmed and encouraged me in carrying out this research. This research is in honour of you and the other women, and their families and whānau who, in responding to violence have informed and guided this project.

To Dr Ang Jury, Chief Executive of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR); Dr Karen Seccombe, of the Women's Art Initiative; and Huia Taumata, my research kaumātua. From our first encounters you have supported my research. The knowledge and time you each shared was of immeasurable value to my understanding of domestic violence and was critical in shaping this research. I express my gratitude to you.

To Professor Mandy Morgan, my primary research supervisor, you have guided me through this research process with such generosity, wisdom and perception. I am honoured to have been your student. Thank you for your commitment to my learning, and your dedication to working for a more peaceful and just society.

I thank Dr Ruth Gammon for your support in the early days of this research and for your feedback in the later stages.

The intent of this research, and particularly the Women's Group programme is deeply influenced by the work of Cathy Richardson, Allan Wade, Linda Coates, Shelly Bonnah and their Response-Based colleagues in Canada and Australia. Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik from the Calgary Women's

Emergency Shelter provided crucial content for the Women's Group through their handbook *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships*. Likewise, documents produced by the NCIWR, the Women for Safety and Justice Ballarat Women's Programme, and Canadian Response-Based Therapist Will Bratt have been important sources of inspiration and content for the Women's Group. Thanks also to Ian Wards and Tom Riley for their assistance with the audio production of Group programme resources.

I warmly acknowledge the NCIWR and other domestic violence advocacy organisations that challenge interpersonal and structural violence, and shape broader social understandings of domestic violence, whilst continuing to support thousands of women and children to safety. I pay tribute to the immeasurable contributions of individuals and groups who have, over decades, advocated for individual women, families and whānau responding to domestic violence. Your humanity enriches all of us.

I am extremely grateful to the Massey University College of Humanities and Social Sciences scholarship committee for the CoHSS Doctoral Scholarship. This financial support made it possible for me to undertake this research.

Finally, to Andy and my family, and to Grace and Claire. Thank you with all of my heart for your infinitely loving support, encouragement, patience, humour and belief in me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	x
CHAPTER ONE: Preface.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
The Current Project: A Collaborative Research Approach	3
<i>The research aims were:</i>	4
Terminology	4
<i>Domestic Violence</i>	4
<i>Advocacy</i>	7
<i>Perpetrators and Victims</i>	7
Thesis Outline.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: Introduction	10
Changes to Domestic Violence in the Law.....	10
Domestic Violence Prevalence in Aotearoa New Zealand.....	11
Advocacy for Women Victims of Domestic Violence	17
<i>Historical Perspectives in Women Victim's Advocacy</i>	20
Representations of Empowerment in Victim Interventions.....	29
Evaluating Women Victims' Groups	32
Women's Refuges in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Brief History.....	34
CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical Perspectives in the Project.....	41
Discourses and their Consequences.....	41
How Violence Against Women is Defined.....	45
Response-Based Practice: Responses and Resistance to Domestic Violence	56
Summary.....	70
CHAPTER FOUR: Methodology and Ethical Considerations.....	71

Methodological Framework: Feminist Poststructuralism and Positioning Theory	74
<i>Knowledge Production and Psychological Research</i>	74
<i>Subject Positioning</i>	76
<i>Discourse Analysis and Positioning in the Current Project</i>	77
<i>Research Principles of Collaboration and Action</i>	79
<i>Collaborative Research and Reflexivity</i>	82
Procedural Considerations	82
Ethical Considerations	83
Summary	95
CHAPTER FIVE: Study One – Analysis and Discussion of Advocates' Accounts.....	97
Methodological Procedures for Study One.....	97
<i>Sampling and Participant Selection</i>	97
<i>Data Collection Procedures</i>	98
<i>Data Analysis</i>	99
<i>Focus Groups and the Women's Group Resource Kit</i>	101
Reflections on Collaborating with the Advocates	102
Analysis and Discussion	103
1. Our Kaupapa and Takepū: Group Purpose and Values	104
<i>1.1 Social Connectedness</i>	109
<i>1.2 Positive Social Responses Upholding Mana and Dignity</i>	112
<i>1.3 Learning Together and From One Another</i>	115
<i>1.4 Enhancing Safety</i>	119
Reflections on Theme 1: Our Kaupapa and Takepū.....	123
2. Our Mahi: Group Processes.....	123
<i>2.1 Facilitator Skills and Tasks</i>	123
<i>2.2 On-going Learning with Response-Based Practice</i>	126
<i>2.3 Women Engaging</i>	127
Reflections on Theme 2: Our Mahi - Group Processes	132
3. Our Whakatakoto: Group Structure.....	132
<i>3.1 Programme Structure</i>	132
<i>3.2 Session Structure: Procedures</i>	134
<i>3.3 Individual Session Content</i>	135
Reflections on Theme 3: Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure	138

Overall Reflections on Advocates' Understandings of the Group Programme.....	139
CHAPTER SIX: Study Two.....	141
Methodological Procedures for Study Two, Parts I and II.....	141
<i>Sampling and Participant Selection</i>	141
<i>Data Collection Procedures</i>	142
<i>Data Analysis</i>	143
The Participating Women: Part I.....	146
Analysis and Discussion.....	147
1.1 <i>Concealing Violence</i>	147
1.2 <i>Exposing Violence</i>	155
2.1 <i>Obfuscating Perpetrator Responsibility</i>	160
2.2 <i>Clarifying Perpetrator Responsibility</i>	168
3. <i>Concealing, Elucidating, and Honouring Victim Responses and Resistance</i> ...	174
4.1 <i>Blaming and Pathologising Victims</i>	181
4.2 <i>Contesting Victim Blaming and Pathologising</i>	189
Reflections on Study Two, Part I.....	191
CHAPTER SEVEN: Study Two, Part II.....	195
Methodological Procedures for Study Two, Part II.....	195
The Participating Women.....	196
Analysis and Discussion.....	197
1. <i>Concealing and Exposing Violence</i>	197
2. <i>Obfuscating and Clarifying Perpetrator Responsibility</i>	207
3. <i>Contesting Victim Blaming and Pathologising</i>	215
4. <i>Concealing, Elucidating, and Honouring Victim Responses and Resistance</i> ...	222
5. <i>Restoring Dignity and Wellbeing Through Group Support and Solidarity</i>	229
Reflections on Study Two, Part II.....	237
CHAPTER Eight: Conclusion.....	239
References.....	252
Appendix A: Te Tiriti o Waitangi.....	286
Appendix B: Six Factors in Response-Based Contextual Analysis.....	288
Appendix C: Client Recruitment Information for Advocates.....	290

Appendix D: Letter of Support from Women's Refuge.....	292
Appendix E: Massey University Low Risk Ethics Approval Letter.....	293
Appendix F: Massey University Human Ethics Approval	294
Appendix G: Participant Consent Form (for Clients).....	295
Appendix H: Information Sheet (for Clients)	296
Appendix I: Authority for the Release of Transcript Form (for Clients and Advocates)	300
Appendix J: Interview Schedules 1 and 2 (for Clients).....	303
Appendix K: Research Kaumātua Letter of Support	309
Appendix L: Information Sheet (for Advocates).....	310
Appendix M: Interview Schedule (for Advocates).....	313
Appendix N: Participant Consent Form (for Advocates)	315
Appendix O: Focus Group Participant Consent Form.....	316
Appendix P: Summary of Findings for Feedback Session with Advocates	317
Appendix Q: Women's Group Facilitation Guide	332
Appendix R: Women's Group Handbook	475
Appendix S: Clinical Case Study	539

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: Abusive behaviours checklist for assessing risk and lethality.....	6
Figure 2: Recorded domestic violence-related data 2016: A snapshot.....	16
Figure 3: Response-based practice contextual analysis.....	58
Table 1: Themes in the Analysis of Advocates' Texts.....	104

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CYF	Ministry for Children, Oranga Tamariki. Formerly named Child Youth and Family
FVDRC	Family Violence Death Review Committee
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NCIWR	National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
NZFVC	New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse
RBP	Response-Based Practice
The Amendment Act	Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013

CHAPTER ONE: Preface

While language is a tool of domination, it is no less a tool of resistance.

(Coates & Wade, 2007)

Domestic violence against women in Aotearoa New Zealand is a significant social problem that reflects a legacy of harmful society-wide responses and subsequent fragmented, inadequate systems responses (Family Violence Death Review Committee [FVDRC], 2017). Serious concern about prevalence now resounds at governmental level with lead voices vigorously demanding urgent and substantial changes in how we think about domestic violence and act to prevent it (FVDRC, 2017). Ethical interventions for enhancing the safety of victims of domestic violence are crucial to preventing domestic and family violence (Herbert & Mackenzie 2014; Ministry of Justice [MOJ], 2014a). The central premise of this project is that the quality of social responses to domestic violence, including the languaging of violence and responses to it, largely influence victims' opportunities for enhanced safety, dignity, and wellbeing.

Statement of the Problem

Language used to conceptualise interpersonal violence is critical in shaping social responses to the violence (Gavey & Schmidt, 2011; Hook, 2001; Stark, 2009).

How violence is understood by victims and perpetrators, and within families, whānau,¹

¹ I acknowledge many Māori terms contain nuances and dimensions that do not have literal English translations. Whānau, for example, while often represented in Pākehā texts as a translation of family, refers to a different kinship structure to the western nuclear norm, and differs from non-Māori notions of 'extended, non-blood-related family.' I emphasise how translations between Te Reo Māori (the Māori language) and English language intersect with historical and current differences in understanding such notions as whānau and family. This has critical implications for individual and collective safety, wellbeing and self-determination of Māori.

victim services, communities, and the justice system shapes and is shaped by the forms the violence takes; the degrees to which it is recognised and tolerated; and actions taken to prevent it, sanction against it, and protect victims. Social responses characterised by language that blames and pathologises victims, mitigates perpetrator responsibility, and conceals the violence and victims' resistance to it intensifies victims' humiliation, isolation and marginalisation, and supports continued control and abuse² by perpetrators (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd, Wade & Renoux, 2004). Conversely, social responses characterised by language that reveals violence, clarifies perpetrator responsibility, honours victims' resistance and responses, and contests victim blaming and pathologising should engender increased dignity, safety, and wellbeing for victims, and reduce violence by perpetrators.

Language within family violence discourse often perpetuates representations of victims and perpetrators that maintain unhelpful social responses, which support ongoing violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Humphreys & Thiara, 2003; Meyer, 2011; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Yuen 2007; 2009). For example, Coates and Wade (2007) identified how violence was concealed and minimised and how perpetrator responsibility was mitigated by language used in a judgement that a stepfather's assaults of his stepson over two years were "an isolated incident" rather than multiple and intentional acts of violence (p. 516). In confronting the problem of representations that perpetuate unsafe responses to family violence, Response-Based Practice (RBP) offers an intervention framework for providing helpful social responses within families where there is violence. RBP pays attention to ways

² From a RBP view, the term "abuse" in reference to violent actions minimises violence. At times, I have used "abuse" interchangeably with "violence" because abuse is broadly used in the literature and in the accounts of women advocates and victims I encounter. On reflection however, I notice that I have used abuse less often nearer to completing my research than at the beginning as my own awareness of RBP and language that conceals violence increased. I have not edited out this pattern of use because I am using my own thesis as an example of the way in which RBP can inform the discursive shift.

language used in interventions influences the extent to which victims experience increased dignity, safety, and wellbeing.

The Current Project: A Collaborative Research Approach

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Women's Refuges perform a vital function in providing a range of advocacy services for women victims of domestic violence and their children (Woolson Neville & Gremillion, 2015). I initiated this project in response to a request from a Women's Refuge manager to update the service's Women's Group Programme. The manager sought a resource that reflected contemporary and more inclusive understandings in the area of women's group advocacy and particularly, one that reflected RBP by prioritising:

- Use of language that reveals violence, clarifies perpetrator responsibility, honours victims' resistance and responses, and contests victim blaming and pathologising;
- Practices that uphold dignity;
- Interventions that support safety;
- A social analysis of the ways in which domestic, family, and whānau violence is supported by contemporary understandings of violence at home.

The overarching purpose of this project was twofold: First, to create, deliver, and evaluate a RBP Women's Refuge group programme. Second, to provide baseline analysis for evidence of responses that ethically support victim safety. This would inform the development of a good practice framework for RBP Refuge programmes for victim safety in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The research aims were:

1. To develop, deliver and evaluate a RBP template programme for a Women's Refuge group intervention;
2. To analyse RBP clients' narratives of their experiences of abuse and interventions to identify the social responses to violence clients experienced before participating in an RBP intervention;
3. To analyse ways in which clients' understandings of and resistances to violence changed through their involvement with RBP.

Hence, the project provides evidence about RBP through a social analysis of ways women victims and their families and whānau respond to and resist violence, encounter social responses following violence, and respond to these social responses in a Women's Refuge setting. Given the significance of languaging violence for this project, clarification of pertinent terminology is provided at the outset of this report.

The beginnings of this project coincide with legislative changes introduced by the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013 (the Amendment Act) that came into effect on 1 October 2014. Conditions of the previous legislation, the Domestic Violence Act 1995, would have precluded the development of the Women's Refuge Group programme template of which the project is primarily concerned. Hence, changes to the Amendment Act assume particular significance in the conception of this research.

Terminology

Domestic Violence

In this project, *domestic violence* pertains to terminology used in New Zealand legislation and literature whilst recognising the problematic nature of representations of

interpersonal violence. The Domestic Violence Act 1995 (Parliamentary Counsel Office, 2013) defines domestic violence as:

Violence against a person by any other person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.

With the introduction of the Amendment Act, the definition of psychological abuse now includes financial or economic abuse (MOJ, 2014a). A crucial component frequently absent from such definitions is that domestic violence is also characterised by *intentional* use of physical force or power (Hydén, Gadd & Wade, 2016). Domestic violence also refers to a person's controlling actions. These may include, physically or socially isolating, and monitoring or restricting a partner's or ex-partner's activities, and can refer to a perpetrator depriving their (ex)partner of basic rights and survival needs (FVDRC, 2016).

These definitions are useful as they encompass a range of controlling and abusive behaviours. Thus, they challenge a prevalent conception of domestic violence as an isolated incident of physical assault, a conception that decontextualises domestic violence from the social and interpersonal conditions in which it occurs. This is demonstrated by the inclusion of multiple violent behaviours in the *Domestic Violence Provider Code of Practice/ Adult Safety Programmes- Needs Identification and Safety Planning Sessions* document produced by the MOJ (2014b) (displayed in Figure 1).

However, these definitions use gender-neutral language masking a statistical picture and social reality that indicates the predominance of men's violence against

women in Aotearoa New Zealand. For example, in 2016, 89 percent of protection order applicants were women and 89 percent of respondents³ were men (New Zealand Family

Coercion and threats	Intimidation	Economic and financial abuse
Emotional abuse	Isolation practices	Using children
Physical abuse	Sexual abuse	Gender or social privilege
Alcohol and other drugs	Minimising, denying, blaming	Road rage

Figure 1. Abusive behaviours checklist for assessing risk and lethality (MOJ, 2014b, p. 30).

Violence Clearinghouse [NZFVC], 2017a). Further, compared to male homicide victims, women are significantly more likely to be killed by a male partner or ex-partner and to have a history of victimisation by the perpetrator (FVDRC, 2017). To illustrate, "in 98 percent of the intimate partner deaths (between 2009 and 2015) where there was a recorded history of abuse, women were the primary victim, abused by their male partner" (FVDRC, 2017, p. 9). A gendered understanding of domestic violence acknowledges systematic social differences between men's and women's access to resources, social power, use of violence, and protection and recovery from victimisation and marginalisation enabled by particular hierarchical social systems and social arrangements (Hunnicut, 2009; Kimmel, 2002; Stark, 2009; World Health Organisation, 2014). Thus, despite the apparent gender neutrality of "domestic violence," a gendered analysis underlies the use of this term in this project.

³ Respondent refers to the person to whom the protection order applicant seeks protection from.

Advocacy

In this project *advocacy* encompasses the multidimensional work of supporting women and their children seeking and receiving protection from further violence and discrimination, and enhancing their safety, dignity, and healing over time (Hindle & Morgan, 2006; Morgan & Coombes, 2013). Advocates support victims on personal and practical levels, and by helping them to access and negotiate community resources and overcome obstacles within and across family, whānau, legal, health, welfare, social, and cultural frameworks (Woolson Neville & Gremillion, 2015). Advocates also engage in systems advocacy. This entails promoting legislative and broad sociopolitical structural transformation to end domestic violence (Morgan, Coombes, Te Hiwi & McGray, 2007). Systems advocacy can include raising awareness about eliminating violence through the media and educating police, judges, and other professionals who work with perpetrators and victims (Morgan et al., 2007).

Perpetrators and Victims

This project follows Weaver, Todd, Ogden, and Craik's (2007) definitions in using the term *perpetrator* to denote "the person in a close relationship who chooses to behave in ways that harm, control, or dominate another," and the term *victim* as "the person who has been purposely harmed by the unwanted actions of another" (p. 5). This usage relates to individuals' actions in specific interactions, not to identities or to totalising descriptions (Coates & Wade, 2007, p. 513). The terms *perpetrator* and *victim* are often used as stigmatising identity labels. For example, *victim* may signify "deficiencies" such as passivity, in a person's character. Being labelled a perpetrator may be interpreted to mean the person is irredeemably violent. It is not difficult to appreciate why people who have experienced violence and associated indignities of being labeled a victim sometimes prefer to eschew this term. Correspondingly, a

perpetrator concerned about using violence is unlikely to seek help to desist if they anticipate being treated as irredeemably violent. In this project, *victim* primarily represents a person responding to violent and unjust actions committed against them by their partner or expartner, the *perpetrator*. These terms can also apply to people belonging to marginalised groups responding to and resisting political oppression perpetrated by members of a dominant group (Richardson, 2006). This has particular salience in the context of Māori responses to colonialism beginning with imperialist British forces. Victim and perpetrator draw attention to rather than conceal wrongful harms carried out by the perpetrator towards the victim (Richardson & Wade, 2013).

Thesis Outline

This chapter has provided a broad introduction to the current project and clarified terminology to be used. Chapter Two critiques literature pertaining to historical and practical underpinnings of social responses to domestic violence, with particular emphasis on interventions for women victims in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Chapter Three discusses theoretical understandings of ways discursive practices enable and/or restrict, and are enabled and/or restricted by, domestic violence, resistance to violence, and victim safety and dignity. An overview and critique of RBP is provided.

Chapter Four outlines the project's methodological framework and ethical rationale. The chapter begins with a statement of the project's aims and research questions. I discuss feminist poststructuralism and principles of collaborative action research and their application to the research design and methods. The chapter then sets out ethical considerations raised in the project and how these were addressed.

Chapter Five presents Study One's thematic analysis and discussion of advocates' understandings of the Women's Group programme (hereafter referred to as

the Women's Group or the Group). I reflect on collaborating with advocates and outline methodological procedures. Particular attention is given to what is presently working and what could be helpful for strengthening the programme. The chapter also reports advocates' ideas about RBP and its potential utility in the Women's Group.

Chapters Six and Seven present Study Two's methodological procedures, discourse analyses and discussions of transcribed interviews with Refuge clients before and after their participation in the Women's Group respectively. Integral to Chapter Seven is an evaluation of the Women's Group in respect to evidence of responses that support victim safety and dignity.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis with a summary of findings. I consider ways in which these findings inform the development of a good practice framework for RBP programmes. The project's limitations and implications for future research are considered. From this, a synthesis of potential responses that ethically support women victims' dignity, healing and safety is drawn.

CHAPTER TWO: Introduction

Chapter Two begins with a discussion of recent changes to domestic violence legislation and domestic violence prevalence to place the literature review in relevant context. I then review origins of advocacy services drawing from theoretical and practical perspectives. Following this, I discuss issues in evaluating domestic violence programmes for victims. An historical overview of Women's Refuges in Aotearoa concludes the review. Interwoven with the review, social and material implications of discursive practices in domestic violence are examined.

Changes to Domestic Violence in the Law

On 1 October 2014, the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013 came into effect. Changes introduced by the Amendment Act represent a turning point in formal responses to domestic violence in Aotearoa New Zealand. Underpinning this new legislation is increased emphasis on improving flexibility and responsiveness in non-violence and safety programmes to increase perpetrator accountability and victim safety (MOJ, 2014a).

Among changes, new Family Court referral processes to service providers such as Women's Refuges have been implemented to support programme access and engagement by victims. The changes also shift providers' requirement to obtain approval for individual programmes, to a single approvals process for the provider based on its "capability to provide a defined service and the quality of outcomes of the service provided" (MOJ, 2014a, p. 11). Prior to the Amendment Act, priority was given to funding perpetrator stopping violence programmes over victim safety programmes. The Amendment Act aims to distribute resourcing for the two intervention types more

fairly. The Amendment Act also stipulates that providers' programmes are informed by contemporary, identified theories and models (MOJ, 2014a).

In practice, this means a service, such as an independent local Refuge, can offer a safety programme responsive to the particular social and cultural contexts and safety needs of an individual client, her children, and their community, on the condition that the programme prioritises safety, and ethical principles are applied (MOJ, 2014a).

Collaborating advocates and I maintain that the social conditions and safety needs of a client living in one community vary from those of women living in different personal, social and cultural circumstances. We therefore expect the MOJ's approval process to accommodate variance from prescriptive "one size fits all" programme delivery. Within this legislative context, the current project has developed around designing, delivering and evaluating a RBP Women's Group enabled and informed by Women's Refuge advocates' and clients' understandings.

Domestic Violence Prevalence in Aotearoa New Zealand

New Zealand Police, the MOJ, Ministry of Health, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR), the NZFVC, and the FVDRC are key organisations responsible for collating domestic and family violence data. Reports generated through their processes are shocking to read; their columns of numbers represent a situation of heartbreaking solemnity. While a single account of violence within a family can in itself be tragic, in reviewing these reports, one is left deeply saddened and profoundly disturbed by the magnitude of domestic violence taking place in Aotearoa New Zealand. For example, in 2015, of the 65 homicides committed, 43 percent of victims and perpetrators were family (NZFVC, 2017b). Herbert and Mackenzie (2014) reported lifetime prevalence of New Zealand women experiencing domestic violence the highest for economically developed countries with available data.

Concerningly, these data derive only from recorded reports of family and domestic violence. This is problematic for a multitude of reasons. It is well established that disclosures of domestic violence to formal services are far lower than actual rates of domestic violence in the population (Barrett, St. Pierre, & Vaillancourt, 2011; Fenrich & Contesse, 2009; MOJ, 2015). For example, in their New Zealand study of women victims' help seeking, Fanslow and Robinson (2010) found that of 956 participants who reported physical and/or sexual partner violence, just 12.8 percent had reported this to the police, and only 2.3 percent had told a Women's Refuge. Notably, the sample of women participants was from the general population rather than from domestic violence services.

More recently, the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey found only 23 percent of violent offences by a family member were reported to police (MOJ, 2015). The most prevalent explanations given for underreporting of offences by participants who identified as victims were: The offence was "just something that happens" (89.6 percent); it was not serious (86 percent); it was wrong but not a crime (83.8 percent); and the offender was an intimate partner (75.9 percent) (MOJ, 2015). The Survey concluded that many victims did not view interpersonal violence as a crime or know it is legally a crime, especially when a family member committed the violence (MOJ, 2015). These findings signal significant underreporting of physical and sexual domestic violence, which contributes to difficulties in accurately establishing its prevalence.

The high attrition rate throughout justice services is illustrated in the UN Women (2011) justice chain model. This depicts the stages of domestic violence reporting, police investigation, prosecution and court, and trial that women victims navigate in seeking redress through the justice system. The process of engaging with justice services begins with a woman determining whether it is possible, helpful, or safe

to disclose her partner's violence in those settings. The following steps entail whether and how police act upon this reported violence; investigate the case; police and court responses to the perpetrator and victim; and prosecutor, judge and jury responses. The inherent complexity of these processes is discussed further into this chapter. For now, I invoke this model to illustrate that throughout each of these steps, women victims encounter multiple social responses, some of which are helpful and some that are not, which function as either pathways or barriers to safety. The substantial hurdles, particularly institutional, that obstruct women victims' opportunities for fair outcomes result in high rates of attrition at each stage (UN Women, 2011). Consequently, of women abused by partners or ex-partners, only a small fraction experience some manner of just outcome through the justice system (UN Women, 2011). Prevalence of reported abuse, rates of arrest, police investigations, and convictions, reflect these conditions. In turn, these data influence policy, resourcing, and broader societal understandings of and responses to domestic violence. Crucially, victims' knowledge that seeking increased safety through the justice system offers no guarantee of protection or redress invariably discourages violence disclosure (Elizabeth, 2015; Wilson, Smith, Tolmie, & de Haan, 2015).

A matter of importance is that statistical records omit contextual information. This risks providing inaccurate representations of particular circumstances of reported violence. Indeed, data sources can lack startlingly basic information. For example, in 18 percent of homicides recorded by the New Zealand Police between 2009 and 2015, the victim's gender and relationship to the offender was reported as not recorded or unclear, or no offender was identified (NZFVC, 2017b). These omissions mean official data on victims' and perpetrators' relationships may differ from actual relationship distributions.

This makes accurately extrapolating perpetration and victimisation patterns according to relationship status difficult.

At a more nuanced level, reporting an isolated domestic violence-related offence can result in an impoverished picture regarding identifying the primary victim and predominant aggressor. Omitting this information decontextualises a perpetrator's ongoing coercive control and, in some cases, extreme abuse of their partner, and the victim's responses to this abuse (Fanslow, 2005; Kimmel, 2002). To further illustrate, in the 63 reported domestic violence deaths from 2009 to 2012, 12 women and 51 men committed the homicide (FVDRC, 2014). Of those deaths, extensive evidence found nine of the 12 women who killed their male partners were the identified primary victim and their deceased partners were the predominant aggressor, and in one additional case of a woman killing her male partner, it was suspected that the woman was the primary victim of her deceased partner. In just two of the 12 cases was a woman who had killed her partner identified as the predominant aggressor and in one of those homicides the woman's partner was also a woman (FVDRC, 2014). Put differently, of the 63 deaths that occurred, 55 had histories of violence in the relationship. In 93 percent of these 55 deaths, women had been abused in the relationship and 96 percent of men had been the abusers in the relationship (FVDRC, 2014). FVDRC data updated to encompass 2009-2015 reported that of the 83 intimate partner deaths with recorded violent histories, 81 women and one man were identified as the primary victim (FVDRC, 2017). A further example of obscuring crucial contextual information about the nature of interpersonal violence is reporting practices that use legal terms of reference such as *man assaults female* which do not necessarily distinguish between partner and non-partner assault (Mayhew & Reilly, 2009).

Regarding the problem of missing domestic violence contextual details and reporting practices, domestic violence-related deaths and injuries are not limited to the outcome of a perpetrator's physical violence against their primary victim and the victim injuring or killing the perpetrator (MOJ, 2014b). A perpetrator may injure or kill themselves and/or other people including, for example, their children and other family members (FVDRC, 2014). Additionally, a primary victim may injure or kill themselves or their children in response to the perpetrator's abuse. Furthermore, children and other family members may injure or kill themselves or others in response to the perpetrator's abuse (FVDRC, 2014). Such examples illustrate how important contextual information is absent from domestic violence records and statistical analysis relating to injury and death despite relationships between its occurrences. Without accurate knowledge of specific social and interpersonal conditions, and broader systemic responses surrounding domestic violence, significant barriers to generating effective organisational responses to violence prevention will remain.

Finally, the problem of establishing and agreeing upon a satisfactory definition of domestic violence is a major barrier to determining prevalence (Fanslow, 2005). Common understandings of domestic violence are located somewhere between acknowledging single incidents of severe assault, and recognising them within a broader understanding of domestic violence. This is reflected in the Act (MOJ, 2014a) definition as a continuum of isolating, micro-actions of controlling and abusive practices. The latter understanding is encapsulated by Stark's (2007; 2009) notion of liberty crimes to represent attacks upon women victim's dignity, autonomy, basic freedoms and physical and psychological integrity in a context of coercive control by men who perpetrate abuse. Stark's notion of coercive control has evolved to an understanding of domestic violence as a pattern of harm by an identified perpetrator. This encompasses entrapment

of at least one but often multiple victims, such as children and whānau, with implications for victims spanning prolonged periods and future generations (FVDRC, 2016). I discuss problems of limited conceptualisations of domestic violence further in Chapter Three. For now, these receive brief mention to signal the appreciable challenges faced in understanding domestic violence prevalence.

With these issues in mind, the NZFVC (2017b) statistics shown in Figure 2 allude to present concerns regarding the extent of domestic violence held by those working in the family violence sector in New Zealand society.⁴

New Zealand Police recorded 6,377 male assaults female victimisations and 4,852 proceedings for breaching a protection order.

Of the 118,910 police family violence police investigations, at least one offence was recorded in 41,079 of these.

In 2015/16, through NCIWRs, 2,466 women accessed safe house services. 11,062 women and children accessed advocacy services in the community. Women's refuges received approximately 73,000 crisis calls (approximately 200 calls per day) and 41,525 referrals for victim services over this period.⁵

Figure 2. Recorded domestic violence-related data 2016: A Snapshot (NZFVC, 2017b).

While these figures offer a glimpse into the scale of this problem, they do not reflect the full extent of domestic violence in the population. Seeking accurate understandings of domestic violence prevalence exemplifies the complex problem of negotiating shared, appropriate understandings of what constitutes domestic violence. How domestic violence, and correspondingly, perpetrators, victims and bystanders, are

⁴ For example, Native Affairs – Kowhiri (2014) conducted *Te Tai Hauāuru*, the Māori Television Reid Research Poll and found that 96 percent of those polled rated 'family violence' as the most important issue to them in the 2014 General Election.

⁵ Services included support and advocacy; participation in training programmes; access to food, money and legal help; health and housing services (including home upgrades); emergency accommodation, and court approved programmes (NCIWR, 2016).

represented shapes responses to the violence and those involved. Concomitantly, others' responses shape victims' options when seeking support in safety and dignity, and whether perpetrators escalate or desist violence. If underreporting violence is understood as symptomatic of inadequate representations, whereby victims deem it unsafe to seek assistance, this reveals systemic obstacles throughout state and broader community responses for protecting victims and preventing violence (FVDRC, 2016; Herbert & Mackenzie, 2014). These issues also indicate changing political positions and expectations over time as societal understandings shift to encompass more, or less, appropriate understandings that prioritise social and material conditions unsupportive of violence.

Examining ways in which social responses experienced by women victims support or undermine their safety and dignity is central to the current project. Of especial interest is examining victim advocacy as a particular category of responses that aim to support victims in their efforts to increase their own and others' safety and dignity. The following section reviews this work.

Advocacy for Women Victims of Domestic Violence

Advocates supporting women experiencing domestic violence can be pivotal in safeguarding them from further abuse from partners, ex-partners and future partners (Coombes, Morgan, Blake, & McGray, 2009; Hester, 2011; Robinson, 2006; UN Women, 2011). Advocacy can also be crucial for minimising additional harms as women victims negotiate multiple challenges within their communities. Challenges include those presented by justice, health and welfare services (Bennett, Riger, Schewe, Howard, & Wasco, 2004; Black, 2003; Campbell, 2006; Gillespie, 2008; Hester & Westmarland, 2005; Robinson, 2006). Victim advocacy increases women victims' and their children's access to vital social, legal and material resources; immediate and long-

term safety; and reduces distress, discrimination and revictimisation for some marginalised women in Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g. Coombes et al., 2009; Maxwell, Anderson, & Olsen, 2001; Morgan et al., 2007) and internationally (e.g. Black, 2003; Bybee & Sullivan, 2002; Campbell, 2006; Grauwiler, 2008; Robinson & Howarth, 2012; Shepard & Pence, 1999; Sullivan & Bybee, 1999; Tan, Basta, Sullivan, & Davidson, 1995). Fanslow and Robinson (2010) found of all sources of support sought by women victims in Aotearoa, Women's Refuge was the only source reported as helpful by all women who sought their assistance. This signals the valuable function of specialised women victims' advocacy.

Referral to specialised advocacy services is advantageous to women victims if services are adequately resourced and feminist analyses of domestic violence which privilege victims' dignity are upheld (Black, 2003; Sullivan & Bybee, 1999). New Zealand studies of women victims' experiences of policing support this view. For example, Gillespie (2008) and Robertson et al. (2007) found victims reported more positive outcomes when police gave the option of Women's Refuge support in conjunction with the standard police response, particularly when police and Refuge advocates worked collaboratively to provide interventions. Similarly, research on multiagency responses to domestic violence undertaken in Wales established that more than 40 percent of high-risk victims reported total cessation of partner abuse one year after multi-agency involvement, and almost 100 percent of victims reported their experience of multiagency support as important in contributing to their ability to live free from violence (Robinson & Tregidga, 2007).

Advocacy organisations work with women individually and in groups. Women who participate in group programmes receive support and information about domestic violence and options available to them for enhanced safety (Bennett et al., 2004;

Shepard & Pence, 1999). Group programme evaluations provided by women's advocacy organisations suggest this mode of engagement can be beneficial for helping women victims identify current or ex-partner's behaviour as abusive, and legitimise their pre-existing understandings of domestic violence (Hester & Westmarland, 2005; Maxwell et al., 2001; Williamson & Abrahams, 2014). Evaluations indicate group programmes can provide valuable ways for women to recover from violence through sharing knowledge and giving and receiving support with others who have had similar experiences (Cosgrove et al., 2008; Grauwiler, 2008). Additional positive outcomes of women's advocacy programmes include victims' reduced isolation, shame and guilt; and their increased safety, hope for the future, and broader knowledge and use of sources of support (Bennett et al., 2004; Cosgrove et al., 2008; Grauwiler, 2008; Hester & Westmarland 2005; Williamson & Abrahams, 2014).

Parallel provision of individual and systems advocacy has been described in victim advocacy research. In their appraisal of New Zealand victim advocacy service, Viviana, Morgan et al., (2007) identified various ways in which advocates created conditions for victims' enhanced safety. For example, women victims reported increased emotional support, information and advice on safety planning and legal processes, support throughout police and court procedures, education about dynamics of domestic violence, support for children and parenting, support in seeking shelter and relocating, referrals for counselling, and protection from discrimination and other barriers to victims within community and formal institutions. Systems advocacy entails preempting, monitoring and reforming the various institutions victims negotiate as they seek justice and freedom from abuse (Thelen, 2000). This work can involve providing specialised training to police, court, health and welfare sectors, establishing formal relationships with these government sectors at national and local levels, lobbying to

improve victim safety and accountability of government agencies, and contributing to research and policy development (Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Hester & Westmarland, 2005; Williamson & Abrahams 2014).

Historical Perspectives in Women Victim's Advocacy

In Anglo-American cultures, advocacy services for woman victims primarily attribute their origins to women's movements of the 1970s (Charles, 2004; Cosgrove et al., 2008; Elman, 2003; Weldon & Htun, 2013). Less often, recognition of victim advocacy is extended to other historical and cultural contexts. *Mujeres Libres* (Free Women) for example, was a 30,000 member Spanish anarchist women's organisation active during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, which sought to end urban and rural women's oppression in political, employment, and domestic spheres (Ackelsberg, 1984). An earlier example is of the first wave of shantangs, refuges for abused, impoverished and widowed women and girls established in China in the late 18th Century (Rogaski, 1997). These examples illustrate how gendered understandings of women and girls' abuse and oppression emerge at different times and places in peoples' histories. Correspondingly, the examples convey how gendered understandings are historically, culturally and socially specific in relation to the emergence, meaning and practices of advocacy.

The meager recorded knowledge of women's advocacy through history is likely an artifact of intersecting social conditions: Severe restrictions placed on women's activities and scholarship prevalent in many societies, combined with the dominance of Anglo-American cultural knowledge and methods of historical interpretation above those of other cultural and social groups. In reviewing the few available references to early women's movements, and particularly women's shelters, I noted that a fundamental distinction between these and the refuge movement of the 1970s was that

the earlier activities often arose from ideologies grounded in patriarchal moralism, namely, religion-based charity and preserving girls' and women's chastity. Origins of the refuge movement are partly attributed to such organisations as the National Council of Women and Women's Christian Temperance movement of the Nineteenth Century. These movements focused on progressive social reforms encompassing women's suffrage, ending men's violence against women, improving labour conditions, and treatment of homeless and incarcerated people (Cook, 2011). These concerns suggest that early feminist analyses were core influences of the refuge movement. Indeed, a principal insight of feminist scholarship of the 1970s was in designating abuse and control of some women as an extreme endeavor to maintain dominance, legitimised by omnipresent patriarchal power relations (Charles, 2004; Elman, 2003; Ferraro, 1996).

During this period, various feminist groups sought to reconfigure dominant patriarchal sociopolitical ideologies and institutions through sustained activism to end women's abuse and subordination, and by exposing ways in which gender, ethnicity, social class, and sexuality intertwine with power relationships, marginalisation and violence (Haviland, Frye, & Rajah, 2008). Inherent in this work was a commitment to supporting individual women experiencing domestic and sexualised violence by establishing advocacy groups and refuges for women victims and their children (Hammons, 2004). Concomitantly, pressure was intensified on governments to recognise their duty to respond to domestic violence by providing advocacy organisations with financial means to undertake their work, and by redressing obstructions to women's freedom from abuse within legislative and justice policy and practice (Durfee, 2009; Elman, 2003; Harvie & Manzi, 2011; Lehrner & Allen, 2009; Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Shepard & Pence, 1999). As such, broad sociopolitical aims of these women's movements foreground the traditions of many advocacy organisations:

specifically, the imperative that ending violence against women must include direct services to women experiencing violence and their children, and change oppressive social and political systems and ideologies.

Since this period, the efforts of feminist activists and scholars within and between many nations have transformed public and legal conceptions of violence against women (Durfee, 2009; Finley, 2010; Flood & Pease, 2006; Hunnicutt, 2009, UN Women, 2011). This was partly accomplished by raising awareness of the magnitude and harms of domestic violence through strategic litigation cases. It was also achieved by conceptualising domestic violence initially as a social justice issue and increasingly, as a human rights violation and criminal justice concern (Charles, 2004; Weldon & Htun, 2013). Importantly, these conceptual shifts are attributed to greater recognition of individuals experiencing domestic violence as victims of crimes entitled to due process of law (Durfee, 2009). Undoubtedly, domestic violence legislation is an imperative and a powerful mechanism for signaling to individuals and societies the unacceptability of domestic violence and for protecting victims. Concerns have been expressed, however, that a narrower focus on legal sanctions for protecting victims and holding perpetrators accountable has constricted how we define, think about, and act upon violence against women (e.g. Durfee, 2009; Gadd, 2012; Harvie & Manzi, 2011; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Stark, 2007; 2009). Prevalent misgivings, for example, center on the presumption that legal sanctions effectively deter perpetrators from using violence and increase victim safety (Mills, Thom, Meehan, & Chetty, 2013). More broadly, domestic violence researchers caution against prioritising criminal justice system solutions that focus on individuals' actions whilst neglecting to address the deep-rooted structural inequalities and wider social responses that nurture conditions conducive to violence (Morgan & Coombes, 2013). Indeed, such reservations towards current policing and legal responses

are present within academic and activist arenas and exist among police and legal professionals providing direct services to victims and perpetrators (Hoyle & Sanders, 2000).

The inadequacies of a narrow focus on legal sanctions are substantiated by research findings indicating that justice system responses do not consistently increase safety and justice for all women and, at times, even diminish victims' safety (Aldridge, 2013; Barrett et al., 2011; Belknap, Melton, Denney, Fleury-Steiner, & Sullivan 2009; Durfee, 2009; Grauwiler, 2008; Elizabeth, Gavey, & Tolmie, 2012a; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Meyer, 2011; Robertson et al., 2007; Shepard & Pence, 1999). Gadd's (2012) study supported a broadly identified experience that a significant proportion of domestic violence reported to police does not lead to a successful prosecution and, moreover, prosecution does not necessarily equate to positive outcomes for victims; despite the confounding of the two, they are not one and the same. New Zealand research found women victims reported reduced safety when legal tools such as protection orders were not adequately enforced (Robertson et al., 2007). In their respective studies, Aldridge (2013), Gadd (2012), and Hoyle and Sanders (2000) found that a majority of victimised women reported their experiences of police and court processes were not worth the associated trauma and costs as their safety did not increase and the perpetrator was not adequately held accountable. Consistent across the studies was the particular concern reported by women victims that their violent (ex)partners were not required to acknowledge their wrongdoings and the multiple harms they had caused (Aldridge, 2013; Gadd, 2012; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Robertson et al., 2007).

Such reductive views of violence against women also truncate our visions of how to achieve greater freedom, fairness, and peace for all people. In her Sydney Peace Prize lecture, writer Arundhati Roy articulated her disillusionment regarding privileging

of human rights above social justice discourse, and implications for marginalised peoples' hope for justice:

Today, it is not merely justice itself, but the idea of justice that is under attack. The assault on vulnerable fragile sections of society is at once so complete, so cruel, and so clever – all encompassing and yet specifically targeted, blatantly brutal and yet unbelievably insidious – that its sheer audacity has eroded our definition of justice. It has forced us to lower our sights, and curtail our expectations. Even among the well-intentioned, the expansive, magnificent concept of justice is gradually being substituted with the reduced, far more fragile discourse of "human rights"... The difference is that notions of equality, of parity have been pried loose and eased out of the equation. It's a process of attrition. Almost unconsciously, we begin to think of justice for the rich and human rights for the poor. Justice for the corporate world, human rights for its victims (Roy, 2004, para. 6).

Arundhati Roy's remonstrations on behalf of disenfranchised people correspond to an understanding of violence against women as enabled by, and enabling of, social systems and social arrangements that reinforce dominance and subordination for certain groups, in this case, particular social conditions giving rise to some men's greater entitlement to resources and status and women's subordination (Hunnicut, 2009; Stark, 2010). Analogously, contemporary feminist researchers have established that the politicised feminist insights centered around social justice from which many victims' advocacy organisations originate, and which are recognised as crucial to social change, have been progressively overshadowed by a neo-liberal orientation towards individualising domestic violence victims and mainstream service provision based on

managerialist business models (Elman, 2003; Finley, 2010; Harvie & Manzie, 2011; Lehrner & Allen, 2009; Radford & Gill, 2006). Thus, as states have responded to calls to adopt policies and legislation for protecting victims, women victims' advocacy has in turn become increasingly institutionalised (Elman, 2003; Shepard & Pence, 1999). In both arenas, researchers (e.g. Harvie & Manzi, 2011; Lehrner & Allen, 2009) have observed advocacy organisations' focus on establishing safety for individual victims presides over continuing work for social change.

Victim services' recruitment practices and workplace cultures increasingly reflect depoliticised, individualist and gender-neutral perspectives of domestic violence (Finley 2010; Lehrner & Allen, 2009). This is partially recognised as a corollary of advocacy organisations' rapid expansion and hence, increased need to secure operational funding. As a significant proportion of resourcing comes from governments, challenges to the state and communities by advocacy organisations are seen as compromising strategic relationships that enable advocates to provide direct services to victims (Morgan & Coombes, 2013). Indeed, victim advocates in New Zealand research reported a requirement to not engage in activism as conditional upon having speaking rights in a family violence court (Coombes et al., 2009; Morgan et al., 2007). To explain the de-gendering stance increasingly apparent in domestic violence services and policies, Radford and Gill (2006) reason that to secure community and financial support, advocacy agencies are often pressured to avoid "contentious issues" by appeasing community leaders in adopting gender-neutral language and practices (p. 375). Radford and Gill (2006) found that attempts to suppress evidence of the disparity between women's and men's victimisation originate from father's rights lobbyists who, under the guise of promoting gender equality and children's rights, pressure community and government organisations to adhere to gender-blind approaches. This also manifests

as removing gender analyses from domestic violence discourse. Radford and Gill (2006) emphasise that de-gendering approaches undermine the safety of women and men victims, particularly men who have experienced sexualised violence, as these different groups' needs for advocacy and support will diverge.

Consequences of inter-agency relationships between victim advocacy organisations and statutory agencies such as corrections, court, child protection and welfare services have been raised as concerns. For example, some statutory agencies order women victims to attend safety programmes to coerce them to leave their partners (Hester, 2011; Humphreys & Absler, 2011; Strega & Janzen, 2013). In the context of child protection agencies, women's entitlement to keep their children may be conditional upon them attending victim programmes (Humphreys, Mullender, Thiara, & Skamballis, 2006). The burden of responsibility for keeping children safe may be placed unfairly on victims who are mothers by child protection agencies when the abusive father is unwilling to engage with the service or more difficult to work with than the mother (Humphreys & Absler, 2011; Terrance, Plumm, & Little 2008; Williamson & Abrahams, 2014). Such agency responses perpetuate victim-blaming and minimise violence if agencies' actions signal to victims and perpetrators that the mother is to blame for not adequately protecting her children and that the perpetrator will not be held accountable for his violence. Both conditions are implicated in diminished safety and justice for victims and their children (Hester, 2011; Jaffe, Crooks, & Wolfe, 2003; Strega & Janzen, 2013; Terrance et al., 2008; Williamson & Abrahams, 2014).

Similarly, advocates' unwitting surveillance of victims may be an outcome of statutory services' reporting requirements (Williamson & Abrahams, 2014). Advocates' capacities to independently advocate for victims are compromised as a consequence of their requirement to cooperate with statutory agencies, particularly where there are

expectations of sharing information about victims. Furthermore, woman victims may see their attendance in advocacy programmes as punishment if it is mandatory rather than voluntary. The issue of surveillance has particular significance in the context of perpetrators' violent strategies such as threatening to report partners to police, welfare, or child protection services in cases where victims have been pressured into illegal acts or couples have engaged in illegal activities more generally (Felson, Messner, Hoskin, & Deane, 2002). Inter-agency information sharing about victims can undermine women and their children's safety and dignity by reducing both victims' perceived safety of advocacy services and their actual safety (Williamson & Abrahams, 2014).

While critiques of cross-agency relationships raise safety and dignity concerns, given the complexity and wide-reaching consequences of domestic violence, an integrated response system is now considered crucial for halting domestic violence (Fanslow, 2005; FVDRC, 2016; Herbert & Mackenzie, 2014). Many domestic violence intervention initiatives have developed in response to research findings that identify integrated community responses as fundamental to increasing safety and accountability in domestic violence (Hague, 2000; Hester & Westmarland, 2005; FVDRC, 2016; Maxwell et al., 2001; Robertson & Busch, 1993; Robinson & Tregidga, 2007; Shepard, & Pence, 1999). One benefit is enabling courts to share information about victims and perpetrators with victim advocacy services as this can be important for decision-making when assessing perpetrators' risk and dangerousness, and developing safety plans and programmes with victims (MOJ, 2014b) as contrasted with the potentially deleterious consequences of advocates' surveillance and information sharing regarding victims. Presently, approved safety programme providers in Aotearoa can apply to the Family Court for information held about victims and perpetrators pertaining to a specific domestic violence situation. Information can include copies of the protection order

application, supporting affidavits, the protection order itself, and associated documents (MOJ, 2014b). Advocates' opportunities to review court documents alongside discussions with the victim can be vital for informing ongoing safety needs responsive to each victim's particular and changing circumstances.

While information sharing between agencies is recognised as critical for increasing safety and relevance of services to victims (FVDRC, 2016), caution must be taken to ensure it does not further undermine safety and dignity; the very goal of integrated domestic violence responses. Victim advocacy research has demonstrated that victims' safety is compromised when domestic violence responses are misappropriated by services that do not possess theoretically rigorous understandings of domestic violence (Williamson & Abrahams, 2014). A prevalent example in agency victim responses is when politicised discourses that encompass systemic injustices and broader conditions of discrimination and marginalisation are construed as individual or family pathology (Finley, 2010; Lehrner & Allan, 2009; Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Pollack, 2010). This misappropriation maintains victim blaming and deficit models for particular groups.

The current project is concerned with one component of a potentially larger inter-agency domestic violence system. With this come significant tensions. In this Chapter I described how earlier politicised women victims' advocacy focused on supporting victims and on reconfiguring dominant patriarchal institutions while in recent times, women's advocacy increasingly orientates towards professionalism and alignment with state ideologies (Finley, 2010). Unease regarding implications of dependence of specialist women's advocacy organisations on states is increasingly voiced (e.g. Elman, 2003; Ferraro, 1996; Hunnicutt, 2009; Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Stark, 2009). Amongst concerns is growing apprehension that the feminist analyses

central to understanding conditions in which domestic violence arises, and the multiple systemic conditions of discrimination that must be redressed for resolution, have been substituted with criminal-justice and medical discourses. This discursive shift constrains possibilities for far-reaching, long-term reductions in violence against women. Research indicates victims' advocacy informed by feminist analyses of domestic violence and structural inequities is pivotal for promoting victim's safety and wellbeing (Hunnicut, 2009). Recognising the need for an integrated domestic violence system without compromising the social justice aims and independent voice of Women's Refuge is a salient issue in this project. In the following section I refocus the discussion on specialist victim advocacy responses by drawing attention to tensions in discourses of victim empowerment and education underpinning safety programmes.

Representations of Empowerment in Victim Interventions

Scholars of violence against women (e.g. Finley, 2010; Pollack, 2010) hold serious reservations about women's victim programmes based on an individual empowerment discourse (for example, offering assertiveness training and self-esteem enhancement). This constructs victim empowerment as a character trait and mental state whereby marginalised people, and particularly women victims, are presumed deficient, but capable of being nurtured to be strong, independent and self-sufficient. Personal improvements, promoted as desirable, mask the deliberateness of violence and decontextualise violence from interpersonal, structural and systemic barriers to victims' freedom from abuse or discrimination (Coates & Wade, 2004; Pollack, 2010). Endeavoring to teach victims "empowerment skills" implicitly conveys harmful messages to victims that their partner's abuse is a consequence of both parties' poor interpersonal communication skills, assertiveness, self-esteem and self-management. By learning to overcome their personal inadequacies, victims are informed they will be less

likely to be "picked out" as targets for abuse and will be empowered to protect themselves and others from further violence. Instead, women learn their newly acquired skills and behavioural changes do not stop their partner's control and abuse and in some cases partner's abuse escalates. This signifies to women they are not only responsible for determining whether or not their partner will abuse them, but also incapable of "taking control" and improving their circumstances by learning how to "become" someone who does not get abused. Despite services' well-meaning intentions, internalised and individualistic conceptualisations of empowerment reinforce victim-blaming and pathologising, and mutualise responsibility for violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; Wilson et al., 2015).

A principle problem of individual, internalised empowerment is that particular interpersonal, social and material conditions restricting victims' access to resources necessary for empowerment are overlooked (Pollack, 2010). In regard to the content and philosophical approach of women's group programmes, anti-oppression researcher Kasturirangan (2008) encourages critical consciousness raising of ideological and structural conditions that enable violence against women and discussing how this relates to individual women's experiences of abuse. A further recommendation is for advocacy programmes to promote sharing diverse perspectives, values and meanings of safety among group members, and supporting women in determining their own goals for freedom from abuse (Kasturirangan, 2008). Morgan and Coombes (2013) suggest that in facilitating these various forms of knowledge sharing, group programmes legitimate multiple sources of oppression experienced by victims as well as sources of safety that emerge from participants' and advocates' understandings and values. Thus, women's group facilitators attune to their roles as group collaborators developing skills and knowledge through honouring victim's experiences and contributing specialised

advocacy knowledge to these understandings.

Kasturirangan (2008) privileges an understanding of empowerment as a continuous process through which women victims increasingly gain access to social and material resources important to them, rather than as an inevitable outcome of women's group participation. Morgan and Coombes (2013) contest advocates' positioning as providers of empowerment and instead advance Kasturirangan's view of empowerment as a collective process through which advocates engage with women victims to support self-determination, interdependence and access to social resources. Empowerment is understood as on-going collective safety responses involving working together to overcome oppression, and systemic barriers to victims' safety (FVDRC, 2016).

The psychoeducational approach of some women victim's advocacy programmes is criticised for reinforcing a view of domestic violence as principally the victim's problem (Kuijpers, van der Knapp, & Lodewijks, 2011). This is presumed to position women victims as responsible for the violence and hence, responsible for changing themselves and their violent partner's behaviour, rather than holding the perpetrator responsible and challenging broader ideological and structural conditions that enable domestic violence (Lehrner & Allen, 2009; Stark, 2007). In their evaluation of women's groups, however, Williamson and Abrahams (2014) did not find these concerns replicated in the experiences of participants. In contrast, women reported appreciating opportunities presented through programmes to clarify their understandings of their partner's abuse, to have their experiences legitimised, and crucially, to learn that the abuse was not their fault (Williamson & Abrahams, 2014). These findings illustrate the value of privileging clients' perspectives on their own experience of victims' programmes when undertaking programme evaluations. In the following section I briefly discuss ethical and methodological issues in evaluating

women's group programmes.

Evaluating Women Victims' Groups

Rather than provide an exhaustive review of victim group evaluation, the purpose of this section is to briefly illustrate the considerable complexity of victim advocacy and unique nature of victim group programmes and hence, challenges in their evaluation. This highlights the critical importance of integrating ethical reasoning and practice-based evidence into programme evaluation (Sullivan, 2011).

Part of ethical practice in victim advocacy is evaluating programmes offered to victims. Failure to do so is a disservice to clients, funders and the service and may further harm victims. Traditional programme evaluation models are often designed to assess single, pre-established goals (such as reducing drug relapse, or improving literacy, for example). Thus, conventional evaluation may not be sensitive to assessing the array of functions performed by victim advocates, or prepared for the complexity of evaluating such work (Lyon & Sullivan, 2007). Also problematic is that evaluation models, techniques and objectives predominantly revolve around monitoring group participants' behavioural changes as indicators of their increased safety (Lyon & Sullivan, 2007). Advocates may be justifiably skeptical about evaluation of their programmes: they know clients come to them as a result of someone else's harmful behaviour, despite funder and wider community misconceptions that victims and victim services can stop domestic violence. To expect group programmes to stop perpetrator's violence suggests victims are responsible for others' violent actions. Thus, a central premise in evaluating victims' groups must be that victims do not cause their partners to abuse them and therefore, it is unethical to include evaluative criteria based on cessation of violence or clients ending relationships with perpetrators. Ethical implications of

evaluating a programme's influence in changing victim's understandings of domestic violence convey broader tensions in creating effective victim advocacy programmes.

Similarly problematic are programme outcomes based on increasing clients' "cooperation with" and "willingness to engage" advocacy and legal services. These can imply women who chose not to engage are uncooperative or not helping themselves so are therefore less deserving of support (Pratt, 2004). These assumptions ignore the many personal, safety and structural barriers for victims who do not engage, or stop engaging, with services and instead reinforce victim blaming and pathologising stereotypes. Evaluative emphasis on changing victim behaviour and engagement necessitates critical analysis of potential implications for victims. Evaluators' understandings and ideological commitments thus need to be challenged in regard to perpetuating victim-blaming and other harmful social responses.

In response to prevalent assault-based conceptualisations of domestic violence and victim-blaming stereotypes, victims may blame themselves and not be aware of their own multiple responses and resistances to violence. Women's group advocacy in the current project aims to help to change victim's understandings, expectations and available discursive resources to accommodate broader understandings of domestic violence as a pattern of coercion, control and entrapment, as well as discourses of resistance. This has potential for enhancing victims' safety, dignity and wellbeing. Moreover, working alongside advocates and other clients can increase social support and knowledge of social and legal resources (Sullivan & Lyon, 2007). From these encounters women may experience clarity regarding ways they have protected themselves and others from abuse.

Advocates are invariably aware that their clients have diverse, multiple, and changing needs. Supporting victims to negotiate these is a core part of advocacy. Thus,

in respect to programme outcomes, Sullivan and Lyon (2007) emphasise an evaluative focus on outcomes identified as important to each client. Working with individual women to clarify their goals can increase the group's relevance to them. This also supports service planning by deepening the organisation's understandings of clients' diverse needs (Lyon & Sullivan, 2007). Thus, evaluation should encompass a mode of group facilitation flexible and responsive to clients' changing circumstances.

I have raised several critical issues underlying ethical reasoning in women victim's group evaluation. I now present a brief history of Women's Refuge, a major New Zealand advocacy organisation, in order to contextualise the Women's Group programme and its evaluation historically and socially through the refuge movement.

Women's Refuges in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Brief History

In 1973, the first Women's Refuge was established in Christchurch (Aviva Family Violence Services [AVFVS], 2014). Throughout the ensuing decade, groups of women and men committed to ending violence against women progressively established women's refuges throughout the country and in 1981 the NCIWR, an umbrella organisation for local refuges, was created (Hann, 2001). This work was aligned to international women's advocacy movements which sought to reshape sociopolitical and legislative responses to violence against women, and to directly support women to safety from their partner's violence by providing residential safe houses and advocacy for women remaining in the community including in their own homes (NCIWR, 2000). In Aotearoa, these collective actions, alongside other feminist movements, are attributed to awakening a series of social change movements that would irrevocably transform the lives of thousands of women and children and, more broadly, social understandings of violence in the home (Cahill & Dann, 1991; Grey, 2008; McCallum, 1993).

Many of those involved in the refuge movement identified with the notion of a universal sisterhood of women committed to redressing gender inequality and ending violence against women (Cosgrove et al., 2008; Hammons, 2004). In a prevailing social climate that minimised and normalised domestic violence, victims were often disbelieved or blamed for partner's violence, and perpetrators were often not held responsible for their behaviour. A unified women's solidarity movement was thus understood as necessary for challenging and transforming such oppressive social conditions (Elman, 2003).

Concurrently, for many wahine Māori, the indigenous women of Aotearoa, the view that gender-based violence transcends national, cultural and class boundaries oversimplified and overlooked experiences of domestic violence that intersected with colonisation, decolonisation and inherently, the abuse, oppression, and marginalisation of Māori since the arrival of an imperialist British culture (Morgan, Coombes, Neill-Weston, & Weatherley, 2011; Pihama & McRoberts, 2009). Understanding how interpersonal and structural violence operate together as "tools of patriarchy *and* as tools of racism and colonialism," and thereby continue to oppress and exploit indigenous women globally, was recognised as critical yet underdeveloped areas of practice (Smith, Richie, Sudsbury, & White, 2006, p. 4).

In the domestic violence context, indigenous and feminist scholars and activists drew attention to indigenous women's dual experiences of contemporary and historic control and abuse (e.g. Bussey & Whipple, 2010). The lived experience of present violations of their personhood by someone close to them, and through ongoing colonising processes remains a reality for many indigenous women victims (Cram, Pihama, Jenkins, & Karehana, 2002). Integral to this are wahine Māori responses to profoundly oppressive social power structures and policies that manifest as poverty,

social exclusion, and erasure of cultural memory whilst, perversely, representing marginalised peoples' suffering under a neoliberal rationale as a problem of poor individual choices. These understandings drew attention to how indigenous women victims are harmed by historic violations and oppression of their people's women as components of the colonising state's policies of cultural dispossession and domination (Bussey & Whipple, 2010). In these respects, indigenous women experiencing domestic violence contend with domination and abuse by (ex)partners and by the culture that colonised and irrevocably changed their own culture.

These understandings endure with striking relevance for many wahine Māori whose priorities for seeking safety from abuse must be better accounted for within advocacy organisations and collaborating government services. This accounting must pay particular attention to historical and contemporary state injustices carried out upon wahine, their whānau, and their tupuna (ancestors) (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). For example, in my previous research advocates reported relatively widespread distrust of government agencies, such as police and CYF [Child youth and Family], among wahine Māori in the context of historical and current experiences of state oppression (Reedy, 2013). Women's experiences included the state taking infants and children from whānau, families, and communities that did not have sufficient economic support, or did not fit into the industrialised Anglo-European model of how families should be constituted (Duncan & Worrell, 2000). This was particularly prevalent for Māori whose whānau kinship systems were neither understood nor respected by state institutions (Cram, 2012).

For wahine Māori advocates and victims, the premise of universality operating within refuges would, at times, manifest as ethnocentricity, cultural blindness and racism (Hann, 2001). Somewhat relatedly, lesbian and bisexual women's experiences of

homophobia and abuse in New Zealand society, and lack of legal protection from victimisation were, at times, reproduced within refuges. Despite the instrumental role of many Māori and lesbian women in establishing refuges (McCallum, 1993), the philosophies, language, and every-day practice within refuges and the women's movement more generally, maintained ethnocentric Pākehā and heteronormative positions that often rendered Māori and lesbian women's experiences invisible (Hann, 2001). Thus, the growing assertion of diverse women's voices in feminist debate, analysis, and critique internationally and in Aotearoa guided the development of women's movements with increased awareness of how interrelated social, political, cultural, historical and geographical contexts mediate the extent to which women's justice and freedom from abuse are attained (Hann, 2001).

These conditions led to the NCIWR adopting principles of biculturalism that necessitated equally sharing political power between Māori and tauwi (non-Māori) and reformulating the NCIWR into a parallel development model. The model was practiced as living Te Tiriti o Waitangi⁶ in which tangata whenua (sovereign people of the land) and tauwi aspired to share resources and representation equally, work side-by-side, and provide culturally appropriate services to women victims and their children, including Māori Women's Refuges (NCIWR, 2000). These aspirations led to two corresponding processes for addressing domestic violence in the form of parallel development for tangata whenua and tauwi. An additional outcome was a commitment to lesbian visibility by the NCIWR. This would be reflected in the Collective's Code of Ethics, establishment of the Lesbian Refuge Worker's Network, successful lobbying for victims' legal protection in same-sex relationships, and commitments to anti-homophobia and lesbian advocates' and clients' safety within refuges (Hann, 2001).

⁶ For further information about Te Tiriti o Waitangi please refer to Appendix A.

Thus, the refuge movement grew from the roots of interwoven stories of politicised feminist and indigenous analyses of violence against women, and mutual commitment to community development and practicing non-violence. Crucially, it is also acknowledged that discrimination and marginalisation of Māori prevail in many social contexts throughout Aotearoa. Correspondingly, tensions remain within organisations such as women's refuges regarding achievement of tino rangatiratanga, self-determination for Māori, in this setting.

These historical conditions underpin the NCIWR's current philosophies, structure, and practices. In present times, the NCIWR supports 37 affiliated refuges dispersed across 41 sites in Aotearoa New Zealand (NCIWR, 2016). Of these refuges, 14 are for Māori wahine and tamariki (children) and one is for Pasifika women, their children, and families (NCIWR, 2017). Additionally, Shakti, an associate member of the NCIWR, provides a specialist service to women victims and their families belonging to African, Asian and Middle Eastern refugee and migrant communities (Shakti, 2017).

The NCIWR continues to support women victims and their children by offering individual, group and systems advocacy. Among services provided are safehouses; 24-hour telephone and internet crisis lines; safety assessment and planning for women; information and support for women, families, whānau and friends of victims; legal advocacy and education about police and court processes; safety group programmes for women and children; parenting support; childcare; relocation for victims and children within New Zealand and internationally; and information about, and connections with, community resources including legal, health, therapeutic, housing, and welfare services (NCIWR, 2017). The NCIWR (2017) undertakes public awareness raising through media campaigns, and comment through media releases, public events, delivering

specialised training, research, policy advice and direct lobbying to government to prevent domestic violence.

Approximately 50 to 60 percent of NCIWR work is government funded (NCIWR, 2017). In 2017, the NCIWR had a staff of 988 employees, consisting of 357 paid and 631 voluntary workers (NCIWR, 2017). Given NCIWR annual statistics, staff to client ratios indicates a significant volume of work carried out by a relatively small staff. To emphasise, over the previous year, 2,466 women accessed safe house services, 41,062 women and children accessed community advocacy services, and refuges received approximately 73,000 crisis calls (around 200 calls per day) and 41,525 referrals for victim services (NCIWR, 2017). Despite the vital services undertaken by refuges, these figures and the perennial issue of underfunding expose a pervasive undervaluing of essential work.

Not all domestic violence women's advocacy organisations, including some refuges, are affiliated with the NCIWR. Some independent refuges provide specialised services for particular groups, such as Pasifika women and their families. Other victim advocacy services emphasise providing support for all members of families living with violence (AFVS, 2017). For example, programmes are offered to women abused by partners, and for men who are violent towards their partners and other family members within the same service (Woodward, 2013).

Some organisations do not necessarily adhere to feminist sociopolitical analyses of domestic violence and in some instances, service providers maintain depoliticised, gender-neutral and individualised constructions of violence that do not distinguish between domestic and other forms of family violence (Portwood & Heany, 2007; Stark, 2007). This may entail, for example, attributing a partner's abusive behaviour to "relationship problems" between spouses or to "family dynamics." Coates and Wade

(2007) argue these representations obscure the unilateral nature of violence, fail to recognise victims' resistance or hold perpetrators responsible for their actions, and perpetuate victim-blaming. This draws attention to ways discursive practices shape domestic violence understandings and manifest in profound social and material implications for victims and perpetrators.

Throughout Chapter Two I have critiqued historical and contemporary institutional responses to understanding, measuring, representing, and sanctioning against domestic violence. Within this discussion I have introduced material and social implications of discursive practices within these institutional responses. In the following chapter, these ideas are examined with a brief overview of how discourses are theorised and how they work to maintain particular ideological and systemic power relationships. This provides a context for examining some implications of domestic violence definitions, and how these pertain to RBP, which follows.

CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical Perspectives in the Project

In this chapter I discuss theoretical assumptions about the manner in which discursive practices enable and/or restrict, and are enabled and/or restricted by particular understandings of phenomena and ourselves in the context of partner violence, resistance to violence, and victims' safety and justice. I also critique ways domestic violence has been conceptualised in powerful social institutions and some of their implications. From there, I critically review RBP. Social, material and ethical implications for women victims and their families and whānau as they respond to violence, encounter social responses following violence, and respond to these responses are interwoven throughout Chapter Three.

Discourses and their Consequences

A poststructuralist conception of discourse refers to common—and often competing—systems of understanding, communicating about, and experiencing the world, which are embedded in relationships between positions of power and the privileging of particular knowledges (Hollway, 1984). In this view, a discourse consists of regulated linguistic systems (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, & Walkerdine, 1984), capable of shaping how individuals and groups make meaning and act through this meaning making. Gavey (1989) elaborates on this understanding in stating, "all meaning and knowledge is discursively constituted through language and other signifying practices" (p. 463). Discourses make possible, and are made possible, through practices pertaining to particular ever-shifting cultural, institutional, historical and social systems and arrangements (Weedon, 1997, p. 40). Thus, particular understandings of phenomena and of ourselves in relation to these are made available

and reproduced through discourses, which also have implications for actions, practices and institutions.

The current project aligns with a Foucauldian and feminist understanding of consequences of discursive practices. Gavey (1989), for example, asserts, "it is through discourse that material power is exercised and that power relations are established and perpetuated" (p. 464). Therefore, particular power relations favour and thus reproduce discourses that sustain their arrangements. The material and social advantages of privileged positions perpetuate particular discourses that serve those privileged positions. Under such conditions a group's capacity to strengthen its interests is partially contingent on its ability to represent its viewpoint as more legitimate or truthful than others (Coates & Wade, 2007). In this sense, a Foucauldian position affirms deployment of language as an essential strategy for seizing and exercising power (Coates & Wade, 2007). An implication of this is the wide availability of dominant discourses which are then extensively integrated into many people's understandings and become insinuated into the seemingly proper and "natural order" of our lives. Through their taken-for-granted pervasiveness dominant discourses become invisible in their omnipotence (Gavey, 1989).

From this theoretical perspective, the dominance of some discourses constrains the availability and valuing of others creating subjugated knowledge (Coombes & Morgan, 2001). Marginalised discourses are discredited through processes of deliberate exclusion, being unintentionally ignored, or represented as aberrations in relation to acceptable (and accepted) meanings and hence, as threatening to social order. When particular discourses are censored, unjust social and material conditions are reproduced, and resistance occurs (Hook, 2003; 2004a). A Foucauldian perspective offered by Thiesmeyer (2003) is that marginalised groups' and individuals' resistance may be

understood as an impertinent challenge to those conferred with power and status and to their dominance, whether knowingly or by virtue of the taken-for-granted truth status of dominant discourses. The response to such dissent is hence thought to lead to preemptive and retaliative actions, which intensify the authority of hegemonic discourses and further suppress those marginalised in order to maintain the status quo.

In the context of interpersonal violence, this conceptualisation of discourse and power is consistent with Coates and Wade's (2007) argument that all forms of violence are designed to suppress or conceal victims' resistance. Yet Coates and Wade (2007) eschew poststructuralist perspectives which, in their terms, reproduce a form of discourse determinism that denies individual agency. They instead maintain a critical realist understanding which emphasises material and structural inequalities that result in differential access to benefits, including social power between groups. Coates and Wade draw attention to research findings that perpetrators always operate with awareness of victim's resistance so accordingly, the specific ways in which they enact violence anticipate resistance and attempt to prevent it (e.g. Todd et al., 2004; Todd et al., 2014). In support of their argument, that domestic violence is more likely practiced in the private sphere of home hidden from view rather than in public offers evidence of the premeditated way in which perpetrators choose when, how, and whom they abuse in a context of social unacceptability of violence. Notwithstanding, perpetrators also choose to use violence in public, for example, to get their partner to do what the perpetrator wants, or suppress victim resistance, if they do not anticipate or respect particular forms of social condemnation.

From a poststructuralist perspective, language is not a descriptive tool for accurately naming experience in order to provide a reliable, mutually understood reflection of reality (Weedon, 1997). Anderson's (1996) claim that "language is not

innocent" (p. 119) powerfully articulates this notion of language as a regulator, constrainer and enabler of particular meanings and interactions operating at micro and macro levels of communication (Strong & Busch, 2013). Accordingly, discourse offers particular subject positions to individuals and groups (Weedon, 1997). In the sense that discourses are made available to people, they become vantage points through which experience is interpreted and meaning is made (Wilbraham, 2004). Discourses present possible constructions or versions of oneself and others that can be multiple and contradictory. They are construed in varying ways in accordance with particular social contexts. If discourse is understood on Foucault's terms to be the "articulation of preferred social ideologies," (cited in Thiesmeyer, 2003, p. 11), then to maintain power differentials, seek social valorisation, or prevent persecution, we are likely to take up subject positions that conform to culturally accepted expectations and the discourses that maintain them.

If varying material and social conditions are constituted in and through discourses, then enacting social change should account for and be prepared to disrupt discourses that maintain unjust and oppressive social structures and arrangements (Coombes & Morgan, 2001; Gavey, 1989). Transformative goals entail analysing discourses that reproduce privileged positions, and examining how marginalised groups and subjugated discourses are represented as deficient (Combs & Freedman, 2012). Therefore, the analysis of discourse also involves identifying multiple and alternative subject positions, and exploring how positioning offers possibilities for perpetuating or redressing unjust social conditions.

In the following section I examine ways domestic violence has been conceptualised in social institutions from the perspective of discursive theory.

How Violence Against Women is Defined

As explained in the introductory chapter, contention surrounds domestic violence definitions. Ongoing debate in the process of 'defining' can be understood as a manifestation of intersections between privilege, power, resistance, and knowledge. The uncritical manner in which *family violence* is frequently interchanged with *domestic violence* and obscuring the overwhelming prevalence of women's victimisation in favour of gender symmetry in conceptualising domestic violence, exemplify the inherently political process of defining the phenomena (Berns, 2004; Fanslow, 2005; Flood & Pease, 2006, Lehrner & Allan, 2009).

Understandings of domestic violence constructed through discourse are pivotal in shaping how victims respond to partner's violence, and to others' social responses (Coates & Wade, 2007; Todd et al., 2004). Correspondingly, available discourses are crucial for shaping how perpetrators enact control and abuse, and respond to their abused partner's responses, including resistances, and to other's social responses (Coates & Wade, 2007; Todd et al., 2004). I discuss prevalent domestic violence discourses identified by researchers in more detail in the following section. Presently however, I turn the discussion to ways in which language is used to delimit domestic violence and some implications of this process.

While language does not *determine* whether or how violence is practiced by perpetrators or experienced and resisted by victims, identifying, analysing and challenging how domestic violence is defined is important because language used to articulate what domestic violence means shapes possible social responses to it. In turn, enacted social responses contribute to community norms that perform a central function in supporting, sanctioning, condemning and resisting violence, in the locations and through the means by which perpetrators are able to control and abuse, and in the ways

victims resist their violence and seek safety (Coates & Wade, 2007; Todd et al., 2004; Wade, 1997). This assumes particular significance in light of multiple research findings linking community norms supporting or excusing violence, actual engagement in sanctioning violence within families, and reduced likelihood of acting to protect or support victims (e.g. Berkel, Vandiver, & Bahner, 2004; McLaren, 2010; Nabors, Dietz, & Jasinski, 2006; Sakall, 2001).

The use of language to conceal and misrepresent partners' violent actions, victims' responses to violence, and others' responses to perpetrators and victims' responses, is a theme of central interest to this project. In particular, I draw on the scholarship of Linda Coates and Allan Wade (e.g. 2004; 2007) who identified clear patterns of communication characterised by the misrepresentation of deliberate abusive actions to constitute non-deliberate non-violent actions through close analysis of legal and professional therapy texts. In this sense, perpetrators and others often refer to abusive behaviour as non-volitional and "out of their control," and hence, as not, or only partly, their responsibility (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Jenkins, 1991; McLaren, 2010; O'Neill, 1997; Richardson & Wade, 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Todd et al., 2014). To use an example from my own study on rural victim advocacy, advocates consistently described similar accounts within their communities. Prevalent understandings of men who abused their partners construed them as passive victims unable to resist reproducing the behaviour they saw around them as "family violence is all they know" while their abuse of their partners was often attributed to stress or alcohol use (Reedy, 2013). From Coates and Wade's (2004) inquiry, the use of four prevailing linguistic strategies were identified, in which violence is concealed, perpetrator responsibility is mitigated, victims' resistance is concealed, and victims are blamed or pathologised. Coates and Wade termed these strategies the four discursive

operations of violence. Their analyses (2004; 2007) illuminate ways in which responsibility for violence and oppression is attributed to victims and perpetrators through language and social arrangements that enable the privileging and excluding of different social groups.

Given the prevalence of discursive strategies which conceal perpetrator responsibility and victim resistance, it is unlikely that consensus for a single, universally accepted definition of domestic violence will be achieved. Herbert and Mackenzie (2014) draw attention to implications of the lack of shared understanding within sectors providing services for perpetrators and victims, and at wider community levels. In particular, they posit that without a shared understanding, unhelpful representations of domestic violence can endure unchallenged. Among examples of such commonly held representations are:

"Abuse in relationships is usually caused by both people, that partners allow it to happen, and therefore, both must change for the abuse to stop; children need fathers, even violent ones; victims exaggerate the level of abuse—if it was really that bad, they would leave; and abuse is caused by drinking, stress and poor impulse-control" (Herbert & Mackenzie, 2014, p. 12).

Lack of consensus regarding adequate understandings of domestic violence means formal and community responses contribute to undermining victim safety and continued victimisation by perpetrators and others in the community, including the services entrusted to support victims (FVDRC, 2016).

Defining domestic violence as an interpersonal, gender-neutral conflict between two adults with equal access to power, or as incident-based violent acts carried out by

(or even upon) pathologically unwell or immoral individuals, points to therapeutic and criminal justice solutions. Legislative and court responses to domestic violence, such as the Domestic Violence Act 1995, have been crucially important for shifting understandings of partner abuse as a private matter between spouses, and particularly, of concern only to the abused individual, towards a view of domestic violence as socially unacceptable and punishable crime (Flood & Pease, 2006; Hester, 2011).

As indicated previously, many women's victim advocacy organisations were founded on an understanding of domestic violence as an especially pernicious component of a much broader process centered around the maintenance of patriarchal dominance and women's oppression (Elman, 2003; Hester, 2011). Goetting, for example, described the insidious character of domestic violence as "an obsessive campaign of coercion and intimidation designed by a man to dominate and control a woman which occurs in the personal context of intimacy and thrives in the sociopolitical climate of patriarchy" (1999, p. 4). This notion of patriarchy has been criticised on the grounds that it misrepresents men as a homogenous group collectively engaged in women's oppression and abuse (Hunnicut, 2009). Yet patriarchy can be understood as "social arrangements that privilege males, where men as a group dominate women as a group, both structurally and ideologically...manifest[ing] in varieties across history and space" (Hunnicut, 2009, p. 557). Rather than unhelpfully positioning all men as accomplices to violence against women, this more useful conceptualisation of patriarchy in the context of domestic violence identifies the centrality of gender as it intersects with additional mediating conditions including, for example, ethnicity, social class, culture, age, and sexuality (Ammar, Couture-Carron, Alvi, & San Antonio, 2013; Hunnicutt, 2009; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Both men and women may desire power and control and use violence to achieve various ends (Stark,

2009); moreover, both men and women may benefit or be victimised as a consequence of patriarchy intersecting with other social conditions. Thus, patriarchy can be understood as a superordinate form of social organisation in which different men and women might use privilege, or resist domination, in varying ways afforded by other intersecting social processes. With these considerations in mind, to reiterate a central principle for understanding domestic violence, it is widely undisputed in violence against women scholarship that patriarchal social systems and arrangements are integral in reinforcing conditions for gender-based violence (e.g. Hester, 2011; Hunnicutt, 2009, Lehrner & Allen, 2009; UN Women, 2011).

This understanding positions women's abuse by their partners within a context of intersecting historical, economic, social, and political ideologies and systems of interacting sites of dominance, oppression, and resistance (Hunnicutt, 2009). In present times, however, widespread preference for narrower definitions of domestic violence is recognised by many feminist and domestic violence researchers as an impediment to victims' dignity and freedom from abuse, and perpetrator accountability (e.g. Ferraro, 2013; Keeling & Fisher, 2012; Portwood & Heany, 2007; Stark, 2007; 2009). Specifically, a more prevalent individualist medico-legal domestic violence discourse emphasises language that privileges severe physical incidents of violence to construct the meaning of domestic violence (FVDRC, 2014; Hester, 2011). Such language preferences permeate victim advocacy, policing, court, social service, and health settings (FVDRC, 2014; Stark, 2007; 2009). This is exemplified by Trujillo and Ross's (2008) finding that when police officers attend domestic violence callouts, the majority predicts the possibility of future abuse as either rare or unlikely, suggesting most officers understand domestic violence as one-off incidents of physical assault rather than episodes within a pattern of abuse.

An implication of individualist terminology is the endorsement of interventions that recognise and respond to discrete occurrences of physical violence and, to a lesser extent, clearly verifiable incidences of psychological violence. When formal services' emphasise assaultive violence, combined with poor understandings of partners' ongoing control and entrapment strategies, services cannot adequately respond to the majority of situations in which domestic violence occurs (Hester, 2011; FVDRC, 2016; Stark, 2007). Fenrich and Contesse (2009) found that despite inclusion of non-physical forms of violence in the Domestic Violence Act 1995, judges were less likely to grant protection orders for non-assaultive violence and hence, lawyers were often reluctant to encourage victims who had not been physically abused to make an application. Lawyers reported this was to prevent clients' further victimisation from distressing court processes and increased risk of violence by perpetrators (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). Fenrich and Contesse (2009) identified similar reluctance by police to arrest perpetrators for breaches of protection orders relating to non-physical abuse.

Portrayals of victims in domestic violence media campaigns typically depict a woman with facial bruising and wounds. While this imagery intends to convey the seriousness of domestic violence, it also contributes to stereotypes that equate domestic violence with severe physical assault. Paradoxically, since perpetrators choose to abuse their partners, and they are aware of its social unacceptability, they are more likely to conceal evidence of their abusive practices (Coates & Wade, 2007; Weaver et al., 2007). Accordingly, observable abuse, such as that causing visible facial injuries, is less common and hence, less representative than other violent acts. Indeed, my previous research strongly indicated a more common experience that control, entrapment, and less visible patterns of abuse were poorly understood and acknowledged in rural Aotearoa. Descriptions of abuse in my study signalled the volitional character of

perpetrators' actions aimed to conceal violence and limit victims' opportunities to resist: For example, a perpetrator beating his partner's head and torso causing wounds and bone fractures that were hidden by her hair or clothing; another partner behaving civilly in public then returning to the couple's home to yell verbal abuse at her for hours (Reedy, 2013).

Concern with a focus on physical assault is similarly illustrated in Grauwiler's (2008) study of women victims' decision-making when seeking help: participants reported their primary obstacle was their own struggle to ascertain whether others would legitimately recognise their experience as violence. Most participants had endured psychological violence for months or years, and some experienced infrequent physical violence, but in each situation women did not readily disclose the violence because they felt that what they experienced did not conform to public definitions, including their own, of domestic violence (Grauwiler, 2008).

Crucially, limited conceptualisations decontextualise violent acts from women victims' cumulative, everyday experience of fear and oppression resulting from their partner's patterns of coercive control and entrapment, and the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which violence occurs, including structural gender and racial inequalities (Hester, 2011; Portwood & Heany, 2007; Stark, 2010). Domestic violence understood as isolated incidents of physical abuse obscures "the lived infrastructure of partner abuse" (Stark, 2009, p. 1512). Thus, current medico-legal definitions preclude recognising the function of physically violent incidents within an ongoing process of maintaining dominance through sustained control, entrapment, less severe assault, and other non-assaultive abuse (FVDRC, 2014; Keeling & Fisher, 2012; Ferraro, 2013). Limited definitions of domestic violence impede access to support and protection for the vast majority of women subjected to chronic abuse other than severe partner

violence (Stark, 2010). Stark (2010) argues that focusing on discrete assaultive events and physical violence generally, renders other pervasive practices invisible, such as isolation, intimidation, blaming, insults, economic control, and material deprivation. The meanings of these actions for victims are also rendered invisible.

A single incident focus can also mean that no distinction is made between primary perpetrator and primary victim (FVDRC, 2014; Hester, 2011). Consequently, victim safety may be undermined when the primary victim's retaliatory acts against the abusive partner lead to the victim's arrest which enables different abusive strategies to be available to their partner (for example, using the court process or child protection services to threaten or vilify the victim), and prevents them from accessing victim services (Elizabeth, Gavey, & Tolmie, 2012b). Research by Elizabeth (2017), for example, identifies a form of abuse, termed custody stalking, whereby following separation, a father uses or threatens to use, legal or bureaucratic procedures to reduce the mother's access and increase their own access to their children which considerably exceeds the father's pre-separation involvement with his children. Furthermore, the current incident-based discourse on violence creates an oversimplified misconception that women's decisions to seek safety derive solely from their assessment of the severity of violence inflicted upon them while obscuring their experience of other interpersonal and wider structural inequalities influencing their decision making (FVDRC, 2016). Conceptualising domestic violence as discrete incidents of physical assault also impairs progress towards understanding how women experiencing domestic violence make sense of their situations, mobilise strategies for peace and increased safety, and weigh up the consequences to themselves, their children, and their partners of options for action available to them.

Domestic violence definitions often overlook the experience of particular patterns

of violence and their meanings as they pertain to a victim's specific sociocultural context (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Yoshihama, 1999). In raising this issue, I do not necessarily imply that violence causes greater or lesser harm to some victims than it does to others, rather, I emphasise the centrality of culturally-based understandings and practices in victims' experiences of abuse, and the function of particular cultural contexts in supporting their safety, dignity and access to justice (Yoshihama, 1999). The experience of violence for a lesbian woman, for example, may encompass many forms of violence identified in the Amendment Act in addition to threats to publically disclose her sexuality to others against her wishes. Combined with few formal and informal sources of support, little assurance of privacy and confidentiality in seeking support, community and victim services' beliefs about the non-existence of domestic violence among lesbian couples, and in a broader social context of homophobia, her particular cultural context prohibits rather than enables support for her safety. According to Yoshihama (1999) underpinning the importance of recognising cultural contexts and their complexity is the notion that victims should be entitled to voice the forms and severity domestic violence assumes in accord with their own systems of meaning. Notwithstanding, victim voices that take up discourses that blame victims and justify or excuse perpetrators' actions highlight the complexity of taking an uncritical or romanticised position in legitimating victims' voices.

In addition to inadequate recognition of patterns of non-assaultive violence, research also indicates that assault-based domestic abuse is not consistently recognised as a matter of serious concern. In the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey: 2006, a prominent finding was the discrepancy in crime attributions between victims, and police and justice staff (Mayhew & Reilly, 2009). A general pattern identified was that victims of serious offences, including threats and sexual and physical assault, were less likely to

perceive these as crimes despite police and justice staff assessment indicating they were crimes. Furthermore, the Survey found that victims rated vehicle theft as a more serious crime than intimate partner assault and sexual assault in their judgements of offence seriousness (Mayhew & Reilly, 2009).

Alternative domestic violence understandings have been proposed on the basis that they may be more helpful for preventing and intervening in domestic violence. Some argue that preference for describing domestic violence in terms of episodes within a pattern of control, coercion, entrapment, and abuse better represents the cumulative harms in which patterns of perpetration or victimisation are recognised, and supports identification of the primary victim and predominant aggressor (e.g. FVDRC 2014; 2016; Stark, 2007; 2009). Crucially, in addition to patterns of physical, psychological, and economic violence, Richardson and Wade pay particular attention to "attacks on the dignity of victims" (2013, p. 147) and attacks on valued bonds between victims and others including their children, members of their families and cultural groups.

The notion of coercive control, associated with interpersonal violence researcher and victim advocate Evan Stark (2007) has gained increasing prominence in theoretical, policy, and service-delivery conceptualisations of domestic violence (e.g. Herbert & Mackenzie, 2014; Hester, 2011; FVDRC, 2016). Coercive control entails ongoing and intentional surveillance, isolation, degradation, intimidation, and assaultive and non-assaultive domination of women by men in intimate relationships (Keeling & Fisher, 2012; Stark, 2007; 2009). Pro-feminist scholars such as Stark reason that current domestic violence responses obviate recognition of coercive control and the prevailing patriarchal sociopolitical structure that depends upon, and facilitates, some men's privilege and women's subjugation (Ferraro, 2013; Stark, 2010). Specifically, researchers express concern that emphasising categories of violence to define domestic

violence conceals the centrality of gendered power relationships necessary for understanding and ending it (Ferraro, 2013).

Two particularly compelling arguments illuminate the utility of coercive control in conceptualising domestic violence. First, evidence indicates many perpetrators are unlikely to re-assault their partners severely once they have initially done so (Stark, 2009; Wade, 1997). At earlier stages of a couple's relationship, by using various abusive strategies, sometimes including physical abuse, perpetrators effectively set the terms of the relationship so they are subsequently able to maintain dominance over their partner. Ostensibly subtler methods, which are potentially capable of terrorising the abused partner, such as using intimidating eye-contact and quietly spoken threats, may then be engaged to achieve their goal of getting their partner to act according to their wishes, or in response to the abused partner's acts of resistance (Wade, 1997). Elizabeth, Tolmie, and Gavey (2011) draw attention to ways, in seeking to attenuate or prevent a partner's abuse, a victimised woman may engage in appeasement without the abusive partner necessarily actively behaving abusively. Rather, the physical presence of the perpetrator can prompt the victim to act in ways that will increase her chances of safety. Hence, and given the low likelihood of victims' disclosure to formal services (Fanslow & Robinson 2010), it is argued that in the vast majority of cases a single assault-based definition will not account for a victim's experience of isolation, entrapment, and being taken hostage by her partner in her home (Stark, 2010).

The second argument for a coercive control conceptualisation is premised on Stark's (2009) analysis that there is no coherent reason for "coercive control [to] exist if women were already inclined towards deference" (p. 1512). Accordingly, Stark construes domestic violence as "liberty crimes" against women in the context of men's social and economic privilege, rather than physical and psychological harms arising in a

sociopolitical vacuum. Stark states, "until it can be shown that modern women who are free from coercion and control voluntarily exhibit deference on a substantial scale, I hesitate to emphasize character, culture, or family as causes of these behaviors" (2009, p. 1512). Thus, feminist scholars and activists reason that in ignoring the experiential, historical, and sociopolitical contexts in which coercive control is fostered, domestic violence and gender inequality cannot be effectively addressed (e.g. Berns, 2004; Stark, 2010).

The meanings attributed to patterns of control and violence are relevant to perpetrators and victims, and to those positioned to determine the forms justice will take for both. Present emphasis on incidences of physical abuse in formal services and informal contexts decontextualises these acts from victims' lived experience of control, violence and harm, and masks the extent to which victims' respond to and resist violence. This situation is exacerbated by the extent to which those who engage in violence actions are adept at hiding it. Their adept hiding is aided by their ability to present themselves to others as more psychologically, cognitively and socially competent than their victims who are contending with broad-reaching harms from partners' abuse including and exacerbated by negative social responses.

In the following section, I discuss RBP to elucidate why we should view coercive control and violence within a rubric of interacting patterns of social responses, including victim's acts of resistance, perpetrator's reactions to these, and other formal and informal responses to victims and perpetrators.

Response-Based Practice: Responses and Resistance to Domestic Violence

RBP, attributed primarily to the ideas of Canadian researchers and family therapists Allan Wade and Cathy Richardson, and scholars Linda Coates and Nick Todd

(Weaver et al., 2007), evolved from practice with victims and perpetrators, and subsequent development of a framework referred to, in variations, as the four operations of language in the representation of violence. They observed that victims of violence always respond to and resist abuse, covertly or overtly, in relation to specific dangers and opportunities presented in their particular situation (Coates & Wade, 2007; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Wade, 1997). This contradicted prevalent understandings of victims as passive recipients of abuse and thus drew their awareness to ways perpetrators' and victims' actions are typically represented using the language of *effects* rather than the language of *responses* (Todd et al., 2004; Weaver et al., 2007). In the language of *effects* the victim accepts both the perpetrator's violence and the subsequent harms of victimisation, which are thus construed as effects of the perpetrators' actions leaving her without any agentic position in the sequence of events.

In the context of domestic violence five principles have emerged from the observations that victims do respond to and resist abuse, which provide the foundations of RBP (Weaver et al., 2007, p. 4-5).

1. *Whenever people are treated badly, they always resist.*
2. *People tend not to notice that victims resist violence.*
3. *Perpetrators of violence know that victims will resist, so they make plans to stop the victims from resisting.*
4. *Violent and abusive behaviour is always done deliberately.*
5. *When it comes to domestic violence, appearances are deceiving.*

RBP conceptualises a response as "a volitional act that demonstrates judgment, imagination, and will... a social communicative act that plays a part in on-going social interaction" (Todd et al., 2004, p. 51). By comparison "an effect is the strictly

determined outcome of a previous event/cause...an end state, the last link in a causal chain" (Todd et al., 2004, p. 51). A response-based understanding of violence recognises that victims respond to perpetrator's actions, and to social responses to their own and the perpetrator's responses as displayed in Figure 3 (page 58) and presented in detail in Appendix B. Correspondingly, perpetrators respond to victim's responses and to the social responses they receive (Wade, 2007). From this position, research findings indicate that the quality of social responses towards victims and perpetrators is the single most important predictor of the severity and nature of victims' distress (Andrews & Brewin, 1990; Andrews, Brewin, & Rose, 2003; Richardson & Wade, 2013).

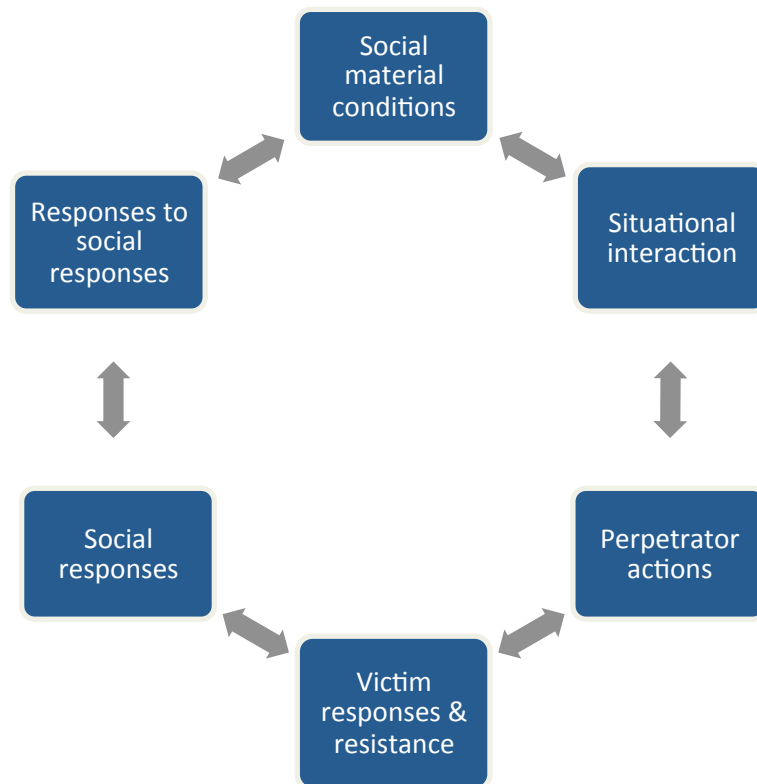


Figure 3. Response-based Practice contextual analysis (Bonnah, Coates, Richardson & Wade, 2014, p. 12).

Several studies have established clear links between increases in the number of supportive people in victim's lives, and victims' options for safety from violence (e.g. Sullivan & Bybee, 1999; Sullivan, Bybee & Allen, 2002), and recovery (e.g. Anderson,

Renner, & Danis, 2012; Grauwiler, 2008). Higher numbers of people supporting victims is also correlated with cessation of perpetrator offending (e.g. Grauwiler, 2008; Robinson & Tregidga, 2007). Research in social responses to violence suggests that when victims disclose violence in informal and formal settings, they sometimes find their concerns are met with disbelief, disrespect, blame, and vindication of the perpetrator's violent actions (Flood & Pease, 2006; Grauwiler, 2008; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Meyer, 2011; Richardson & Wade, 2010).

Among a representative sample of women victims of domestic violence in Fanslow and Robinson's (2010) study, of the approximately 75 percent of women who disclosed their partner's violence, more than 40 percent reported receiving unhelpful responses. However, in contrast to Richardson and Wade's (2010) finding, between 50 percent and 75 percent of women victims who utilised formal services reported experiencing a helpful response. In the same study, Fanslow and Robinson (2010) established that a significant obstacle to women victims seeking help was their own view that their partner's abuse was "normal" or not serious enough. Additional reasons for women not seeking support from formal services were shame and embarrassment, and fearing the consequences including losing their children (Fanslow & Robinson, 2010). These reasons also indicate that participants anticipated negative responses to their disclosure.

In regard to negative social responses, when responses to victims are unsupportive, they and their families experience increased humiliation, social exclusion, and isolation from other members of their family and community, and their safety is further undermined (Alaggia, Regehr, & Jenney, 2012; Belknap et al., 2009; Grauwiler, 2008; Richardson & Wade, 2013). Conversely, positive social responses, centered around upholding dignity and obtaining an account of the violence and their resistance

from the victim, have been found to be closely connected to wellness, safety, and experiences of just outcomes for victims (Coates & Wade, 2004; Richardson, 2006; Richardson & Wade, 2010).

Richardson and Wade (2013) found that compared to victims who received negative social responses from family, friends and formal agencies, those who received positive responses experienced less intense distress of shorter duration, were less likely to receive a diagnosis of mental illness, and were found to work more cooperatively with formal services, and report violence in future. Given the high reliability of victims' predictions in estimating repeat violence by their current or ex-partners (Weisz, Tolman, & Saunders, 2000), victims' cooperation with services including their willingness to engage in risk assessment may be crucial in preventing further violence.

Proponents of RBP argue that the focus of enquiry and intervention in the domestic and family violence sector primarily attends to the effects or impacts of abuse on victims. For example, women who have been victimised are often portrayed as damaged, submissive, or alternatively, as mutually aggressive in their relationships (Campbell, Rose, Kub, & Nedd, 1998; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Todd et al., 2004). Equally, victims are frequently construed as having poor boundaries, assertiveness skills and self-esteem (Richardson & Wade, 2013; Weaver et al., 2007). As a consequence of such positioning, victims are more likely to be perceived negatively by themselves and others, and in particular, pathologised and blamed for the abuse (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Humphreys & Thiara, 2003; Wade, 1997). Evidence of victim pathologising is exemplified in the finding of high antidepressant prescribing rates for women victims by general practitioners (Badbury-Jones & Taylor, 2013), and significantly higher prescribing rates of potentially addictive drugs, including analgesics and antidepressants, to women victims compared to non-victimised women (Stene, Dyb,

Tverdal, Jacobson, & Schei, 2012). Yuen (2007; 2009) argues that stereotypes of victims as "permanently scarred" for example, often originate from well-meaning and compassionate intentions but can construct perceptions of victims as people without hope and agency.

Todd et al. (2004) maintain that the language of effects tends to dominate the language of responses because violence is typically concealed from view of people outside the relationship. Often, to avoid negative consequences of their abusive actions, perpetrators strategically present themselves to others in a positive light. For example, a perpetrator might behave in a charming manner while garnering sympathy as a victim, and also blame the person they abuse for their "relationship problems" (Coates & Wade, 2007; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Todd et al., 2004; Weaver et al., 2007). Equally, victims may tactically avoid disclosing partner's abuse to others because it is unsafe to do so and they wish to prevent other's negative responses, including harsh judgment towards them (Belknap et al., 2009; Coates & Wade, 2007; Todd et al., 2004; Weaver et al., 2007).

Because people outside of the relationship are seldom aware of victims' resistance, and tend to associate resistance with visible conflict, they imagine victims do not act to protect themselves and hence, may blame victims for "allowing" themselves to be abused (Wade, 1997; Weaver et al., 2007). Blaming women victims who are mothers for remaining with abusive partners and "failing to protect" their children is a prevalent harmful social response towards victims (Haight, Shin, Linn & Swinford, 2007; Hester, 2011; Hughes, Chau, & Poff, 2011; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013). It is based on the assumption that mothers are solely responsible for stopping their partner's abuse and ensuring the safety of themselves and their children. A striking example of mother-blaming is indicated in Terrance et al's. (2008) study, which found

that compared to women who were not victims of domestic violence, those who were victims were significantly more likely to be held more responsible for their children's abuse. Mother-blaming of victims fails to recognise women's various efforts to keep their children safe including protecting children's physical safety when women are immediately threatened by perpetrators, providing reassurance, instilling hope, and supporting children's emotional recovery following violence (Height et al., 2007). Research by Elizabeth et al. (2011) indicates, too, that mothers victimised by their partners are not always reproached for "failing to protect" their children. Instead, at times they are portrayed as uncooperative and obstructing abusive fathers' rights for contact with their children, even when their reasons for trying to restrict (ex)partners access to the children are for safety. In many contexts, victims are acutely aware of negative, sometimes contradictory, social responses towards people who have been victimised (Todd et al., 2004; Wade, 1997).

In contrast to conventional approaches for "treating" effects of abuse, fundamental to RBP is illuminating the multiple ways victims seek to oppose or lessen their partner's abuse, increase their own and others' safety, and reassert dignity (Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Wade, 1997). Dignity, the process of treating one another respectfully, and honouring each other's autonomy, freedom and social and personal safety, is central to RBP because it is recognised as vital for individual and collective social esteem and wellness (Wade, 1997). RBP focuses on restoring, reasserting and upholding dignity premised on the observation that violence and oppression diminish dignity and without redress, harms to victims endure (Wade 1997, 2007). In this approach, close attention is paid to elucidating, in fine detail, victims' emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual responses during and following abuse (Richardson & Wade, 2013).

A RBP position maintains that when the language of effects is used to represent victimisation, responses such as a victim escaping from a perpetrator's attempt to inflict pain by compliance with their immediate demands is likely to be misconstrued or overlooked (Wade, 2014). Likewise, if a perpetrator tries to isolate the victim, yet she stays spiritually connected to her cultural ideals, it may be overlooked as a form of resistance (Wade, 2014). These examples also demonstrate the response-orientated, unilateral nature of abuse (Coates & Wade, 2007) and support a principle argument in RBP, which holds that "one of the strongest forms of evidence for the existence and vital importance of everyday resistance are the determined efforts made by the perpetrators of violence and oppression to conceal or suppress it" (Wade, 1997). A victim's compliant responses, for instance might be misrepresented as pathological passivity, dissociation, dependence, or masochism. A victim's commitment to spiritual connectedness as a response to her partner's abuse might be completely discounted.

RBP recognises that in many situations, victims cannot prevent violence or escape from the perpetrator (Richardson & Wade, 2010; Scott, 1990). Moreover, when victims openly challenge perpetrators, the responses from perpetrators are likely often characterised by intensifying the abuse, potentially involving increased threats, intimidation, control and assault (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007, Richardson & Wade, 2010). In concert with other RBP practitioners (e.g. Jenkins, 1991; Weaver et al., 2007), I emphasise that since the perpetrator is responsible for the abuse, the onus for acknowledging the harms they have inflicted upon others, and accepting responsibility for desisting sits with them. Victims' resistance assumes numerous expressed and unexpressed forms of withstanding, preventing, stopping and opposing abuse (Alaggia et al., 2012; Anderson & Danis, 2006; Campbell et al., 1998; Cavanagh, 2003; Wade, 1997). Concomitantly, in the context of RBP, while resistance might involve survival,

resilience and "inner strength," it is not simply a reframed equivalent of these constructs. Rather, more often resistance is a spontaneous response, which has its origins in "fear, desperation, and powerlessness" and needs to be considered in each context-specific situation rather than as a fixed character descriptor (Wade, 2014, p. 3). Thus, Todd et al. (2004) suggest notions such as resilience and survival are, at times, implicated in concealing victims' resistance or unhelpfully casting victims in deficient or idealised terms.

On these grounds, it is implausible and unethical to measure the effectiveness of a victim's responses to abuse according to their ability to successfully stop the violence (Coates & Wade, 2007; Wade, 2014). A more helpful position, and one which more closely represents victims' experience, is that victims consistently perform various actions to uphold their own and others' dignity, and increase their own and others' safety (Combs & Freedman, 2012; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Wade, 1997; Weaver et al., 2007; Yuen, 2007; 2009). Because, however, in the majority of situations it is unsafe for victims to openly oppose violence, more commonly, responses to violence are imperceptible to people other than the victim (Chalari, 2012; Scott, 1990; Wade 1997; 2007). Paradoxically, abstaining from directly confronting a perpetrator is arguably more indicative of foresight and self-preservation than cowardliness or weakness. Thus, dreaming about or imagining safer and happier circumstances, or mentally planning possible future eventualities in secrecy are understood as examples of resistance (Coates & Wade, 2007; Wade, 2014). In applying this idea to working with a victim, a RBP approach would ask her to describe in detail how she responded to the perpetrator's abuse rather than how she was affected by it (Wade, 1997; Yuen, 2007).

In researching the utility of internal conversation among oppressed peoples,

Chalari (2012) deduces that "resistance can be fully experienced by an individual, even if this resistance is unrecognized or unexpressed" (p. 83). Internal conversation in this sense refers to one's "inner life, and intra-active process of deliberation, evaluation and selection" and the way in which a person reflexively understands her or himself situated within her or his social environment (Archer, 2007, p. 63). In the context of victims' experience, internal conversation can encompass "issuing internal warnings and making promises to oneself, reaching concrete decisions, or coming to a conclusion about a particular problem" (Archer, 2007, p. 2). This construct suggests an important and common yet seldom-recognised response to violence and gives support to the RBP position that covert responses may be misrepresented as submissiveness or simply overlooked when an effects-based model is applied to experiences of victimisation.

In conventional responses to domestic violence, selective denial of personal agency is also often assumed in perpetrators. For example, in attempting to understand causes of violence, perpetrators often portray themselves as victims of biological, psychological, or social circumstances beyond their control (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Jenkins, 1991; McLaren, 2010; O'Neill, 1997; Richardson & Wade, 2013; Todd et al., 2004; Todd et al., 2014). Perpetrators and others may also reference a number of conditions, for example, personality traits, stress, alcohol, victim-blaming, or financial difficulties, to excuse and evade responsibility for their violence (Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Richardson & Wade, 2013; Weaver et al., 2007). Such excuses are commonly construed as causes of violent behaviour and are maintained through discourses of domestic violence among communities and within the family violence sector (O'Neill, 1997; Todd et al., 2004). Attributing violent behaviour to pathological causes or social stressors not only negates perpetrators' responsibility and view of their ability to desist, but also shifts this responsibility to professionals in therapeutic and social service

settings who potentially become liable for blame when perpetrators continue to abuse. Of greater concern is that many of these discourses position the victim as responsible for stopping the violence or changing their circumstances. Hence, professionals have an obligation to attribute responsibility for abusive acts to the perpetrator rather than promoting unhelpful and unsafe causal attributions of violence.

Of particular relevance, research by O'Neill (1997) identified five domestic violence discourses operating within social science disciplines implicated in enabling and constraining formal and informal responses to victims and perpetrators. These were described as: The discourse of pathology (the perpetrator and/or victim are disordered, deficient, or dysfunctional); the expressive tension discourse (anger or frustration cause the perpetrator to explode/snap/lose control); the liberal humanist discourse (the perpetrator and victim exercise choice, rationality and control); the learning discourse (based on the transgenerational cycle of violence); and the social systems discourse (implicating broader structural problems of poverty, violent culture, or patriarchy in domestic violence). In many respects O'Neill's (1997) findings align with Coates and Wade's (2004) four discursive operations of violence; specifically, ways in which language used by professionals in the family violence sector conceals violence and victim resistance, obfuscates perpetrator responsibility, and blames or pathologises victims. Domestic violence discourses such as those identified by O'Neill utilise a combination of various linguistic operations including metaphors (e.g. "she pushed all my buttons, then I just lost it"), terminology (e.g. mutualising the unilaterality of violence by referring to "a violent relationship" or eroticising violence in referring to rape as a result of "an overactive sex drive"), grammatical forms (e.g. obscuring agency in referring to "an abusive home environment"), and stereotypes (e.g. "she lacks appropriate boundaries") (Todd, et al., 2004). A common theme across most domestic

violence discourses is the positioning of perpetrators as having little or no control over their abusive actions while victims are positioned as capable of and hence responsible for stopping the violence and changing their circumstances (Coates & Wade, 2007).

As previously discussed, a common explanation for a perpetrator's violent actions derives from a discourse of intergenerational abuse whereby perpetrators learn violent behaviour from their own experiences of victimisation. Language of effects saturates such explanations of abusive behaviour. If, as this discourse suggests, past or current experiences of victimisation cause perpetrators to act abusively, it transpires that they have no control over their actions. However, if this were the case, random violence carried out only by people who have been abused would be the norm and perpetrators' agency would be denied.

Therefore, crucial to RBP is recognising the deliberate nature of violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Todd et al., 2004; Todd et al., 2014; Wade, 1997). That perpetrators invariably abuse people less able to overpower them and that they often conceal their violence from others outside the relationship in terms of when, where and how they abuse clearly indicates they do have control over their actions. That they anticipate resistance from victims also indicates their violence is deliberate and that they can desist from abusing (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007). Thus, RBP advocates critical analysis of relationships between violence and its representation in context, not only as a research endeavour, but also as central to applied practice (Coates & Wade, 2007).

In regard to non-violence programmes, while some perpetrators have experienced violence, research indicates that interventions that focus on exploring abuse experiences tend to invoke a sense of entitlement within perpetrators that is counter to helpful change (Jenkins, 1991; Todd et al., 2014; Wade, 2014). Accordingly, RBP perpetrator intervention emphasises perpetrators' choice to abuse or desist, recognises

their ability to be nonviolent and respectful, and holds them accountable for their actions rather than excusing or commiserating with them. Relating to perpetrators as agentic individuals upholds their dignity, which may encourage them to persevere in challenging their own understandings and practices, and increase the possibility they will be less violent (Todd et al., 2014; Weaver et al., 2007).

Response-based practitioners and researchers report that victims experience increased dignity, social worth, empowerment, a greater sense of pre-existing capability, and reduced self-blame when they discuss, identify and examine the many ways they have resisted abuse (Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Wade, 1997; Weaver et al., 2007). Yet, a prominent pattern of language use within formal responses is of misrepresenting violence and perpetrators' and victims' responses (Richardson & Wade, 2013). In taking a RBP approach, a fairer, more helpful, and more evidence-based representation of violence and resistance necessitates the following steps:

- *Obtaining clear descriptions of violent actions in context;*
- *Focussing on victim and perpetrator responses to the violence;*
- *Identifying social responses;*
- *Focusing on responses to social responses;*
- *and honouring resistance and building safety.*

(Richardson and Wade, 2013, p. 156-159)

Therefore, researching and applying RBP in work with clients centres the enquiry on examining the conditions, in micro-detail, under which a person is able to practice violence and evade responsibility for their harmful acts, and understanding how victims specifically respond to and resist abuse. Thus, the particular historical, social,

and immediate physical contexts in which a perpetrator abuses and desists and a victim responds and resists, assume great importance for providing evidence of victims' capacity to protect themselves and others as well as perpetrators' capacity to act respectfully, and supports court evidence regarding the severity and nature of violence (Richardson & Wade, 2013).

According to Wade (1997) and Richardson and Wade (2013), questioning victims in order to obtain detailed and precise descriptions at a micro-level about these circumstances helps elucidate resistance and thereby positions victims as active in pursuing safety and dignity. Making resistance more visible enables victims, professionals and others to make connections between ways of responding and victims' pre-existing skills and knowledges (Yuen, 2007). In becoming aware of the many ways they respond and resist, victims might also reposition themselves as people who refused to cooperate, even if in extremely subtle ways, with those who abused them (McCarthy, 2010). Similarly, detailed descriptions of social responses received by victims and their subsequent responses to these are sought. This process helps identify helpful and unhelpful responses and assists victims to make sense of and dignify the "situational logic" of their own responses in relation to others' responses (Richardson & Wade, 2013; Wade, 1997).

Summary

RBP is underpinned by several intertwined principles, described in this Chapter. The approach entails practicing with awareness of ways in which "language can be used to (a) conceal or reveal violence, (b) obscure or clarify perpetrator responsibility, (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses, and (d) blame and pathologise, or contest the blaming and pathologising of victims" (Coates, Todd, & Wade, 2000, cited in Wade, 2014, p. 2). Recognising the deliberate nature of violence and holding perpetrators accountable for their violent actions is central to RBP (Weaver et al., 2007). Furthermore, at the heart of RBP is the task of elucidating and honouring victims' resistance to abuse and oppression to aid in recognising the primacy of dignity to all people's wellbeing (Coates et al., 2000, cited in Wade, 2014).

A central assumption of RBP is that people always respond to violence and oppression and all forms of violence are designed to suppress or conceal resistance: perpetrators operate with awareness of victim resistance so the specific ways they enact violence anticipate and prevent resistance (e.g. Todd et al., 2004; Todd et al., 2014). For these reasons, RBP de-emphasises the language of effects in describing processes of victimisation, preferring instead, the language of responses. This calls for a careful, critical analysis of the language of violence and offers guidance on contextual analyses of situations of abuse so safety, dignity and justice can be restored. This critical overview of discourses of domestic violence and RBP foregrounds the current project's research methodology and ethical considerations, outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: Methodology and Ethical Considerations

The project aims to provide evidence about the effectiveness of RBP in supporting victim safety and wellbeing, and to inform the development of a good practice framework for RBP in a Women's Refuge setting. This project's design uses qualitative methodologies and research techniques informed by collaborative action research principles, thematic and discourse analyses and positioning theory. These approaches are influenced by feminist poststructuralist epistemology.

To achieve these objectives, the project involved two major tasks, identified as Study One and Study Two. Study One, corresponding with the project's first research aim, entailed developing, delivering, and evaluating a RBP template programme for a Women's Refuge group intervention. This was in collaboration with Women's Refuge advocates. The selected methodologies for this first task utilised principles of feminist action research and fourth generation evaluation. Data were collected during meetings, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with participating advocates, and through reviewing the refuge's previous and new Women's Group documents. I used thematic analysis to interpret interview data and report findings back to advocates. I then designed successive draft Women's Group Facilitation Guides for further feedback, and the final Resource Kit consisting of the Facilitation Guide, Women's Handbook, and supporting multi-media resources.

The purpose of Study Two was to provide evidence about women's safety following the intervention of the Response-based Women's Group, enabling me to respond to the project's research questions:

1. How did participants' languaging of their experiences with a response-based intervention demonstrate the effectiveness of response-based principles in practice?
2. How did participants' accounts evidence the effectiveness of honouring resistance and the dignity of all people, and give testimony to ways in which their understandings of domestic violence changed following participation in the response-based intervention?

Study Two corresponded with the project's second and third research aims of analysing RBP clients' narratives of their experiences of abuse and interventions to identify the social responses to violence clients experienced before participating in an RBP intervention; and analysing ways in which clients' understandings of and resistances to violence changed through their involvement with RBP. This necessitated analysing how the women's positioning after their involvement in the Group changed in relation to their understandings of domestic violence; and identified discursive resources the women used to enable dignified positioning. Discourse analysis was the selected methodology for Study Two. Data were collected during semi-structured interviews with clients before and following their participation in the new 12-week Women's Group. I structured interviews and analyses in accordance with the Response-Based contextual analysis model developed by Richardson and Wade (2013). This involved obtaining clear descriptions of violent actions in context, focusing on victim and perpetrator responses to the violence, identifying social responses, investigating responses to social responses, and honouring resistance and building safety (2013, pp.

156-159). These analyses entailed close, iterative readings of interview texts to enable a systematic analysis of language use necessary for illuminating the social responses with which RBP is concerned.

Studies One and Two have been distinguished to aid explanation for the purpose of this report and show differences between the two participant groups and in data treatment. In this chapter the methodological theory and ethical considerations for both studies are the primary focus of my attention. Matters of method, data collection and analyses are dealt with in more detail in relation to each study in subsequent chapters. However, in practice, the production, delivery, and evaluation of the Women's Group was not a linear process. These activities informed one another. The evaluation process began at the project's outset and continues beyond my reporting of its completion. For example, ongoing consultation with the advocates enabled Study One to be informed by the advocates' interest in RBP and the evaluations they were receiving from clients of the programme. That informed my discussions with advocates in developing the programme. Similarly, while the understandings of participating advocates and clients are gathered for different purposes, and hence qualitative data from the two groups are treated differently, both group's expectations of, and responses to the Group informed each other throughout the project. Moreover, as a collaborating researcher, my involvement with participants and the project was one of mutual influence. Hence, action research principles including practical problem solving for local social justice goals, interviewing and focus groups were central to undertaking these tasks. I now discuss the methodological framework and ethical considerations of the project.

Methodological Framework: Feminist Poststructuralism and Positioning Theory

In the previous chapter, I began by exploring the poststructuralist concern with critiquing prevalent constructions of how truth and authenticity are established and maintained, and who has authority to determine these (Parker, 2005). My foci are Foucauldian and feminist understandings of material and social consequences of discursive practices for their contribution to social justice research. These perspectives maintain that power relations and social arrangements are exercised and reproduced through discursive practices. Feminist poststructuralism is particularly concerned with illuminating, then disrupting, heteronormative discourses of gender and intersecting social power relations pertaining to, for example, gender, class, age, ethnicity, indigeneity, and sexuality. Notions of dominance and resistance are important for understanding feminist poststructuralism because they signal that despite constraints of prevailing discourses, people exercise agency in choosing to comply with or resist discourses: Discourses are contestable rather than deterministic (Lazar, 2005). People are not passively entangled in discursive webs, but capable of reflecting on, challenging, intervening, changing, and transcending ideological and social systems and power relations. These assumptions permeate my research methodology, as discussed in the following sections.

Knowledge Production and Psychological Research

An important poststructuralist assumption is that human experience is not bound by prediscursive stable identities: language does not function subsequent to experience (Denzin, 1997). Instead, the poststructuralist notion of the "subject inscribed in language" (Derrida, cited in Davies et al., 2004, p. 363) constructs human experience

and action as constituted in and through systems of meaning making. Language is understood to provide meanings in accordance with particular and changing social, historical and cultural contexts. In this sense, knowledge generation is a local and contingent process mediated by language (Fox, 2003). These understandings of knowledge generation problematise the practice of essentialising human experience and behaviour, a principal activity of positivist enquiry in psychology (Parker, 2014). Specifically, they call into question explanations of experience at the level of the individual as fixed internal states able to be categorised somewhere between normality and abnormality (Parker, 2005; 2014).

Poststructuralism rejects monolithic "grand narratives" of human experience, knowledge, and action unmediated by historical, social and cultural contexts (Fox, 2003). In this sense, poststructuralist enquiry contests the reasoning underlying positivist approaches to studying social experience and relations, specifically, the endeavour of objectively discovering and verifying universal truths that can be applied to and generalised across individuals and populations (Davies et al., 2004). Notwithstanding, it is emphasised that poststructuralist critique involves deconstructing claims that essentialise what it means to be human by examining the ideologies and practices underpinning them, but such critique does not equate to unexamined or outright dismissal of such claims and associated practices. Rather, poststructuralist enquiry sees human subjectivity–self-knowing in relation to sites of social power–as constituted in shifting and intersecting social, cultural and psychological contexts across time and place, and of which empirically based understandings of human experience and activity are not exempt (Hook, 2004b). Our meaning and knowledge making are relational activities: complex, often contradictory, and capable of transformation. For these reasons, poststructuralist enquiry is capable of accommodating the richness and

complexity of discursive understandings of human subjectivity (Parker, 2014).

Subject Positioning

Discourses and associated practices become vantage points through which experience and meaning are constructed and communicated (Wilbraham, 2004). Thus, discourses present possible constructions or versions of oneself and others in the world. Different social situations maintain specific versions of how particular people might be represented and categorised, which are reproduced discursive resources. The varying social situations we encounter involve discursively constituted norms with available "subject-positions within which we locate ourselves" (Wilbraham, 2004, p. 488). We reposition ourselves and others in accordance with the changing social contexts we encounter. Therefore, discourses enable particular subject positions for individuals and groups which can be multiple and contradictory, and construed in varying ways in accordance with particular social and historical contexts (Weedon, 1997).

Correspondingly, the assumptions and understandings attached to particular subject positions shape one's view of oneself and the world (Davies et al., 2004). Thus, discourses construct and are constructed by subjects (Hook, 2001). This assumption challenges positivist methodological assumptions of human subjectivity as reducible to essential, universal, and fixed categories of objective human experience and behaviour.

People tend to take up subject positions that conform to culturally accepted expectations and the discourses that maintain them; positioning outside of a dominant discourse can mean one's actions may be construed as abnormal or deviant (Hook, 2001). In the context of domestic violence, heteronormative gender discourses in particular, are instrumental in constraining how, where, and when particular subjects arise (Gavey, 2011). Under such conditions, by not conforming to traditional gender stereotypes, for example, one may be subject to intensified scrutiny, sanction and

exclusion from more just forms of social participation accorded to those adhering to socially accepted rules and conventions.

The shaping of subjects by pervasive discourses also extends to Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, constant engagement in self-surveillance, monitoring, and regulation in accordance with implied social rules in order to transform and "normalise" subjects (1977, cited in Hook, 2004b). The relationship between constant surveillance and self-disciplining refers to the notion of an "optics of power" in which the subject is ever aware of their visibility, while the potency of disciplinary power lies in its invisibility to the subject (Hook, 2004b, p. 217).⁷ Equally, a poststructuralist perspective (e.g. Gavey, 1989) maintains that while we are shaped and constrained by more powerful dominant discourses and their social and material implications, individuals and groups can exercise agency through rejecting or subverting dominant discourses, and can reposition subjectivities. For these reasons, a feminist poststructural position seeks to "enable accounts and modes of activity usually hidden...to come to light" (Parker, 2005, p. 7). Analysis of discourse is an appropriate research technique for such an undertaking.

Discourse Analysis and Positioning in the Current Project

For this project, I take the theoretical perspective that discourses of gender and domestic violence, and how we are positioned in relation to these, are crucial in enabling or limiting the enactment of abuse and resistance, and responses of and towards perpetrators and victims. This is founded on the principle that material, social, and interpersonal conditions are constituted in and through discourses, thus, working for

⁷ Disciplinary power has been discussed extensively in the literature, for example, see, Derek Hook's "Foucault, disciplinary power and the critical pre-history of psychology" (2004b). In D. Hook (ed., pp. 210-238), *Critical Psychology*, Lansdowne, South Africa: UCT Press.

social change should be prepared to intercept discourses that support unjust and oppressive social structures and power arrangements (Coombes & Morgan, 2001; Gavey, 1989). Transformative research involves analysing discourses that reproduce privilege, and examining how marginalised groups and subjugated discourses are represented as deficient (Combs & Freedman, 2012). In practice, analysis and critique of how dominant discourses silence subjugated discourses by constructing them as deviant, deficient or incomprehensible is crucial to transformative research (Hook, 2004a).

Rather than aiming only for identifying the particular discourses reproduced in, or absent from, a given text under analysis, Foucault argues the importance of focusing the enquiry on understanding "what subject-positions are made possible within such texts" (cited in Hook, 2001, p. 523). For example, the frequently voiced view "why doesn't she just leave?" invokes a discourse of rational choice in domestic violence that positions victims as safely able, or desiring, to leave their abusive partner (Burman & Chantler, 2005). This can construct victims as passive, negligent, and collusive, and thus deserving of blame when they do not separate from their partner. Positioning victims as deficient or blameworthy reduces their likelihood of receiving empathy and support crucial to enhancing their safety. Victim blaming and pathologising discourses obscure the structural and discursive contexts of victim's lives that enable their partners to control and abuse them. For those who adhere to such discourses, victim's actions are rendered incomprehensible and/or pathological. Many ways victims resist partners' violence are also incompatible with such discourses. Furthermore, a discourse that supports asking; "why doesn't she leave?" disregards victims' knowledge of their situation and their abuser, as research evidence (e.g. Miller, Gregory, & Iovanni, 2005) shows that leaving offers no guarantee that the abuse will end or that the victim will

experience safety and support. Thus, in regard to positioning victims through domestic violence discourses, this research also investigates how counter-discourses of dignity can be constructed through people's awareness of resistance within marginalised positions.

While discourse analysis seeks to problematise dominant discourses and attend to alternatives, it does not involve presenting these alternatives as more truthful representations of reality. Such an approach runs counter to the poststructural perspective that there are no absolute truths to be discovered (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Rather, in this project, discourse analysis involves identifying dominant discourses and alternative subject positions, and exploring how positioning offers possibilities for perpetuating or redressing unjust material, social, and interpersonal conditions.

Research Principles of Collaboration and Action

The decision to use collaborative action research principles for this project came about through intersecting processes. A Women's Refuge manager was eager to replace the service's Women's Group programme with one modelled on RBP and asked me to undertake this task. I was familiar with RBP through attending training workshops, reading the relevant literature, and exchanging ideas with others excited about the potential of RBP. I had also worked and conducted research in the women victims' advocacy field. Through analysing how to meet this need, I devised a research model incorporating principles of action research and fourth generation evaluation into its feminist poststructural foundations. These principles emphasise collaboration and applying social justice aims to address practical problems identified by stakeholders in locally specific contexts (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1987). Crucially, the project's context of seeking safety and wellbeing for women victims through advocacy closely aligned with a feminist poststructuralist theoretical framework

and collaborative action research goals that emphasise social transformation through advocacy for and with marginalised groups (McHugh, 2014; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

Particular advantages of action research have been described in the advocacy literature and further supported the rationale for engaging principles and strategies of this methodology. Through collaborative input, people with diverse knowledge and skills are brought together to accomplish common goals (Schensul, 1987). The most important concerns, from the perspectives of the primary researcher and participants are identified and prioritised (Renzetti, 1997). An additional benefit of action research is the potential that exists for developing theory and practice, as a result of researcher-practitioner collaboration, which can in turn extend the project's applicability to other research and practice contexts.

Evaluation in this project entailed a process of investigating how advocates understood and went about delivering the previous and new Women's Groups; ways in which the particular localised context of the Refuge shaped programme delivery; and what advocates, clients and I saw as advantages and disadvantages of the original and new programmes. The theories of fourth generation evaluation inspired this process. Fourth generation evaluation is a collaborative, poststructuralist approach developed by Guba and Lincoln (1989) whereby "the claims, concerns, and issues of stakeholders serve as organisational foci (the basis for determining what information is needed)" (p. 50) with the aim of "empowerment and enfranchisement for all stakeholders" (p. 18).

These research principles are congruent with feminist poststructuralism in disputing knowledge creation as the exclusive domain of expert positions sanctioned through dominant discourses and institutional practices. Rather, they recognise local expertise, including marginalised ways of knowing (McHugh, 2014). This feminist

perspective locates the everyday interactions of Refuge advocates and clients as engagements of knowledge creation and positions the women involved as reflexive agents purposively shaping the research. Thus, the contributions of advocates and clients were crucial for expanding the limits of my understanding as the researcher and in this manner, our collaborative encounters served to "challenge existing forms of knowing, through using different ways of seeing" (Simons, 1986, p. 237). In reading, thinking and talking about these research principles and the project in general, I was also reminded that power is not a fixed quality that resides in the researcher or the advocates but operates with fluidity, and can move between, be shared, and can transform within the research team collectively and individually.

A practical focus on developing, applying, and refining solutions from the project's outset, rather than delaying action until the project's completion, favourably distinguished the research design from other, frequently used methodologies (Grant & Humphries, 2006). Richardson and Reynolds' extend this argument for trialling solutions from the project's inception beyond its practical merits to its broader ethical implications in asserting:

Justice-doing requires immediate responses. Our work is imperfect, but required, and we cannot say to clients, "Continue your suffering. We'll get to you later when we know exactly what to do". We acknowledge that our responses to oppressive situations will be imperfect (2012, p. 6).

Relatedly, the project's value was enhanced by being relevant, timely, and responsive to those directly involved in resisting violence and oppression and reinstating peace, healing, and dignity.

Collaborative Research and Reflexivity

Because this research model is informed by feminist poststructuralism, the notion of the researcher as a separate, non-interfering, apolitical observer is contested (Fine, 2002; Fox, 2003). My involvement in the project as primary researcher entailed translating, by which I mean constructing and representing my readings, of research activities into this thesis. As the researcher, I was positioned differently to the other collaborators. This position gave me privileges in relation to the representation of the research. However, I was not able to stand apart from participating advocates and clients to provide objective, politically neutral commentary of research activities (Davies et al., 2004). Instead, in influencing the understandings and activities of participants, I had a commitment to closely analyse and enact my ethical and political responsibilities throughout the research in accordance with the project's alignment with feminist research theories (c.f. McHugh, 2014).

Procedural Considerations

Once the Women's Group Resource Kit was produced and ready for delivery, the project's evaluative process concerned recognising complexity, and being sensitive to unanticipated and idiographic changes in client's lives. Working with small samples is recommended for obtaining in-depth idiographic data sensitive to detailed accounts, and diverse and collective perspectives (Aldridge, 2013; Lunt, Davidson, & McKegg, 2003; McHugh, 2014). Thus, I sought between three and five Refuge advocates and three and five clients to interview using a process of referral to sample purposefully (see Appendix C: Client Recruitment Information for Advocates). The participant number was selected to provide intensive, detailed and contextual advocate data to inform development of the new Women's Group and evidence of clients' changing understandings through their involvement in the Group using thematic and discourse

analytic techniques respectively. Without detailed contextual data afforded by a small-sample approach, it would be extremely difficult to make sense of data or findings (Fox, 2003). Small samples data can provide a level of detail that transcends individual situations that is helpful for understanding the potential applicability of an intervention in complex situations (Simons, 1996).

I considered how an ethically informed feminist research commitment also requires researchers to prioritise participants' meaning-making (Finlay, 2011). During this process, the researcher appreciates that the inherent ambiguity of linguistic exchanges means they cannot fully know and therefore directly access or convey another person's accounts of their experiences (Gavey, 2011). In response to these assumptions, the researcher instead seeks to get as close as possible to participants' perspectives. These conditions are offered by in-depth interviews and were thus my primary data collection method. Similarly, semi-structured interviewing and focus groups aligned with the project's feminist poststructuralist orientation in presenting opportunities for participants to provide accounts of their experiences enabling co-construction of meaning between participants and the researcher (McHugh, 2014). Moreover, single interviews and two advocate focus groups were considered suitable given advocates' and clients' multiple commitments and informal opportunities for collaborating with the advocates.

Ethical Considerations

The selected Women's Refuge offered full support for this research (See Appendix D: Letter of Support). Preliminary consultation with advocates, particularly the Manager, working at this service was carried out as foundational work necessary for the process of developing, delivering, and evaluating the RBP Women's Group.

Identifying ethical implications of this research was informed by my previous research and professional knowledge of victim advocacy practices and two institutional ethical guidelines: Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants and the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This process required examining potential ethical concerns, particularly regarding risk of harm, voluntary participation, informed and voluntary consent, privacy and confidentiality issues, conflicts of interest, cultural considerations and compensation to participants. Ethical issues were further analysed and discussed with my research supervisors, and experienced academic Massey University staff who were not involved with this project reviewed the project's ethical protocol. For Study One an ethics notification was evaluated by peer review as low risk and registered on the Massey University Human Ethics Committee Low Risk Database in July 2014 (see Appendix E). The Massey University Human Ethics Committee approved Study Two on 25 September 2014 (Southern A Application– 14/73) (see Appendix F).

Additional consultation was undertaken with the Manager of the selected Women's Refuge. Discussions with the manager and my primary research supervisor were invaluable for informing and challenging my assumptions about implications of subject positioning in relation to more restrictive notions of fixed identity in the context of domestic violence advocacy. Given the importance of these distinctions for conceptualising the Women's Group and the project more generally, these women's familiarity with feminist poststructuralist theory facilitated understanding and communication considerably. An implication of this was that we readily agreed on the importance of identifying harmful stereotypes of women victims and contesting victim stigmatising and pathologising. Therefore, for both studies, the data collection methods

and analytical techniques involved framing the enquiry in terms of advocates and clients as "knowledgeable self-reflective informants" (Lehrner & Allen, 2009, p. 658) who, through experiencing and thinking about domestic violence, have appreciable insight into the complexities and challenges involved in becoming free from violence in the home. This feminist poststructuralist orientation required me, as primary researcher, to be explicit about my position in constructing research activities (Parker, 2005). In turn, I needed to integrate my reflections of interactions and accounts into the analyses so my influence could be examined in relation to the research findings (c.f. Davies et al., 2004; Macleod, 2004).

Conversations concerning ethics also reinforced my appreciation of reflexivity as a means of critically examining the discourses I invoked as a researcher. If I intended to interpret a participant's accounts through my readings and decide how to ask questions and analyse responses, then I also needed scrutinise the interests and preoccupations underlying my own research activities (Parker, 2014). Richardson and Reynolds' provocation: "justice-doing is inspired by workers refusing to be contented with social cruelty. However, our work is not innocent and neutral positions are inherently political" (2012, pp. 6), similarly attuned my attention to the ethical imperative of interrogating my own understandings. Using a journal to develop my ideas reflexively throughout the research was vital for this. Equally, regular discussions with my primary supervisor were invaluable for critiquing my ethical and methodological understandings and practices.

The decision to undertake this project was inspired by awareness of the need for different understandings of and improved responses to domestic violence, and hence, a sense of responsibility to contribute to the current body of research and practice in this field. Thus, I identified with the Refuge manager in recognising response-based

principles and practices as deeply informed by ethics. Indeed, a vital function of the Women's Group is to honour women's dignity and resistance in the face of others' violence. Furthermore, my knowledge of RBP through ongoing training was important ethically in claiming to apply this knowledge and associated skills to research activities with advocates and clients. Thus, since the project's inception I have taken all opportunities to develop my RBP knowledge and practice through participating in training and conferences, and integrating it into my practice as a clinical psychology intern and researcher.

Regarding citation and development of evidence-based research to support RBP, it is widely understood within the interpersonal violence literature that it is almost always unethical to undertake randomised controlled trials in the context of domestic violence perpetration and victimisation (Jackson, et al., 2003). By positivist standards, it is unethical to have a control group of participants matched for their experience of domestic violence but who are not offered protection from the violence. More generally, it is unethical to deprive a control group consisting of victims of domestic violence of potential benefits accorded to those in the experimental group, even if the benefits may be available following the study. As indicated by Sullivan (2011) a limitation to quasi-experimental designs in domestic violence research is that systematic differences may exist between victims who choose not to participate or to drop out of research and participants who remain involved. This compromises the validity of findings due to the poor representativeness of the study population and hence, generalisability of findings. Likewise, longitudinal studies with victims of domestic violence are fraught with ethical, methodological, and practical challenges, as previously indicated. Furthermore, problematising who has authority to impose definitions and measures of domestic violence on participants' understandings of their experience is seldom considered

outside qualitative research. Legitimizing victims' knowledge and accommodating multiple understandings through reporting research findings was a crucial ethical requirement in this feminist poststructuralist enquiry.

Therefore, selecting research methods informed by feminist poststructuralism also involved ethical concerns. These methodologies are particularly responsive to the inherent complexity and diversity of individual women's lives and are also sensitive to collective experiences, as in this case, a group of Refuge advocates and clients (McLeod, 2011). Adopting these methodologies reflects my commitment to recognising the complexity and diversity of participating advocates' and clients' experiences, and their skills and knowledge in enhancing women victims' safety. Moreover, the theoretical framework was inspired by social justice aims and methodologically aspired towards negotiation and shared ownership of the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). For example, in producing Group Resource Kits for the NCIWR's ongoing use, a practical contribution was made towards addressing the injustice of the organisation's significant and chronic under-resourcing.

While assurances of privacy and confidentiality are crucial for domestic violence research undertaken in all settings, conducting research within a single community organisation assumed particular significance. Commitment to honouring privacy and confidentiality was paramount. As the researcher I recognised that sharing seemingly innocuous, non-specific information about people and situations can enable them to be readily identified. This may pose unforeseeable risks to people's wellbeing and safety; an understanding that was at the forefront of my thinking at all times in my interactions with others, and in my reporting of findings. For example, because interviewing and reporting findings required eliciting and representing highly detailed and specific idiosyncratic accounts, a case study approach for Study Two would likely

have offered greater specificity to discourse analytic findings. However, this would have presented unacceptable risk to clients' safety in terms of compromised confidentiality and privacy, even after removing identifying information.

To additionally prevent detecting participants' identities, details of accounts provided by two or more participants were organised so that readers could not track details linking back to individuals. Thematic and discourse analyses for Studies One and Two respectively permitted analysis across and within different participants' texts. This lessened the possibility of compromising confidentiality and privacy while still preserving the meaning of accounts at micro-levels of detail as they related to response-based concerns in presenting the findings.

Client and advocate safety was foremost in recruiting participants. Firstly, Refuge advocates carry out individual safety assessments with all clients, and clients were only referred to the Women's Group after this assessment had occurred. This screening procedure meant only those clients considered safe to participate in the Group were able to participate in the Study. I recognised that after initially agreeing to participate, some clients would decide to opt out or may not be able to participate. Given the multiple personal difficulties and changing circumstances many victims negotiate in establishing safety, participation in research was not a priority for some women (Lyon & Sullivan, 2007). Hence, I requested to interview three to five clients on two occasions understanding that some interviews may not eventuate as originally planned. As anticipated, changing personal circumstances meant one of the women whom I interviewed prior to joining the Women's Group did not participate in the Group so was not interviewed a second time. Similarly, two women interviewed after participating in the Women's Group were not interviewed beforehand because they were not involved with Refuge during the first series of interviews. I emphasise here that the

discourse analysis does not require "matching" pre- and post-Group analysis for specific individuals because discourses are not "located" within individual women but are individually shared. In practical terms, discourse analysis encompasses a form of flexibility that accommodates participants' changing circumstances without compromising the research findings.

A principle safety concern was that my engagement with participants could not introduce additional safety risks. For example, given that close surveillance of victims' modes of communication is sometimes practiced by abusive partners, communicating about the project directly with participants via post, email, telephone, texting, or in person could have placed participants and, if relevant, their children, at risk of escalating their partners' violence. Therefore, it was crucial I carefully considered my mode of engagement in terms of safety risk for clients at all stages of the project. An example of how this was managed was by discussing clients' preferred mode(s) of communication and addressing any safety concerns they may have in relation to our communicating when they initially contacted me and revisiting these issues during ensuing contact should safety conditions change.

Similarly, face-to-face contact needed to be perceived as and actually be safe to clients. This involved considering various implications of interviewing a participant at home, university, Women's Refuge, or a neutral community setting, given each of these locations pose particular safety risks. Risks to clients' safety, privacy and confidentiality were considered if interviews took place at their home; issues relating to confidentiality, privacy, conflicts of interest, and coercion may be present if interviews were conducted at Women's Refuge; and privacy could be a concern in a "neutral" community setting. These considerations indicate that risk is not static; rather, it is a process that changes continually (MOJ, 2014a). Based on discussions with the women and professional

judgement, I therefore assessed and addressed changing conditions of risk on an ongoing basis during all interactions with the women.

Each participant selected a suitable interview time and location and signed a Participant Consent Form before being interviewed (see Appendix G). I anticipated that most interviews would take place at clients' homes but, as a safety precaution, would not be conducted at their home if an abusive partner was present (I made this distinction as some clients may have since formed new relationships with non-abusive partners). To clarify, interviews did not take place at a participant's home if her abusive partner also lived there or, in the case that the participant did not reside with her abusive partner, there was a possibility that the partner may be present or visiting on the day of the interview. In addition, I discussed the likelihood of an unannounced visit by the (ex)partner with the participant when arranging the interview and this information was used to determine a suitable interview location. In either scenario, interviews could be held in a neutral private location.

Gathering and holding information about participants (e.g. age, ethnicity, personal contact details, current involvement with a partner) can be a sensitive matter as clients are likely to have been confronted with stigma and various other harmful social responses associated with experiences of victimisation in relation to their personal information. For example, a client's loyalties to her current or ex-partner, or partner's family or whānau, and her motivation to protect them has implications for the extent to which a participant may wish to divulge information. Likewise, safety risks to clients, and potentially children, pertaining to on-going abuse by partners, as well as policing and court processes can change daily and even hourly. These experiences can be frustrating and exhausting for victims. An example of how I addressed this as the researcher was striving to be flexible, non-judgmental, compassionate, and sensitive to

reading the "sub-text" of whether a client felt pressured to participate in the research or divulge specific information.

Further regarding safety and wellbeing, it was understood that the interview process may have potentially caused psychological discomfort, particularly for clients as they were asked to reflect on their experiences of abuse and their own and other's responses to these. I used a number of strategies to manage this safety concern. I clearly explained to clients the nature and content of interviews in the Information Sheets (see Appendix H), in more detail when we initially discussed the project, and again at the beginning of interviews. This allowed me to check with them that they felt comfortable about sharing their experiences with me in the interview and so that they were able to anticipate being asked to reflect on their experiences. I informed clients I had received training and had experience in interviewing clients about sensitive subjects including domestic violence and that through this I developed skills for maintaining emotionally safe and supportive interactions in interview settings. I also explained to participants that some aspects of our interview would involve me asking them to share difficult and painful experiences. I then explained that finding out about the details of the abuse clients had experienced, and the ways they and others had responded to these experiences, was important for understanding their unique situation and for learning about the ways they had kept themselves and others safe, and maintained their dignity.

An experienced family therapist and Massey University senior lecturer in Clinical Psychology agreed to provide support in her capacity as a therapist to participants who experienced discomfort and wanted further professional support. The availability of this therapist's services was explained to clients in the Information Sheet, during my initial telephone contact with potential participants, and, again when I met participants for the interview before and after interviewing was carried out. I also

sought participants' permission to contact them after the interview to check in with them and offer support as required. Each client was informed that if she found either interview distressing, should she wish, I could put her in touch with the therapist. I telephoned each client after interviewing. All of the women reported the interviews were a positive and safe experience and none wished to be put in contact with the Massey therapist.

As part of addressing participants' privacy and confidentiality, advocates and clients agreed to have their interviews audio recorded and stored on a password-protected computer accessible only to me. Interviewees were informed they could decline to answer particular questions, ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview, withdraw from the research at any time before signing off the transcript for use in the research report, and ask any questions about the project during participation. No participants declined to answer questions, asked me to stop recording or withdrew from the project. All participant data and consent forms were collected, stored and disposed of according to guidelines outlined in the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct to protect participant confidentiality.

Another strategy for protecting participants' privacy and confidentiality involved me transcribing all interviews verbatim, so that I was the only person who connected the transcript with the audio recording when transcripts were checked for accuracy against the original recordings. This transcribing process, which took me hundreds of hours to complete, was also advantageous for my familiarisation with the data. Transcripts were stored electronically on a password-protected computer and were only accessible to my supervisors and me. Information that might identify participants or other people was omitted from transcribed texts. Transcripts were then emailed to participants to review, suggest changes and confirm their agreement for further use of the transcribed texts in

extracts to support analysis. Participants signed an Authority for the Release of Transcript form to verify this process had occurred (see Appendix I). Following this, recorded interviews were destroyed to protect participants' privacy and confidentiality.

Given the ease with which people in small organisations can be identified, pseudonyms were used for participants. In addition, place names and some situations were described in generic terms, for example, "a nearby town." Agency names were also referred to in generic terms with the exception of larger organisations, such as Government Ministries. Likewise, all ensuing reporting of the research, whether in written and oral forms, will omit identifying information.

As the interviewer, I was aware of my ethical obligation to duty of care should a participating client disclose information indicating she or another person was being harmed or at risk of harm. I note here that clients' participation in the Women's Group necessitated their engagement in safety assessments and ongoing support from their assigned advocate. It was therefore highly likely that advocates would be aware of their client's particular safety concerns. Should such concerns have arisen, my plan was to ask the client whether her Refuge advocate was also aware of the issue and to then encourage the client to address this directly with her advocate to minimise the possibility of compromising the client's privacy. In one interview various safety concerns were apparent. I raised this directly with the woman and ascertained that she and her Refuge advocate were clearly aware of the concerns and had procedures in place to address them.

Culturally competent conduct and respectful treatment of others involved in the research were also ethical concerns. I undertook this project understanding that lived experiences of marginalisation, colonisation, and institutional and interpersonal racism often intersect with women victims' experiences of control and abuse and their own and

others' responses to these (Royal, 2011). Our identified culture(s) and ethnicities shape our worldviews, ways of being and relating in the world, and notions of dignity, safety, and wellbeing. These considerations needed to be accounted for in addressing participants' needs throughout the research. At a minimum, this entailed me inviting participants to share the meanings of their ethnic affiliation for them and addressing particular needs or wishes regarding their participation. These considerations also had relevance to the chosen methodologies, data analysis, and reporting of findings. The small-sample framework for this project was idiographic and this approach enabled cultural responsiveness to participants as they were interviewed, and was sensitive to cultural variation in the analysis of interview data. This is reflected in my reporting of analyses of advocate and client interview data in Chapters Five-Seven, and in the conceptualisation and content of the Women's Group Resource Kit.

Regarding additional cultural considerations specifically for wahine Māori, I found previous research experience of working with research kaumātua Huia Taumata helpful. Spending time to explore connections and share experiences face-to-face enabled Huia and I to develop a trusting relationship. Huia helped guide me in my relationships with the research participants and understandings of domestic violence from her experience as an advocate and victim (see Appendix K: Letter of Support). Consultation was also initially undertaken with a manager of a Māori Women's Refuge, representing the Māori Caucus of the Women's Refuge Governance Board. While my involvement with this manager was brief and early in the research, our conversations offered insights for understanding intersections between indigenous experiences, and Māori women's advocacy and victimisation. This manager provided a Māori feminist perspective that complemented my Pākehā feminist position.

Following completion of the project, Women's Refuge received a copy of the

completed report. A presentation based on the research process and findings was also given to Women's Refuge. The Women's Group Resource Kit was given to the NCIWR for their use.

As a further measure for addressing ethical implications of this project, my reflexive journal encouraged my examination of implicit assumptions I may have introduced to the research as a strategy for enhancing transparency and the ethical validity of the project. Research methods reported in Chapters Five and Six describing sampling and participant selection, data collection, and analytic procedures, elaborate on strategies used to prevent harm to people and groups implicated in this research.

Summary

Chapter Four outlined the methodological rationale and ethical considerations guiding the project's design. I discussed why feminist poststructuralist epistemology was used to provide the methodological and ethical framework. I also described the qualitative methodologies and research techniques, informed by collaborative action research and Fourth Generation evaluation principles, and discourse analysis and positioning theory, chosen for the project.

The project aimed for transformation by engaging with advocates and clients at a localised level to improve their service. This involved two major tasks. Study One largely concerned the preliminary and practical work of developing, delivering and evaluating a new RBP Women's Group Resource. This provided the foundations for Study Two, wherein clients' accounts of their experiences and understandings of domestic violence and social responses to their victimisation before and following their participation in the Group were sought. This would provide evidence of ways the Group was effective in transforming the discursive resources clients drew on in making sense

of their experiences of domestic violence victimisation, and particularly in dignifying ways that honour their resistance to violence and oppression.

The qualitative design, employing semi-structured interviews, advocate focus groups, document reviews, and creating Women's Group Resource Kits with close attention to particular ethical research issues in working with women victims and advocates was described. Transcribed interviews with advocates and clients were analysed using thematic and discourse analyses respectively, reported in Chapters Five-Seven. These would enable systematic analyses of language use that illuminate the social responses with which RBP is concerned. These methodologies and ethical considerations were selected to inform the development of a good practice framework for RBP in a Women's Refuge Group setting and provide evidence about the effectiveness of RBP in supporting victim safety, dignity and wellbeing.

CHAPTER FIVE: Study One – Analysis and Discussion of Advocates' Accounts

The aim of Chapter Five is to represent advocates' understandings of the Women's Group and particularly, what is working and what could be helpful for strengthening the programme. This also involves reporting advocates' views about the utility of RBP in the Women's Group. The chapter begins with a description of methodological procedures. I then reflect on collaborating with the advocates. The analysis and discussion follow, and the chapter concludes with my overall reflections on advocates' understandings of the Group programme. Together, Study One contributes to identifying needs to be addressed in developing, delivering and evaluating the proposed RBP Women's Group.

Methodological Procedures for Study One

Sampling and Participant Selection

Five advocates working at Women's Refuge with experience of facilitating the original Group were invited to participate. To meet selection criteria, participants needed to be women over the age of 18 who had worked as advocates in a paid or voluntary capacity for at least one year.

Advocates were recruited by asking the Refuge Manager to circulate an Information Sheet (Appendix L) describing the research and inviting advocates to participate in an interview and two focus groups. The Manager then provided me with advocates' email addresses so that I could make contact with them directly. I wrote to each advocate to discuss the research and invite her to participate. Advocates were assured their decision to participate in interviews would remain confidential except in

the case where their participation in the focus groups would, by necessity, be known to colleagues who had also agreed to participate (see Appendix O).

The five advocates who took part in the research were aged between 28 and 53 years. Three women described their ethnicity as New Zealand European, one as New Zealand Māori, and one as Samoan. The length of time the women had worked in advocacy roles, varying from 1.5 to 20 years, indicated considerable collective expertise. All women were engaged in paid employment as advocates. Additionally, all women provided advocacy in a volunteer capacity either presently or in the past. As advocates' involvement in the research was regarded as part of their Refuge work, their time participating was added to their paid work hours.

Data Collection Procedures

Initial data from advocates were collected during semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. Predetermined, open-ended interview questions and prompts provided a guide for discussion and ensured advocates' perspectives and my research questions were covered (Appendix M). The open-ended form of questions enabled me to be responsive to advocates' accounts as interviews unfolded.

Advocates selected suitable interview times and locations and signed Participant Consent Forms before being interviewed (Appendix N). Four interviews took place at participants' workplaces. The remaining interview was conducted at the advocate's home. These settings were private and interruptions were minimal. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours. The transcribed interviews generated 69 pages of text for analysis. Transcribing interviews verbatim is in keeping with qualitative research conventions, which emphasise the close approximation of participants' dialogue. Therefore, linguistic features that contributed meaning and contextual information, such as discourse markers (e.g. "you know what I mean?"), repeated

clauses, references to laughter (e.g. [laughs]), and words emphasised by advocates (shown in bold), were included.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis of interview transcripts was used to identify advocates' perspectives regarding the original Group and ideas for future improvements. Thematic analysis was selected for its utility in structuring and synthesising themes in advocates' accounts. This allowed my reconstruction of the texts to remain relatively close to advocates' accounts as recommended by Burman and Chantler (2005). Thematic analysis is non-prescriptive and entails iterative readings of interview texts from which themes emerge, making it suitable for collaborative research. The iterative process of readings and focus group consultations on emerging themes produces a rigorous, clearly structured and meaningfully organised framework for integrating convergent and divergent participant perspectives.

Data analysis began during interviewing and transcription as emerging patterns, themes, stories, and distinctive nuanced experiences became apparent. Analysis intensified over the following stages. After transcribing interviews, the next stage entailed several readings of each transcript to develop an overall sense of individual advocates' accounts of their understandings. This was important for enhancing the validity of analyses by grounding ensuing interpretations (Burman & Chantler, 2005) in advocates' accounts. This is a process of developing a constructed account, which is then available for consultation with others in the research team, to produce a co-constructed account meaningful to all involved. During subsequent readings, line-by-line examination of data took place so connected units of meaning could be delineated, as recommended by Coombes et al. (2009). These were indicated, along with initial reflective comments, in transcript margins.

Following this, tentative themes were noted in the transcripts and corresponding phrases were highlighted. Recurrent themes within individual transcripts were identified, coded, compared and refined. These themes, together with corresponding “exemplar” passages from the transcripts were extracted and grouped together so comparisons between similar themes and excerpts could be made. This was firstly an ideographic process completed for individual transcripts, and then thematic groupings across the five different transcripts were brought together.

As a means of assessing the credibility of themes identified (McLeod, 2011), the next stage involved checking the congruency between themes and my understanding of advocates’ meanings as they were presented in the original transcripts. Subordinate themes were then identified within each major theme and a similar coding, extraction and grouping process was carried out. I then returned to the original transcripts to check whether overarching and subordinate themes appropriately reflected the contexts in which they were originally conveyed. This stage involved identifying divergent perspectives within and between transcripts, a process important in determining the trustworthiness and plausibility of themes and for enhancing the comprehensiveness of interpretations (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Tong, Sainsbury, & Craig, 2007). A table of three overarching themes, each grouped with subordinate themes, key phrases from the transcripts, and codes for locating all relevant excerpts within each of the transcripts was created. A simplified version of this is presented in Table 1 in the following Analysis and Discussion section.

The next stage of analysis entailed the final write-up. This involved presenting excerpts of participants’ accounts from the transcripts, and interweaving these with my analytic interpretations. In accordance with Tong et al's. (2007) recommendations for providing evidence of the relevance, coherence and plausibility of thematic

interpretations, extracts from all participants' transcripts were used across thematic interpretations. Thus, the reporting of the thematic analysis in this chapter is structured as commentary supported by excerpts from advocates' interview texts determined to be informative and representative. In keeping with a feminist poststructural framework, I refrain from claiming the analysis is exhaustive or complete. Advocates' data were accorded equivalent status to literature pertaining to women's group advocacy referred to in the analysis in respect of advocates' expertise and knowledge in the victim advocacy field (Coombes & Morgan, 2001).

Focus Groups and the Women's Group Resource Kit

Summaries of the thematic analysis of advocates' interview texts, in combination with relevant research literature, were collated then discussed with advocates in focus groups to obtain feedback for developing the Women's Group Resource Kit (discussed later in this chapter). With advocates' permission, during and shortly after feedback sessions I took notes to record ideas generated from discussions and observations of the process (see Appendix P: Summary of Findings for Feedback Session with Advocates). I incorporated the thematic analysis and first focus group feedback into a synthesis of RBP approaches, women's group advocacy literature, the original Women's Group Documents, MOJ specifications for protected person's safety groups, and my own concepts. From this I designed successive draft Women's Group Facilitation Guides and Handbooks for further advocate feedback and the final Resource Kit (see Appendices Q and R).

Reflections on Collaborating with the Advocates

The following account of my experience as I interviewed advocates illustrates the value of maintaining flexibility and a non-prescriptive approach to research. During early discussions with the Refuge Manager, she expressed a pressing need for a new RBP Women's Group. I noted the Manager's concern that the original programme was outdated and of poor quality. At this initial stage, it would be reasonable to assume the Manager and I shared a problem-focused view of the original programme: we envisaged a radical overhaul where the Group would be substituted with an entirely different programme. As I interviewed her and other advocates it was interesting then to reflect on the passion, depth of knowledge, and respect they held in regard to many aspects of the original Group. Advocates recounted numerous stories about women's lives and relationships that took place in context of the Group. They frequently referred to their understanding of the purpose of each module in the Group manual and connected their weekly facilitation of this to important events in the women's lives and their changing understandings.

While the advocates suggested changes to the Group, they wanted to retain much of the original 10-week programme, and introduce a RBP approach, within a similar timeframe for delivery. As the Manager had asked me to create a new programme, this realisation was a little daunting: how would I create a substantively different programme without losing the content and intention of the original programme?

These reflections signal how an inflexible problem-focused inquiry into what was wrong with the Group might have closed down crucial learning about what was important to the advocates. Hence, the fourth generation concept of appreciative inquiry, where need identification begins by investigating what was working well and

valued (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), provided a starting point to address further needs. In this case, appreciative inquiry built into the interviewing process provided data to guide development of the new Group. These data also contributed to evaluation criteria for changes and served to remind me about what is important and valued by advocates and clients.

On reflection, interviews with advocates did not evoke exclusively positive accounts of the original programme's utility. Advocates also spoke of needing to provide a safe context for provoking change. It was apparent that a common goal among Group facilitators was creating a supportive environment for encouraging risk-taking, including imagining and planning different futures. The Manager advocated the Group functioning as a provocative community, safely and supportively, for clients and advocates. In doing this she also signaled her deep trust and belief in advocates' and clients' abilities. This translated as highly respectful behaviour, and commitment by the Manager to upholding the dignity of her staff and the women and children they serve.

Analysis and Discussion

The remainder of this chapter is structured using the three overarching themes and subordinate themes shown in Table 1. This offers an organisational framework for conceptualising how the Women's Group functions, and how advocates and clients contribute.

Table 1

Themes in the Analysis of Advocates' Interview Texts

Overarching Theme	Subordinate Theme
1. Our Kaupapa and Takepū: Group Purpose and Values	1.1 Social Connectedness
	1.2 Positive Social Responses and Upholding Mana and Dignity
	1.3 Learning Together and From One Another
	1.4 Enhancing Safety
2. Our Mahi: Group Processes	2.1 Facilitator Skills and Tasks
	2.2 On-going Learning and RBP
	2.3 Women Engaging
3. Our Whakatakoto: Group Structure	3.1 Programme Structure
	3.2 Session Structure- Procedures
	3.3 Individual Session Content

1. Our Kaupapa and Takepū: Group Purpose and Values

All five advocates described transformative experiences of working in groups for women victims. They spoke with conviction of the power of the group to enable learning, support, and healing through reciprocation. Throughout interviews, advocates referred to the Women's Group as a positive force in the lives of women victims and their children:

The Women's Group, that's where I've seen the most change, through the Group programme in women's lives...I believe in the programme that much!...One of my young clients, she just sent me a photo thanking us and saying how much she loved the programme and, it was her and her son, they've moved away and she took a photo and it meant a lot. I put it in the [Group] book in the evaluation

part because we never got an evaluation from her and I thought; well that's an evaluation in itself [Serena; 619-623].

Serena's extract implicitly draws from a key response based principle in exemplifying how the Group functions as a positive social response for clients. Advocates' accounts suggested tensions in defining the Group kaupapa and how this could be problematic for different stakeholders. In particular, referring agencies such as the Courts and CYF expected a strong education focus and were understood to place less emphasis on women's healing and recovery:

The fact that it's a Refuge programme, and that it's seen as a DV [domestic violence] education programme works two ways, it works for us and it works against us. Because people often don't get why it is they have to be educated about DV because they miss the support part of it and think it's teaching grandma to suck eggs, it's a bit like, been there done that, but that is also seen as a plus for us because other agencies want women to do the programmes, so Child Youth and Family—this is something you need to do, the Courts very strongly recommend it. So they get encouraged to come and do it so that's good and bad, it helps and it hinders [Elizabeth; 522-530].

Advocates suggested that emphasis on educating women about domestic violence could be perceived by clients as patronising if not handled with sensitivity. In this way, advocates conveyed the response-based principle of their role in maintaining victims' dignity in a context of victims' common experiences of agency responses that treat them as deficient.

Advocates referred to inclusiveness and accessibility as fundamental to the Group's purpose. Tensions regarding the forms bicultural practice could and should assume in the Group resonated across interviews. Advocates spoke passionately of their concerns regarding the issue of misrepresenting the Group as a genuinely bicultural programme in a tauwiwi setting. Themes expressed by advocates related to how misrepresentation could be patronising and alienating to wahine Māori and non-Māori women. In particular, questions around inclusion of indigenous responses to colonisation were raised, as reflected in the following advocate's comments:

*I'm presuming that you'll be building in a notion of bicultural practice, but it can't be the focus of the programme because we're a tauwiwi general Refuge...The issue we're dealing with is domestic violence, it's violence against women and children. **That** is our issue. And while racism's an issue, and heterosexism is an issue, and sexism full-stop is an issue, and I get all that on an intellectual level and on an academic level, our **mahi** is keeping women and children safe...that's our focus and I mean, Refuge is bad at this, people's energy gets diverted away, they lose what their central kaupapa is. For the sort of programme we need, we'd lose women early on if we focused on that because the women would go 'oh my god,' you know, 'we're here for DV'...One of the problems we have if we can't do it properly is that we're in danger of just doing this tokenistic, patronising—it could alienate Māori and the other women...it's seen as ticking a PC [politically correct] box...we do that sort of thing too much and if we're going to do bicultural stuff, we do it properly, or don't pretend that you're providing this kaupapa Māori service when you can't because that is just patronising and disempowering of Māori. And it totally misses the notion of*

partnership and respect...everyone just sort of rolls over and gets paralysed- it's a very inactive version of bicultural practice [Elizabeth; 640-687].

Advocates voiced concerns regarding ways of respectfully including colonisation experiences in the Group. However, when I raised the possibility of incorporating Group members' responses to structural oppression and discrimination, including indigenous responses to racism and colonisation via a response-based contextual analysis framework, advocates indicated this could be an appropriate and helpful process. Thus, advocates expressed tensions between social justice aims and responding to individual victims' suffering. Maintaining Women's Group inclusivity for all participants in a tauwiwi setting was acknowledged as central to Refuge's kaupapa whilst legitimating intersecting oppressive practices, including colonisation, necessitates an analysis of social power relations that enable or constrain violence. From this I understood advocates would value practical resources and guidance for translating response-based principles into practice.

Advocates argued that from their clients' perspectives, the primary purpose and appeal of the Group was to receive and give support to other women in similar circumstances:

My biggest draw card I always use is the supportive environment...It's amazing, as soon as you say it's a supportive environment and you'll meet other women in similar circumstances, that seems to be what draws them in...Whereas, I think if you just said it's an education programme, they go 'oh yeah' [unenthusiastically], and a couple of my clients, that's their sole purpose for

going, is to get that support and meet other women in the same circumstance [Rachel; 118-141].

Elizabeth expressed her expectations as attaining balance between learning, recovery, and being challenged in a supportive environment:

I want a programme that's challenging to our women so they're not just being educated and supported, but they're being challenged to grow and to take on new ideas [Elizabeth; 779-782].

Evident in advocates' accounts was awareness of their work as something that is value driven. Advocates indicated that takepū (values) provide a culturally responsive and ethical framework for working.

The takepū have been really useful actually for me...to identify things, not only professionally but personally...we don't really [separate personal from work] because we're a whole person, we, on a personal level bringing so much forward, in whatever job we're in [Serena; 98...110].

Advocates emphasised the inextricable link between respectful support and caring for the 'whole person' as the core Refuge takepū underpinning the Group. This resonates with the response-based principle of upholding dignity in advocacy work. In the following section, I draw on several takepū indicated in advocates' accounts understood to underpin the Group purpose.

1.1 Social Connectedness

In comparing the processes of one-to-one work with advocates and the Group, advocates consistently referred to the takepū of closeness and shared understandings that develop between the women through working together in the Group. This involves sharing deeply personal experiences, which engender conditions in which women support and trust one-another. Advocates recollected how Group members often maintained contact after completing the Group and also recounted women staying in touch with the local Refuge for years afterwards. In these ways, advocates implicitly invoked the response-based principle that people operate in a social context of relationships, not as individuals in isolation. Clients' longing to connect with other women often worked to motivate them joining the Group:

The women form very, very strong bonds and end up with very good friendships...Whenever I talk to the women about joining the programme...that kind of sparks their interest about forming bonds with other women who have been through a similar thing [Rachel; 49-62].

Having women participate who are "willing and active engagers" was considered an important takepū relating to creating a supportive group environment. The programme content and their roles as facilitators created conditions conducive to willing and active engagement. Grace spoke of how each Group becomes progressively autonomous:

*They run the Group—a lot of it's **their** conversations...they make their own rules too in the Group [Grace; 311-331].*

Advocates encouraged self-determination as a group and for individual women. These perspectives indicated advocates' ethical and response-based takepū of recognising victims' capacities as capable, resourceful women and facilitating long-term interdependence as a crucial social resource for victims. Establishing social connections for victims has multiple positive implications for women's safety and wellbeing. Isolation can be used as a strategy by abusive partners and be enhanced by blaming and pathologising responses women receive during and following victimisation. The prevalence of isolation was evident in advocates' accounts of victims' experiences; as were the ways the Group mitigates participants' isolation. As they discussed women's isolation, advocates emphasised how prior to beginning the Group, most women saw their experiences of abuse as extremely unusual, aligning with the response-based view that concealing violence is a widespread practice. Learning they were not alone in their experiences was a vital source of reassurance and attenuated clients' isolation:

I always recommend to my women to attend the Programme because it's supportive and can be quite eye opening—it helps them realise they're not alone. Sometimes they feel like they're the only ones it's happened to and that other people won't understand, it's quite good for them to see that people do understand and people have been through it before [Rachel; 49-62].

Advocates referred to the advantages of having several women supporting each other offered in the Group context. They made connections between enhancing women's immediate safety and reducing isolation through Group participation:

They're having weekly contact...they start sharing their stories and the other women will give them encouragement. We can say things to encourage the women but the other women can be quite blunt and actually challenge them. That's really helpful for their own safety [Serena; 646-657].

Advocates consistently portrayed the Group as a forum for participants to grow and become stronger through working together in a dignifying social environment that validates their experiences of violence and resistance. The responses clients receive from advocates and other clients enable them to reposition themselves as capable and healthy and to recontextualise their responses to their partners' abuse as understandable and reasonable:

When it's time to start sharing...they finally can't wait to say out loud what happened to them. Especially the ones who haven't had physical violence. It's a great opportunity for them to go, 'hey, all of this was abuse and that's what happened to me!' You know? 'I thought I was crazy,' it's really validating [Serena; 293-297].

Jen's account of one Group participant's actions conveys the creative resistance that emerged as her understanding of domestic violence changed:

There was one lady who was photocopying parts of her book and sending highlighted parts [pages] to him in jail saying 'this is what you do to me' [Jen; 406-408].

Advocates' accounts suggested connections between collectively validating clients' experiences of violence and restoring dignity through participating in the Women's Group. Thus, an important Group takepū encompassed working towards identifying resistance, social justice, and solidarity for women victims.

From advocates' perspectives, a principle takepū of the Group is for clients to give and receive support and to relate to other women who have had similar experiences in a safe, non-stigmatising environment. The Group context counters women's isolation and enables them to develop trust and interdependence. These dignifying experiences contribute to participants' immediate and long-term safety and healing. Taken together, advocates' understandings signaled their recognition of the Refuge takepū and response-based principle of providing a positive social response and the transformative processes enabled through the Women's Group.

1.2 Positive Social Responses Upholding Mana and Dignity

While advocates did not explicitly refer to the response-based term 'positive social responses,' the notion of the Group as a forum for providing positive social responses was evident throughout advocates' accounts. Advocates referred to the pervasiveness of victims' shame and self-blame; as well as negative judgement, blame and disbelief by others that women victims contend with socially. Advocates consistently reinforced the Group's takepū of countering victim-blaming, and supporting participants to overcome shame and self-blame:

One of the really big themes for Refuge is, you know, it's about not blaming women...that's a really big part of not being judgmental [Rachel, 146-150].

Advocates impressed upon me the immense value of the Group as a place for women to come where they will not be blamed for their partners' abuse, and where they are told, often for the first time, that their victimisation is not their fault. During Group activities, advocates explicitly and repeatedly state the women are not to be blamed for their partners' abuse. Even though the Group is helpful for women to be less self-blaming, it can take a long time for women to realise they are not responsible for the abuse.

Yes, [we try to] shift the blame—shift it to where it belongs, it has worked for some, not for all, that will take time, and again; building up her mana, and letting her know that his actions shouldn't result in her feeling like shit. Because [the perpetrator] chose to do this, doesn't mean you should wear the blame—again wording around that is really quite difficult with women, but they would see it as 'it's my fault because the kids got a twack last night'—quite hard to translate that so they can understand but once they get it, it's like a light bulb goes off [Grace; 183-191].

The response-based emphasis on upholding dignity through using language and practices that do not blame or pathologise victims was apparent in the way advocates spoke about their clients and their work in the Group: Promoting positive social responses and reinstating clients' dignity was inherent in the takepū of this Women's Refuge:

It's really good for the women that come along to hang out with other women and recognise for all that we talk about how common it is and the one-in-three

and all that...honestly for so many of those women, this is the first—when they come into the Programme—this is the first time that they actually believe that—when they actually sit in a room with half a dozen or so other women and while the details might be different, they all get it—and you can almost see their light bulb going on for some of them: 'oh, really, so he did that to me and that's not really disgusting and strange and weird cause that happened to her too?' And so, I think that's one of the primary benefits to the Group [Elizabeth; 52-61].

Although the clients longed for support and connection with other women, at first they often experienced a sense of distress and dread as they imagined disclosing their stories in the Group. What happened instead however, was that women tended to receive kindness, support and admiration from members:

She did it, she just stayed and talked all about it and said exactly what had happened, this is what had made her leave, and everyone was like, 'you're amazing, you did what you needed to do to protect your babies.' Yes, he's sitting in jail now and will do for quite some time, but yes; it's awesome that she was able to tell her story in a room full of women [Jen; 746-754].

Advocates emphasised the crucial relationship between women's safety and the Group as a setting where the advocates and other clients would not evaluate them negatively. For the women not to experience blame, judgement and shame, and to know they are always welcome regardless of their life circumstances—that they will never be turned away and their Refuge connection has no time-limit—was recognised as an extremely important takepū for enhancing their safety and dignity.

1.3 Learning Together and From One Another

Advocates spoke of the Group as a place for clients to make sense of experiences of victimisation in new ways and how this process allowed them to gain perspective and recognise patterns of abuse in helpful ways:

They start to put a little bit of structure around their experience, they can make a little bit of sense—it stops being so chaotic—we talk about the chaos and they can put an organising frame around it [Elizabeth; 63-70].

In particular, they used the Power and Control Wheel for broadening women's understandings of domestic violence and legitimating their experiences of victimisation as a consequence of varying forms of violence partners had used. This activity was also seen as facilitating relationship building in the Group.

There is one exercise that we do with the Power and Control Wheel and that's normally in the second session—first session they don't really want to talk. I haven't met many that will actually share on that first day...On the second week they actually want to start opening up a little bit more and they normally tell me at the end that Session Two needs to be longer because they're all writing down on a piece of paper their own experiences and where it fits on the Wheel and they're also having the conversation with each other...that's where they really start talking and to form those bonds—and they get it that actually everybody else in this room understands. It may be a slightly different situation—but they get it [Jen; 99-110].

Advocates argued that as women learn about power and control and the way this encompasses various non-physical forms of violence, they are able to recognise a much broader spectrum of what constitutes domestic violence. Their recognition of multiple forms of violence opens up the possibility for understanding the response-based notion that language can conceal and minimise violence or reveal violence:

The most important one...has been doing the Power and Control Wheel, and I also know from when I've shown women that they find it quite shocking—because a lot of the things that are counted as abuse they just thought that's how life is, so I think that's probably the most important bit and doing it in a supported environment rather than one-on-one...because then they can bounce things off each other [Rachel; 74-80].

Given the limited conceptualisations of domestic violence prevalent in broader social settings, advocates saw the Power and Control Wheel as one of the few tools available to them to reveal broader violent practices, encompassing psychological and spiritual violence and entrapment as well as the pattern of harmful actions by a perpetrator. However, Elizabeth discussed risks associated with misuse of the Wheel and endorsed a cautious approach when using it:

The Power and Control Wheel has the power to be used to really pathologise women. But it is a really good tool for women to look at all the things that hurt them but they never actually thought of as abusive. When they do the exercise and see it all coming together, it does form a pattern for them...And I don't like it when it gets used to beat people around the head with and make them feel like

they're something other than capable and reasonably solid healthy people, but you know, we have to use these tools sometimes even if they're not perfect [Elizabeth; 63-82].

Elizabeth's understanding of the Power and Control Wheel aligned with a response-based view and core Refuge takepū that challenges constructions of victims as deficient, while also signaling the need for better resources that enable advocates to practice confidently in a response-based way. The potential risk of the Power and Control Wheel is that women will believe they are inadequate because they did not recognise the pattern of violence as their experience. The Group offers the opportunity to address this risk, if self-blame is clearly re-focused towards understanding for the sake of safety.

Advocates' accounts suggested the Group was especially valuable for encouraging immediate and long-term safety planning as participants benefited from a large group of women with similar experiences who were willing to share and learn together:

When we do safety planning in the Group it's really useful because the other women will share experiences, like 'Oh, last time he found me because I had my location on Facebook.' So they'll share ideas of ways to keep themselves safe [Serena; 657-666].

Advocates described the knowledge-building process for women and how, with better-informed understandings of domestic violence, the choices available to women for seeking support and resources that contribute to becoming free from violence also

expand. However, there were risks involved in construing the process of expanding women's choices as empowerment. For Elizabeth, discourses of empowerment can be problematic in a Women's Refuge setting:

*Empowerment is something that's been misused almost to the point where it's become one of those nonsense words...I would prefer us to be talking about things like choice, but choice within a relative framework so there's this really clear understanding that there are always choices...you always have choice and you always have power **but** there are structural constraints and things that are going to restrict how you play those choices out, but somehow communicating the response-based notion that even small acts of resistance count [Elizabeth; 434-443].*

Here, Elizabeth exemplifies the advocates' wish for guidance and resources that support them to practically implement response-based principles shared among advocates. Collectively, advocates reinforced the takepū of elevating group settings for women victims as places in which they learn together through reciprocation. For example, women learn through sharing possible solutions to similar experiences and through examining currently held ideas and trying out new ones in a safe environment. In these ways, advocates conveyed respect for victims' pre-existing knowledge and competence. This demonstrated coalescence between advocates' takepū and the response-based principle of upholding victim dignity. Moreover, group work can enable women to become better informed about domestic violence and through legitimating and developing their knowledge and support networks, more choices become available to them.

1.4 Enhancing Safety

Advocates' accounts conveyed the cumulative learning occurring over the duration of the Group. The flexible group structure enabled conversations to arise about safety and for the Group to engage in safety problem solving. This allowed women to respond to particular safety concerns together as they arose. For example, issues such as dealing with non-compliances with safety orders or preventing abusive partners from locating clients were analysed and addressed as a Group. Jen's account suggests how women's changed understandings of domestic violence and their partner's patterns of control and violence can assist women's safety planning for themselves and their children:

Every session is making them more aware. Even if these women plan on staying, they're more aware of him when he walks through the door...for a lot of our women, they'll say because he's not actually beating her, it's actually not family violence, they'll start to notice that actually, financially, I don't have any money every week... And they'd start noticing little things, just the way he walks through the door some days, to different things he'll say...they start to prepare themselves for leaving. It may be that they usher the kids out to the neighbour's house or they ring a friend and say, 'can you come and get the kids for a while?' They may not feel safe enough to leave but they're able to get the children out sometimes, or they're able to get themselves into a room where it's going to be slightly safer [Jen; 294-306].

In these ways, from advocates' perspectives, the Group functions to mitigate against further violence in the immediate and long-term. Crucially, women learn that

Women's Refuge is a safe and inclusive environment that will provide them with the breathing space and support to make choices rather than imposing limitations on women's responses to situations of violence:

Once they've been through the programme...they find out it's actually not run by a bunch of crazy man-hating lesbians, it's not going to tell them you have to leave your home or your partner; you actually have the power to make choices, [and] they relax about the notion that we're not going to pack them into our van and lock them in our safehouse...All of those sort of things, those myths that sit around Refuge...they become demystified through them being here and talking to us, it makes sense to them...so they're more likely to use our service in the future if they want to or need to [Elizabeth; 118-133].

Advocates also recognised ways women extended their learning beyond the Group and shared it among friends, families, and whānau. The ripple effect of their knowledge sharing beyond the Group also served a safety function:

They're taking in things from the Group and from the other women, and maybe they might not put those things in place this year but it's kind of planted a seed, especially if they're helping another whānau member or friend to speak about it...and some of them would have their own little group sessions...[participants] will get together and go over the content and talk about it...they're keen! [Grace: 155-156].

For victims, quality of available helpful social responses is strongly aligned with wellbeing, dignity, and safety from further violence. Advocates suggested that clearly identifying sources of support in clients' lives and developing means of increasing supports was missing from the Group programme content. Although they were keen on developing this focus in the content of the sessions, they acknowledged that expanding clients' social resources was inherent in the Group process:

What's really effective with the Group is the support they get from one another. It's amazing. I've seen so many really awesome friendships start out of there, and some generally good support systems. Some of the women we see, they don't have any, and some in particular, they only had us, which is not a place that we want to be in, that the only support system they have is us [Serena; 311-316].

Social resources could also serve to enhance safety similarly to advocacy services. For many clients, knowing what services and informal supports are available, even if they choose not to use them, makes a crucial difference in their decisions regarding assessing immediate and long-term safety. This reinforces the idea that building clients' knowledge of social resources shapes the choices they make about their situations of violence and options for seeking freedom from these. The following advocate's account conveys this relationship between women's awareness of sources of support, such as Refuge, and decisions made in negotiating safety and recovery:

[The women] feel generally when they get to the end of the Programme, they know there's going to be support for them. If they run up against issues with CYFs or police they know they're not gonna have to deal with it by themselves.

So they get some trust in us. They have a lot more information than they came into the programme, and while from the outside it might look like they haven't actually done much with that information, they've still got it and they might not use it tomorrow or the next day, but six months down the track they might [Elizabeth; 85-100].

Advocates were asked to reflect on particular aspects of the Group that women find supportive. Their accounts indicate that support was enabled through maintaining flexibility in the Group and benefitting from the Group's collective knowledge to address events arising for participants, as circumstances concerning their safety can change frequently. Support was also conceptualised as the takepū and practice of consistently relating to each woman in deeply respectful ways, which in turn facilitates women's resourcing for safety, even though the Programme content may not address those resource needs directly.

Limited and negative perceptions of the services Women's Refuge provide as the "ambulance at the bottom of the cliff" or as restricting victims' freedoms are commonly encountered in social policy and practice. Advocates suggest however, that victims' safety is enhanced through their participation in Women's Groups and these benefits extended across long periods of time and throughout families, whānau and communities. Advocates understood enhancing safety as going beyond thinking about individual women as separate entities by considering friends, family and whānau as sources of, and requiring, safety. Advocates thus argued that Women's Groups, and Women's Refuge's services more generally, are effective in enhancing safety by providing a positive social response to victims and their wider social networks, despite being seldom recognised as such.

Reflections on Theme 1: Our Kaupapa and Takepū

As I listened to advocates talk about their ideas and practices as Group facilitators, I grew to understand the activities that took place in the Groups as collective work undertaken by advocates and clients. Advocates' accounts reinforced the idea that the Group offers important opportunities for women with similar experiences and concerns to become a source of strength, hope and support for each other. Although difficult to separate, the Group takepū and kaupapa involved upholding the principles of social connectedness, positive social responses, reinstating mana and dignity, and learning together and from one another. I also reflected that these contributions to enhancing safety, restoring women's wellbeing, and building resources in the lives of Group participants connect well with response-based principles. This insight helped me recognise my role at this point in the project was to offer a resource that would enable Group facilitators to translate existing connections between refuge takepū and response-based principles into practice.

2. Our Mahi: Group Processes

2.1 Facilitator Skills and Tasks

Advocates engage in a range of tasks before, during and after facilitating each 10-week Women's Group. Before registering in the Group, clients often work with an advocate over several weeks. One-to-one engagement provides opportunities for advocates to build trust and to provide information and support to their client. During this time, advocates undertake detailed safety assessments with clients. This allows advocates to evaluate whether their client is safe to participate and is likely to benefit from the Women's Group:

We have that good understanding of what they're going through and we can figure out at the time whether or not [the Group's] for them [Grace; 41-42].

If appropriate, advocates carefully recruit potential Group participants as part of the planning process. This requires awareness of women's unique situations and sensitivity to their concerns which is developed during, yet reaches beyond, safety assessments:

It can be quite daunting knowing you're going to be meeting another group of women and discussing your experiences, so initially that can be quite challenging to get them to come and meet the Group and make sure they feel safe enough to actually engage in the Group...I encourage them to attend just one session and see if it's something that they want to do, or whether I meet them and introduce them to the Group, whatever I can do to make them feel comfortable [Rachel; 211-220].

The planning stage necessitates preparation of and familiarity with session content, aims and goals. It equally requires willingness to lay plans aside in response to situations that arise for individual women, and to allow group processes that offer useful or powerful learning to occur.

The fact that we are flexible, that if we need to go longer, then we can most days. Because it may be that a woman will come in and something has happened over those past days since we've seen her and perhaps she's going to need a

little longer to work out what actually happened and try and get other people's responses as well and then she can actually have a game plan [Jen; 63-68].

Creating and maintaining a supportive environment is an important facilitator skill and task. This involves attending to individual women and the Group through careful listening and observing. It also requires respectfully asking questions to gauge understanding, to convey emotional support, and encourage learning and reflection. In addition, advocates indicated an important facilitator task is to establish emotional comfort and thus safety in the Group:

I think it's really up to the facilitators as well to make sure that people stay engaged and it is a safe environment and everyone feels comfortable talking [Rachel; 143-144].

However, "feeling comfortable" did not mean that the women would always find the group discussions uncomplicated. One advocate spoke about the Group's potential to provide a forum for safely challenging women. Her perspective derived from a view of clients as stronger and more capable than they are often positioned. Challenging women in supportive ways was seen as non-condescending respectful treatment and understood as crucial for enhancing dignity:

You know there's a bit of a balance between making it really easy and making it so easy that they don't give it any respect...like we used to go and pick women up, bring them down, take them home afterwards, look after their kids and just sort of wrap them up in cotton wool, and some women just didn't take it

seriously because we were so soft and fluffy...I think they didn't value it, and I don't think we valued it enough either, and I think we communicated that [Elizabeth; 532-549].

Elizabeth welcomed the possibility of a new Women's Group that facilitators would take pride in and they and clients would value and take seriously:

I'm trying to sort of push the idea that women will get some value out of it, that this is a good thing to be doing...and that's what you need to be selling to your clients, not just it's something that might be useful but, you know, be a bit enthusiastic about it, don't be doubtful about it...so let's not downplay the value of this to women, let's have them taking it seriously [Elizabeth; 532-554].

Response-based principles were exemplified in advocates paying careful attention to the situations of particular women and upholding their dignity through care and aroha in all their interactions from initial assessments to opportunities for challenges that recognise their capabilities. Implicated in these skills and tasks were the advocates' resistances to negative stereotypes of victims as weak and incapable, even when they were not safe enough to be recruited to a Group.

2.2 On-going Learning with Response-Based Practice

In relation to the work of group processes, advocates consistently expressed enthusiasm for RBP and welcomed its introduction into the Women's Group. In terms of Group mahi, advocates spoke of building their skills through engaging with RBP as vital because it RBP training transformed their own understandings of domestic violence, victims' experiences, and how they relate to their clients:

Yup, keen on RBP, the training we did was fantastic. It really made me look at it in a really different light [Jen; 690-691].

Advocates understood that RBP paid close attention to language associated with violence:

I'm going to try and incorporate that language more, I think it's really awesome...I think response-based; it will really change things [Rachel; 282...350].

Although the advocates had received training in RBP, as this is approach is philosophical rather than prescriptive, advocates were unsure of how to apply it in the Group. Moreover, because RBP is so different to dominant discourses, which primarily inform interventions for victims of domestic violence, advocates expressed apprehension about their confidence in applying RBP. Thus, while the advocates could see the value and transformative potential of RBP, their commitment to Group processes for their clients meant that even though they were enthusiastic about RBP, the need for further training, annual refresher training, and a clear explanation in their Group Facilitation Guide was evident.

2.3 Women Engaging

For Advocates, an important Group process is monitoring members' engagement. Jen describes a common experience of variable engagement for Group members negotiating daily safety concerns.

Some of the women won't [always engage], it could be that they participated really well last week, this week they are completely shut-down. They may be absorbing it, but they're not talking at all, next week they might start talking again, and the other women are actually pretty good at picking it up as well that someone's not talking as much, so they'll also be like, in the breaks, 'oh, do you want a hot drink, is there anything I can get you?'...Anything they can do [Jen; 442-445].

Advocates emphasised the need to be attuned to these changes as facilitators. They shared their observation that members are often well attuned to the difficulties other women face and that their care for each other during difficult times encourages women to return to the Group each week. The group process involves giving women space and time to listen. It also involves laughing together, showing aroha (love, compassion) and gentleness, and connecting with that person. Manaakitanga⁸ was recognised by advocates as vital for sustaining women's interest in the Group. In particular, advocates emphasised the importance of being welcoming and offering hospitality and food on Women's Group days:

Food is a big part of women wanting to come in each week...food brings people together [Grace; 60].

The mahi of bringing the women together through sharing food both enacts the values of manaakitanga and also makes space for diversity among the women, because hospitality and care welcomes everyone. Recognising and respecting diversity among

⁸ Manaakitanga: Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support, the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

participants and getting to know women as individuals were identified as important elements for women's engagement in the Group. Learning about each member provided opportunities for advocates to find out what their needs might be in the Group and how to relate to them on their terms:

For them to speak out it's about feeling that they can trust not only their facilitators but also their peers, if they don't feel that then they're not going to speak out...The facilitator needs to be observant of everything that's happening in the Group, of the unwritten, unsaid things [Elizabeth; 730-746].

The relationship between clients' engagement in the Group and more common experiences of disbelief that victims face was evident in advocates' accounts. Advocates spoke of clients having little family and whānau support. In particular, poor social support appeared to derive, at least partially, from limited understandings of domestic violence, especially non-physical control and abuse. Rachel's account illustrates a common experience whereby women may not be considered "real" victims and thus, others' responses suggest they are not entitled to seek help:

One client that I met the other day, her family's opinion was that it's not serious enough to consult Refuge, but when she told me her story it was amazingly bad. But I guess, because it's not the physical, in her family it was just toughen up you know...a lot of the time it's not understanding how real and how serious the situation actually is [Rachel; 233-244].

Advocates' accounts suggested that not only is violence minimised in some clients' families and communities, but also, it is normalised to the extent that women in gravely dangerous situations were not recognised as worthy of support and protection. Advocates expressed particular concern regarding their clients' own responses to their partners' abuse and others' responses to their victimisation. In a social environment that minimises, mutualises, and blames women for abuse inflicted upon them, the women may struggle to talk about their experiences. For these reasons, they may also seek to protect themselves from further marginalisation by withholding information about their experiences:

Women will quite often play it down. It can sometimes be quite hard to actually find out what's going on, to get the full picture because they themselves don't believe that, they don't tell you all the things and it's not until you actually get into a discussion with them and then it will be, 'oh this happened.' But they say it like it's not a big deal...A lot of that is a coping mechanism that they've built to try and get through what they are going through but a lot of it can be social stigma [Rachel; 255-263].

From advocates' perspectives, the balance between challenging minimisation and victim blame and encouraging engagement in Group processes needs careful reflection and negotiation. As well as negative social responses to the women themselves, many women are also acutely aware of negative community perceptions of Refuge. These negative stereotypes may initially discourage women from participating in activities offered by the service. Advocates shared stories illustrating clients' initial reluctance and shame in seeking Refuge support, reflecting the response-based idea that

most victims experience shaming and blaming social responses. Many of these fears also appeared to come from misunderstandings about services Refuge provides and advocates' intentions. In particular, advocates found clients and their families may fear that Refuge advocates will insist women leave their partners and try to make them stay at their safehouse (refer to extract from Elizabeth, section 1.4 above).

Advocates also suggested that women's shame about their victimisation could prevent them from disclosing their experiences to unfamiliar people. Advocates did however report that when clients reach the stage of registering in the Group, generally, their perception of Refuge is positive. This was understood to be based on women's positive experiences with advocates and informed understanding of services offered by Refuge.

In relation to engaging women, advocates also suggested that revising the Group programme while maintaining its original messages could involve creating coherence between sessions so that the women are more aware of the purpose of each component of the Group programme:

Modernising the concepts, creating more coherence so that it's not just the advocates that understand what they're there for every week, but that [the women] go away knowing what they were there for [Elizabeth; 593-595].

Myths surrounding Refuge's services and agenda were seen as barriers, but only initially, to women seeking support. More generally, unhelpful social responses towards victims associated with limited conceptualisations of domestic violence, minimisation of abuse, and victim blaming were understood as barriers to Group participation.

Reflections on Theme 2: Our Mahi - Group Processes

This theme explored some strengths and areas for improvement relating to Refuge mahi and processes of facilitating the Group. In our conversations, I consistently found notions of restoring client's dignity salient as advocates spoke about the skills and tasks they saw as vital to preparing and delivering Group. While advocates expressed enthusiasm for incorporating RBP into the Group, I heard their tentativeness about doing this confidently. They emphasised the need to receive adequate initial training and on-going opportunities for reinforcing their learning. I related strongly to these concerns as I thought about how response-based principles and practices were marginalised amidst what often feels like ossified, unmovable understandings of domestic violence that dominate intuitional responses. Indeed, my sense of an increasing gulf between understandings and languaging of mental illness, violence and oppression in my Clinical training and my own experiences was a source of confusion, misunderstanding, and frustration and isolation as I undertook this research. I thus appreciated advocates' expectation that instructions for applying RBP into the Group would be clearly explained in the new Group Facilitation Guide and was committed to ensuring they felt the resource adequately met their needs. Inherent to this commitment was integrating the advocates' mahi and Group structure so that advocates felt confident and excited about facilitating the new RBP Group programme.

3. Our Whakatakoto: Group Structure

3.1 Programme Structure

Advocates' talk about the Women's Group structure provided the most explicit information on specific changes that they would like to see from the development of a new Group programme. Without exception advocates wanted additional sessions, and

each of longer duration. This meant increasing sessions from 10 two-hour sessions to 12 three-hour sessions.

A constant thing I hear from the ladies is they feel they're just getting started once Session 9 or 10 hits [Grace; 121-122].

Advocates also argued for co-facilitating the Group primarily as increasing the sources of support for clients and as a safety measure.

Two facilitators is ideal, just to jump in where needed. I haven't had any huge confrontations within the Groups, thankfully, but it is a safety thing as well [Jen, 554-555].

Co-facilitation enables advocates to observe and attend to members' emotional responses and deliver session content in an engaging way, while benefitting from generating ideas through working together.

The lack of opportunities for working women to attend the Group was raised as a concern.

It's difficult for working women to get to programme in daytime. There's a really big gap in that area, and I feel for those women [Serena, 595-596].

Advocates also emphasised a need for accessible language and variation in activities to accommodate women with limited literacy and English language abilities.

Some of the bookwork needs to take into account that some of our women are not literate [Serena, 630].

I suggested that once the new Group is established, Refuge may consider coordinating an evening Group, at least on a once-yearly basis, for women unable to attend during work hours. The advocates expressed support for this. In terms of the appearance and utility of the previous Group manual, advocates also indicated a need for improved editing of the new Facilitation Guide.

3.2 Session Structure: Procedures

Advocates argued for improvements in the standard procedures across sessions. They indicated the need for clearer, more detailed explanations of session aims, goals, and rationale. Advocates reported that this would help them to understand each session's purpose. This would also help new facilitators to understand what and how to deliver programme content.

The manual needs more information for the facilitators about how to deliver it, more in-depth about how each session is going to go, like, what's this going to look like? What is the aim? Have the session goals at the beginning. It would be really nice, say if you were looking at that manual, you know exactly; I'm doing this exercise because I am going to demonstrate how...so and so, whereas if you didn't already know that—because we've had so many new facilitators recently and I realise going through the manuals how difficult it is. It would be really good if someone could just pick it up and go, oh yes, this is what I'm doing, why are you doing this? Everything needs to be really, really clear about the purpose

of everything you do as a facilitator...why are you doing this?...so all facilitators have the same understanding of what are we delivering, this is the purpose, this is the goal [Serena; 753-780].

In particular, advocates expressed the need for written information about RBP that conveyed its key principles and how they can be applied to specific session activities. This needed to be in accessible language to ensure facilitators feel comfortable with RBP.

3.3 Individual Session Content

This final section is organised to inform the particular concepts and activities advocates wanted to see in individual sessions. Advocates requested specific changes to the content of the Group Facilitation Guide. For example, they requested less time be spent on legal matters since these should be covered in individual advocacy sessions.

A whole session on protection orders? We don't need it. A protection order can be explained—how it works, how to get one, what to do with it, in half a session. Things like safety planning is built like it's part of what you do on your day-to-day contact with the women, so the amount of time that's spent on it in the programme is sort of ho-hum because they've already done it [Elizabeth, 360-366].

Providing more information about offender programmes and policing processes was a higher priority for the advocates. In relation to RPB, the principle of dignity for perpetrators includes holding them accountable for their actions and therefore

respecting them as agents who make choices to exercise control over others. Explaining how offender programmes serve to uphold men's dignity by holding them accountable for their actions could serve to mitigate the guilt that some women feel about their partner's legal coercion to attend the programmes.

A lot of the women feel guilt and feel they're narking on their men. So more support around the whole police process and men's programmes...because clients feel guilty because they want to talk to the police and more worried about his feelings than their own [Grace; 134-145].

Advocates also suggested revising some activities that they saw as outdated. In particular, they asked for revisions to be made to two DVDs that were used in sessions to portray broader conceptualisations of domestic violence: 'She'll be Sweet' and 'Someone's Daughter.' New material that the advocates requested included sessions on women's earlier experiences of violence, either in childhood or previous relationships; social support and community resources (as discussed in section 1.4 above); and preparation for and more time during the session on children's experiences:

What needs more work is tailoring to their emotional needs because it brings up a lot of emotions for the women, after the Children's session a lot women tell me they felt really angry or upset afterwards [Serena; 240-261].

Devoting time to addressing not only clients' experiences relating to a specific partner, but also to violence women may have experienced growing up and in previous relationships was considered crucial for women's healing.

In offering recommendations for improving the Group manual, advocates also emphasised the value of ensuring variation in activities and including plenty of interactive content.

A lot of the women are visual and making sure activities are broken up so they're not just sitting there writing—you know, afternoon sleep if they're just being lectured at [Rachel; 639-641].

Advocates requested a clear reframing of language of effects to language of responses, and careful examination of language that blames or pathologises victims, in accordance with RBP:

*I'd like to see changes in the language—because the [previous programme] talked about the **impacts** upon women and children and the **effects** of violence and some of it was quite pathologising, and some of it even made me cringe a little bit—even before I'd done response-based practice stuff, but it was what had been approved, it was what has in front of us [Elizabeth; 331-334].*

Potentially useful examples of learning methods from the group work practice in social work literature (e.g. Lindsay & Orton, 2014) include interactive, trust and relationship building games; stories from different media; and role-plays. More crucially, women can also benefit from opportunities to learn from each other through sharing their own stories about effective ways of resolving problems, and learning through exploring, discussing and debating ideas, and group reflection.

Reflections on Theme 3: Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure

The final overarching theme encompassed the practical and material aspects of running the Group. I found that in keeping with the Group kaupapa, advocates' accounts expressed their strong commitment to the messages and aims of the Group content. Their conviction of its value to women victims was striking. It felt rewarding to focus on these practical considerations for the advocates because it involved imagining the new Women's programme in its tangible state. It was also exciting because I was inching closer to creating something 'real' for the advocates and their clients after so many months of residing in the realm of ideas, theories, and dreams. Alongside these feelings, I experienced overwhelm at my growing realisation of the enormity of the project, the high expectations of advocates and others aware of my research, and that it was now up to me to meet this requirement. While advocates expressed a desire for improvements to the Group and eagerness to introduce new material and concepts, including RBP, it was also apparent that advocates wanted to retain much of the existing content—a challenge that I initially fretted about, but learnt to trust my abilities and determined character. One advocate summarised her aspirations for the Group and laid the challenge for me as primary researcher to ensure that a high quality resource eventuates from this project:

I want a programme I'm proud of and the girls can use and facilitate knowing they're actually offering the opportunity for positive stuff every session
[Elizabeth; 572-574].

Overall Reflections on Advocates' Understandings of the Group

Programme

The aim of Chapter Five was to examine advocates' understandings of the Women's Group focusing on what is presently working and what could be helpful for strengthening it. Findings from the analysis were sought for identifying needs to be addressed in developing and delivering a new RBP Women's Group. Three overarching themes were presented: Our Kaupapa and Takepū - Group Purposes and Values; Our Mahi - Group Processes; and Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure, for conceptualising how the Group functions, and how advocates and clients contribute to this.

Given the substantial experience and knowledge that exists in each Women's Group, these themes largely centered on reciprocation of support and broadening women's understandings of domestic violence, as advocates and clients exchange advice and emotional and practical support to enhance one another's dignity, safety and wellbeing. Indeed, I found that the apparent ability and willingness of Group members to share useful advice and actively support one another countered discourses of victims as pathological and passive and instead positioned them as women capable of maintaining enduring, positive relationships with one-another. I reflected on the profound value advocates placed on the Group as a transformative entity in victims' lives. It became clear to me that advocates understood the Group's kaupapa as offering a positive social response, and their roles as upholding Group members' dignity in multiple ways. It was evident that advocates worked with an understanding of response-based principles and my role, in designing a new Group resource, was to assist them to transform these into practice.

I presented a summary of findings from this analysis, and a draft RBP Facilitation Guide, to advocates in the first focus group. One purpose of the focus group

was to verify whether findings reasonably represented advocates' perspectives and revise these where necessary. No significant revisions were required

Additionally, the focus group provided an opportunity to review the draft Facilitation Guide. Advocates gave positive feedback and were eager to start using the new proposed Resource as soon as possible. I produced the Resource Kits shortly after the first focus group. In accordance with advocates' recommendations, the second focus group centred on me facilitating a RBP workshop as it applied to the new Group Resource Kit. All advocates were present for both focus groups and expressed considerable enthusiasm for the project and using the new Resource Kits. The Resource Kit itself is a group facilitation resource for advocates and clients. The facilitation guide is a 135-page booklet consisting of Part One: Information for Women's Group facilitators, Part Two: Women's Group Session Guide for Facilitators and Part 3: Facilitator Resources. The Women's Handbook is a 60-page booklet, given to each group member, consisting of resources for women to reference during and beyond the 12 weekly sessions. I also created additional multi-media materials to support the weekly sessions, which, together with the Guide and Handbooks, were collated in a large, sturdy resource box. I initially produced Resource Kits for two Refuges. These were trialed and refined by Group facilitators in place of the original Group materials. The revised Group programme formed the basis for Study Two, which is reported in the following chapters.

CHAPTER SIX: Study Two

After completing interviews, analysis, and consultation with the advocates about the Women's Group, and the RBP changes they would like to see in the revised Group, I devised the new Resource Kits. The RBP 12-week Women's Group was offered to Refuge clients referred by the Family Court. Study Two involves case-based discursive analyses designed to assess how the new Women's Group impacted clients' languaging of their experiences. In Chapter Six I present the methodological procedures for both Parts I and II of Study Two, and the analysis and discussion for Part I: a discursive study of two Women's Refuge clients' interview texts *before* their involvement in the RBP Women's Group. Part I provides a basis from which to compare clients' languaging of their experiences and understandings of domestic violence after their involvement in the Women's Group.

Methodological Procedures for Study Two, Parts I and II

Sampling and Participant Selection

Refuge clients were invited to participate in Study Two. I asked advocates to distribute Information Sheets on my behalf to clients who met selection criteria for the study: Women who were at least 18 years old and had enrolled in the RBP Women's Group but not yet begun the programme (see Appendix C). I provided letters to advocates clarifying their role in Study Two. This included reiterating the Project's purpose, the importance of clients' involvement, what clients' involvement entailed, and how advocates could facilitate clients' participation. Clients were informed they were under no obligation to participate and that Women's Refuge would not provide me with any identifying information.

Clients were invited to express interest in participating to me directly. They were assured their decision to be interviewed would remain confidential and that my supervisors and I would not inform Refuge staff of clients' decision to participate. Once potential participants contacted me, I discussed the purpose of the research and what participation would involve. Clients were then provided with Information Sheets (Appendix H) and signed Participant Consent Forms (Appendix G) before being interviewed.

Due to Refuge transitioning between the previous and new Women's Groups, only two women met selection criteria for Part I of the study and both agreed to contribute to the research. The interviews with these participants took place shortly after they had registered for the Group. Information about the two women is provided before the analysis section in this chapter. Three women participated in Part II of the study, which is reported in Chapter Seven. The second interviews occurred shortly after the women had completed the Group. Information about these women is provided in the following chapter.

Four interviews took place at clients' homes. The fifth was conducted at Refuge. These settings were private and interruptions were minimal. Interviews lasted between 1 and 2.5 hours. Each woman received \$25.00 in recognition of her contribution. I provided baking and beverages during interviews.

Data Collection Procedures

Akin to advocates' data, individual, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were considered an appropriate means of collecting data from clients (see Appendix J for Interview Schedules One and Two). In-depth interviews created an opportunity for the women to share and reflect on their understandings of violence and resistance, while I assured the women of my commitment to listen well and without judgement. Concern

with women victims' marginalised and hidden understandings aligned this approach with the project's feminist theoretical orientation (McHugh, 2014).

My interview questions aimed to be responsive to women's stories as they unfolded. In keeping with RBP, interviews involved contextual analysis and continual monitoring of our interactions to check women's experiences of dignity throughout interviews (observing women's faces, voices, postures, engagement) (Richardson & Wade, 2013). This also entailed listening for the often-subtle micro-details and contexts of the women's responses to violence. In relation to RBP, micro-details are crucial for evoking accounts of responses and resistance to violence because victims' responses, and particularly resistances, are seldom acknowledged. Analyses would not contribute to the aims of the study if I was not able to elicit marginalised discourses during interviews.

The transcribed interviews generated 82 pages of text. I used the same transcription process for Studies One and Two, so that interview dialogue was closely approximated through written representation of linguistic features in all transcripts. Clients signed an Authority for the Release of Transcript form (see Appendix I) to verify they had been given the opportunity to review and alter their transcribed interview and agreed to extracts being used in the analyses. This procedure was also used for Part II of this study.

Data Analysis

Discourse analysis was the selected method to analyse texts generated in Study Two. It entails close attention to subtle micro-details of texts and, simultaneously, broader social and cultural discursive resources participants draw on to construct their understandings (Hook, 2001; Parker, 2005). Identifying discourses used by the clients in constructing their accounts was vital when analysing their interview texts because

discourses of domestic violence can have a profound constraining influence on the discursive options, including storylines and subject positions available to victims, perpetrators, and others.

Discourse analysis was chosen as the appropriate methodology for Study Two given the central goals underpinning the Women's Group were related to languaging as theorised in RBP. In particular, the programme aims to expose oppressive discourses, such as those pertaining to Coates and Wade's (2004) four operations of violence; construct alternatives that challenge misrepresentations of victims, including those that facilitate self-blaming; and restore victims' dignity, healing and wellbeing. Thus, discourse analysis was important for detecting explicit discourses, such as those that construct victims as deficient, perpetrators as 'out of control,' and both parties as mutually responsible for the violence. Crucially, discourse analysis enabled me to examine whether clients' changing understandings through Group participation corresponded with repositioning themselves as resisting abuse and injustice in multiple ways, and constructing perpetrators' and others' actions as deliberate strategies for concealing and suppressing victim resistance.

I analysed the transcribed data to identify dominant and marginalised discourses in the women's accounts. After progressively refining several versions of identified discourses, I decided to structure the analytical framework around Coates and Wade's four discursive operations, in which language can "conceal or reveal violence and injustice, clarify or obscure offender and social responsibility, conceal or elucidate victim responses and resistance, and blame and pathologize or contest victim blaming and pathologizing" (2004, p. 522). It was possible to map this framework onto the women's accounts in a compelling, plausible way that was directly linked to the theoretical principles of RBP and therefore to the goals of the Women's programme.

Through this process, I was conscious of the transformative value to clients of elucidating their resistance to violence while also cautious of maintaining an uncritical stance that romanticised resistance per se. For example, particular ways clients resist violence may obstruct rather than promote safety for themselves and their children. It was important to show how the discourses clients took up, and the actions of these discourse, made sense in the context of their situations at particular moments in time and within particular sociocultural contexts. It was also necessary to clarify the constraining influence of discourses that led to varying forms of resistance which manifested as desperate acts of retaliatory violence or attempted self-annihilation. Therefore, of interest was an inquiry into the *forms* of resistance that were possible, enabled, or constrained by available discourses and material and social conditions of clients' lives.

A second consideration in using the four operations to structure the analyses is that the analytic process was not a straightforward, linear procedure of lifting excerpts from clients' interviews to illustrate how each operation performed in its respective function. Such an approach would give a limited and oversimplified rendition of clients' responses to violence and oppression. In this respect, I recognise that the four operations manifested in differing ways for the women in relation to how they were positioned by available discourses. Moreover, while I've presented the four operations in an ordered manner, they should not be treated as isolated functions but rather, as traversing and building on one another.

There were also variations to my analytic approach in response to emphases clients placed on narrative modes of responding to interview questions. Clients shared personal accounts that provided such important foregrounding to understanding the decision-making processes of the women and their families and whānau in resisting

violence that I decided to represent these accounts as narratives at times. Thus, some relatively comprehensive narratives are interwoven throughout my report of the analysis.

Examining use of customary terminology pertaining to social power relations (for example, gender, social class, culture and sociogeographical rural/urban location) was also important for interpreting clients' understandings of their options for enhancing safety, wellbeing and dignity (Morgan & Mattson, 2017). Sensitivity to contradictory discourses reproduced by clients, and accounts that indicated practices of disciplinary power by the women, were also part of this analytical process for helping make sense of changing choices that became available to the women through Group participation (Gavey, 2011).

The Participating Women: Part I

Mira is a Pākehā woman in her early twenties. When we met, Mira was living in a small town with her preschool aged child at her mother's home and working long shifts in a factory six days per week. Mira was in the process of leaving her partner, a Māori man in his early twenties. He was father to their child and had contact with their child through supervised access.

Tracey is a Māori woman in her mid-forties living in a city. Tracey was self-employed in a creative-design role and lived with her teenaged child. She had been separated from her husband, a Pākehā man and father of their child, for six months. He had part-time custody of their child.

The Family Court had referred both women to Women's Refuges after their partners had been served protection orders. Both women gave detailed accounts of (ex)partners' violence, which included extensive psychological, financial, sexualised, emotional, and physical violence in contexts of coercive control. Throughout interviews,

the women referred to their responses to broader patterns of structural violence pertaining to racism, colonialism, gender-discrimination, and threats of poverty which intersected with (ex)partners' violence.

Analysis and Discussion

1.1 Concealing Violence

This first part of the analysis offers evidence of ways clients were positioned by representations of domestic violence and how they negotiated and resisted concealing of violence within these representations. Discursive practices within domestic violence contexts often portray perpetrators and victims as equally responsible co-agents in the violence (Coates & Wade, 2004). These practices commonly include language that mutualises and minimises violence severity, which works to conceal violence, perpetrator responsibility, and victim resistance (Coates & Wade, 2004). The following findings examine these ideas in relation to clients' awareness of how concealing or exposing violence positions them in terms of safety and support.

Minimising Violence

Minimising violence severity and non-assaultive violence enables controlling and violent behaviour to be concealed. Findings in Part I support earlier research (e.g. Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004) indicating that victims often minimise perpetrators' violence. Clients drew from prevalent understandings that verbal and emotional abuse do not constitute domestic violence. For example, in recalling how she became involved with Refuge, Mira's understanding positioned her as unable to receive support from police and Refuge:

It must have been the police who got in contact with them. I refused any Women's Refuge help before because he never did anything to me; it was just all mouth [Mira; 26-29].

Mira's account conveys how non-assaultive domestic violence is routinely minimised as not serious and hence, not harmful. Narrow conceptualisations of domestic violence impose significant constraints on victims' and others' ability to communicate about and seek safety from partners' violence, and enable perpetrators to conceal a wide range of controlling and violent practices without reproach (Coates & Wade, 2004). The potency of limited conceptualisations is indicated by Mira refusing previous efforts by police during domestic violence call-outs to refer her to Refuge. Mira's assault-based view of domestic violence superseded the authoritative positions of police and Refuge. Minimising violence was further evinced when Mira corrected me by differentiating "*abuse*" from "*verbal*" after I inquired about her partner's verbal abuse during the interview: "[*There was*] a lot of verbal **and** abuse" [33].

Although women's accounts indicate that violence severity and violent strategies used by partners were minimised and thus able to be concealed, women's apparent downplaying of aspects of the violence also positioned them as emphasising partners' worsening abuse in different settings and over time. This implicit scaling of violence severity, for example, "*it wasn't bad then*" [Mira; 90] was potentially a means for the participants to impress upon me their everyday, cumulative, lived experience of violence. This challenged a prevalent understanding of domestic violence as constituting single, isolated events.

Despite accounts telling of years of control, domestic exploitation, and violence from partners, in their narratives women frequently minimised partners' abusive actions.

Thus, their accounts suggest the women were constrained by the domestic violence discourses available to them and acutely aware of the stigma and shame of being seen as victims. The following statement conveys how Tracey drew from discourses that enabled her ex-husband's on-going violence to be concealed from friends:

They don't need to know my personal life; I don't need to go around telling my story of woe to everybody [Tracey; 2064-2066].

Here, Tracey makes the distinction between personal and public drawing from discourses pertaining to the sanctity of home and family privacy, and individual privacy rights (c.f. Towns, Adams, & Gavey, 2003). These interconnected concepts stem from modern Western notions of the nuclear family and individual as discrete, self-ruling entities entitled to conceal their lives from public view behind closed doors, which enables and justifies the minimisation and concealment of violence. Such discourses enable women to protect violent partners from condemnation and allow women protection from "outside" criticism. Women's victimisation is minimised in anticipation, intentionally or otherwise, of negative social responses. Given the prevalence of victim blaming and stigmatising discourses, it makes sense that women position themselves as resisting representations of themselves as victims and their partners as violent.

Mutualising Violence

The four operations pay attention to how violence is concealed through language that mutualises violence. Mutualising is problematic because it constructs victims as at least partly, and sometimes fully, responsible for perpetrators' violence (Coates & Wade, 2004). Many examples of mutualising, non-agentic language were evident in women's narratives:

We had some doozie arguments [Tracey; 77]

The big arguments were every week. There was about four days in the week when we were just constantly fighting [Mira; 161-162].

These accounts show how mutualising terms "we," "arguments," and "fighting" obscure partners' patterns of coercive control and verbal, psychological and physical abuse by positioning the speakers as equally responsible co-agents in the violence. For example, after seeking details about these violent episodes, I learned that "doozie" referred to several hours of Tracey's husband interrogating, threatening and yelling abuse, and at times, physically assaulting her weekly over 16 years of their relationship:

Six hours of conversation...now these bun-fights were at least six hours long.

There was verbal violence; there was physical violence...we'd argue about the finances for six hours and these conversations were always about me being wrong, with him controlling the situation [Tracey; 1858-1881].

Tracey gave her husband's rationale for being violent: "because our big button pushers were money and housework" [518]. This positioned Tracey as a participating agent in the violence because despite keeping "the house immaculate" [520] and surviving on a small weekly allowance from her husband, she was subjected to hours of violence because she "failed to meet his high standards" [524]. Given Tracey's husband blamed her for their financial difficulties and treated her as his domestic servant, she was positioned by her husband as provoking his violence. The mutualising metaphor

"our big button pushers" obscures Tracey's husband's responsibility for his violence while implying she and her husband have no control over their actions. Tracey's narrative continues in the following excerpt:

Not realising I was still in the danger part of the bun-fight, sometimes I was caught off-guard. Sometimes I foolishly engaged, but I shortened it; I got it down to four hours. Equally, it takes two to fight so I'm equally responsible. But, however, with [husband]'s, circular conversations, that's why he kept going. And of course, end result: I'm the problem. I need to get sorted, I need to go on drugs. He often used to say that, 'oh, you just need to go on medication.' That was another hook. He'd sometimes just randomly chuck that in and that would set me off, because it's the whole mental health accusation [Tracey; 225-2235].

Tracey describes the imperative to remain vigilant to further violence by attempting to disengage from her husband's interrogating "*circular conversations*" to prevent him escalating his violence. This positions Tracey as adhering to the commonsense mutualising notion, "it takes two to fight," which is followed by the seemingly reasonable deduction that both parties should be accountable for their "disputes." Thus, Tracey positions herself as equally blameworthy for her husband's violence. However, Tracey's subsequent comment about her husband interrogating her with circular conversations and claiming she is the source of the problem implies her ambivalence regarding her part in precipitating his violence.

Tracey's narrative details how her husband deliberately suppressed her resistance by interrogating her over many hours and claiming she was mentally ill to further dominate and blame her. Tracey drew from a mutualising view of violence by

claiming equal responsibility. She elaborated on her role in the "*arguments*" by saying his "*mental health accusations*" "*would set me off*". This misconstrued Tracey's resistance to her husband positioning her as pathological, as provoking and justifying his intensified violence. Tracey's account describes a process whereby victims come to blame themselves for partners' violence.

Language that mutualises violence is strengthened by a liberal humanist discourse which involves constructions of choice, rationality and control (O'Neill, 1997). The discourse positions women victims as rationally choosing to live with or without violence while their recovery from it is contingent on their willingness to be accountable for their part in it, as suggested here:

Part of what I'm trying to unlearn is thinking, well maybe he was right; and I'm also trying to take responsibility for my behaviours [Tracey; 883-885].

Tracey's ambivalence around doubting or believing her husband pathologising and blaming her reflects a paradox victims face in making sense of their victimisation with limited discursive resources. Implicit here is that victims are responsible for their victimisation and preventing future violence, and resolution of this requires re-education through self-examination and self-transformation. Concealing, and specifically, mutualising violence through requiring victims to "own" their contribution to the violence is also enabled by traditional gender stereotypes of women as less competent or emotionally stable than men (c.f. Towns et al., 2003). This operation of mutualising violence is implicated in the following account:

I'm a strong personality, he knew that, but I'm also very teachable, very humble, and can admit that yes, I'm not afraid to say sorry when I'm wrong, I'm not afraid to admit my mistakes [Tracey; 1067-1069].

Tracey is positioned as insubordinate and provoking discord due to her "*strong personality*." Yet, she also resists a view of her assumed "psychological deficiencies" as problematic because she can be taught, admit mistakes and apologise. Through this positioning, Tracey becomes rational and reasonable but also subservient in being mistaken and open to learning from her husband. Her positioning also draws from a traditional discourse of the husband as an authority figure whose function is to guide his less capable wife (Elizabeth, 2015; Stark, 2010). Building on this, Tracey explained, "*there were occasions when yes, I raised my temper, but I have learnt*" [1073-1074]. This similarly derives from a stereotype of women as excessively emotional and unruly, yet tamable if they apply themselves to their husband's good direction. Drawing from Foucault's notion of disciplinary power, Tracey's response may be understood as self-surveilling and self-correcting her unfeminine behaviour. Chillingly, such stereotypes rationalise a wife's requirement to exercise self-discipline and correction by the husband. In doing so, domestic violence is justified as requisite to maintaining marital order.

These accounts indicate that Tracey's husband enlisted discourses of men's superiority to suppress her resistance to his abuse and control. Anticipating further violence is intimated by Tracey's reference to taking precautions to conceal her own resistance: "*but I have learnt*." Together, Tracey's accounts draw from discourses that position her as instrumental in provoking and preventing violence and thus conceal her husband's deliberate violence and her resistant responses.

Ways of concealing violence that were enabled through particular social responses the women received were also evident in their accounts, as indicated here:

An old friend...had quietly observed that things weren't quite right between [my husband] and I over the years—but it wasn't her business to say...[church congregation members] were very aware of [husband] and the family dynamics, they were also aware that my relationship with [husband] was not normal [Tracey; 122-125...238-240].

The women's articulation of social responses to domestic violence often drew from a discourse of upholding the sanctity and privacy of family. Women discussed responses received from partners' families and friends, which concealed violence and exonerated the perpetrator. A persistent theme was the women's experiences of sorrow, loneliness and injustice in response to others' lack of support for them and their children despite having knowledge of the violence. For example, when I enquired about partners' families' awareness of their violence Mira commented, *"it's their brother, it's their son—he can't do wrong" [506]*. Women openly spoke about families protecting and defending the men while disregarding the harm done to their women partners and children. Families drew from discourses of family loyalty and women's subordination to men in their families. These positioned women's rights to safety and equality as secondary to men in the family, thus undermining women and their children's safety and dignity.

1.2 Exposing Violence

In elucidating the four operations, Coates and Wade (2004) emphasise that victims' and others' languaging can reveal rather than conceal violence and victim resistance. In particular, Coates and Wade identified ways violence is exposed by language that clarifies the deliberateness of perpetrators' violence. Similarly, illuminating victims' responses to violence and others' social responses can expose violence by showing victim resistance. In support of these findings, I encountered several instances of women's talk that positioned them as resisting gender and family-role expectations by exposing violence. In the following excerpt, Mira recollected her partner's and her flatmate's partner's violent and controlling actions:

My flatmate's boyfriend was giving her a hiding as well. So it was like [from my partner's perspective], well he can do worse to her so I'll do something to you to make it not even that worse, not as bad...like my flatmate's boyfriend was giving my flatmate a hiding and [my partner] thought it was perfectly fine to go mouthy to me. They'd be screaming in the bedroom and I'd wanna go and break it up and he's like 'nup, you fucking stay out if it blah, blah, blah.' But it's like, she was pregnant then as well, and he kicked her in the stomach a few times and punched her in the head and it's like, that's his baby and I don't want anything happening to that kid. I just wanted to break it up all the time, but instead [my partner] wouldn't let me so I'd wait until after he left and wait until her boyfriend had taken off in their car [Mira; 169-183].

In this retelling, Mira highlights, and hence brings to scrutiny, her partner's rationale for claiming his violence was acceptable by comparing it to their flatmate's

violence towards his girlfriend and unborn child. Mira's response conveys incredulity towards her partner for discounting his actions as violence. Mira exposes him minimising psychological and verbal violence and attempting to stop her intervening to protect her flatmate. Mira's inclusion of "*blah, blah, blah,*" reinforces her contempt for his actions and conveys her sense of injustice over his efforts to conceal his violence. Mira also positions herself as a protector who does not comply with her partner's demands. She does this by trying to stop the flatmate from abusing his girlfriend then by covertly supporting her once it is safe to go to her aid. In Mira's account she also exposes violence by using agentic language to clearly attribute violence to the two men. In these ways, Mira positions herself as resisting both violence and portrayals of victims as passive.

In the following account, Tracey contests the positioning of perpetrator violence as involuntary and provides a clear challenge to notions of victim passivity and pathology:

This isn't about me getting back at [husband], this is about safety for myself and [daughter]. And I've made that very clear to [husband], I said 'you chose your actions that day and you gave me no choice,' I said, 'I put protection orders in place because I had no guarantee that you weren't carrying out the threats you made about taking [daughter] off me, and property, and me on the street with nothing. I had no guarantee that you would not do that' [Tracey; 2574-2580].

In stating at the outset, "*this isn't about me getting back at [husband],*" Tracey anticipates negative social responses that position women victims as vengeful or vindictive, particularly women who "betray" their spouse and break family codes of

loyalty in seeking outside support (c.f. Busch et al., 2014). This statement indicates Tracey's acute awareness of stigmatising responses towards victims. Yet, she positions herself as competently restoring safety for herself and daughter by disclosing his abuse to police. Furthermore, Tracey's response indicates clear recognition of structural barriers to safety, including threats of poverty, homelessness, further violence, and marginalisation faced by women and particularly indigenous women victims (Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Tracey's account offers a valuable testimony to the response-based idea that victims recognise and make choices within the context of broader social responses, particularly those that blame and pathologise victims (Coates & Wade, 2004). The account also shows how victims' intersecting social and material realities constrain options for safety, and that victims and perpetrators operate with awareness of implications of these constraints.

Despite the dominance of discourses that positioned perpetrators as not fully responsible for their violent actions, the women signaled they recognised their own and their partners' awareness of partners' control and abuse as deliberately suppressing the women's resistance:

When I asserted myself he would try a different tack and put more and more and more pressure on, and that was one example of me coming out of the delusion that I was living in, the fantasy world of happy ever after. Happy ever after does not exist in this situation [Tracey; 1760-1764].

Tracey's account shows how these operations are enabled by a prevailing heteronormative "happy ever after" fairytale discourse (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Notably, Tracey's growing clarity regarding her husband's strategies to suppress her

resistance coincided with her repositioning as able to reject potentially harmful romantic love discourses.

The intertwined relationship between partners' abuse and negative social responses towards the women was often evident in their accounts. A prevalent theme throughout interviews was women's exasperation and sense of injustice in negotiating partners' control and covert suppression of their resistance through enlisting others. The women positioned themselves as aware of unfair treatment victims receive and others' negative perceptions of victims. This was evident as Tracey recalled her husband forcing her to attend couples counselling with a preselected church counsellor:

I wasn't being given a fair chance and it was clear and obvious that [the counsellor] had no respect for me and had clearly sided with [husband] ... [Counsellor] was just trying to find out the facts of who was telling the truth and who wasn't, but obviously he was already predisposed...he blew me off, definitely condescending, patronising [Tracey; 255-257...273-286].

Tracey's description of the counsellor's negative responses towards her expose ways abusive partners use authoritative professionals, such as counsellors, and institutions such as the church, to perpetuate violence. The account conveys victims' acute awareness of victim blaming and stigmatising responses of professionals, and the entrapment they experience when abusive partners enlist respected figures for their own means. And, by revealing her husband's abusive tactics Tracey positions herself as having insight into the way authority is used against her. She also exposes a commonly encountered social response received by victims in which a mental health professional is positioned as an arbiter of truth while she, as party to the violence, stands on trial.

Thus, Tracey conveys insight into how she is positioned by a psycho-legal discourse in which two individuals accorded considerable authority in this setting: a male, church-based couples counsellor and her husband, collude to question, judge and dismiss her credibility. The following excerpt offers evidence of how Tracey asserts authority for herself:

I expressed that anger by saying 'this is total bullshit' I said, 'it doesn't prove anything it's circumstantial.' [Husband], feeling quite satisfied with himself thinking, right I've got her exactly where I want her, under control, he sat smugly back into his chair, crossed his legs and folded his arms and said 'well, I can make this all go away if you stop being violent.' The counsellor said nothing. He just sat there and listened to [husband] emotionally blackmail me into submission, which is exactly what that was [Tracey; 98-108].

In defending herself in front of her husband and counsellor by stating, "*this is total bullshit*," Tracey positioned herself as non-compliant and rejecting the psycho-legal terms of engagement the two men tried to impose on her. Again she demonstrates insight into her husband's attempts to conceal his violence and manipulate her. She also positioned herself as cognisant of how the counsellor's unsupportive behaviour signaled his alliance to her husband and enabled the violence to continue. Here Tracey positions herself as insightful of her entrapment by her husband and counsellor, each a part of their church community, through her husband using her angry responses to his violence to claim he is the victim of her violence. By reversing victim and perpetrator roles, the husband suppresses Tracey's resistance and undermines her credibility in the counsellor's eyes (Bancroft, Silverman, & Ritchie, 2012; Morgan & O'Neill, 2001;

O'Neill & Morgan, 2001). Tracey's positioning conveys her ensnarement through the authority of the counselling profession and the authority of her husband within the overarching authority of their church doctrines and community.

In this context, Tracey's resistance may be recognised as acts of both desperation and assertiveness; her positioning as revealing and resisting abuse may be resistant, but also conveys her entrapment, frustration and despair in knowing that social responses towards her amounted to collectively undermining and discrediting her. These texts show that victims may take up assertive and challenging positions whilst also knowing the consequences to themselves when they overtly resist violence without the support and understanding of important others.

2.1 Obfuscating Perpetrator Responsibility

In this section I offer evidence for ways Refugee clients and their (ex)partners were positioned by discourses pertaining to attributions of perpetrator responsibility for violence. Coates et al., (2014) found perpetrators almost always regulate their violent behaviour on the basis that control and violence is intended to maintain dominance and suppress victim resistance. Discursive practices within domestic violence and broader social contexts however, commonly attribute violent acts to external conditions beyond perpetrators' control. Consequently, perpetrator responsibility is obscured or attenuated and violence is portrayed as non-deliberate and, at times, justified. Studies (e.g. Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004) suggest woman victims, at times, externalise partners' responsibility for violence. This includes language indicating partners' violence is non-deliberate or out of control.

Clients drew from several domestic violence discourses to make sense of, explain, and, on occasion, justify partners' violence and their own responses to this. They frequently used discourses supporting perceptions of violence as uncontrollable

and unpredictable. The excerpt below followed Tracey's description of her husband yelling at and kicking her after she had inquired about their finances:

It was completely unexpected...I don't believe he intentionally set out to do that, it was in the heat of the moment and a stupid mistake, and he reacted like that [Tracey; 565-567].

Tracey's account construes her husband's violence as unintentional and shows how this enables perpetrators to be constructed as neither responsible nor accountable for their violence. Such explanations are understandable in the context of discourses pertaining to romantic love and spousal duty to respect and care for one-another. These discourses provide ways of making sense of deeply troubling behaviour and situations where the alternative, that one's partner is intentionally violent, is perhaps incomprehensible: emotionally painful and irrevocably disruptive of one's notions of spousal trust, respect, and love. In attributing partners' violence to "*a mistake*" or to overwhelming forces beyond their control, partners are given the benefit of the doubt and victims are positioned as exercising tolerance and forgiveness. This enables victims to position themselves, their partners, and their relationship as redeemable rather than being reduced to totalising labels and identity attributions such as "abuser," "victim" or "dysfunctional."

Given victims' humiliation at recognising partners' violence as deliberate, their dignity may be preserved by understanding violence as unintentional. Viewing violence in these ways may be understood as a form of resistance to others' negative stereotypes of victims and perpetrators. Moreover, perceiving partners' violence as intentional may invoke responses such as anger, desire to defend oneself, disclose the violence, or leave

the perpetrator. These responses may be met with perpetrators' intensified attempts to suppress the victim's responses, and others' contempt and victim blaming.

Acknowledging a partner's violence as intentional and controllable calls for particular responses from the victim, which may be met with more distressing and frightening consequences as the partner and others respond to the victim.

The women's talk drew on prevalent discourses representing domestic violence as an outcome of psychological forces outside perpetrators' control:

It's really quite psychotic...He switches into stress mode because being at home reminds him that he's gotta go to work tomorrow...he's like Jekyll and Hyde, flipped personalities, just like that [Tracey; 633-644].

He just switches, he'll be like happy and next minute he's packing a sulk about something [Mira; 151].

The women employed terms associated with psychiatric disorders suggesting constructions of partners' violence as mental illness. The expressions "*psychotic*," "*flipped personalities*," and "*he just switches*" referenced partners' oscillations between benign and hostile behaviour. These psychologising terms, supported by references to partners' behaviour as unpredictable and rapidly changing, externalised violence by attributing it to mental illness (Coates & Wade 2004). This positioned partners as helpless and thus, inculpable.

Women also drew from mental illness discourses of violence when speaking about partners' interrogating, coercing, and other intimidating behaviour. Mira's partner routinely used threats of suicide to pressure her to stay with him every night:

It would be like, 'I wish you were here, I don't feel right without you here, I'm feeling down,' and then it would be like he'd just flip and he'd be real depressed and I'm going to kill myself [Mira; 56-68].

Mira described her partner combining suicide threats, pressuring her for sex several times daily, and verbal and emotional abuse, including threatening to leave her for other women. In these ways, women victims are positioned as responsible for violent partners' intentions and actions by being required to cooperate with their demands, and, in the context of suicide threats, as responsible for him living or dying. This absolves partners' responsibility for violence and is furthered by men being able to deploy discourses of mental illness, biological "male sex-drive" needs, and legitimised notions of men's ownership and objectification of women to coerce partners (Hollway, 1984; Morgan & O'Neill, 2001).

If perpetrators' violence is portrayed as an outcome of forces beyond their control and thus non-deliberate, the presumption follows that women victims must practice compassion, forgiveness and forbearance, and be constantly physically and sexually available to partners if they are to avoid social condemnation as callous, unfeminine, or bad women. This is reinforced in the context of a family privacy discourse that entails not "airing your dirty laundry in public" and hence, not disclosing domestic violence (c.f. Towns et al., 2003). This draws from traditional gender discourses that essentialise femininity through constructions of "good" and "real" women as gentle-natured nurturers who selflessly place others' needs before their own (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003). Life stressors, alcohol use, and male sex-drive were frequently encountered attributions of precursors to violence offered by the women:

He got even mouthier, he got himself a job I admit that, but then with the job he became more moody so it caused more fights and as I got more pregnant, I had a lot of complications...I was hospitalised a few times and...he'd turn to more chicks because I wasn't there [Mira; 431-443].

Mira's account illustrates how women drew from multiple externalising discourses of domestic violence to explain partners' violence; including work stress, male sexual 'needs,' and men's entitlement to disrespect women (Coates & Wade 2004; O'Neill & Morgan 2001). Women's talk about partners' demanding and violent behaviour on returning home from work, and the ways the women predicted and managed this, again suggested their positioning in relation to a "good wife" discourse, perpetually available and accommodating husbands' demands (Davidson-Arad, Peled, & Leichtentritt, 2008). Such positioning obscures men's violence as deliberate and controllable. Moreover, it is the women who are positioned as blameworthy for abuse, in Mira's case, caused by her "unavailability" when hospitalised.

A resounding theme throughout interviews was women's abusive partners' positioning as victims themselves (Bancroft et al., 2012; Morgan & O'Neill, 2001). This drew from domestic violence discourses pertaining to parental modelling of violence (c.f. O'Neill & Morgan 2001). Mira's example employed discourses of violence as learned behavior and family dysfunction to make sense of her partner's violence:

He doesn't have the best influences in his life, his dad, in front of me, has raised a hammer at him, because they were arguing...it could also be because of [his parents] that he's the way he is [Mira; 889-896].

When perpetrators are positioned as victims of their personal histories, their current violent behaviour is constructed as uncontrollable and, according to some learning theories, often inevitable (Bancroft et al., 2012; Morgan & O'Neill, 2001; O'Neill & Morgan, 2001). Like other discourses externalising responsibility for violence, forces outside perpetrators' control compel them to act violently, in this case, modelling violence within one's family (Coates & Wade 2004; O'Neill & Morgan 2001). In this context, for abused women to deny partners' victimhood by appearing unsympathetic and unsupportive again risks being positioned outside a dominant construction of a good wife who is expected to be long-suffering and selflessly enduring her lot in life (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003). Tracey's narrative similarly construed her husband as a victim of family dysfunction. In the following excerpt, her husband's mother is portrayed as the source of his poor self-concept and abusive behaviour:

He was told he was worthless, that he wouldn't amount to anything. His mother dominated and controlled him, obviously still does...this is his ingrained thought process, that he's a trouble maker and a victim, and so at that point I believe he was taking on the victim mentality that, he has been victimised as a child by his mother [Tracey; 404-416].

Tracey's account employs psychologising discourses pertaining to dysfunctional mother-child bonding, dominating maternal styles, and the contribution of these conditions to developing such constructs as low self-esteem and a sociopathic personality type. These discourses draw from traditional gender stereotypes in which men's dominance and women's submission within the family are normative and

appropriate, while mothers perceived as strong or dominating are cast as causing lifelong psychological damage to their children. Indeed, several times in the interview Tracey's husband's psychological difficulties and violence were attributed to his mother's dominance as a wife and parent:

She is the wear the pants type woman...because this is what was modelled to him, of men and women in unhealthy relationships. [Husband] did exactly the same, no surprises, 'oh, I'm not gonna let my wife wear the pants,' so he made sure by kicking me up the backside that he wore the pants, he made sure by controlling the finances, trying to control me, belittle me, that he was not going to let me wear the pants [Tracey; 1058-1065].

Implied in Tracey's account is her husband's positioning as denied his entitlement to fulfill his appropriate gender role by a domineering mother, rendering him a powerless, emasculated victim worthy of sympathy. Such conditions are used to explain partners' violence, as indicated by Tracey's sympathy towards her husband regarding his upbringing and subsequent abuse of her: *"I just think; that poor man, he has had a shit life, and he's still having a shit life" [453-458].*

Under such circumstances, perpetrators' responsibility for violence is absolved while paradoxically; victims are denied recourse to justice if seen as unsympathetic to partners with histories of victimisation. Moreover, in the context of perpetrating violence, these psychological constructs are interwoven with particular "victimhood," discourses that construe victims as choosing to adopt deficient "identities" based on weakness, vulnerability, and poor interpersonal functioning. Indeed, Tracey's reference

to her husband *"taking on the victim mentality"* [416] starkly conveys her awareness of prevalent social responses that stigmatise and pathologise victims, and how these invariably constrain options for disclosing violence. These accounts offer evidence for the operation of discourses in which individuals "take on" victim roles and thus choose to be victims, while perpetrators' violence is construed as non-deliberate and uncontrollable (Coates & Wade, 2004).

Tracey also attributed her own family's difficulties to her mother's dominance: *"My mum, again, was a wear-the-pants-sort-of-person; my parent's relationship ended in divorce"* [424-426]. Both mothers are depicted as bad wives and mothers for being inappropriately masculine/dominant, and hence, instigating marital discord and divorce. This maintains traditional gender role stereotypes as essential for "healthy" relationships and families. The extent to which women as wives and mothers are dominant or submissive becomes central to determining family cohesion and the fate of one's marriage. Hence, women are positioned as responsible for keeping home and family together by behaving submissively.

While externalising attributions of domestic violence prevailed in the women's accounts, they did also speak in ways that challenged conceptualisations of partners' control and abuse as non-deliberate:

I have been misunderstood, I have been judged, I have been persecuted, I have been bullied, manipulated and controlled for 18 years and in the last six that pressure has become extraordinary. Now it's just like...this is the last battle, this is the last ditch effort. But the difference to me from two years ago is now I'm a stronger person. I can do this. And I will survive. And I am putting a stop to the abuse, and it will stop. Because I'm going to make it stop [Tracey; 2112-2118].

Although Tracey acknowledges the extent of her victimisation here, she positions herself rather than her husband as responsible for ending his violence. This enlists a victim empowerment discourse by construing women victims as key actors in securing their own safety and survival by stopping partners from victimising them. Such positioning misplaces responsibility for violence and endangers women by unrealistically maintaining that their self-empowerment will make perpetrators desist. They also perpetuate victim blaming by focusing on women keeping themselves safe rather than men's willingness to stop abusing.

2.2 Clarifying Perpetrator Responsibility

This section focuses on how victims' talk clarified rather than obscured perpetrator responsibility. While clients frequently employed externalising discourses of perpetrator responsibility, they also used language that exposed the deliberateness of partners' violence. This was conveyed through women recounting their partners' behaviour changes around other people, for example. The women also shared accounts of partners changing behaviour in relation to the women's responses and resistance to violence.

Women spoke about partners' attempts to conceal violence in social settings where partners could be held accountable for their behaviour. These accounts highlighted their partners' ability to "switch" their abuse "on and off" according to anticipated responses of others, thus demonstrating partners' awareness of their abuse as socially unacceptable. Notably, clients' combined incredulity and resignation was expressed in their voices and body language as they described partners transitioning between being charming and "on their best behaviour" in others' company, and becoming frightening, manipulative, and brutal upon returning home.

Mira compared her partner's behaviour when alone with her and their baby to social occasions with whānau. To contextualise this, Mira's partner's abuse included domestic exploitation and refusing to do his share of child-rearing tasks, as well as verbal, psychological, financial, sexualised and physical violence:

He was a lot quieter and he helped me with [baby] when other people were around. Like if we were at my parents I'd be, 'you're changing that one' if she'd done a poo in her nappy...I'd make the most of it. But I'd like make it a joke so I wouldn't get the backhand of it when I got home [Mira; 778-787].

Through this account, Mira adopts a particular subject position as insightful witness to her partner's ability to control his public image through selective displays as good family man and supportive partner and his strategically timed abuse of her. In turn, Mira's tactical use of social occasions is conveyed in her taking these opportunities to get him to undertake parenting tasks, while using humour to placate him and reduce the severity of his violence when alone again. Mira's counter-strategy of "jokingly" telling him to change the nappy is a form of resistance; Mira creates a parody in which she is aware he is required to modify his behaviour around others, which, under these favourable conditions, enables her to assert herself. This reveals Mira's tacit understanding that his violence is controllable and a deliberate attempt to suppress her resistance and moreover, that she and her partner interact in the unspoken knowledge of this.

In a similar demonstration of resistance, Tracey described using sarcasm to convey disdain towards her husband for casting himself as victim before their counsellor:

*[Husband] had tears in his eyes and his body language was pathetic just like **he** was the victim...oh he was **very** clever at putting it on...my reaction was a bit sarcastic by showing applause and clapping, and saying, 'you have been treated to a performance,' I said '[husband] is quite skilled at acting'...maybe I was sarcastic, but it was truthful [Tracey; 260-270].*

In using parody and sarcasm the women communicated the ludicrousness of their partners' behaviour. This could be understood as reclaiming their dignity. Their actions indicated their positioning as quick-witted, astute women despite partners subsequently suppressing their resistance. Such responses contest victims' positioning as passive, powerless, compliant, or virtuous.

While interviewees generally portrayed partners' violence as unintentional, on further questioning, their language suggested awareness of partners' control and abuse as deliberate. Although the women initially employed operations that concealed violence and perpetrator responsibility, increasing engagement with counter-operations I used to create safe and supportive conditions in the interview process facilitated a discursive shift. Tracey's excerpt below conveys her vacillating uncertainty over the extent of her partner's responsibility for his actions. However, as she elaborates, she positions him as deliberately suppressing her resistance by exploiting her refusal to challenge him in front of their daughter:

There was times I thought he was doing it on purpose to cause an argument, because he can...when [our daughter] was around he knew I wouldn't bite back.

That's when he'll turn into one of his moods, he'll snap and be stroppy and I won't know why [Tracey; 900-906].

In Tracey's account, the husband's behaviour and her response to it indicate both parents' awareness that witnessing violence harms children. Using his knowledge that his wife would not actively resist abuse in front of their daughter indicated awareness that his violence was socially unacceptable. Such accounts suggest how women victims are positioned as responsible for protecting their children from partners' violence, including from "witnessing" domestic violence, through state sanctioned child protection discourses and are therefore recognised as partly responsible for stopping partners' violence. Paradoxically, victims who are mothers may be placed in a bind where they are pressured to stay with violent partners when constrained by discourses of family cohesion, father's rights, and stigmatising single mothers (c.f. Kaye & Tolmie, 1998), as Mira's excerpt suggests:

I thought I wouldn't get any better than him and for my daughter. I grew up in a broken home, I didn't see my dad for 10 years and I didn't want that for her so like, people think you're just stupid because I kept giving him chances and for him to be a father and he keeps ringing up, but I want to keep doing it for my kid [Mira; 671-675].

Mira's account conveys how victimised mothers are positioned as bad mothers for leaving their children's fathers and simultaneously, as "*stupid*" for trying to maintain relationships with violent partners (Douglas & Walsh, 2010; Ptacek, 1988; Strega & Janzen, 2013). Clients frequently referred to partners' threats to stop the women's access

to their children for attempting to leave or not complying with other demands. On these occasions, women used language that clearly exposed the intentionality of partners' violence as means of control, as conveyed here:

[Husband] said, 'alright [daughter], you choose which parent you want to live with.' See, this is another control because he knows I love [daughter] and this is one of the things on many occasions he threatens: 'I'm going to throw you out of the house, take [daughter] off you.' He used [daughter] as the bait and she, unfortunately, caught in the middle...He realised he had me, because I backed off, I backed down [Tracey; 2489-2494...2503-2504].

Tracey's account illustrates women victims' entrapment in the context of significant social and material restrictions to their and their children's safety and justice. Notably, by directing the child to choose which parent to live with, the husband projected an image of Tracey as a decisive and destructive element to family unity and wellbeing.

The Women conveyed how they were positioned as dependent on partners for resources. "Choosing to leave" positioned them as breaking up their family and depriving their children of material needs. Accordingly, women's decisions to leave were met with others' contempt, including their own children, family, whānau and the Family Court. Interwoven in these narratives are ways women victims understand the problematic conditions of knowing partners' violence is deliberate and knowing that social responses towards victims who leave partners often include further marginalisation, structural violence, unjust legal outcomes for victims and their

children, and no guaranteed protection from violence. Thus, clients' narratives reflected women victims' profoundly limited options for escaping violence.

A common metaphor in the women's narratives concerned being tried in court and surrounded by "accusers" to depict partners' and others' social responses towards them as victims, mothers and wives:

[Husband] revealed to me, 'everybody's against you,' so he was isolating me and saying 'you went to the doctor, you're supposed to get [psychotropic] medication,' which isn't true; the police were called, so how I described it, imagine a circle, I'm in the middle of it, and you've got all these little arms pointing in, so I'm in the middle here, and here are all these accusers, so there was the police, the neighbours, the doctor, the two counsellors [Tracey; 241-251].

Interwoven in clients' narratives were accounts of entrapment when multiple negative social responses intersected with partners' isolating, blaming and pathologising of them. Tracey's excerpt reveals her husband's violence as deliberate and facilitated by other people and agencies blaming and pathologising her. Simultaneously, Tracey's husband is positioned as using social conditions enabling her positioning as psychiatrically disordered and his as long-suffering husband to his advantage. Notwithstanding, Tracey's use of court trial metaphors to describe her situation positions her as an astute woman aware of the prejudices and wrongdoings she and other victims contend with. This enables her to speak vehemently about the many injustices committed against her. Such narratives contest victims' positioning as passive and challenge discursive constructions of a "good, compliant victim."

Clients' shift towards clarifying perpetrator responsibility became apparent as interviews progressed. Possibly, this was in response to me prioritising safety and rapport and wording of questions during interviews. The following account illustrates clients' repositioning partners as intentionally choosing to behave violently, and their own responses as sensible:

At the end of the day, he still chose to be violent and the only choice I had was to ring the police. It was the right choice to make [Tracey; 2044-2046].

Thus, when clients were invited to use language that supported articulating perpetrator violence as deliberate and victims as responding to their violence, they rejected portrayals of victim passivity or pathology. Instead, they took up positions as competently and justifiably restoring safety and justice for themselves and their families.

3. Concealing, Elucidating, and Honouring Victim Responses and Resistance

In this section I examine discourses in clients' texts that construct and contest victims' positioning as non-agentic "non-responders" to violence and broader unjust social responses to women's victimisation (Coates & Wade, 2004). Clients drew upon several ideological positions in constructing their understandings of whether and, if so, how they responded to and resisted violence. I found narratives of perpetrator and victim responses that, at least initially, positioned the women as passive "recipients" of partners' control and abuse, and narratives that contradicted such positioning. The excerpt below is characteristic of clients' languaging of their actions during and/or following partners' violence:

Tracey: So with the bun fights and [husband]'s predisposition of setting me up to fail. I stopped reacting to that.

Jess: Right. And so what would you do instead?

Tracey: Nothing, I wouldn't respond [2171-2179].

Tracey's resistance is concealed in positioning herself as doing "nothing" in response to her husband's abuse. This exemplifies how women were, at least on the surface, positioned as non-reactive to violence, or submitting to perpetrators' control. This draws from discourses that portray victimised women and children as passive, vulnerable, powerless, and without agency (Coates & Wade, 2004). Discourses informed by, for example, psychological theories of learned-helplessness and fight, flight and freeze reactions have shaped widely held constructions of victim responses. Similarly, popular conceptions of victims' experience that emphasise overt behavioural responses, such as fighting back or physically removing oneself from the perpetrator, coupled with poor recognition of covert and internalised responses, constrain victims' experience and expression as agentic responders to violence.

By another reading however, such accounts portray victims as choosing to change how they respond to partners' violence by actively "not responding." This suggests Tracey "doing nothing" in this context was an intentional means of limiting her husband's capacity to use her responses, such as verbally defending herself, as a pretext for escalating his violence, as indicated in this subsequent part of the interview:

He'd come back with a different angle, a different technique. He kept shifting the goal post. But I just got smarter in my approach by not engaging [Tracey; 2187-2190].

Tracey elaborated on her response; being alert to signs he was preparing to verbally attack her, and then actively disengaging from him. This account positions victims as aware of the deliberateness of violence and skillfully responding to mitigate harm. Tracey emphasises her clarity and reasoning abilities during these episodes by positioning herself as an intelligent, competent person, thereby countering potential, commonly encountered, social responses that would portray her as passive or pathological.

Covert responses to violence were widely evident in client's texts after explicitly asking women for details of their responses when partners were abusive, and hence, facilitating a response-based dialogue, as depicted here:

Jess: And what was your response to that?

Tracey: I was standing here at the sink thinking, I wasn't thinking Christian thoughts, I didn't say this fortunately, I thought get the eff out of here and never come back.

Jess: So you kept it in your mind?

Tracey: I kept it in my mind [1410-1445].

This interchange also suggests how a "good Christian wife" discourse operates in domestic violence contexts to reinforce traditional feminine stereotypes (c.f. Towns et al., 2003). These constrain acceptable modes of responding, and how women victims resist them. Here, Tracey is positioned as retaining her dignity through her knowledge of respectful conduct and her husband's transgressions of this. She observes this with an internal dialogue where she defies her role as a good Christian wife by imagining

admonishing and expelling her husband from their home. In this context, keeping her desire private is necessary for self-protection from further violence and others' disapproval.

These accounts convey the ambivalence of available discourses that make victim responses invisible and yet illustrate victims navigating these constraints in choosing language that signals their active responses to violence (Coates & Wade, 2004). As suggested, victims "go underground" to minimise the severity and duration of violence, manage safety, and maintain dignity by staying silent, keeping thoughts private, and disengaging from perpetrators.

Women's accounts supported the response-based principle that language used to conceptualise violence often conceals victim responses and resistance (Coates & Wade, 2004). Accounts also conveyed the response-based tenet that perpetrators' violence is designed to suppress victim resistance and perpetrators act with awareness of this. Accordingly, narratives indicated how partners behaved abusively in anticipation of clients' resistance. Tracey's account below, for example, was shared in the context of her husband's attempt to suppress her resistance after telling him she would report him to the police for assaulting her. He responded by blaming her for "making" him break a window and, with their child present, threatened to call the police and report that *she* had assaulted him if she did not clean up the glass:

[Husband] said, 'If I don't,' using the F-word, 'if I don't fucking pick up the glass' he was going to ring the police. And unfortunately our daughter witnessed all this, and so I picked up the glass [Tracey; 49-52].

Entwined with the husband's strategy of controlling Tracey by threatening to take their child away from her, was the disciplinary influence of broader social responses condemning mothers who "fail to protect" children by "allowing" children's exposure to partners' violence (Nixon & Cripps, 2013; Strega & Janzen, 2013). This remained a dominant theme in clients' texts. Concealing violence through mutualising and minimising language coincided with discourses that constrain options for conceptualising victims' responses. Clients were positioned as not only partially responsible for partners' escalating violence, but as having just two options for managing this: fight back or do nothing. Such representations of victims' "dichotomies" were ubiquitous in interview texts:

*I was quite mouthy and I figured out it doesn't work anymore. I'm usually quite headstrong but so is he and yeah...he was angry at me about something and he just punched a hole in the back of the door...he did it so I could see, he's broken his hand because I pissed him off, he's gone and punched walls, punched a brick thing before, when I was pregnant he was drunk and he was going off at me...I was mouthy and it just carried arguments on so I thought, best just to sit here in silence...so I just took what he had to throw at me, I was mouthy at the start when we were arguing and then it was like, I'm over this, especially when we had our daughter around then I **definitely** didn't argue back, she didn't need to see it [Mira; 355-364...390-404].*

Mira is positioned as possessing only two available alternatives, imposed by constraining discourses of victims as either co-aggressors engaged in mutual combat with perpetrators, or passively "sitting in silence." Under such conditions, the victim is

blameworthy for "contributing" to the violence, often termed "giving as good as it gets," or failing to prevent it, frequently termed "allowing herself to become a victim." Mira's account expanded on her self-reference as *"mouthy,"* whereby she verbally defended herself from her boyfriend's violence early in her relationship. When victims are positioned as responding and resisting rather than "being done to," alternative readings become possible. For example, in her account, Mira may be construed as argumentative and provocative and hence partly blameworthy for "triggering" her boyfriend's violence, depending on which discourses inform Mira's positioning. Alternatively, Mira may be understood as covertly yet distinctly resisting her boyfriend's violence by disengaging from him and her surroundings while remaining physically present. That she stops verbally defending herself to reduce the duration and severity of violence supports Coates and Wade's (2004) discursive operation that victims always resist violence and oppression.

Likewise, Coates and Wade's (2004) argument that perpetrators work to suppress victim resistance and victims are aware of this (*"he did it so I could see"*) is illustrated in Mira's narrative. Furthermore, despite the prevalence of clients' claims of "doing nothing," on further questioning women articulated their responses to violence manifesting as thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and actions taken. Hence, when I inquired about the micro-details of clients' responses to violence and broader social responses, this created a platform from which they could articulate their thoughts and actions as responses, deliberate and inadvertent, and at times, as resistance to violence.

This process, enabled through response-based contextual analysis interviewing, illustrates clients' tacit understanding that victims do respond to violence and oppression in multiple ways, particularly when enabled through dialogue sympathetic to their positioning as responding and resisting (Richardson & Wade, 2010). For example,

asking, "then what would you do/ were you thinking at the time?" presented interviewees with opportunities to reposition themselves as rationally responding, as the following excerpt concerning Mira's responses when her partner was violent indicates:

Jess: And what did you do after he did that?

Mira: I aired my dirty laundry on Facebook all the time, when I know I shouldn't have, because that was quite petty. But that was my diary really and then everyone knew about it [500-503].

In this context, by exposing her boyfriend's violence to whānau and their broader social network, Mira positioned herself as a person who would not stay silent or allow him to isolate her. These actions/resistances challenge intertwined discourses which prescribe conduct for "good women" and "passive victims" submitting themselves to partners within the private sanctity of a modern nuclear family (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003).

Contradictory discourses shifting between violence "done to" victims, and victims actively enhancing their safety and dignity were apparent in the texts. Moreover, clients' accounts suggest their unimpeded, ready transition from using language of effects to using language of responses, as conceptualised by Todd et al. (2004) when given the opportunity. This created possibilities for women to contemplate and talk about the "situational logic" of their responses (Wade, 1997). Indeed, although women's narratives initially reinforced notions of victims as non-responding and non-resistant, accounts also conveyed the response-based principle that perpetrators' control and abuse is designed to suppress victims' ever-present resistance.

4.1 Blaming and Pathologising Victims

As touched on throughout this chapter, discursive practices within domestic violence and wider social contexts commonly attribute victimisation to deficiencies in victims' character and behaviour. Indeed, victim blaming and pathologising saturated clients' interview texts. Clients spoke of others' responses routinely positioning them as responsible for causing and stopping partners' violence. They also offered detailed accounts of perpetrators justifying violence by blaming and pathologising them amongst myriad strategies to control, abuse, and suppress their resistance.

Commonly in interview texts, clients positioned themselves as lacking good judgement in selecting and maintaining relationships with violent partners. Tracey's comment, *"I'm open to a possible new relationship, but I will be more cautious"* [2551-2552], exemplifies how clients portrayed themselves as implicated in "choosing" violent partners. Implicit self-blame for poor partner selection was maintained throughout interviews, despite contrary evidence suggesting no violence was evident in the initial stages of relationships:

There was a long history, we knew each other really well, I did have a sensible, realistic what-I-want-in-my-life-partner list which was relationship with God, healthy relationship with parents, good with money, common interests, are we friends? Will we get on? I also sussed out what he was like in different scenarios: is he a person that lost his temper? All these sort of things [Tracey; 363-369].

Tracey's account indicates her careful deliberation in seeking aligned values in her partner before entering the relationship. Correspondingly, accounts suggested

women positioned themselves as "stupid" and "weak" for staying with or returning to violent partners:

I kept taking him back; my stupid mistake...I fell for it again and gave in and went back [Mira; 32...42].

Women categorically blamed themselves for "erroneously choosing" and remaining with violent partners when they "should have known better." Victim blaming is reflected in Tracey's self-castigation over leaving her husband and seeking legal protection through police and Family Court processes.

I do have some regrets, I'm still wavering, I've opened a major can of worms, and then some [Tracey; 2139-2140].

Tracey's account typifies conditions in which victims are held responsible for their victimisation, and the actuality of inadequate legal services for victims. Such accounts draw from gendered domestic violence discourses that construct women victims as intentionally seeking, attracting, or accepting violent partners due to moral or mental defects in their own characters. More broadly, this positioning suggests the operation of stereotypical constructions of women, and particularly victimised women, as incapable of keeping themselves safe. These derive from stigmatising, blaming and pathologising discourses of women victims as fragile, vulnerable, irrational, and damaged.

Clients' narratives conveyed the women's bafflement at their own otherwise rational, sensible dispositions under the constraints of such essentialising and hence, ineluctable victim blaming discourses, as indicated below:

*I couldn't believe this was the man I married: This was in our first year of marriage, and shocked to believe he could do that. Because **logically** you think, nup, I'll never ever be in a position where I would be with a man who ever did that, I, **of course**, would ring the police...none of that **logic** even came into my thinking [Tracey; 807-829].*

Women's disbelief in partners' capacity for violence conveyed bewilderment when socially sanctioned codes of love, respect and partnership were violated. Accordingly, women victims may deduce that violence is by their own instigation and evidence of their departure from reason in discerning partners' potential for violence. Tracey's account illustrates this struggle to comprehend interpersonal violence in a sociocultural context comprised of discourses that conceal the unilateral and deliberate nature of violence, and which are instead predicated on scrutinising victims' actions, competence, and character. Clients' attempts to articulate their responses to having violent partners, as implied in excerpts above and below, portrayed the profound limitations of discourses that conceal violence and victim resistance by positioning victims as passively accepting violence:

I don't know how to put it in words, it was a weird, it was just like, I really like this dude and I would do anything to keep him, so I'd accept what he done and I'd be hurt [Mira; 100-103].

Tellingly, Mira's statement, "*I'd do anything to keep him*" draws from gendered sociocultural assumptions about how women's love, loyalty, and devotion manifests. In a domestic violence context, all encompassing "doing anything," by definition, necessitates forfeiting one's rights to freedom from suffering, control and violence. These conditions are enabled by heteronormative cultural discourses constructing women's self-sacrifice and subjugation to men partners, and men's entitlement to dominate women, which also inform idealised notions of romantic love (c.f. Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Constructions of victims as morally responsible for instigating violent episodes and thus responsible for the violence were also evident in women's narratives. This is illustrated in the following account where Tracey intimates that asking her husband about their finances elicited his violent attack on her:

I just remember feeling afraid and in physical pain, and trapped and disbelief that it happened, and trying to rationalise why he did it. If I hadn't asked [about the finances] then it would never have happened...I was very cautious about asking questions about money after that, for years after [Tracey; 807-829].

Tracey is portrayed as instrumental in her husband's subsequent violence as she described struggling to comprehend his violence then self-policing in learning to regulate her behaviour around him. Such positions imply that violence occurs when women deviate from stereotypical "good wife" traditional femininity. Hence, client's narratives indicate an implicit awareness that challenging one's husband is to be non-compliant, aggressive and hence, unfeminine.

Thus, women victims negotiate conflicting requirements of performing gender with traditional "good wife/ mother" standards of nurturing, self-sacrifice, and loyalty, and simultaneously, contemporary egalitarian "strong woman" ideals requiring competence, assertiveness, and empowerment to successfully enact feminine ideals across all life spheres. Given these conditions, they positioned themselves responsible for being abused and morally reprehensible for harming their children through their exposure to violence, as depicted here:

I realise the error of my ways and I felt really bad. I felt like a bad mum and so I discussed it with [daughter]. I apologised for putting her in that position where she had to be ref and she burst into tears. I didn't realise how much damage I was doing [Tracey; 157-160].

Guilt, shame and mother-blaming pervaded clients' narratives. Commonsense victimisation narratives assign responsibility for violence to victims by casting them as responsible for the decisive action in perpetrator violence. Indispensable to these narratives are pathologising discourses that represent women victims as possessing fixed personality traits, for example, masochistic "victim mentalities," causing deviance and dysfunction. Accordingly, victims are construed as mentally disordered. Entwined with victim pathologising are traditional and contemporary gender stereotypes that prescribe a conflicting labyrinth of required feminine behaviour women victims must navigate. For example, victims face a double bind of stigmatising and pathologising positioning if seen as too confrontational and provoking violence, or alternatively as overly passive and submissive. Tracey's excerpt conveys her sensitivity to dominant cultural scripts of women victim's responses to violence as mentally disordered:

I responded with anger, not with violence, anger...I understand being angry is not a mental illness, it just means you're angry [Tracey; 93-96].

Tracey clarifies and defends her anger as a reasonable response to her husband's violence and in doing so, resists the "disordered victim" discourse. This narrative was revisited multiple times during interviews, which I understood as clients anticipating commonly encountered portrayals of women victims as pathological (Coates & Wade, 2004). The following example illustrates Tracey's attempts to dispute her husband and his family portraying her as psychotic:

Their affidavit is so seemingly damning, it paints me in a picture as a psychotic bitch who apparently wields knives and strangles [my husband], and [my child] walks around on eggshells, none of which is true [Tracey; 2146-2149].

Of particular concern in constructing women victims as mentally disordered, are implicit assumptions regarding their characters as untrustworthy, manipulative, and untruthful (c.f. Busch et al., 2014). Consequently, victims may be rendered unreliable, inaccurate witnesses and therefore, unable to provide objective testimonies to legally defend themselves.

Clients' repeated self-positioning as sane, sensible and capable women, particularly mothers, proclaimed their need to counter shame, stigma, and diminished dignity and rights commonly ascribed to people with mental illness. Clients' insistence that they be seen as mentally "healthy," as suggested here, speaks of these deeply held concerns regarding their misrepresentation: *I am a perfectly sane person. Because*

[husband] was trying to say I was crazy, that my issues were all in my head. He was telling me all the time [Tracey; 2035-2037]. Accordingly, clients' repeated attempts to avert presumptions of "madness" could be understood as defenses against narratives that dehumanise victims as psychologically deficient. Such narratives also illustrate clients' acute awareness of ways perpetrators invoke "crazy woman" stereotypes to undermine victims' credibility.

Thus, clients' texts conveyed apprehension concerning prevalent and damaging representations conflating domestic violence victims and people with mental illness. By association, this positioned victims as emotionally unstable and hence, disturbed and potentially dangerous. Implicitly, this construes women victims as burdensome to long-suffering partners, and incapable of forming healthy relationships with partners and their children. Indeed, clients' narratives spoke of others' questioning their parenting capabilities:

Mum put me down as a parent...she was giving me shit; 'just leave him.' It's like, I'm always getting second-guessed as a parent [Mira; 979-983].

Clients' responses conveyed their positioning by complicated, double binding mother-blaming discourses. Disclosing violence and separating from perpetrators risks others' contempt for "breaking-up the family" and particularly, depriving perpetrators of fathering rights (Bancroft et al., 2012). Simultaneously though, by staying silent and remaining with perpetrators, women victims risk being construed as complicit for exposing themselves and any children to further violence. These conflicting dilemmas are suggested here:

He'd been trying to get back with me. I kept saying let's be friends, see where it goes, stupidly, because we're going to get back in the same trap. But I was trying to keep him on-side for [child] and if that's saying I'll take him back, because he's so in and out of her life, and, I need to do it for my kid, but then in the same example, she doesn't need to see that, to see the drama we go through [Mira; 698-704].

Mira's account illustrates how such discourses blame and pathologise victims. Mira refers to herself as deficient and equally culpable for her ex-partner's violence, indicated in the self-denigrating term "*stupidly*," and mutualising language, "*the drama we go through*." This reveals Mira's dismal predicament: being cast as a bad mother for depriving her child and child's father of their relationship through leaving him or limiting his contact; or continuing to subject her child to his violence by staying with him. This socially-imposed position disregards Mira's efforts to protect her child from her violent ex-partner.

Intertwined with these experiences were domestic violence discourses that portray separating from perpetrators as a straightforward option, which masks victims' increased risk of violence, poverty and stigma post-separation. Clients' talk conveyed the precarious social and material conditions in victims' lives during and following separation. Tracey shared her responses after seeking a protection order and leaving her husband:

I was a huge mess, understandably, I was finding it difficult to form words, I was very agitated...I lost sleep, got sick, diarrhea, lost weight...I was riddled with fear, fear of the unknown, fear of what happens if he finds out I've been to

Women's Refuge, fear that he'd carry out his threats to have me thrown out of the house and take [daughter] and I'd be penniless in the street. He threatened that on quite a few occasions over the years [Tracey; 215-233].

Crucially, Tracey's narrative clearly presents intersecting structural oppression and marginalisation contributing to victims' reasonable and realistic concerns about losing their children and becoming homeless: in this context, a Māori mother and homemaker financially dependent on her husband, a skilled, financially resourceful Pākehā man. Tracey's narrative indicates how legitimate distress responses to victimisation are routinely pathologised. The account details psychological and bodily responses to abuse and fear, which coincide with symptoms of diagnosable psychiatric disorders and in this manner, shift the focus from perpetrator actions to victim mental deficiency.

4.2 Contesting Victim Blaming and Pathologising

Examples of clients contesting their blaming and pathologising were uncommon. More often, accounts suggested their positioning as defending themselves against, rather than contesting, blaming and pathologising discourses. Tracey's narrative below is a harrowing account of her desperate attempts to escape her husband and counsellor's blaming and pathologising. The counsellor "diagnosed" Tracey with postnatal depression. Tracey felt her only escape was suicide. When her attempt failed she feared that her husband would use it to prove she was an unfit mother and she would lose her daughter:

[Husband] dictated when we had the counselling sessions, and they were usually four weeks apart. It took me three or four weeks and I emotionally

geared up for the emotional onslaught of these sessions...I nearly killed myself, I don't think this way now, because the counselling was so intense and I felt I had no escape...The sessions were always an onslaught on me: I'm the problem, it's all me...[husband] made darn sure, it was extremely damaging and destructive...That was fortunately four years ago, but the pain of that, the shame I feel and the judgement, not from you...because 'oh, she must be nuts' and 'oh, she tried to commit suicide,' well they don't know that. I'd never told [husband] because he'd use it as ammo and it would be in the affidavit if he knew [Tracey; 1946-1990].

In Tracey's narrative she positions herself as having insight into the way the authority of her church community was used against her, whilst also positioning herself as having authority for herself. In revealing and resisting the violence, Tracey tells of refusing *"to sit here and listen to this bullshit"* [1997]. Thus, she adopts an assertive and challenging position while expressing her understanding of the dangers of that position. Tracey's account also portrays her actions as assertion and desperation in recounting her torment of being ambushed by her husband. She also makes explicit a social response of collective coercion, by recounting how she is beset by the authority of the church, the authority of the counselling profession, and the authority of husband in a context of church and patriarchy.

Victim blaming by others and the women themselves constrain them from seeking outside support as Mira's account suggests:

I wasn't keen to get hold of Refuge, cause I'd taken him back and I felt stupid. But this time it actually was for good because it actually gave me the strength

not to go back, I thought what if, what if...maybe he's got the picture now that he can't do what he does, but I see now he still ain't changed. You know, he can buy me as much things as he does, but he ain't changed [Mira; 116-123].

Mira's narrative conveys women's ambivalence about disclosing violence in the context of anticipating victim blaming and shaming. Despite positive experiences and support received from Refuge, Mira portrays her expectation that leaving her partner was the only viable option from Refuge's perspective. Hence, Mira anticipated being blamed for reuniting with him and, thus, undeserving of support and unworthy as a person. Within this however, Mira, like Tracey, positions herself as having clarity over ways perpetrators attempt to manipulate victims, thus, asserting her legitimacy to remain free from her expartner's violence.

Reflections on Study Two, Part I

In the analysis for Part I of Study Two, I set out to use Coates and Wade's (2004) four discursive operations of violence as an analytical framework to examine how discourses suggested in Mira and Tracey's interview texts shaped their understandings of domestic violence and social responses to violence before participating in the RBP Women's Group. I was aiming to lay the analytic groundwork to enable me to compare discourses clients used before and following their involvement in the Group and consider implications clients' positioning might have for enabling or constraining their safety, dignity, healing and wellbeing.

The analysis illustrated the profound limitations of discourses that conceal violence, perpetrator responsibility, and victim resistance by positioning victims as deficient. I found examples where partners' violence and women's victimisation were minimised in anticipation, intentionally or otherwise, of social responses characterised

by victim blaming and pathologising. Many examples of languaging that mutualised violence were evident in the women's narratives. This positioned the speakers as partially or equally responsible co-agents in the violence. The women's accounts also often drew from discourses that positioned them as instrumental in provoking and preventing partners' violence, which contributed to concealing violence and victim blaming.

A resounding theme throughout interviews was abusive partners' positioning as victims themselves. Mira and Tracey frequently employed externalising discourses of domestic violence as uncontrollable and unintentional (Coates & Wade 2004). At times, however, their stories conveyed their refusal to engage dominant discourses of perpetrators as out of control, and their violence as accidental or unpredictable. I also found examples of clients positioning themselves as resisting concealment of violence and portrayals of victims as passive or pathological.

I noticed how the women often engaged discourses drawing from traditional gender stereotypes in which men's dominance and women's submission within the family are normative and appropriate (Elizabeth, 2015; Stark, 2010). This positioned the women as responsible for keeping home and family together by behaving submissively. Mira and Tracey's responses also conveyed their positioning by complicated, double binding mother-blaming discourses. These conditions are enabled by heteronormative cultural discourse about women's self-sacrifice and subjugation to men partners, and men's entitlement to dominate women. I found it painful to reflect on the women's stories in relation to the current status of women so often positioned within regressive yet incredibly widespread portrayals as highly sexually objectified "domestic goddesses" that saturate our social and personal spheres. I thought about women and girls in my own life, including myself, being rewarded for seemingly innocuous

performance of essentialised "femininity" and the many dark sides of this, as evinced in Mira and Tracey's stories. The women were often, at least initially, positioned as non-responsive to violence, or submitting to perpetrators' control by drawing from discourses that portray victims as passive, vulnerable, powerless, and without agency. I also identified several instances of women's talk that positioned them as resisting gender and family-role expectations by exposing violence. I heard in the women's stories though, that this mode of resistance often came at a high price in the form of family and community condemnation.

Interwoven in Mira and Tracey's narratives were accounts of coercion and entrapment when multiple negative social responses intersected with partners isolating, blaming and pathologising them. Commonly, they positioned themselves as lacking good judgement in selecting and maintaining relationships with violent partners: positions deriving from blaming and pathologising women victims as irrational and damaged. I reflected on how the women's insistence that they be seen as mentally "healthy" speaks of their deeply held concerns regarding their misrepresentation as pathological. Examples of them contesting their blaming and pathologising were uncommon. More often, accounts suggested their positioning as defending themselves against, rather than contesting, blaming and pathologising discourses. During these conversations, I was aware of Mira and Tracey's frustration, sadness and resignation as they shared their accounts of their (ex)partners and others painting them as "crazy" and less than worthy of respectful treatment.

Both women's accounts offer valuable testimonies to the response-based idea that victims recognise and make choices within the context of broader social responses, particularly those that blame and pathologise victims and justify perpetrators' violence. I found that Tracey's narratives in particular indicated her clear recognition of social

power relations and structural barriers to safety, including threats of poverty, homelessness, and marginalisation intersecting with her expartner's further violence. The women's texts often indicated that victims may take up assertive and challenging positions whilst also knowing the consequences to themselves when they overtly resist violence without the support and understanding of important others.

I recognise how my own emerging response-based informed interviewing practices enabled shifts in the women's accounts, particularly in noticing how response-based contextual analysis in questioning opened up possibilities for the women to answer in dignifying ways that positioned them as responding to violence. This enabled me to glimpse into what RBP might imply for my post-programme interviews with clients. This process illuminated how RBP techniques can counter the silencing function of negative social responses and support the women to articulate their resistances to violence and their positioning as assertive and challenging. This led me to reflect on the main question guiding my post-programme analysis: How did the programme support the women to engage discourses that enable dignified positioning? In the following chapter I discuss my discursive analysis of women's accounts after their involvement in the Women's Group.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Study Two, Part II

The previous Chapter analysed how discourses shape Refuge clients' understandings of domestic violence and social responses to violence, before joining the RBP Women's Group. These questions were examined through the ways the women positioned themselves in the stories they told. Chapter Seven investigates the effectiveness of the Group by analysing how the women positioned themselves in relation to their understandings of domestic violence after participating in the Group, and identifying discursive resources the women used to enable dignified positioning.

Methodological Procedures for Study Two, Part II

My methodological procedures for Part II of Study Two followed the same recruitment and ethical protocol as for Part I (described in Chapter Six), using individual interviews for data collection. The variation was in the interview schedule, which included inquiring about clients' views about the Group, changes in understandings of domestic violence, and any changes clients had experienced in their lives, or for people they care about, during or since participating in the Group. Interview data for this study was transcribed using the same transcription protocol as for Study One and Part I of Study Two.

A major aim of the Group was to facilitate a process that restores Group participants' dignity, safety, healing and wellbeing. Exposing and critiquing harmful and oppressive discourses, and constructing alternatives that challenge misrepresentations of victims and perpetrators is crucial to the process. Enabling positive social responses for Group participants involves language practices that reveal violence, clarify and illuminate perpetrator responsibility, and give voice to, and honour, victims' responses and resistance. Thus, akin to Part I, Study Two, the analysis

was organised around Coates and Wade's (2004) four discursive operations/counteroperations of violence within a broader analytical framework examining use of customary terminology pertaining to social power relations (for example, gender, social class, culture and sociogeographical rural/urban location) developed by Morgan and Mattson (2017).

The Participating Women

Mira participated in the first part of Study Two and was introduced in Chapter Six. When we met several months after our first interview, Mira had continued living with her preschool-aged child at her mother and stepfather's home. Mira had recently improved her employment conditions, now working five days instead of long shifts in a factory six days a week. She had ended her intimate relationship with her partner. He continued to have supervised access with their child. Mira had regular face-to-face and phone text contact with her expartner and his whānau.

Jacquie is a Pākehā woman in her fifties. She is a full-time mother with six children and also grieving the loss of a seventh child who had died in his 15th year. At the time of interviewing, Jacquie was in a relationship with her partner (age and ethnicity unknown) of 14 years, who was father of their youngest four children. Jacquie was ambivalent about remaining with her partner and had separated from him several times, including within recent months. He had moved out of the family home two months prior and lived alone in a rural area. He stayed overnight regularly with the family.

Bex is a Pākehā woman in her mid-forties who had recently shifted from a remote rural setting to a small rented home in town where she lived with her two children. Since leaving her husband of 12 years she had gained fulltime employment in an animal rescue shelter. Bex separated from her husband, a Pākehā man (age unknown)

and father of their children, five months prior. The conditions of his protection order prohibited him contacting or being on the same property as Bex and her children. Despite this, her ex-husband made multiple attempts to circumvent these conditions including finding out where she lived, repeatedly parking outside her home and going to her workplace.

At the time of the second data collection period Tracey, interviewed in Part I, had not started the Women's Group so was not interviewed. The women interviewed in Part II gave detailed accounts of (ex)partners' control and abuse, which included extensive and in some cases extreme physical, psychological, economic, sexualised, and emotional violence. They described (ex)partners' violent and controlling behaviour as continuing to the present. The women stated their strong wish to repeat the Women's Group: they had requested and been approved to attend a second Group.

Analysis and Discussion

1. Concealing and Exposing Violence

Analysis of the second interview texts suggests a marked shift in how Refugee clients positioned themselves after experiencing Women's Group practices clarifying violence. Recalling Chapter Six, before the programme women's languaging frequently obscured perpetrators' control and violence. This included terms that minimised and mutualised violence, and narrow conceptualisations of domestic violence that excluded episodic patterns of non-assaultive violence. In this second analysis however, women primarily took up positions of resistance in explicitly referring to broader conceptualisations of domestic violence. The women understood that clarifying violence has implications for their dignity and wellbeing, as illustrated in the following example:

Being able to talk, and everything in that [Group hand]book has made me a lot stronger than what I was. I was quite down when I first started; anything would set me off crying with him. But now I can actually hold my own, and I told him, I didn't realise there was so much abuse, but now I know there was sexual abuse, there was emotionally, financial, and other types of abuse in there, which I didn't actually know beforehand, I just thought, that's how relationships work. It's helped me as a person to know what I deserve and what I don't...I'm happier with who I am because I thought a lot of the problem in the relationship was me but this programme has actually shown it's not...I always thought there was something wrong with me, but now I can actually say, there's nothing wrong with me [Mira; 12-19...104-110].

In Mira's narrative, she positions herself as transcending from shame and despair to dignity and happiness. Mira's talk links her previous positioning as blameworthy and deserving violence, "*the problem in the relationship*," to the injustice of multiple forms of violence. She claims a position as someone who will no longer be silenced but will reveal her partner's violence. Mira attributed her emotional transcendence to building knowledge of diverse violent strategies partners use; opportunities afforded by Group membership. Language that exposes domestic violence stereotypes and clarifies violence is crucial for women's repositioning as legitimately responding to victimisation (Todd & Wade, 2003).

The three women spoke openly of partners' controlling, isolating, surveilling, and intimidating; behaviours frequently discounted in dominant domestic violence

discourses and construed as gender-appropriate in heteronormative discourses (Elizabeth, 2015; Stark, 2010). The women contested domestic violence stereotypes maintained by conceptualising violence as gender-neutral, non-sexualised, single incidents of physical assault decontextualised from perpetrators' broader patterns of coercion, control and entrapment (c.f. FVDRC, 2016). Jacquie's account elaborated on how dominant domestic violence stereotypes alongside strategic use of the legal system support her partner's tactics of control and coercion:

*I know personally from my first husband and now current partner, they learn, just like when you go to jail, how to manipulate the system, and I don't like that more than once now [partner] has said, 'I could have a protection order against you' ...He's not telling people that when I've ever hit him, one of the times was after he raped me, I slapped him in the face. When he said that I did that, he's six foot and 90 kgs, I was 42 kgs. He was **never** scared of me, he wasn't intimidated by me. So as long as he can ever put the blame on me, or the kids: 'if the kids weren't so noisy or so messy I wouldn't have to be so angry' [Jacquie; 314-334].*

Jacquie's narrative reveals how partners blame and intimidate victims, and use legal victim protection measures, to coerce and frighten women, maintain control, and divert responsibility for violence to partners and even children. She evinces several commonplace assumptions that intersect to conceal violence, perpetrator responsibility and victim resistance, and blame and pathologise victims (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Wade, 1997). In this case, domestic violence stereotyping as single incidents of non-sexualised physical assault trivialises rape, particularly spousal, and decontextualises

victims' responses. Her example illustrates the intersection of stereotypes with perpetrators manipulating victims' and others' perceptions of the identified victim (Bancroft et al., 2012; Morgan & O'Neill 2001; O'Neill & Morgan 2001). Jacquie reveals manipulation (and threatening use) of legal processes and professionals to control victims as a form of domestic violence that has been identified in previous research (Dragiewicz, 2011; Elizabeth, Gavey & Tolmie, 2012b; Wangmann, 2010).

After the programme, Jacquie understands her partner as taking advantage of a limited domestic violence discourse to mutualise violence and particularly represent disparate violent acts as equivalent, whereby a slap is equated with any other physically abusive act (Coates & Wade, 2004; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 1998). The account shows Jacquie's tacit knowledge of how these conditions coalesce with gender-neutral constructions of domestic violence that hide disparities in severity, frequency, and dangerousness between different violent acts; decontextualise violent retaliative acts from perpetrators' coercion, control, and psychological violence; and obscure gender-based power differences sustained by dominant patriarchal social structures (Miller et al., 2005). Intertwined is pervasive and erroneous languaging of rape as sex rather than profoundly harmful violence (Coates & Wade 2004; Richardson & Wade, 2015). Such distortions render partner rape invisible.

Jacquie positions herself as disputing dominant domestic violence discourses by exposing multiple forms of violence including intimidation, fear, victim-blaming, humiliation, and making threats (to get angry, tell others she is physically violent, and seek a protection order). Furthermore, Jacquie refuses to accept her positioning as the aggressor by explicitly contextualising her response (slapping her partner) as a retaliatory attempt to reclaim dignity after he raped her.

In the following accounts, Mira and Bex indicate how their changing understandings of domestic violence supported them to disclose partner's violence and seek help:

*Lately with his abusive messages I'm like **whatever**, they don't even affect me. He doesn't like it when I tell him all the abuse he's put me through. I sure tell him. But I never would have before the Group...I will let him know what he done to me; I'm not going to hide it from him anymore [Mira; 151-167].*

The end of my marriage when I finally escaped was because of my children...That was my breaking point and I contacted Refuge the next day, and the police, and said, I need help, I need to get out of here. It was super hard for the first three months. I just hid myself away...because it was the only time I could feel safe. But coming to this Group helped me realise I'm an OK person, I didn't deserve it, it wasn't my fault and he chose to do that. From there on I gained that confidence and thought right, it's about me and my boys now, time to have a life for us, we deserve it. From there it just built up and up and it's going pretty good. I feel pretty strong now. I'm still putting up with a lot from my ex, and he's still breaching...but I feel confident that I can deal with it, I know that whatever I did I didn't deserve it and now he's choosing to do that...I think he's doing it because he wants to be in control and he wants to be intimidating, but it's not working...Definitely having the support, knowing I've got friends now, I was never allowed friends or to go anywhere. Knowing I can contact them whenever I want. And things that I've learnt, I've gained confidence, I've been able to speak out, if he did anything now I'd be straight to the police, I'd be

speaking up about it, whereas prior there's no way I would've done that for fear of the consequences. Because over that 12 years I believed it was my fault that he used to hit me because I was useless, I didn't do anything right, it was my fault, but after the Group I realised he'd made a choice to do that, it certainly wasn't anything I did that made him do it [Bex; 55-143].

Mira and Bex's languaging, *"able to talk/ I sure tell him/ if he did anything now I'd be straight to the police, I'd be speaking up about it,"* conveyed their repositioning from being silenced to speaking their minds. Additional changes in the women's talk such as, *"I can hold my own/I'm not going to hide it from him anymore/this Group helped me realise I'm an OK person, I didn't deserve it, it wasn't my fault"* indicate that exposing perpetrators' use of varied forms of violence and coercive control supports a socially legitimated lifting of victims' shame by shifting moral culpability to the perpetrator. This signaled the women's refusal to conform to traditional gender stereotypes of women as deferential and meek, and to discourses in which spousal privacy must be maintained (c.f. Towns et al., 2003). Thus, the women explicitly resisted dominant gendered discourses of "good" women as passive, submissive and restrained.

Women's narratives, such as Bex's, frequently revealed father's violence towards their children in ways overlooked in dominant domestic violence discourses. Research refers to multiple forms of violence against children and their mothers, which have largely been historically suppressed (e.g. Bancroft et al., 2012; Hester, 2011; Lapierre, 2010). Violent strategies include direct abuse and threats to harm children and their mothers, and intentionally undermining mother-child relationships. Victimized mothers' wellbeing and optimal capacity to parent is compromised while mothers expend

considerable energy responding to violence, and focusing on keeping their children and themselves safe (Bancroft et al., 2012). Thus, women's accounts indicated that Group processes and content opened space for women to reconstruct their and their children's victimisation as resistances to highly oppressive conditions created by violent partners' patterns of coercive control and broader forms of violence: *"It's about me and my boys now, time to have a life for us, we deserve it."*

In the following excerpt Jacquie recalls interacting with police after seeking a protection order. Her narrative conveys implications of prevailing discourses that conceal violence:

It's lip service; it says psychological violence in the protection order, but a policewoman said to me, 'but he hasn't been violent to you' so, at the police station, I said, 'oh no he hasn't, he's just raped me.' I know people don't like that and it makes them uncomfortable, but I'm going to keep doing it...The police have an issue if you're a battered woman standing up for yourself; well of course I'm standing up for myself...Men can't handle women's anger. I'm trying to stand up for my rights or somebody else's rights, but you're not allowed to be angry. The same with the police, if you're crying that's good, but if you're angry, naaa, you're part of the problem then. So you're expected to play the game, but I don't like playing the game [Jacquie; 424-430...598-600...704-707].

Jacquie's retelling contests a dismissive response to her request for police protection by clarifying rape *is* a form of domestic violence. In doing so, Jacquie challenges inadequate domestic violence stereotypes intersecting with traditional discourses of femininity and women victims. These disregard varying forms of

sexualised and non-assaultive violence, which enable negative social responses towards victims and constrain options for disclosure and support. Jacquie's account elicits victims' common experience of legal responses minimising violence, scrutinising victims' motives, and dismissing and disbelieving victims (Bagshaw et al., 2011; Laing, 2010; 2016). Jacquie's positioning as unjustly becoming the focus of police scrutiny reveals a victim pathologising discourse entailing construction of women victims as fabricating false accusations (c.f. Busch et al., 2014).

Jacquie's refusal to adopt a submissive role and hide her anger over multiple injustices, including secondary victimisation by police, exposes conditions under which "bad victims" are directly or indirectly assigned responsibility for violence through subtle messages about their behaviour. For example, women's anger is frequently reported as provoking partner's violence, which positions women as mutually responsible for violence (Coates & Wade, 2004). Jacquie challenges the limited domestic violence discourses, which suppress victims speaking openly, assertively or angrily about rape and non-assaultive violence, and condemn women expressing anger (c.f. Towns & Adams, 2015). Victims understand they will be judged deserving of support if positioned as "good victims/women" but blameworthy, and hence undeserving, should they be positioned as bad. Thus, Jacquie's account draws attention to how victims' positioning by discursive "good/bad" victims/women binaries discriminates against women who refuse to conform to socially approved behavioural scripts of fragility, vulnerability, and compliance and instead express indignation over inadequate responses to their victimisation (c.f. Paterson, 2010).

Jacquie's narrative exposes an ideological dilemma women victims face in risking both exclusion from potentially supportive responses, such as police protection, and social condemnation in negotiating their dignity and regulating themselves to "play

the good victim game." Yet crucially, Jacquie reveals her legitimate grounds to express contempt over her partner's violence, and police responses. She positions herself as maintaining her principles and integrity instead of enduring the humiliation of assuming a "good victim/woman" role. Jacquie refuses to privilege others' desire for comfort above victims' safety and challenging police authority. This is accomplished by resisting the terms set by police and others of what constitutes domestic violence, opposing "good victim/woman" discourses, and speaking openly and angrily about her partner raping and psychologically abusing her. In this manner, legitimating broader understandings of domestic violence that expose violence enabled through Women's Group membership affirmed and strengthened her resistance.

As well as revealing multiple forms of domestic violence and the operations of discursively constituted stereotypes that were implicated in social responses to their victimisation, the women's post-programme accounts contextualise partners' abuse within broader conditions of structural oppression:

Today I'm going to buy me some shoes. Before, I never spent money on myself, it was always on [child], [expartner], or his debts [Mira; 226-227].

I'm on a benefit but I don't have enough money to survive, I've got a \$255 deficit a week but WINZ [Work and Income New Zealand] keep sending me away. So in reality, somewhere down the track, I will have to be with [partner] because [if not] I'll lose my house...Regardless of whether women stay with those men or not; I have to deal with [partner] for the rest of my life because I have four kids with him...In New Zealand men are just allowed to go and rebuild their lives and leave those scarred, damaged families [Jacquie; 267-286...581].

Mira and Jacquie's narratives reveal critical intersections between structural inequalities, economic deprivation, gender-based power hierarchies and partners' violence constraining victims' options for safety from violence (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Domestic violence discourses that conceal economic abuse fail to recognise how victims' financial precarity and exploitation contribute to their entrapment in relationships with perpetrators (Burman & Chantler, 2005).

The women's accounts exposed violence by drawing attention to gender-based economic deprivation and disparity, housing instability, insufficient resources for victims and their children during and after relationships with perpetrators, and inadequate responses for holding perpetrators accountable for contributing to victim's ongoing marginalisation post-separation. Crucially, this conveys prevalent unjust conditions whereby women victims and their children are left to "pick up the pieces" while perpetrators "restart" their lives afresh. Researchers (e.g. Morgan & Coombes, 2013; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005) identified connections between indicators of systemic inequality pertaining to gender, class and ethnicity, and victim marginalisation. Dillon et al., (2016) found housing instability significantly increased women victims' likelihood of remaining with perpetrators and reduced their help seeking. Vitally, the women's talk challenged a prevailing focus on individual victims and perpetrators as the site of domestic violence intervention (Flood & Pease, 2006) by illuminating societal-level inequalities and injustice contributing to women victims' long-term precarity and, to some degree, exonerating perpetrators.

Women's Group emphasis on legitimating and extending women's knowledge of broader sociocultural discursive practices that conceal violence and silence victims facilitated women's resistance to such discourses. Taking up resistance discourses

therefore encompassed knowing about and exposing coercive control and violence, and clarifying contexts in which violence occurs. Women reported these ideas and actions as important in reclaiming their dignity and experiencing greater safety and wellbeing.

2. Obfuscating and Clarifying Perpetrator Responsibility

My analysis before women participated in the Group identified that the women frequently constructed perpetrators' violence as unintentional (Coates & Wade 2004). I found that the women predominantly drew from "commonsense" externalising explanations to justify perpetrators' violence. They often elicited prevalent violence causation discourses to explain perpetrators' violence; the intergenerational cycle of violence theory, boys' emasculation by domineering maternal figures, stress, mental illness, and substance abuse (c.f. O'Neill & Morgan 2001). This enabled excusing or mutualising perpetrator violence, and positioned victims as blameworthy co-agents in the violence, as theorised by RBP (Coates & Wade, 2004; Todd & Wade, 2003). Evident in the current analysis however, was a clear departure from discourses obscuring perpetrator responsibility. The women's stories resisted constructions of perpetrator's violence as involuntary or justified—for example, representations of perpetrators as out of control. They referred to their changed understandings, attributed to Group participation, which repositioned perpetrators from non-agentic or victims, to intentionally behaving violently:

The [Group] taught me everything he does is deliberate, which devastated me...it's so obvious to me now that he does that [Jacquie; 164-170].

He's chosen to do what he's done to me. It's not my fault he acted that way; it's his own [Mira; 107].

I asked the women whether they had experienced changes to their safety since participating in the Group. Their responses support evidence (e.g. Pain, 2012; Towns & Adams, 2015) that availability of discourses attributing violence to perpetrators rather than victims can signify critical turning points in women experiencing enhanced safety and wellbeing:

Jess: What aspects of the Group helped you feel safer?

Bex: Over that 12 years I believed it was my fault that he used to hit me because I was useless, I didn't do anything right, it was my fault, But, after the Group, I realised he'd made a choice to do that, it certainly wasn't anything I did that made him do it [140-143].

Women's legitimation and authority gained through collectively identifying ways perpetrators choose to behave abusively resonated throughout interview texts. Their new knowledge directly and fundamentally linked to enhanced safety and wellbeing. Similar conclusions were also drawn in Towns and Adams' (2015) research, which found women victims' changed awareness that responsibility for violence was the perpetrator's, supported them to challenge language that rationalised or justified partner's violence. Language that clarified perpetrator responsibility and questioned externalising attributions of perpetrators' violence in the Group disentangled preexisting ambiguity regarding victims' roles in provoking or initiating violence and blaming themselves (c.f. Coates & Wade 2004; Morgan & O'Neill, 2001; O'Neill & Morgan 2001). Their experiential knowledge was legitimated through Group written materials and sharing with others that affirmed previously unspoken understandings of the

unilaterality of perpetrators' violence (Coates & Wade, 2004). However, the women's narratives recounted painful transitions in reconstructing perpetrator violence as intentional and controllable:

My biggest thing with [partner] is what it did to you when your mother and father treated you and your sister and brother like that, or your father treated your mother like that, so why on earth would you do it to your kids? Forget me, but I don't get why? So now the deliberate violence thing has really stuck in my head. When I see him acting like a jerk I think, this is you're choosing to do this...He knows how to be good and turn it on...He can literally talk to me and the kids like dirt, then someone will ring and he's nice as pie, and that makes me sick. Or he'll be nice to other people's kids and not to his own [Jacquie; 543-549...695-700].

Jacquie described her initial despair, exasperation, then contempt towards her partner. Her statement, *"the [Group] taught me everything he does is deliberate, which devastated me,"* conveys the process of transition as a struggle to make sense of the senseless: a man's deliberate, disrespectful and abusive treatment of his partner and children, to which the woman's response is devastation and bewilderment. The struggle entails shattering women's beliefs in common, socially valorised notions of intimate and family relationships constituting care, respect and love (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Consequently, availability of the counter-operation of violence as intentional enables a reconstruction of domestic violence as a violation of cherished and sacred notions of intimacy and family, and an attack on victims' dignity (Richardson & Wade, 2010).

Weaver et al. (2007) conceptualise victims' confusion or failure to understand that partners' abuse is controllable as a tacit form of resistance in knowing partners' violent actions have no acceptable justification. Akin to the first interviews, I found women often referenced partners' personal histories in explaining their violence. While in the first interviews women used such constructs as poor parental modelling to explain partners' violence as inevitable, important changes occurred in the discourses women took up in conceptualising partners' violence though Group participation. In Jacquie's narrative, for example, she positions her partner as an agentic adult capable of exerting self-control, but who fails to constructively reflect upon and apply lessons from his own early experiences of abuse in relating respectfully to his children.

Jacquie's statement, "*forget me*" raises questions regarding cultural scripts shaping assumptions about women victims. In this context, "*forget me,*" indicates presence of disciplinary power entailing victims' self-positioning as less worthy of fair, respectful treatment than other family members (Towns & Adams, 2015). This act of self-regulation exemplifies women's enduring experience of social responses informed by traditional gender stereotypes which require women, and particularly mothers, to selflessly subordinate their needs to others or risk condemnation as bad, selfish women or mothers (Lapierre, 2008). The comment "*forget me*" also speaks to normative assumptions about fathers who perpetrate violence that rationalise victimising one's partner as more excusable than victimising one's children. This obscures the highly problematic notion that one can be a loving, respectful father while simultaneously perpetrating violence against one's partner and children's mother (Bancroft et al., 2012). Jacquie's implicit use of the discourse that constitutes mothers as "self-sacrificing" indicates its dominance. However, challenges extending to broader gendered injustices

were not a focus of the programme, even though feminist analyses of domestic violence feature in Group principles and content.

As they were becoming more attuned to partners' ability to control the timing and subjects of their abuse, interviewees conveyed contempt towards them, as indicated in Bex's statement, "*he's just a coward*" [100], and Jacquie's partner "*acting like a jerk*" and that his behaviour "*makes me sick.*" Exposing perpetrator responsibility repositions victims from being morally culpable for their "part in the violence" to morally justified in expecting accountability from perpetrators, and more appropriate agency responses for holding perpetrators responsible and protecting victims. Crucially, other studies (e.g. Towns & Adams, 2015) report victims' transitions from bewilderment to disdain for perpetrators as crucial turning points for victims in mobilising support to exit or reconfigure the terms of relationships with abusive partners.

Across the second interview transcripts, I found women's talk frequently referred to perpetrators acting violently to suppress victims' resistance (Coates & Wade, 2004), as Bex's accounts indicate:

I wasn't allowed to speak up about what was going on in the marriage. Because if I did there was consequences; if he'd found out I'd be beaten; so I just kept my mouth shut [Bex; 52-54].

He's doing it because he wants to be in control and wants to be intimidating [Bex; 67].

Bex's statements exemplify the response-based principle that perpetrators' violence is used to suppress victims' resistance (Coates, Richardson & Wade, 2014).

During her marriage, Bex "*kept [her] mouth shut*" to protect herself and children from her husband's "*consequences*" of escalating violence. Bex also understood her husband beating her, threatening to beat her again if she disclosed his violence, forbidding her having friends or leaving the property, bonding her in domestic slavery, abusing her children, and verbally humiliating her, as deliberate abusive strategies to maintain dominance and suppress her resistance. Similarly, Bex clarified her ex-husband "*control[ling]*" and "*intimidating*" since separating by tracking her new address and frequently driving past her new home and workplace as deliberate attempts to maintain dominance.

Here, Bex communicated critical safety information in disclosing her ex-husband's on-going violence and dangerousness, and her and her children's restricted freedom of movement after ending the relationship. Vivaly, Bex articulated otherwise inadequately recognised knowledge that while victims act in numerous ways to resist and attempt to manage perpetrators' violence, they cannot control it, only the perpetrator can, and equally, leaving a violent partner does not guarantee safety (Miller et al., 2005). Thus, Bex expressed awareness of limits to victims' capacity to ensure safety from (ex)partners' violence by utilising counter-operations of exposing violence and framing perpetrator violence as intentional.

The following narratives support my finding that Group participation opened space for women to enlist broader discourses of gender-based violence derived from understandings of coercive control (Stark, 2007) and the unilaterality and deliberateness of violence (Coates & Wade, 2004) to expose perpetrators' attempts to avoid responsibility by blaming victims for their violence:

[Partner] even rang the police on me! I was seeing it for myself and hearing with my own ears, but how he's relaying it back to me is a completely different perception, and that scares me too, because he's there with the police and saying 'she's fucking loopy' in front of my son, saying, 'all I'm trying to do is be with my kids, be drug free,' You'll always have the bandwagon, 'oh what about poor men, it's always about women.' Well hello: you're the perpetrator so you actually need to learn how to deal with the damage you've done. My biggest thing now is, and that's what I don't understand, [partner]'s...in that position purely because of his behaviour. He got a protection order because of his behaviour, but he's still saying, 'I have to go to that [perpetrator programme] every week because of you, I have a protection order because of you,' and he tells the kids as well...I said 'I don't go to my [Women's] Group because there's something wrong with me, I go because of what you've done to me'...I just wanted to make it clear that everything in this house is all around his behaviour [Jacquie; 214-266].

Jacquie's narrative exemplifies how interviewees took up counter-operations of exposing violence, clarifying perpetrator responsibility for violence, and contesting victim blaming and pathologising through recognising cultural scripts that invert victim status to men perpetrators (Busch, Morgan & Coombes, 2014; McCarthy, 1994-95). Jacquie's narrative revealed how perpetrators enlist discursive strategies to position themselves as the unacknowledged "true victims" (c.f. Dragiewicz, 2011). Jacquie contextualises this in her partner's persistent attempts to minimise his violence, and emotionally manipulate Jacquie, their children and police, into believing she is causing his and his family's anguish.

Jacquie's account exposes perpetrators' attempts to bolster others' view of them

as victims by employing prevalent "crazy-woman" stereotypes which portray women partners as pathological and, by suggestion, irrational and dangerous (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004). Jackie's statement, "*that scares me*" conveys her recognition of how victim blaming and pathologising gives credence to partners' positioning the woman as perpetrator and themselves as victims. This is contextualised in Jacquie's partner twisting events and using the police as a tool of control and abuse (c.f. Harrison, 2008). Jacquie's narrative reveals women victims' familiarity with others' disbelief of victim testimonies (c.f. Humphreys & Holder, 2002) alongside their difficulties producing evidence considered acceptable in court (c.f. Harrison, 2008). Thus, it is reasonable that women respond with fear (Wade, 1997).

Jacquie's accounts also contextualise her partner's actions within a father's rights discourse. This constructs men perpetrators as abandoned and persecuted by a society consumed with pervasive feminist ideologies that give preferential treatment to women and mothers (Busch et al., 2014; DeKeseredy, 2011; Dragiewicz, 2011; Kaye & Tolmie, 1998). Father's rights discourses position women victims who report abuse from partners as vindictive family destroyers (Dragiewicz, 2011; Hindle & Morgan, 2006; Pence & Paymar, 1993). Jacquie's account tells of her partner's attempts to construct her as exaggerating, if not fabricating, his violence, alongside his self-positioning as striving to be a good dad and hold the family together. Father's rights discourses construct organisations aligned with feminist principles, such as Women's Refuge, as "striking at the heart of fatherhood and the family" (Menzies, 2007, p. 79). Likewise, these discourses construct fathers as unconditionally entitled to full parenting rights irrespective of their violence towards family members and ability to safely and competently parent (Bagshaw, 2011; Bancroft et al., 2012).

Perpetrators' positioning as victims is well-documented (e.g. Coates & Wade,

2007; Miller et al., 2005; Pence & Paymar, 1993). Conventionally, this uses a binary victim-perpetrator discourse whereby the identified victim cannot, by definition, also be the perpetrator (Towns & Adams, 2015). Thus, in self-identifying as the victim, the perpetrator precludes responsibility for violence and identifying the abused partner as the victim. Moreover, being positioned as victim enables the perpetrator to exploit existing uncertainty regarding perpetrator culpability afforded by discourses that mutualise and minimise violence, and equate non-equivalent violent acts (Coates & Wade, 2004; Dragiewicz, 2011).

Notably, Jackie's statement above, "*I don't understand*" may be read figuratively as refusing to accept her partner's violence as logical or reasonable, and indignation at her partner's refusal to acknowledge and reflect on the significance of his protection order. Women may be understood as employing resistance discourses by disengaging from positioning as "good wife/woman" that require women to be placid, forbearing, and reconciliatory to successfully enact femininity (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003).

The women's resistance was realised through their repositioning as legitimately taking clear, uncompromising stands regarding appropriate attributions of responsibility for violence (Coates & Wade, 2007). Their stories demonstrated tacit knowledge of discourses enabling articulation of (ex)partners' deliberate strategies for suppressing their resistance, affording the women legitimate grounds to challenge their violence and victim blaming and pathologising.

3. Contesting Victim Blaming and Pathologising

The second series of interview texts contrasted with the first in its absence of discourses constructing victims as passive, not protecting themselves and their children, or responsible for partners' violence due to their own deficiencies (Dobash & Dobash,

1992; Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007). Constructions of the Group as a socially and physically safe space providing protection from victim-blaming and other negative social responses prevailed. The following excerpts support this in conveying interviewees' view of the Group as a space to experience freedom from negative judgement and shame:

I've had major, major changes...when I first came to the Group, when I was first invited to it I refused to come because I didn't think I could participate and join in...From the first session I felt comfortable and knew it was the right place for me, and I didn't think I could even speak up in front of people. And every session that went on I managed to speak more and more...it's been absolutely great...I wasn't put down, because I'd gotten used to being put down and that I was a piece of dirt and just didn't—had no confidence in myself whatsoever. We never felt ashamed for saying anything. This has become my safe place. The best thing I did for myself was to actually join [Bex; 5-35].

I felt very safe in the Group [Mira; 70].

*It's probably **the only** safe place because even though I have some close relationships with other women and family members...I don't want anyone to make a judgement or do anything, I just want them to know how it feels, and in the Group we can do that [Jacquie; 76-81].*

The Group was portrayed as "my safe place" of respite from victim shaming. Statements like, "I just want them to know how it feels," signaled the women's longing

to feel understood without criticism. Implied is a gravely concerning situation where victims have no relationships beyond the Group in which shaming, misrepresentation and humiliation are not the primary responses they receive (Wade, 1997). Bex's account conveys the magnitude to which her life was imperiled by her husband's violence, contextualised in victim deficiency and mother shaming discourses, which are challenged within the Group:

*During my marriage I tried to commit suicide five times because I just didn't want to be on Earth. I felt I was useless, why am I here? My only escape, my only way out, was killing myself. Someone else would be a better mother to my children and I believed it was my only way of leaving him. I felt so...low. And now it's a lot different, a **lot** different. I realise now, especially after being in the Group I realise, and all the ladies, they've told me, you realise you **are** a good person and kind and compassionate, and I'm a good mum and my work with the animals. And to hear that time and time again from the ladies. To know that they mean it. It's been a real boost. It keeps you going, it's awesome...I feel really proud of myself for getting through [Bex; 279-298].*

Bex's narrative indicates she understands her despair-filled thoughts and actions were responses to her husband's violence and entrapment rather than evidence of personal deficiency or pathology. She also illuminates particular Group processes enabling victims' repositioning as capable and resourceful women and mothers. Experiencing disbelief, shaming and other negative judgements is a significant disincentive for victims to disclose violence (e.g. Belknap et al., 2009; Laing, 2010; Coates & Wade, 2004). Understanding the Group as sanctuary from the stigma and

shaming of dominant victim discourses drew attention to the abject lack of safe environments for victims to freely voice experiences, viewpoints, and needs with assurance of respectful and appropriate support.

The following excerpts provide stark depictions of how particular sociocultural assumptions regarding performance of traditional gender roles and violence perpetration severely constrained the women's options for responding to violence before joining the Group:

That was a big change, I believed those 12 years that I was just useless, I really felt I was nothing...I was brought up old-fashioned that once you're married you're married, you do the wife role and he does the husband role, I just felt I wasn't good enough and I deserved what I got. But after starting and being in the Group for a while I started realising, I'm an OK person and I didn't deserve it [Bex; 204-209].

That constant 'it's you, if you just shut up about me doing drugs, if you just cleaned the house more.' And then I started thinking, well I'm not that person anymore. If you want to come home with white gloves you're gonna find dust everyday but hopefully my kids will be smiling. I think that's the power of going to the Group, and I've watched other women coming who are shy or haven't found their voice yet and seen them at the other end. It's so cool and the great thing is you can keep in contact with the women, keep in touch and make sure they're OK. And there's something in that we're not the same either, but that knowing what it feels like without having to say it. You feel that beaten down but the thing we have in common is we're all really strong women. So it's that myth

that you must be downtrodden and weak and have no personality to be a victim of some man's power. I think was one of the big things we got from the Group, we realised we were all really strong, which is ironic, but it's how we kept ourselves safe [Jacquie; 642-657].

Bex and Jacquie's narratives illustrate how traditional gender stereotypes of "good wife," mother-blaming, and discourses of men's entitlement intersect with husbands' use of violence to maintain partner's entrapment, self-blame, and suffering (c.f. Busch et al., 2014). They explicitly reveal and contest discourses that construct victims as passive and dysfunctional, and women as submissive. Jacquie's declaration, *"that myth that you must be downtrodden and weak and have no personality"* explicitly challenges victim pathologising and traditional gender stereotypes. Notably, including *"ironic"* in Jacquie's statement, *"we realised we were all really strong women, which is ironic, but is how we kept ourselves safe,"* implies awareness of the prevalent view that victims cannot, by definition, be strong or capable of self-protection. This suggests the women's resistance to positioning as weak and vulnerable prior to participating in the Group is facilitated through their interactions and relationships in the Group.

These narratives speak to particular respectful and dignifying practices within the Group that enabled members to contest victim-blaming, mother-blaming and pathologising. The comment, *"I started thinking, well I'm not that person anymore,"* conveys Jacquie's repositioning as a capable mother choosing not to conform to traditional gender roles and prioritising her children's happiness over domestic chores. The accounts also suggest how the Group performed a transformative role in women's transition from isolation, despair, self-blame and shame towards belonging, respect, and

hope. Following Group participation self-pathologising in women's scripts was largely absent as indicated in the following example:

Going through the case studies and women talking about strategies their partners used I thought crikey, that's happened to me, I've been told I was mad or stupid or crazy, when I wasn't. And realising that...you're seeing it spelled out in black and white in the book, and you're getting the feedback from other women...I gained back my self-worth and realised I'm not nuts, I'm not unworthy or unlovable [Jacquie; 53-59].

Jacquie's accounts construct Group content and processes as legitimating and reframing women victim's pathologising by revealing ways these discursive operations are used by perpetrators, the justice system, and others (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007). Her testimony speaks to victims' common experiences of being disbelieved and construed as pathological and hence of questionable credibility (Harrison, 2008; Morgan & Coombes, 2016).

Similarly, the extracts below illustrate how women's positioning by shaming victim discourses constrained options for disclosing partners' violence and informed their perception of the Group before participating:

*I was speaking with [advocate] and she goes, 'we've got this programme starting up and can you do it?' I was like naa, **shame!** But she said, 'please come, it will be good for you,' and I was like, 'OK, I'll do it for you,' but I actually got so much out of it as well. And I didn't think I would...because I*

don't like speaking about my personal things. And because people would have gone through more than what I did [Mira; 52-59].

*It's powerful because you're hearing from those other women, and you do start believing, hey I **don't** deserve this, my kids don't deserve this, I **didn't** create this problem...I used to believe it was my fault. I don't now, at all [Jacquie; 82-85].*

The narratives illustrate how prior to joining the Group, the women anticipated a repeat of previously experienced negative social responses. The excerpts show how victim-blaming positioned them as undeserving of support, making disclosing victimisation untenable. The women's accounts tell of the Group opening dialogue for contesting victim blaming and pathologising discourses, and exploring resistance discourses with such inquiries as, if my children and I are not to blame, then who is responsible for the violence, and what social conditions enable victim blaming?

The women's narratives convey women experiencing safety as dignifying social responses characterised by respect and belonging felt within the Group. For example, Group processes, such as the Refuge advocate proactively encouraging women to join the Group whilst emphasising women's choice and control over participation was considered crucial. Such interchanges were important for enhancing dignity and safety, and accommodating women's initial reluctance due to experiences of stigma and diminished confidence. Thus, references to safety were closely interwoven with expressions of relief that a supportive place existed to offer succor from the social violence that pervaded women's everyday experience. Mira's excerpt below suggests resistance discourses prominent in the Group enabled new, mana-enhancing responses to victim blaming:

The way I think of it is that they actually don't know what it's like. I had that the other week; some girl was like, 'why did you stay with him for so long?' Usually I feel like I have to defend myself, but this time I don't feel the need to explain [Mira; 136-139].

Mira's account can be read as her repositioning as self-assured in her knowledge of domestic violence stereotypes that blame victims and excuse perpetrators, and composed in how she chooses to respond to these stereotypes. I found that after the Group women positioned themselves as cognisant of how (ex)partners construed them as deficient to maintain dominance. Replacement of victim blaming and pathologising discourses with those constructing victims as non-complicit in partners' violence suggest the women's repositioning as worthy of respectful treatment and entitled to protection.

4. Concealing, Elucidating, and Honouring Victim Responses and Resistance

Central to Group kaupapa was legitimating victims' responses and resistances by enquiring about the women's responses to specific acts of violence and oppression, and clarifying the situational logic by which some responses become intelligible as forms of resistance (c.f. Wade, 1997). Group session content involved exploring response-based principles of victim resistance through reading, sharing, and discussing. Women examined how they respond(ed) to violence through varying forms of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual resistance; and how they strove to keep themselves safe, protect children and others, and uphold their mana and dignity (Richardson & Wade, 2010; Todd & Wade, 2004). In this section I discuss the Group's effectiveness in

facilitating women critiquing and expanding discursive resources available to them which conceal, elucidate and honour victim responses and resistance (Coates & Wade, 2004; Wade, 1997).

My analysis before women participated in the Group often unearthed narratives of victim responses to partner abuse that positioned the women as passive "recipients" of partners' unintentional violence. I found fewer examples of women taking up counter-operations of honouring their resistance in pre-programme interviews. Particularly salient were discourses constructing victims as non-agentic "non-responders" to violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; Todd & Wade, 2003). Analysing women's texts following Group participation consistently showed the women's repositioning as actively responding, covertly and overtly, to partners' violence:

I never thought I resisted the abuse. But then I learnt at the Group that when he was being abusive and I would just shut down and be quiet or tell the boys, 'go off to your room and just be quiet,' I realised that was resisting abuse, that was trying to calm the situation so it didn't escalate...the more we talked about it the more I thought yes, I can see that. It was a big eye-opener...I know if I had spoken up to anyone or gone for help, there were severe consequences for me or my children so I just shut down and I didn't tell anyone anything. No matter how much I wanted to...my sons were my motivator also to keep going and everything I did was to keep them as safe as possible so he wouldn't hurt them [Bex; 387-411].

[The Group] showed me I'd responded even if I was ignoring him. It showed me that with ignoring him I was actually not giving-in to his abuse...I'm definitely

more aware now of how I resisted his abuse...The Group helped point things out that you had actually done, that you didn't know you were doing [Mira; 22-23...123-126].

The women's excerpts convey their transforming understandings, enabled through Group membership, whereby they understood they were never "doing nothing," "accepting violence," or "allowing themselves/their children to be abused." This was shown by languaging portraying victims' reformulation of their thoughts and actions, crucially, as resisting perpetrators' deliberate violence. In Bex's account, for example, she is positioned as reclaiming dignity and freedom from abuse by reinstating a safe and peaceful home for herself and her children. This legitimated the women's knowledge that they did not cause partners' violence. In clarifying victim responses and resistance, Group facilitators work with the women to notice and examine the situational logic guiding victims' responses in accessible and tangible ways (c.f. Wade, 1997; Weaver et al., 2007). Crucially, victim advocacy promotes understandings of resistance that explicitly acknowledge victims are unable to stop perpetrators' violence (Coates & Wade, 2004; Wade, 1994).

While the women's accounts primarily indicated Group content and processes opened space for resistance discourses previously not encountered by victims, Jacquie's account portrays the Group as enabling her to articulate existing knowledge:

I learned in the Women's Group, the resistance, I have always resisted, I don't remember ever learning about women's resistance...It was like I thought it but I couldn't voice that [Jacquie; 224-227].

Thus, Group participation may be conceived as *affirming and strengthening* the women's positioning as always responding to coercive control, violence and injustice. These transformed understandings were conveyed as contributing to alleviating women's shame and self-blame and thus, central to women reclaiming dignity through Group membership. Women's accounts also consistently positioned their children as responding to and resisting violence:

My [eldest son] took on a very protective role. He always tried to jump in the middle. He'd tell [husband], 'just leave, you're mean!' There were other times when [husband] would be hitting me and [son] would go to his younger brother and take him out of the house, they'd go hide somewhere [Bex; 423-427].

*[Partner] said 'calm down' in front of the kids, and I'm thinking, I'm calm, then...am I calm? Then he said, 'can you see what your mother's doing? See what I have to fucking put up with?' They're 7, 10, 13, and 15, and my son, who's 13, said, 'Dad, Mum didn't say anything, Mum **is** calm, it was you' [Jacquie; 230-235].*

The women's excerpts demonstrate awareness of children resisting abuse in portraying their sons' responses to fathers' violence. Jacquie's account recognises her partner's deliberate attempts to humiliate, blame and control her in front of their children. She exposes her partner's attempts to undermine her authority as mother by manipulating her and their children into believing she is victimising him. The women spoke of their sons with immense pride in portraying them as courageous and fair-minded family protectors.

In evaluating the Group's effectiveness, I was interested in forms of resistance that were possible, enabled or constrained by available discourses and broader material and social realities of the women's lives. Resistance was often conceptualised as responding to interpersonal violence contextualised within particular social power relations such as gender, class and sociogeographical location. This is indicated in Jacquie's accounts of events after leaving her partner. Alongside other forms of violence, Jacquie's partner had used financial abuse by controlling and spending the family's small income and incurring significant debt during their 16-year relationship:

I get [social agencies] saying 'you have to do this you have to do that,' and then you're left on your own, and I'm really resourceful; I used to surround myself with clutter under the guise I could sell it one day and buy my children some shoes and it kept me safe. But if the resources aren't there...it gets to rock bottom and you've got four kids, you can't get back up...WINZ asked, when I had the protection order, oh so he's hit you? And I'm like, you still don't get it, and do I want to have that discussion with WINZ? I feel this overwhelming dread of WINZ...One of the things that was frustrating, not so much through Refuge but other organisations was, 'no, this is the only way we want it to be, the only way we can accept it is if you're not together,' especially the police [Jacquie; 361-367...525-530...780-782].

This account shows how Jacquie constructs her resistance to her partner's violence as inextricably interwoven with structural issues of chronic economic precarity in her family, socio-economic entrapment, victim/mother-blaming discourses and poor agency understandings of domestic violence (Douglas & Walsh, 2010; Ptacek, 1988;

Strega & Janzen, 2013). Alongside this, often disrespectful, inadequate and disempowering social responses women victims receive, in this context from welfare agencies, are revealed.

Jacquie's accounts of interactions with agencies speak of diminished autonomy and dignity in defending her parenting capabilities and requesting support. Jacquie positions herself as revealing and resisting negative judgement towards victims. This may be contextualised in "failure to protect" state practices and policies whereby victimised mothers are presumed responsible for stopping partner's violence and threats are issued to remove children (Morgan & Coombes, 2016; Nixon & Cripps, 2013; Strega, Krane, & Carlton, 2013). By implication, mothers are blamed for "causing" their children emotional distress, disrupted learning, and behavioural problems among other harms when living with and after separating from perpetrators (Douglas & Walsh, 2010; Lapierre, 2008). Jacquie's accounts also expose insensitive treatment of victims due to misconceptions about domestic violence as physical assault.

A reading of Jacquie's narrative indicates that ostensibly well-meaning responses, whereby support is contingent on victims separating from violent partners, is simplistic, moralistic and paternalistic. Implicated here are deeply troubling ramifications of the "stay verses leave" binary, given many women victims experience continued violence and marginalisation after separating, yet are deterred from seeking help if leaving their partner is untenable. Jacquie's excerpts also indicate that some sector workers are unwilling to help victims who remain with partners, despite the dangers of separation and the alienation and blame of victims that is involved (c.f. Morgan & Coombes, 2016; Ptacek, 1988). This serves as a call for reflection and improvement for agencies, including Refuge.

Positioning victimised mothers in the process of leaving violent partners represents a persistent double-bind in which mothers experience pressure to relinquish their autonomy, plead for resources, and demonstrate they and their children are worthy of support, whilst showing they are safe and competent mothers (Jaffe, Lemon, & Poisson, 2003; Strega & Janzen, 2013). Though such demeaning interactions, women victims experience intensified stigma, humiliation, reduced control over their lives, fear of condemnation as inadequate mothers, or being considered unworthy of assistance when they show resourcefulness and capability. Faced with little certainty of adequate and dignifying professional responses, women victims with few independent resources may opt to preserve their self-respect and sense of control by remaining with abusive partners rather than negotiate state welfare processes.

Importantly, Jacquie's accounts convey her ability to notice her own resourcefulness as a response to ongoing threats of poverty intersecting with violence. This was contextualised in her partner's various abusive strategies and the family's lack of a socio-economic "safety net." Jacquie explained "*surrounding [her]self with clutter*" made sense as a means of accumulating valuable items for resale in times of family hardship. This increased Jacquie's financial security and ability to provide for her children. Her self-positioning as a resourceful and capable mother also communicated tensions of enduring the humiliation of asking for state assistance in the context of mother-blaming and stigmatising discourses of people who are "welfare dependent," particularly, single mothers (Strega & Janzen, 2013). Yet, self-blame is absent from Jacquie's accounts. Thus, Jacquie engages a resistance discourse by acknowledging that the forms of her resistance to violence and broader structural inequalities are constrained by wider material and social conditions.

Taken together, victims' responses to violence are complex and multifaceted. This underpins the benefits of contextual analyses that privilege illuminating victims' responses, decision-making, and safety assessment (Coates, Richardson & Wade, 2014). The women's narratives show how the women utilised counter-operations of elucidating and honouring victim responses and resistance in repositioning themselves and their children as capable, resourceful, and courageous.

5. Restoring Dignity and Wellbeing Through Group Support and Solidarity

This final section explores what happened when dignity was the organising principle for engaging and shaping Group members' experiences. I identified characteristics, enabled through a Group format, which demonstrated how the Group operates as an effective social response facilitating the women's enhanced safety, wellbeing and dignity.

The women unequivocally represented the Group as a significant source of friendship and unconditional support. The Group's core documents, the Facilitation Guide and Women's Handbook, underscore the centrality of manaakitanga; hospitality, kindness, caring and respect for others, and nurturing relationships. Interview texts consistently referenced manaakitanga as crucial Group characteristics promoting women's belonging and restoring their dignity. The following excerpts illustrate the vital importance of this for women victims:

I've got all the ladies from [the Group] here and [facilitator]. They're my backbone at the moment...the connections I've made here. They keep me going, they keep me strong [Bex; 83-85].

This friend in particular, I know I can call on her anytime and she can call on me anytime, that's amazing to have found her [Jacquie; 30-31].

People were respectful and it was great fun... We definitely had a lot of laughs [Mira; 84-86].

The women's interview texts conveyed the immense value Group members placed on experiencing connectedness, bonding, and trust, deemed fundamental to Group kaupapa. Women positioned themselves as mutually supporting each other within and beyond the safe Group space into everyday life. Texts portrayed the Group's transformational role for making friendships in which the women called on one-another in times of need. Thus the Group was constructed as a resource for sharing strategies and developing capacity to negotiate adverse social demands women encountered including ongoing abuse from (ex)partners, and broader negative social responses.

The women's talk drew forth the concerted manner in which dignifying, mana-enhancing practices were applied in the Group. Careful and sustained attention to exposing denigrating and shaming practices, and sheltering Group members from these, was evident. Mira's statement, "*we had a lot of laughs*" communicated Group members' healing and dignity that developed through relationships based on connecting, trusting, and laughing together. Dignity enhancing practices were fundamental to restoring the women's wairua. I found interviewees' joy, mauri,⁹ and self-assurance palpable during our face-to-face interactions. Indeed, women's positive experiences of the Group were evident in their commitment to attending:

⁹ Mauri: Vital life force within individuals and collective entities.

I only missed one session; that was because I crashed my car [Mira; 67].

Women's texts also signaled the crucial place of gender analyses through feminist lenses for building sociopolitical consciousness and solidarity in Group processes and content. Jacquie's excerpt conveys the power of women's alignment with feminist principles through a symbolic link to the Group and Refuge:

[Partner's] definitely done the, 'you listen to Women's Refuge too much.' I've got a kowhai tile that was given to me when I left Women's Refuge that has pride of place in my kitchen that he knows about. I have no secrets. I'm staunchly feminist [Jacquie; 797-800].

A reading of Jacquie's account suggests the kowhai tile, proudly displayed, performs a protective function for Jacquie in showing her partner she does not stand alone but has Refuge's backing. Crucially, this is contextualised in Jacquie's partner's attempts to discourage her Refuge connections. This speaks to the considerable threat Refuge represents to perpetrators' ability to dominate partners, and thus, can be construed as an attempt to censure those seen as condemning perpetrators (c.f. Dobash & Dobash, 2010). In this scenario, Refuge and Jacquie are subjects of censure. This positions Jacquie as revealing violence and perpetrator responsibility by refusing to hide her Refuge connection from her partner and others (Coates & Wade, 2004). This is further conveyed in the statement, "*I have no secrets,*" whereby Jacquie proclaims her refusal to participate in victim silencing and shaming and her new-found positioning as "staunchly feminist."

Jacquie's excerpt draws from discourses of feminist action organised around redressing gender-based violence. This association offers a somewhat dangerous form of moral legitimacy in its requirement to challenge dominant power structures and resist relentless backlash, as documented in critiques of father's rights discourses. Jacquie's open identification as feminist and her alignment with Refuge values challenge her partner's attempts to suppress her resistance. Thus, the kowhai tile is constructed as a potent symbol of resistance to violence against women and children.

The women's narratives demonstrate how legitimisation of feminist and response-based analyses of domestic violence through the Group enabled participants' positioning as victim advocates:

I've got a friend at the moment, her partner is quite abusive, not all the time, but when he flips out he flips out, maybe once a month, and she comes to me. I've stopped telling her to leave him because I myself know that isn't helpful to hear, you get told by everyone else, 'leave him,' but you always need that one person to just be there for you, and I've been that one that's been there for her...to help her and support her in any way I could...It's not just physical violence, big time: My mate's partner was saying some nasty things to her and I said, 'you don't need to put up with that' I said, 'that's emotional abuse' [Mira; 21...260].

Nearly all of us have said there've been experiences where we've stood up for other women...that makes me feel like I can make a little bit of difference and that's something amazing that comes back from that Group [Jacquie; 858-863].

The texts tell of the women clarifying domestic violence, including non-assaultive strategies and victim shaming, to support other women. I understood these accounts as engaging discourses of victim solidarity, which construct interpersonal acts of resistance as part of a larger social justice movement against violence and oppression. These challenge discourses of victims as damaged and weak, and instead position victims as confidently, compassionately, and sometimes courageously exposing perpetrators' violence and supporting victims. Thus, the women portrayed the Group as an effective social response, which enabled them to advocate for other victims.

Particular Group processes were understood as enabling women to experience safety in the Group:

Pretty much straight away I felt safe, because we made rules, like what is said in there stays in there [Mira; 77-78].

Mira's statement constructs safety as contingent on trust and confidentiality. The women emphasised the importance of exerting control over how their personal information was managed. Mira's excerpt indicates her cognisance of victim shaming and blaming beyond the safety of the Group. Crucial for victims' safety and dignity is a Group structure that privileges their preferred terms of engagement. Likewise, ongoing support offered through the Group is vital for women's changing conditions of safety:

I would recommend the Group 100 percent. That's why I've come back for another round. It definitely was the best thing I did. I've learnt a lot, I've made connections, I've got support...I did the Group and came to the end of it and it

was only a week and my ex-husband breached again, and I said I just want the support again, can I come back? And [facilitator] said yes [Bex; 447-453].

Thanks from me. I've had dark places and if I hadn't had the Group and that programme I wouldn't be where I am now [Jacquie; 872-873].

It was good meeting new people and having that support, if anything went wrong [Mira; 5-6].

These accounts elucidate the precariousness of the women's safety and compromised wellbeing as they responded to ongoing violence and challenges. Interview texts highlighted the importance of flexibility in Group structure as this had implications for participants' wellbeing. Women emphasised that being able to start the Group without delays, and repeat it, was critical for bolstering safety and wellbeing.

The Group ethos was constructed as collaborative and privileging participants' role as decision-makers, as suggested in Jacquie's statement, "*we all decided we'd do it again*" [732]. Underpinning the importance of participants' decision-making is the common inverse reality of perpetrators and agencies controlling victims' decision-making. Excluding victims from decisions affecting them eventuates in poorly conceived, insensitive and unsafe conditions for victims (Bancroft et al., 2012). Evidently however, the Group facilitator prioritised victims' needs above funding and contractual constraints by "adapting the rules" enabling women to repeat the programme.

In addition to enhanced safety and wellbeing, women attributed broader life improvements to Group membership:

I went and got [a better] job. That was a big thing for me...actually getting out there and doing something for myself [Mira; 223-224].

The joy on my boys' faces, you know. It's such a good feeling; we can...giggle and have fun, not have to be quiet...the boys can just be kids now [Bex; 334-336].

When interviewees elaborated on changes they had experienced through Group participation, they drew from dignifying discourses of collectively honouring victims' resistance and contesting victim blaming and pathologising (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007). For example, women positioned themselves and each other as resourceful, capable women and mothers despite longstanding experiences of systemic oppression relating to economic marginalisation and economic abuse by previous partners. The women also positioned themselves as providing happy and safe environments for their children to flourish. These challenged "good wife/mother" discourses, predominant in the first series of interviews, as dedicated solely to relationships within the family sphere while sacrificing one's own physical and social needs.

Discourses honouring victims' dignity through opposing forms of abuse such as enforced isolation, and deprivation of friendship and joyfulness, featured strongly in interview texts. Thus, interview texts drew from discourses of communal solidarity and interdependence as necessary conditions for victim dignity, wellbeing and belonging (c.f. Richardson & Wade, 2010). Notably absent, were discourses of self-reliance and individualist self-empowerment as avenues for women victims' enhanced wellbeing, as suggested in the following:

We were all from different backgrounds, different ages, but clicked, instantly [Jacquie; 747-748].

The ladies are absolutely wonderful. We've all been through horrible things, all got similar stories, but different stories, and we've just all supported each other...I Facebook the other ladies and we send each other private messages of support to keep going. And if we want to talk to each other we can catch up for a cuppa so it's been great [Bex; 40-47].

Jacquie and Bex's excerpts testify that diversity among members was crucial for solidarity to flourish rather than an obstacle to overcome. The women valued how their differences interwove with discovering similar threads of resistance to victimisation by (ex)partners, and broader structural oppression. This enhanced Group members' positioning as belonging to, and working together in, a collective social justice endeavour.

Thus, the construction of diversity and commonality as complimentary connecting forces, both necessary for nurturing belonging and solidarity, can be read as tacitly contesting divide and rule strategies that would otherwise undermine Group members' relationships and mutual support. This undermined partners' isolating strategies and broader discursive practices that discriminate against women according to, for example, gender, ethnicity, class or age, constraining connections between women victims. Thus, women consistently situated themselves as experiencing dignity through the social experience of recognising related yet different predicaments and

capabilities, and collectively supporting each other's unique paths of transcendence towards dignity safety and healing, rather than seeking to transcend difference.

Reflections on Study Two, Part II

Resistance discourses featured strongly throughout the women's interview texts. In using language exposing violence and clarifying perpetrator responsibility and broader structural conditions constraining victims' support and safety, it was evident to me that victims' positioning as neither blameworthy nor pathological but as responding to and resisting violence was legitimated for the women. I found that the women's narratives portrayed a process of coming to collectively know they were not to blame for partners abusing them. Their accounts signalled Group membership powerfully contributed to identifying and legitimating otherwise marginalised discourses that strengthened their paths towards reclaiming dignity and recovery from victimisation.

I understood these conditions as necessary requisites enabling social safety, dignity, freedom, and space for each woman to reconsider her responses to violence and oppression without self-blame and pathologising as resistance. During our conversation, Jacquie told me, "*the Group changes your thinking and your dialogue, and your dialogue with your children*" [496]. This conveyed how Group content and processes facilitated changes in the women's understandings of domestic violence and facilitated practices that privileged legitimating women's pre-existing, unarticulated knowledge for understanding domestic violence that aligned with resistance discourses.

Interview texts indicate the women constructed the Group as a respectful social response in which experiences of degradation and shame were replaced by resistance stories and imagining and planning futures. Moreover, Mira, Bex and Jacquie's dignity was palpable during our conversations. I observed and deeply felt the women's vitality, mana, humour, engagement, enthusiasm and pride as we spoke together. I noticed the

unmistakable sparkle in their eyes and relaxed demeanours. When I asked each of the women about the meanings they attributed to dignity, experiences of safety and belonging through Group membership were given primacy. In the following and final chapter I reflect on this research project and integrate my understandings of how RBP Women's Group practices and processes might perform as an effective social response supporting victim safety and dignity.

CHAPTER Eight: Conclusion

This research project was inspired by my awareness of the need for different understandings of and improved responses to domestic violence in Aotearoa (FVDRC, 2017), and hence, a sense of responsibility to contribute to the current body of research and practice in preventing violence within families. At a more personal level, the decision to undertake this research was fueled by my struggle, enduring since childhood, to make sense of humanity's capacities for unspeakable brutality and abuses of power amid tenacious hope, courage and kindness. This struggle to come to terms with these irreconcilable conditions concerning my own kind's behaviour towards one-another and other beings took up occupancy in the core of my being as an unfathomable, ever troubling noise at the same time diminishing, and spurring on, my spirit. When I was introduced to the ideas of RBP, the disturbing noise seemed to settle a little: researching and practicing RBP alongside the Women's Refuge advocates and Women's Group participants, and supported by response-based and other anti-violence practitioners and researchers, provided much needed clarity that transformed my understandings of violence and resistance to it.

How I understand violence against women in particular, is largely informed by direct experiences of and research on victimisation and victim advocacy. At the same time, my motivation for victim advocacy remains ignited by the ever-present actions of people resisting oppression and committed to social justice throughout the world's communities. I understand this research as part of a social justice project culminating as interwoven forms of victim advocacy encompassing the localised, practical, political, and systemic. It is my hope that my part in the project, and especially, in creating the RBP Women's Group programme, will contribute to transforming the lives of domestic

violence victims who engage with Women's Refuge and also broader institutional responses to violence prevention.

For these reasons, and because my project brief was to create and evaluate a new RBP Women's Group to replace Women's Refuge's original Safety Programme, it made sense to design a research model around feminist collaborative action research principles for engaging Refuge advocates and clients. This fitted with my research agenda of applying social justice aims to address a practical need in a locally specific context. It also necessarily provided the foundations for Study Two; investigating how discourses of dignity were constructed through Refuge clients' awareness of resistance within marginalised positions. Together, the project's feminist poststructuralist theoretical framework and collaborative action research goals across Studies One and Two emphasised social transformation with and for Refuge advocates and clients seeking safety and wellbeing for women victims.

In the early stages of shaping this research project, I was unsure as to where the research would take me, and where I would, or rather, could, take the research. I was open to the emerging process of the research project, but it still took a great deal of watching, asking, and listening to learn that the project's overarching aim was to investigate what happens when dignity is the organising principle for engaging women victims and shaping their experiences through RBP Women's Group membership. This is premised on the response-based view that restoring victim dignity is a central concern in ethical responses to preventing interpersonal violence.

In accomplishing this aim, my thesis supported a view held by anti-oppression scholars that analysing and critiquing how dominant discourses silence marginalised discourses by constructing them as deficient or incomprehensible is crucial to transformative research (c.f. Hook, 2004). Correspondingly, my thesis maintained that

social transformation is aided by research that analyses, critiques and elevates the processes through which marginalised discourses are legitimated. This necessitated privileging the participating women victims' accounts when comparing discourses they engaged to inform their understandings of domestic violence and position themselves before and after participating in the Group. In these respects, my own positioning through discourses that conceal violence, perpetrator responsibility, and victim responses and resistance, and blame and pathologise victims, was an experience I shared with the women who participated in this research. It was therefore profoundly rewarding to find that exploring the four discursive operations/counteroperations of violence that began to inform the discursive shift within me only months before had also contributed to discursive shifts in the women's accounts after they participated in the Group. Over the project's duration, I observed and reflected on the processes involved in restoring dignity and safety among the Women's Group members as we each found ways to articulate that we were not deficient, or pathological, or to blame.

Among this project's particular limitations, considerable scope remains for evaluating the RBP Group programme. Given the breadth of the project's design as it is, it was not possible to involve more culturally diverse or larger numbers of client or advocate participants, additional 12-week programmes and programmes across diverse settings, or inquire about Group facilitators' perceptions of the Group processes and content after facilitating the programme. All of these possibilities would contribute to better evaluating the Group.

As a preliminary process evaluation, I privileged the women's experiences for informing the evaluation, rather than attempting a more conventional "outcomes" evaluation. While I obtained very rich accounts from participants who took part in Study Two, these accounts cannot represent the diversity of women who attend the

programme and it remains unknown how the programme would work for the women not represented in my study. In addressing this project's limited capacity to evaluate the programme's effectiveness for diverse women, a future project could investigate how well RBP works for culturally diverse clients; particularly given culturally specific services are seldom available for the many different cultural groups represented in Aotearoa. Given contemporary cultural diversity here, it is unforeseeable that a full range of culturally specific services will ever be provided. Many women who participate in Refuge's Tauwi Group programme are not Pākehā and this may well be the situation for some time into the future. Moreover, the Group programme focused predominantly on heterosexual and economically marginalised women's experiences. These limitations regarding the scope of evaluation in relation to diversity of the women who took part is not an issue that would be addressed by increasing participant numbers, rather, it concerns who is and is not represented in the services offered by the Group, and the kinds of social intersections that are and are not represented in the research.

Client interviews needed to occur shortly after the 12-week programme had finished, thus longer-term changes for participants were not explored. Time constraints in this study also meant I was not able to consider the response-based emphasis on ongoing reflexive analytic process as a component of this preliminary evaluation. An important research finding was that the women's support and experiences of safety continued because of the relationships they built within the Group. However, I was not able to assess whether that support and those relationships had long-term benefits for their safety and for the way the women experience negative social responses into the future. Thus, as a priority, a future study could focus on more comprehensive evaluation of the Group's effectiveness. This could examine long-term influences of ways in which

the women understand their circumstances, or impacts the Group might have on the particular social responses the women continue to receive. Such an evaluation would need to investigate how the process of clients relanguaging their experiences is sustained in the long-term, and the particular consequences their relanguaging has for how the women negotiate negative social responses over extended timeframes. Given the women *will* continue to receive unhelpful social responses, and may experience further victimisation, evaluating opportunities for women to re-enter the programme, including improving long-term financial security for facilitating the programme could also be valuable. Relatedly, this project was not able to evaluate how resourcing, facilitator training, and local variations across Refuges will affect fidelity of the programme's delivery to response-based principles and processes.

As I discussed in Chapter Two, discourses of change in domestic violence victimisation are problematic. For example, victim self-empowerment models can undermine dignity and safety by locating victim actions rather than perpetrator conduct as the site of necessary change, hence reinforcing victim blaming and pathologising, and concealing perpetrator responsibility. I found Richardson's (2016) conceptualisation of transcendence valuable in evoking a constructive view of expanding possibilities for increased safety, dignity and healing for those victimised by violence and oppression:

Transcendence refers to a way of enlarging your beliefs and moving on with your lives in a new way— a way that works. Transcendence refers to integrating that which has value into a new self that is larger than the former self (2016, p. 132).

In acknowledging the legitimacy of creating a dignifying place for women victims to experience positive changes, I hold this view of transcendence in understanding change for the women victims who participated in this study. Among significant findings from this project's analyses, the women's narratives indicated their changed understandings were enabled through opportunities presented in the Group to speak openly of personal experiences of violence; and read, discuss, and critique discursive practices that mutualised and minimised violence, and concealed perpetrator responsibility and victim resistance. Clients' narratives also demonstrated how a supportive and affirming Group kaupapa exposed and challenged discourses of victims as deficient and consequently, enabled women to take moral stands against (ex)partners' and others' unjust treatment. Interwoven processes of collectively legitimating women's existing knowledge, and discovering new ways of thinking and talking about domestic violence, entailed exploring implications of dominant discourses. Women were able to articulate what had never been spoken of and through this, displace oppressive and unhelpful discourses (c.f. Hook, 2001).

After participating in the Group, women's accounts contextualised their understandings of domestic violence in increased recognition of patterns of coercive control, non-assaultive forms of violence, and wider oppressive sociocultural practices and beliefs pertaining to social power relations. Throughout interviews, women spoke of their responses to structural oppressions of gender-discrimination, social class, and threats of poverty intersecting with (ex)partners' violence. In particular, the women's narratives engaged, and increasingly challenged, traditional gender discourses of men's dominance, encompassing coercive control and violence, and women's submission and self-sacrifice, as normative. In these respects, the women's narratives highlighted the response-based principle that victims recognise and make choices within the context of

broader social responses, particularly those that blame and pathologise women victims and excuse men who use violence (Bonnah et al., 2014). Indeed, the women's accounts evinced how victims' intersecting social and material realities constrain or enable options for safety, and that victims and perpetrators operate with acute awareness of implications of these constraints.

Integral to Women's Group content and processes is recognising that resistance happens in the context of women not always having the option or desire to completely remove themselves and their children from their partner and his whānau or family. The women's accounts portrayed victim responses to the dilemma of remaining with violent partners, despite their ambivalence, as a way of managing safety. These narratives articulated a process of keeping partners in close proximity as responsive monitoring and resisting men's violence towards the family. For example, women spoke of their predicaments in trying to manage partners' dangerousness while risking charges of welfare fraud or condemnation for "exposing" their children to their fathers' violence. Concurrently, the women's narratives conveyed victims' predicaments over maintaining contact with violent partners or risking condemnation for depriving partners of their "fathering rights." The women were responsively aware of a mother-blaming discourse in which victims may not disclose violence for fear of accusations of "failing to protect" their children or destroying family cohesion (e.g. Strega & Janzen, 2013). These findings signal the crucial place of contesting victim- and mother-blaming in Group content and challenging institutional practices encountered by victims that perpetuate blaming.

Relatedly, at times the women's narratives conveyed victims as challenging idealised, unappealing, or unrealistic options for seeking safety and dignity in the context of negotiating conditions for remaining with or separating from partners. Their

narratives proclaimed victims' knowledge that "happily ever after" is a doubtful prospect: risks of violence and social and economic marginalisation do not magically disappear after separating, rather, they may worsen. Hence, legitimating victims' existing knowledge of the realistic limits of the means available for establishing safety, and increasing knowledge of the choices that become available to women through Group participation was evident in women's accounts.

Following Group participation, women's narratives shifted from language of effects to language of responses, as described in RBP (Todd & Wade, 2003). The women testified to the ways Group interactions and content facilitated their repositioning as *always* responding to violence. They spoke of the considerable value of reflecting back on their experiences of violence where narratives of "being done to" were reconsidered through identifying numerous overt and covert actions, each reasonable responses in the context of adversity and resisting violence (c.f. Coates & Wade, 2004; Wade, 1997). Their stories of these changes aligned with Todd and Wade's (2003) findings of binary portrayals of victims, such as passive verses active, compliant verses resistant, and self-destructive and deficient verses resourceful and capable.

Women's accounts affirmed the value of Group processes and content for highlighting resistance within one-another's histories. They supported each other in reconsidering themselves as responding to and resisting violence with competence and courage. Through noticing and drawing out each other's responses and resistances, women collaborated to change their self-perceptions from passive to actively seeking to improve safety for themselves and their children. These dignifying processes supported members' repositioning as reasonable, competent women.

Study Two's analyses provided valuable insight into implications of the Group for instigating changes in women's self-positioning regarding shame, blame and

pathologising. I found self-blaming and pathologising pervaded women's first interview texts, with fewer examples of the women contesting victim blaming and pathologising. In analysing the second series of interviews however, this pattern inverted: self-blame and self-pathologising were absent from the women's narratives. Throughout their narratives following Group participation, I encountered multiple instances where they engaged discourses of resistance to dominant Western heteronormative stereotypes of women, and particularly women victims, as deficient, complicit, provoking and deserving violence. This was evident in the women's recollections of experiencing transcendence from fear, self-blame, shame and despair to feeling safe to express distressing emotions without being pathologised. Rejecting self-blame and self-pathologising became apparent as women began interpreting their past and current actions as reasonable responses to coercion and violence, rather than psychological effects or deficiencies confined to their own minds (Todd & Wade, 2003; Wade, 1997).

Clear attributions of perpetrator responsibility for violence also enabled women to replace shaming and pathologising discourses with those in which their responses to violence were normalised. Hence, their personhood was destigmatised and reconceptualised as worthy of respectful treatment and protection. In holding this seemingly new or legitimated knowledge about themselves and one-another, Group members were repositioned as having legitimate authority to expose and confront (ex)partners about their volitional coercion and violence, and seek others' support should they choose, as important means of reinstating their dignity.

Prevalent in women's narratives were constructions of the Group as the only safe space for its members. The women characterised the Group as a place to critique and oppose victim blaming, shaming, and pathologising. They also defined safety as experiencing belonging, respect and renewed hope through Group membership. This

understanding highlights the dearth of safe alternative environments for victims to freely voice experiences, viewpoints, and needs with assurances of respectful and appropriate support. Correspondingly, it underscores the Group's substantial role in supporting the women's safety through honouring their voices, by acknowledging their dignity, and redressing the stigma and shame imbued in many of their experiences.

The women's accounts signalled that social support and session content enabled through the Group were inextricably connected to changing their social and physical experiences of safety. These accounts speak to an important idea in social justice community work with victims expressed by Hollander:

Resistance is collaboratively constructed in conversation. Successive speakers support, echo, challenge, and build upon each other's statements to create an alternative conceptualization...The construction of new images of [victim resistance] is a cooperative enterprise (2002, p. 489).

Crucially, the women's narratives portrayed the Group as facilitating women collaboratively supporting one-another in reconsidering their situations of violence and problem-solving the complex daily challenges they faced. Restoring dignity and wellbeing through Group support and solidarity can be understood as manifesting in women's enhanced safety and dignity through collectively "sharpening tools" of resistance to violence and ensuing negative social responses (c.f. Richardson & Wade, 2010). In practice, this involved developing new resources through sharing stories, and integrating Group session content into preexisting knowledge. This also entailed women non-judgmentally supporting and encouraging each other through different stages of

responding to interpersonal and structural violence with sensitivity to intersecting social power relations and the different circumstances they constituted.

Reinstating safety and dignity took form in fostering friendships, acceptance, belonging and having hope for one another's futures. Taken together, these processes, conveyed as integral to the Group, assisted the women in questioning inappropriate, harmful negative stereotypes and messages, honing their analyses, and considering previously untenable courses of action towards safety and healing. Thus, the Group provided a dignifying social and physical space for victims to discuss and articulate their experiences of coercive control and violence and thereby, resist violence in solidarity.

For me, these findings evoked notions of a "care community" developed by resistance theorist Isabell Lorey (2015) in the context of marginalised women victims of structural oppression. Lorey's (2015) conceptualisation contests dominant discourses of care work as "feminine duty" and of subordinate status to paid labour. Instead, *relationality* with others in a care community is elevated as pivotal to everyday life and understood as a form of collective resistance disrupting "business as usual" policies and practices that maintain oppression and injustice (Lorey, 2015). I believe this interpretation of care community can be usefully transposed to the Women's Group whereby members privileged reciprocal care as a dignifying practice and mode of resistance in exercising their right to care for, and be cared for by one-another. The concept of a care community offers a potentially powerful means for appreciating possibilities of the RBP Group as an ethical model for collective resistance to domestic and structural violence.

Over the course of undertaking this project, it was evident that the valuable work of Refuges in Aotearoa, and the extensive advocacy roles they perform, are little

understood or appreciated beyond those people directly involved as advocates or clients. Having extensively reviewed the international literature on good practice in women victim's advocacy and the NCIWR's work, I was struck by the advocates' and the Collective's relatively high level of progressive, well-informed and innovative practices. The critical work by Refuges in Aotearoa warrants substantively greater appreciation and support. This requires documenting, and broadly communicating the work and its underlying principles. An important means for mobilising support for advocacy is through critical research spanning localised grassroots to broad social policy contexts. Indeed, the current project's findings highlight the crucial value of "missing voices research," in privileging advocates' and victims' experiences, understandings and definitions of safety and change for guiding domestic violence interventions. Yet, in reflecting on this project's impact, I am also keenly aware that extending the scope of research for investigating violence prevention is but one means of contributing to social transformation, and a highly constrained means. With this in mind, I understand this project as contributing my own voice, and the voices of the women involved throughout the project, to the urgently needed work of preventing domestic violence. I invite all those who can, as practitioners, activists, advocates, students, teachers, members of communities, families and whānau, and people resisting violence to engage wholeheartedly in this on-going work by bringing their capabilities and emboldened spirits to this social-justice project.

When asked about their understandings of dignity after participating in the Group, women referred to experiencing dignity and mana through connectedness with a group that legitimated their experiences in dignifying rather than shaming ways. Their experiences were contextualised and normalised as understandable responses to interpersonal and structural violence. The women's narratives tell us that the Group

offered social safety, which transferred into members' enhanced safety in their everyday lives. Building from this, response-based principles in Group processes and content illuminated women's positioning as advocating for other victims. The Group was represented as a catalyst for significant, positive life changes in the women's accounts. Thus, the Group was clearly depicted as a place in which dignity was the organising principle enabling safety, support and friendship in solidarity. This project's findings, focusing on the women's languaging of their experiences before and after participating in the response-based Women's Group offers clear, if limited, evidence for the effectiveness of response-based principles and practices at Women's Refuge.

References

- Ackelsberg, M. (1984). Mujeres Libres: Individuality and community, organising women during the Spanish Civil War. *Radical America* 18(4), 6-19. No doi.
- Alaggia, R., Regehr, C., & Jenney, A. (2012). Risky business: An ecological analysis of intimate partner violence disclosure. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 22(3), 301-312. doi: 10.1177/1049731511425503
- Aldridge, J. (2013). Identifying the barriers to women's agency in domestic violence: The tensions between women's personal experiences and systemic responses. *Social Inclusion*, 1(1), 3-12. doi: 10.12924/si2013.01010003
- Ammar, N., Couture-Carron, A., Alvi, S., & San Antonio, J. (2013). Experiences of Muslim and non-Muslim battered immigrant women with the police in the United States: A closer understanding of commonalities and differences. *Violence Against Women*, 19(12), 1449-1471. doi: 10.1177/1077801213517565
- Anderson, K. M., & Danis, F. S. (2006). Adult daughters of battered women: Resistance and resilience in the face of danger. *Affilia*, 21(4), 419-432. doi: 10.1177/0886109906292130
- Anderson, K. M., Renner, L. M., & Danis, F. S. (2012). Recovery resilience and growth in the aftermath of domestic violence. *Violence Against Women*, 18(11), 1279-1299. doi: 10.1177/1077801212470543
- Andersen, T. (1996). Language is not innocent. In F. Kaslow (Ed.), *The handbook of relational diagnosis and dysfunctional family patterns* (pp.119-125). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Andrews, B., & Brewin, C. R. (1990). Attributions of blame for marital violence: A study of antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52(3), 757-767. doi: 10.2307/352940

- Andrews, B., Brewin, C. R., & Rose, S. (2003). Gender, social support, and PTSD in victims of violent crime. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 16*(4), 421-427. doi: 10.1023/A:1024478305142
- Archer, M. S. (2007). *Making our way through the world: Human reflexivity and social mobility*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Aviva Family Violence Services (2014). *Our history: New Zealand's first refuge*. Retrieved from <http://www.avivafamilies.org.nz/About/Our-History/>
- Aviva Family Violence Services (2017). *About Aviva*. Retrieved from <http://www.avivafamilies.org.nz/About/>
- Bagshaw, D., Brown, T., Wendt, S., Campbell, A., McInnes, E., Tinning, B., ... Arias, P. (2011). The effect of family violence on post-separation parenting arrangements: The experiences and views of children and adults from families who separated post-1995 and post-2006. *Family Matters, 86*, 49-61. No doi.
- Ballarat Women's Programme. (2013). *Women for Safety and Justice: A facilitated support group for women who have been victims of violence*. Ballarat, Australia: Ballarat Community Health/ WRISC Family Support.
- Bancroft, L., Silverman, J., & Ritchie, D. (2012). *The batterer as parent: Addressing the impact of domestic violence on family dynamics*. Sage Publications. doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/10.4135/9781452240480>
- Barrett, B. J., St. Pierre, M., & Vaillancourt, N. (2011). Police response to intimate partner violence in Canada: Do victim characteristics matter? *Women & Criminal Justice, 21*(1), 38-62. doi: 10.1080/08974454.2011.536057
- Belknap, J., Melton, H. C., Denney, J. T., Fleury-Steiner, R. E., & Sullivan, C. M.

- (2009). The levels and roles of social and institutional support reported by survivors of intimate partner abuse. *Feminist Criminology*, 4(4), 377-402. doi: 10.1177/1557085109344942
- Bennett, L., Riger, S., Schewe, P., Howard, A., & Wasco, S. (2004). Effectiveness of hotline, advocacy, counseling, and shelter services for victims of domestic violence: A statewide evaluation. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 19(7), 815-829. doi: 10.1177/0886260504265687
- Bennett, S. T., & Liu, J. H. (2017). Historical trajectories for reclaiming an indigenous identity in mental health interventions for Aotearoa/New Zealand - Māori values, biculturalism, and multiculturalism. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. Article in press. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2017.05.005>
- Berkel, L. A., Vandiver, B. J., & Bahner, A. D. (2004). Gender role attitudes, religion, and spirituality as predictors of domestic violence attitudes in white college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45(2), 119-133. doi: 10.1353/csd.2004.0019
- Berns, N. (2004). *Framing the victim: Domestic violence, media and social problems*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Black, C. J. (2003). Translating principles into practice: Implementing the feminist and strengths perspectives in work with battered women. *Affilia*, 18(3), 332-349. doi: 10.1177/0886109903254578
- Bonnah, S., Coates, L., Richardson, C., & Wade, A. (2014). *Response-Based Contextual Analysis in Cases of Violence* [Conference notes] from C. Richardson, & A. Wade (2014, April). Response-Based Practice in Action:

Addressing and Promoting Social Justice Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.

- Boonzaier, F., & de la Rey, C. (2003). "He's a man, and I'm a woman": Cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in South African women's narratives of violence. *Violence Against Women*, 9(8), 1003-1039. doi: 10.1177/1077801203255133
- Boonzaier, F., & de la Rey, C. (2004). Woman abuse: The construction of gender in women and men's narratives of violence. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 34(3), 443-463. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC98282>
- Bratt, W. (2015, January 14). Your emotions aren't a problem [Blog]. Retrieved from <http://www.willbrattcounselling.com/blog-creating-difference/2015/1/12/your-emotions-arent-a-problem>
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Burman, E., & Chantler, K. (2005). Domestic violence and minoritisation: Legal and policy barriers facing minoritized women leaving violent relationships. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 28, 59-74. doi: 10.1016/j.ijlp.2004.12.004
- Busch, R., Morgan, M., & Coombes, L. (2014). Manufacturing egalitarian injustice: A discursive analysis of the rhetorical strategies used in fathers' rights websites in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Feminism & Psychology*, 24(4), 440-460. doi: 10.1177/0959353514539649
- Bussey, B., & Whipple, J. B. (2010). Weaving the past into the present: Understanding the context of domestic violence against Native American women. In L. L. Lockhart & F. S. Danis (Eds.), *Domestic violence: Intersectionality and*

- culturally competent practice* (pp. 286-319). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Bybee, D. I., & Sullivan, C. M. (2002). The process through which an advocacy intervention resulted in positive change for battered women over time. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(1), 103-132. doi: 10.1023/A:1014376202459
- Cahill, M., & Dann, C. (1991). *Changing our lives: Women working in the women's liberation movement, 1970-1990*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books Limited.
- Campbell, R. (2006). Rape survivors' experiences with the legal and medical systems: Do rape victim advocates make a difference? *Violence Against Women, 12*(1), 30-45. doi: 10.1177/1077801205 277539
- Campbell, J., Rose, L., Kub, J., & Nedd, D. (1998). Voices of strength and resistance: A contextual and longitudinal analysis of women's responses to battering. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 13*(6), 743-762. doi: 10.1177/088626098013006005
- Cavanagh, K. (2003). Understanding women's responses to domestic violence. *Qualitative Social Work, 2*(3), 229-249. doi: 10.1177/14733250030023002
- Chalari, A. (2012). The causal impact of resistance: Mediating between resistance and internal conversation about resistance. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 43*(1), 66-86. doi: 0021-8308
- Charles, N. (2004). Feminist politics and devolution: A preliminary analysis. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society, 11*(2), 297-311. doi: 10.1093/sp/jxh037
- Coates, L., Richardson, K. & Wade, A. (2014, April). *Six key factors in response-based contextual analysis*. Lecture presented at the Response-Based Practice in Action:

Addressing and Promoting Social Justice Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.

Coates, L., Todd, N., & Wade, A. (2000). *The Response-Based view* [Conference notes] from C. Richardson, & A. Wade (2014, April). Response-Based Practice in Action: Addressing and Promoting Social Justice Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.

Coates, L., & Wade, A. (2004). Telling it like it isn't: Obscuring perpetrator responsibility for violent crime. *Discourse & Society, 15*(5), 499-526. doi: 10.1177/0957926504045031

Coates, L., & Wade, A. (2007). Language and violence: Analysis of four discursive operations. *Journal of Family Violence, 22*, 511-522. doi: 10.1007/s10896-007-9082-2

Combs, G., & Freedman, J. (2012). Narrative, poststructuralism, and social justice: Current practices in narrative therapy. *The Counseling Psychologist, 40*(7), 1033-1060. doi: 10.1177/0011000012460662

Connell, R.W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and Society, 19*(6), 829-59. doi: 10.1177/0891243205278639

Cook, M. (2011). Women's movement - The women's liberation movement, Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz/en/womens-movement/page-6> (9 Aug, 2017).

Coombes, L., & Morgan, M. (2001). Speaking from the margins: A discourse analysis of ten women's accounts of spirituality. *Australian Psychologist, 36*(1), 10-18. doi: org/10.1080/00050060108259626

Coombes, L., Morgan, M., Blake, D., & McGray, S. (2009). *Enhancing safety:*

Survivors' experiences of Viviana's advocacy at the Waitakere Family Violence Court. Palmerston North: Massey University. New Zealand.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life.

In W. Pasmore & R. Woodman (Eds.), *Research in organisational change and development* (pp. 129-169). Retrieved from http://www.centerforappreciativeinquiry.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/APPRECIATIVE_INQUIRY_IN_Orgnizational_life.pdf

Cosgrove, S., Harwin, N., Hiimäe, R., Martins, M. M., Mimoso, R., Pauncz, A.,...

Viegas, P. (2008). *The Power To Change: How to set up and run support groups for victims and survivors of domestic violence.* Budapest, Hungary: NANE Women's Rights Association, Associazione Artemisia, AMCV, NGO Women's Shelter, Women's Aid Federation of England. No doi.

Cram, F. (2012). *Safety of subsequent children: Māori children and whānau: A*

review of selected literature (Report No. 2/12). Wellington, New Zealand:

Families Commission - Kōmihana ā Whānau. Retrieved from

<http://www.familiescommission.org.nz/web/māori-children-whānau/index.html>

<https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/docs/uoa-docs/rights.htm>

Cram, F., Pihama, L., Jenkins, K., & Karehana, M. (2002). *Evaluation of programmes*

for Māori adult protected persons under the Domestic Violence Act 1995.

Wellington, NZ. Ministry of Justice.

Davidson-Arad, B., Peled, E., & Leichtentritt, R. (2008). Representations of fathers and

Mothers in court petitions for dependent minor status for children at risk.

Children and Youth Services Review, 30(8), 893-902. doi:

10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.12.016

Davies, B., Browne, J., Gannon, S., Honan, E., Laws, C., Mueller-Rockstroh, B., &

- Petersen, E. B. (2004). The ambivalent practices of reflexivity. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(3), 360-389. doi: 10.1177/1077800403257638
- DeKeseredy, W. S. (2011). Feminist contributions to understanding woman abuse: Myths, controversies, and realities. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16, 297-302. doi: 10.1016/j.avb.2011.04.002
- DeKeseredy, W. S., & Schwartz, M. D. (1998). Measuring the extent of woman abuse in intimate heterosexual relationships: A critique of the conflict tactics scales. In *Violence Against Women Net Applied Research Forum: National Electronic Network on Violence Against Women*. Retrieved from <http://www.csaj.org/documents/178.pdf>
- Denzin, N. (1997). *Interpretive ethnography: Ethnographic practices for the 21st century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dillon, G., Hussain, R., Kibele, E., Rahman, S., & Loxton, D., (2016). Influence of intimate partner violence on domestic relocation in metropolitan and non-metropolitan young Australian women. *Violence Against Women*, 22(13), 1597-1620. doi: 10.1177/1077801216628689
- Dobash, R., & Dobash, R. (1992). *Women, violence and social change*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Dobash, R., & Dobash, R. (2010). What were they thinking? Men who murder an intimate partner. *Violence Against Women*, 17, 111-134. doi: 10.1177/1077801210391219
- Douglas, H., & Walsh, T. (2010). Mothers, domestic violence, and child protection. *Violence Against Women*, 16(5), 489-508. doi: 10.1177/1077801210365887
- Dragiewicz, M. (2011). *Equality with a vengeance: Men's rights groups, battered*

women, and antifeminist backlash. New Hampshire, USA: Northeastern University Press.

- Duncan, G., & Worrell, J. (2000). Window on the world. Social policy and social work in New Zealand. *European Journal of Social Work*, 3(3), 283-295.
- Durfee, A. (2009). Victim narratives, legal representation, and Domestic Violence Civil Protection Orders. *Feminist Criminology*, 4(1), 7-31. doi: 10.1177/1557085108324961
- Durie, M. (2013). *The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti O Waitangi*. Retrieved from New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO
<http://www.unesco.org.nz/content/?id=108&Itemid=248>
- Elizabeth, V. (2015). From domestic violence to coercive control: Towards the recognition of oppressive intimacy in the Family Court. *New Zealand Sociology* 30(2), 26-43. No doi.
- Elizabeth, V. (2017). Custody stalking: A mechanism of coercively controlling mothers following separation. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 1-17. doi: 10.1007/s10691-017-9349-9
- Elizabeth, V., Tolmie, J., & Gavey, N. (2011). Gendered dynamics in Family Court counselling. *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*, 31(2), 1-20. Retrieved from <http://www.nzac.org.nz/journal/1.%20Gendered%20Dynamics%20in%20Family%20Court%20Counselling.pdf>
- Elizabeth, V., Gavey, N., & Tolmie, J. (2012a). The gendered dynamics of power over the postseparation care of children. *Violence Against Women*, 18(4), 459-481. doi: 10.1177/1077801212452049
- Elizabeth, V., Gavey, N., & Tolmie, J. (2012b). "... He's just swapped his fists for the

system": The governance of gender through custody law. *Gender & Society*, 26(2), 239-260. doi: 10.1177/0891243211434765

Elman, A. R. (2003). Refuge in reconfigured states: Shelter movements in the United States, Britain and Sweden. In L. A. Banaszak, K. Beckwith, & D. Rucht (Eds.), *Women's movements facing the reconfigured state*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Family and Community Services, Ministry of Justice New Zealand. (2011). *Talking about Family Violence: Stories of Positive Change* (DVD). New Zealand: Police Immigration New Zealand.

Family Violence Death Review Committee. (2014). *Forth Annual Report: January 2013 to December 2013*. Wellington, New Zealand: Family Violence Death Review Committee, Health Quality and Safety Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/mrc/fvdr/publications-and-resources/publication/1600/>

Family Violence Death Review Committee. (2016). *Fifth Report: January 2014 to December 2015*. Wellington, New Zealand: Family Violence Death Review Committee, Health Quality and Safety Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/assets/FVDRC/Publications/FVDRC-5th-report-Feb-2016-2.pdf>

Family Violence Death Review Committee. (2017). *Fifth Report data: January 2009 to December 2015*. Wellington, New Zealand: Family Violence Death Review Committee, Health Quality and Safety Commission. Retrieved from https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/assets/FVDRC/Publications/FVDRC_2017_10_final_web.pdf

Fanslow, J. L. (2005). *Beyond zero tolerance: Key issues and future directions for*

- family violence work in New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: Families Commission. Report No. 30/05. Retrieved from www.superu.govt.nz/sites/default/files/zero-tolerance.pdf
- Fanslow, J. L., & Robinson, E. M. (2010). Help-seeking behaviours and reasons for help seeking reported by a representative sample of women victims of intimate partner violence in New Zealand. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 25*(5), 929-951. doi: 10.1177/0886260509336963
- Felson, R. B., Messner, S. F., Hoskin, A. W., & Deane, G. (2002). Reasons for reporting and not reporting domestic violence to the police. *Criminology, 40*(3), 617-648. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.2002.tb00968.x
- Fenrich, J., & Contesse, J. (2009). *"It's not ok": New Zealand's efforts to eliminate violence against women*. New York, NY: Leitner Centre International Law and Justice.
- Ferraro, K. J. (1996). The dance of dependency: A genealogy of domestic violence discourse. *Hypatia, 11*(4), 77-91. doi: 10.1111/j.1527-2001.1996.tb01036.x
- Ferraro, K. J. (2013). Gender matters in intimate partner violence. In B. Russell (Ed.), *Perceptions of female offenders: How stereotypes and social norms affect criminal justice responses* (pp. 133-149). New York, NY: Springer
- Fine, M. (2002). *Disruptive voices: The possibilities for feminist research*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Finley, L. L. (2010). Where's the peace in this movement? A domestic violence advocate's reflections on the movement. *Contemporary Justice Review, 13*(1), 57-69. doi: 10.1080/10282580903549219
- Flood, M., & Pease, B. (2006). *The factors influencing community attitudes in relation*

to violence against women: A critical review of the literature. Melbourne, Australia: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

- Fox, N. J. (2003). Practice-based evidence: Towards collaborative and transgressive research. *Sociology*, 37, 81-102. doi: 10.1177/0038038503037001388
- Gadd, D. (2012). Domestic abuse prevention after Raoul Moat. *Critical Social Policy*, 32(4), 495-516. doi: 10.1177/0261018312439361
- Gavey, N. (1989). Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis: Contributions to feminist psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 12, 459-475. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.1989.tb01014.x
- Gavey, N. (2011). Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis revisited. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 35(1), 183-188. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684310395916>
- Gavey, N., & Schmidt, J. (2011). "Trauma of rape" discourse: A double-edged template for everyday understandings of the impact of rape? *Violence Against Women*, 17(4), 433-456. doi: 10.1177/1077801211404194
- Gillespie, D. M. (2008). *Women's experiences of the policing of domestic violence (Masterate thesis)*. Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- Goetting, A. (1999). *Getting out: Life stories of women who left abusive men*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Grant, S. & Humphries, M. (2006). Critical evaluation of appreciative inquiry. *Action Research*, 4(4), 401-418. doi: 10.1177/1476750306070103
- Grauwiler, P. (2008). Voices of women: Perspectives on decision-making and the management of partner violence. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30(3), 311-322. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.10.008
- Grey, S. (2008). Out of sight out of mind: The New Zealand women's movement. In S.

- Grey & M. Sawyer (Eds.), *Women's movements: Flourishing or in abeyance?* (pp. 65-78). London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hague, G. (2000). *Reducing domestic violence: What works?* Multi-agency fora. Policing and Crime Reduction Unit, Home Office, London.
- Haight, W. L., Shim, W. S., Linn, L. M., & Swinford, L. (2007). Mothers' strategies for protecting children from batterers: The perspectives of battered women involved in child protective services. *Child welfare*, 86(4), 41-62. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/openview/a71831fadf52cc9f6f413748e0f25b5c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=40853>
- Hammons, S. A. (2004). "Family violence": The language of legitimacy. *Affilia*, 19(3), 273-288. doi: 10.1177/0886109904265805
- Hann, S. (2001). *Palmerston North Women's Refuge: Herstory 1979-2001*. Palmerston North: New Zealand, Palmerston North Women's Refuge Incorporated.
- Harrison, C. (2008). Implacably hostile or appropriately protective? Women managing child contact in the context of domestic violence. *Violence Against Women*, 14(4), 381-405. doi: 10.1177/1077801208314833
- Harvie, P. & Manzi, T. (2011). Interpreting multi-agency partnerships: Ideology, discourse and domestic violence. *Social and Legal Studies*, 20(1), 79-95. doi: /10.1177/0964663910384907
- Haviland, M., Frye, V., & Rajah, V. (2008). Harnessing the power of advocacy-research collaborations: Lessons from the field. *Feminist Criminology*, 3(4), 247-275. doi: 10.1177/1557085108323365
- Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C., & Walkerdine, V. (1984) *Changing*

the subject: Psychology, social regulation, and subjectivity. London, United Kingdom: Methuen.

Herbert, R., & Mackenzie, D. (2014). *The way forward - an integrated system for intimate partner violence and child abuse and neglect in New Zealand.* Wellington, New Zealand: The Impact Collective. Retrieved from www.theimpactcollective.co.nz/thewayforward_210714.pdf

Hester, M. (2011). The three planet model: Towards an understanding of contradictions in approaches to women and children's safety in contexts of domestic violence. *British Journal of Social Work, 41*(5), 837-853. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcr095

Hester, M., & Westmarland, N. (2005). *Tackling domestic violence: Effective interventions and approaches.* Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. Report No. 290. London, United Kingdom: Home Office, Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/2556/1/2556.pdf>

Hindle, S., & Morgan, M. (2006). On being a refuge worker: Psycho-social impacts of advocacy. *Women's Studies Journal, 20*, 32-47. No doi.

Hollander, J. A. (2002). Resisting vulnerability: The social reconstruction of gender in interaction. *Social Problems, 49*(4), 474-496. doi: 10.1525/sp.2002.49.4.474

Hollway, W. (1984). Women's power in heterosexual sex. *Women's Studies International Forum, 7*(1), 63-68. doi: 10.1016/0277-5395(84)90085-2

Hook, D. (2001). Discourse, knowledge, materiality, history: Foucault and discourse analysis. *Theory and Psychology, 11*(4), 521-547. doi: 10.1177/0959354301114006

Hook, D. (2003). Analogues of power: Reading psychotherapy through the sovereignty-Discipline-government complex. *Theory & Psychology, 13*(5), 605-628. doi: 10.1177/09593543030135006

- Hook, D. (2004a). Fanon and the psychoanalysis of racism. In D. Hook (Ed.), *Critical psychology* (pp. 115-138). Lansdowne, South Africa: UCT Press.
- Hook, D (2004b). Foucault, disciplinary power and the critical pre-history of psychology. In D. Hook (ed., pp. 210-238), *Critical Psychology*, Lansdowne, South Africa: UCT Press.
- Hoyle, C., & Sanders, A. (2000). Police response to domestic violence. *British Journal of Criminology*, 40(1), 14-36. doi: 10.1093/bjc/40.1.14
- Hughes, J., Chau, S., & Poff, D. C. (2011). "They're not my favourite people": What mothers who have experienced intimate partner violence say about involvement in the child protection system. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(7), 1084-1089. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.01.015
- Humphreys, C., & Absler, D. (2011). History repeating: child protection responses to domestic violence. *Child and Family Social Work*, 16, 464-473. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2206.2011.00761.x
- Humphreys, C., & Holder, R. (2002). An integrated criminal justice response to domestic violence: It's challenging, but it's not rocket science. *SAFE: The Domestic Violence Quarterly*, 3, 16. No doi.
- Humphreys, C., Mullender, A., Thiara, R., & Skamballis, A. (2006). 'Talking to my mum': Developing communication between mothers and children in the aftermath of domestic violence. *Journal of Social Work*, 6(1), 53-63. doi: 10.1177/1468017306062223
- Humphreys, C., & Thiara, R. (2003). Mental health and domestic violence: 'I call it symptoms of abuse'. *British journal of social work*, 33(2), 209-226. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/33.2.209
- Hunnicut, G. (2009). Varieties of patriarchy and violence against women: Resurrecting

"patriarchy" as a theoretical tool. *Violence Against Women*, 15(5), 553-573. doi: 10.1177/1077801208331246

Hydén, M., Gadd, D., & Wade, A. (2016). Introduction to response based practices to the study of interpersonal violence. In M Hydén, D Gadd, & A Wade, (Eds.), *Response based approaches to the study of interpersonal violence*, (pp 1-16). London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jackson, S. L., Feder, R. F., David, R. C., Davis, C., Maxwell, R., & Bruce, G. T. (2003). *Batterer intervention on programmes: Where do we go from here?* National Institute of Justice. Report No. 1-3. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/195079.pdf>

Jaffe, P. G., Crooks, C. V., & Wolfe, D. A. (2003). Legal and policy response to children exposed to domestic violence: The need to evaluate intended and unintended consequences. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 6, 205-213. doi: 10.1023/A:1024914517072

Jaffe, P. G., Lemon, N. K. D., & Poisson, S. E. (2003). *Child custody and domestic violence: A call for safety and accountability*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jenkins, A. (1991). *Intervention with violence and abuse in families: The inadvertent perpetuation of irresponsible time: Evaluation of the 2006 Family Law Reforms*. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Institute of Family Studies. Retrieved from <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/evaluation-2006-family-law-reforms>

Kasturirangan, A. (2008). Empowerment and programmes designed to address domestic violence. *Violence Against Women*, 14(12), 1465-1475. doi: 10.1177/1077801208325188

Kaye M., & Tolmie, J. (1998). Fathers' rights groups in Australia and their engagement

with issues in family law. *Australian Journal of Family Law* 12, 19-67.

Retrieved from <http://journals/journal/ajfl/vol12/05-01033>

Keeling, J., & Fisher, C. (2012). Women's early relational experiences that lead to domestic violence. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22(11), 1559-1167. doi: 10.1177/1049732312457076

Kimmel, M. S. (2002). Gender symmetry in domestic violence: A substantive and methodological review. *Violence Against Women*, 8(11). doi: 10.1177/107780102237407

Kuijpers, K. F., van der Knaap, L. M., & Lodewijks, I. A. J. (2011). Victims' influence on intimate partner violence revictimization: A systematic review of prospective evidence. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 12, 198-219. doi: 10.1177/1524838011416378

Laing, L. (2010). *No way to live: Women's experiences of negotiating the family law system in the context of domestic violence*. University of Sydney & the Benevolent Society, Sydney. Retrieved from <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/6255/1/No%20way%20to%20live%20final%20report.pdf>

Laing, L. (2016). Secondary victimization: Domestic violence survivors navigating the family law system. *Violence Against Women*, 1-22. doi: 10.1177/1077801216659942

Lapierre, S. (2008). Mothering in the context of domestic violence: the pervasiveness of a deficit model of mothering. *Child and Family Social Work*, 13, 454-463. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2206.2008.00563

Lapierre, S. (2010). More responsibilities, less control: Understanding the challenges and difficulties involved in mothering in the context of domestic violence. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(5), 1434-1451. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcp080

- Lapierre, S., & Côté, I. (2011). "I made her realise that I could be there for her, that I could support her": Child protection practices with women in domestic violence cases. *Child Care in Practice*, 17(4), 311-325. doi: 10.1080/13575279.2011.598142
- Lazar, M. (2005). Politicizing gender in discourse: Feminist critical discourse analysis in praxis. In M. Lazar (Ed.), *Feminist critical discourse analysis: Gender, Power and ideology in discourse* (pp. 1-30). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lehrner, A., & Allen, N. E. (2009). Still a movement after all these years? Current tensions in the domestic violence movement. *Violence Against Women*, 15(6), 656-677. doi: 10.1177/1077801209332185
- Lindsay, T., & Orton, S. (2014). *Group work practice in social work*. Exeter, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Lorey, I. (2015). *States of insecurity: Government of the precarious*. London, United Kingdom: Verso.
- Lunt, N., Davidson, C., & McKegg, K. (2003). *Evaluating policy and practice: A New Zealand Reader*. Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Lyon, E., & Sullivan, C. (2007). *Outcome evaluation strategies for domestic violence service programs receiving FVPSA funding: A practical guide*. Harrisburg, PA: National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.
- McCallum, T. (1993). National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges 1981-. In A. Else (Ed.), *Women together: A history of women's organisations in New Zealand, ngā rōpū wāhine o te motu* (pp. 142-146). Wellington, New Zealand: Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs and Daphne Brassell Associates Press.

- McCarthy, I. (2010). A traumatic intrusion with transgressive possibilities: Power as a relational and discursive phenomenon. *Context, October*, 21-24. Retrieved from http://www.imeldamccarthy.com/Publications_and_Downloads.html
- McCarthy, S. (1994-1995). The role of the media in domestic violence cases: A journalist's perspective. *Albany Law Review*, 58, 1235-44.
- McHugh, M. (2014). Feminist quantitative research: Toward transformation of science and society. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 137-164). Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- McInerney, B., & Carriere, R. (2015, April). *Integrating feminist and response-based practice at Kaushee's Place*. Paper presented at the Dignity 2015: Response-Based Practice in Action Conference, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.
- McLaren, F. (2010). *Attitudes, values and beliefs about violence within families 2008: Survey findings*. Centre for Social Research and Evaluation Te Pokapū Rangahau Arotake Hapori, New Zealand. Retrieved from <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/research/campaign-action-violence-research/attitudes-values-and-beliefs-about-violence-within-families.pdf>
- McLeod, J. (2011). *Qualitative research in counselling and psychotherapy (2nd ed.)*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Macleod, C. (2004). Writing into action: The critical research endeavour. In D. Hook (Ed.) *Critical Psychology* (pp. 210-238). Lansdowne, South Africa: UCT Press.
- Māori Language Commission. (2015). *'Kia ita!' Te Taura Whiri I te Reo Māori, Manaakitanga figure*. Retrieved from <http://www.korero.maori.nz/news/mlw/theme.html>
- Maxwell, G., Anderson, T. & Olsen, T. 2001. *Women living without violence: An*

- evaluation of programmes for adult protected persons under the Domestic Violence Act 1995*. Ministry of Justice, New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.govt.nz/publications/publications-archived/2001/women-living-without-violence-an-evaluation-of-programmes-for-adult-protected-persons-under-the-domestic-violence-act-1995-february-2001>
- Mayhew, P., & Reilly, J. L. (2009). *The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey: In Family Violence Statistics Report*. Wellington, New Zealand: Families Commission, Retrieved from <http://www.familiescommission.org.nz/sites/default/files/downloads/family-violence-statistics-report.pdf>
- Menzies, R. (2007). Virtual backlash: Representations of men's "rights" and feminist "wrongs" in cyberspace. In D. E. Chunn, S. B. Boyd, and H. Lessard (Eds.), *Reaction and resistance: Feminism, law, and social change* (pp. 65-97). Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia Press.
- Meyer, S. (2011). Seeking help for intimate partner violence victims' experiences when approaching the criminal justice system for IPV-related support and protection in an Australian jurisdiction. *Feminist Criminology*, 6(4), 268-290. doi: 10.1177/1557085111414860
- Miller, S. L., Gregory, C., & Iovanni, L. (2005). One size fits all? A gender-neutral approach to a gender-specific problem: Contrasting batterer treatment programs for male and female offenders. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 16(3), 336-359. doi: 10.1177/0887403404273944
- Mills, A., Thom, K., Meehan, C., & Chetty, M. (2013). *Family Violence courts: A review of the literature*. Auckland: Centre for Mental Health Research. Retrieved from <http://www.lawfoundation.org.nz/wp->

content/uploads/2013/12/3.-Family-violence-courts.-A-review-of-the-literature.pdf (10 Aug, 2017)

Ministry of Justice. (2014a). *Changes to domestic violence programmes*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from <https://nzfvc.org.nz/?q=node/1657>

Ministry of Justice. (2014b). *Adult safety programmes – needs identification and safety planning sessions*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Forms/dvpp08-needs-and-safety-planning-outcome.pdf>.

Ministry of Justice. (2015). *2014 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey: Main findings*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Justice. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.govt.nz/publications/global-publications/n/new-zealand-crime-and-safety-survey-2014/publications/global-publications/n/new-zealand-crime-and-safety-survey-2014/documents/nzcass-main-findings-report>

Morgan, M. (2015). *Diverse voices, many stories: Tu Mai Awa Project and Research Presentation commentary* (with D. Saddler, J. Bailey, M. Benschop, & T. Mattson). Dignity Conference, Eastern Institute of Technology, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.

Morgan, M., & Coombes, L. (2013). Empowerment and advocacy for domestic violence victims. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 7(8), 526-536. doi: 10.1111/spc3.12049

Morgan, M., & Coombes, L. (2016). Protective mothers: Women's understandings of protecting children in the context of legal interventions into intimate partner violence. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 28(1), 59-78. Retrieved from <https://groups.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Morgan-ACP-28-1-2016.pdf>

- Morgan, M., Coombes, L., Neill-Weston, F., & Weatherley, G. E. (2011). Shaping feminist psychologies in Aotearoa: History, paradox, transformation. In A. Rutherford, R. Capdevila, V. Undurti, & I. Palmary (Eds.), *Handbook of international feminisms: Perspectives on psychology, women, culture and rights* (pp. 195-218). New York, NY: Springer.
- Morgan, M., Coombes, L., Te Hiwi, E., & McGray, S. (2007). *Accounting for safety: A sample of women victims' experiences of safety through the Waitakere Family Violence Court*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University.
- Morgan, M., & Mattson, T. (2017, May). *Discursive research with Tui Mai Awa*. Paper presented at the Dignity 2017 International Conference: Fremantle, Western Australia.
- Morgan, M., & O'Neill, D. (2001). Pragmatic post-structuralism (II): An outcomes evaluation of a stopping violence programme. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 11*(4), 277-289. doi: 10.1002/casp.625
- Nabors, E. L., Dietz, T. L., & Jasinski, J. L. (2006). Domestic violence beliefs and perceptions among college students. *Violence and Victims, 21*(6), 779-795. doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/10.1891/0886-6708.21.6.779>
- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (1996). *Women's education programme*. Wellington, New Zealand: National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges Incorporated.
- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2000). *Improving outcomes for women and children using Refuge services*. Wellington, New Zealand: National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges Incorporated.
- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2012). *Fresh start: A practical*

guide for women wanting to be free from abuse. Wellington, New Zealand:

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges Incorporated.

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2015a). *We work for tangata whenua*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Maori-wahine.htm>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2015b). *We work for women in same sex relationships*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Lesbian-women.htm>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2015c). *We work to try to meet the needs of all women*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Women-with-disabilities.htm>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2015d). *We work for women of all ages*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Older-women.htm>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2015e). *Migrant and refugee women*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Migrant-and-refugee-women.htm>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2016). *Annual Report: July 2015-June 2016*. Wellington, New Zealand: National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/news/annual-reports/>

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges. (2017). *About us: New Zealand's most significant domestic violence organisation*. Retrieved from <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/about-us/>

New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse. (2017a). *Data summary 2: Violence*

against women, June 2017. Retrieved from
<https://nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/DS2-Violence-Against-Women-2017.pdf>

New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse. (2017b). *Data summary 1: Family violence deaths, June 2017*. Retrieved from
<https://nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/DS1-Family-Violence-Deaths-2017.pdf>

New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. (2013). *The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti O Waitangi*. Retrieved from
<http://www.unesco.org.nz/content/?id=108&Itemid=248>

Nixon, K., & Cripps, K. (2013). Child protection policy and indigenous intimate partner violence: Whose failure to protect? In S. Strega, J. Krane, S. Lapierre, C. Richardson, & R. Carlton (Eds.), *Failure to protect: Moving beyond gendered responses* (pp. 166-188). Nova Scotia, Canada: Fernwood.

O'Neill, D. (1997). *Men against violence: A post-structural critique of the science and practice of stopping men's violence to women in an applied community setting*. Doctoral dissertation, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

O'Neill, D., & Morgan, M. (2001). Pragmatic post-structuralism (I): Participant observation and discourse in evaluating violence intervention. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 11(4), 263–275. doi: 10.2002/casp.624

Pain, R. (2012). *Everyday terrorism: How fear works in domestic abuse*. Centre for Social Justice and Community Action. Scottish Women's Aid. Retrieved from www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/sites/www...org.uk/.../EverydayTerrorismReport.pdf

- Parker, I. (2005). *Qualitative psychology: Introducing radical research*. New York, NY: Open University Press.
- Parker, I. (2014). *Psychology after psychoanalysis: Psychosocial studies and beyond*. Taylor and Francis. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/massey/detail.action?docID=1715825>.
- Parliamentary Counsel Office. (2013). *Domestic Violence Act 1995: Section 3, meaning of domestic violence*. Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1995/0086/latest/DLM372117.html>
- Paterson, S. (2010). 'Resistors,' 'helpless victims,' and 'willing participants': The construction of women's resistance in Canadian anti-violence policy. *Social Politics, 17*(2), 159-184. doi: 10.1093/sp/jxq001
- Pence, E., & Paymar, M. (1990). *Power and control: Tactics of men who batter (Rev. ed.)*. Duluth, MN: Domestic Abuse Intervention Project: Minnesota Program Development, Inc.
- Pence, E., & Paymar, M. (1993). *Education groups for men who batter: The Duluth Model*. New York: N.Y: Springer Publishing.
- Pihama, L., & McRoberts, H. (2009). *Te Puawaitanga o te kakano: A background paper report*. Retrieved from http://toahnnest.org.nz/images/Releasing_Te_Puawaitanga_o_te_Kākano__FIXED.pdf
- Pollack, S. (2010). Labelling clients 'risky': Social work and the neo-liberal welfare state. *British Journal of Social Work, 40*(4), 1263-1278. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcn079
- Portwood, S. G., & Heany, J. F. (2007). *Responding to violence against women: Social*

- science contributions to legal solutions. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 30(3), 237-247. doi:10.1016/j.ijlp.2007.03.007
- Pratt, R. (2004). Towards understanding domestic violence: Reflections on research and the 'Domestic Violence and Minoritization' project. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 14, 33-43. doi: 101002/casp.758
- Ptacek, J. (1988). Why do men batter their wives? In K. Yllö & M. Bograd (Eds.), *Feminist perspectives on wife abuse* (pp. 133-157). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Radford, L., & Gill, A. (2006). Losing the plot? Researching community safety partnership work against domestic violence. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 45(4), 369-387. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2311.2006.00429.x
- Reedy, J. (2013). *Advocates' understandings of the impacts of intimate partner violence in rural communities (Unpublished Honours research report)*. Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- Renzetti, C. M. (1997). Confessions of a reformed positivist: Feminist participatory research as good social science. In M. D. Schwartz (Ed.), *Researching sexual violence against women: Methodological and personal perspectives* (pp. 131-143). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Richardson, C. (2006). Métis identity creation and strategic responses to racism. *Variations*, 2, 56-71. Retrieved from www.uvic.ca/hsd/assets/docs/publications/variegations/.../richardson.pdf
- Richardson, C. (2016). *Belonging Métis*. Vernon, Canada: J Charlton Publishing.
- Richardson, C., & Reynolds, V. (2012). "Here we are, amazingly alive": Holding ourselves together with an ethic of social justice in community work. *International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies*, 3

(1), 1-19. Retrieved from

<http://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/ijcyfs/article/view/10471/3103>

Richardson, C., & Wade, A. (2010). Islands of safety: Restoring dignity in violence-

Prevention work with indigenous families. *First Peoples Child & Family*

Review, 5(1), 137-145. Retrieved from

<http://journals.sfu.ca.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/fpcfrr/index.php/FPCFR/article/view/182>

Richardson, C. & Wade, A. (2013). Creating islands of safety: Contesting failure to

protect and mother-blaming in cases of paternal violence against children and

mothers. In S. Strega, J. Krane, S. Lapierrre, & C. Richardson (Eds.), *Failure to*

Protect; Moving Beyond Gendered Responses (pp. 146-186): Nova Scotia,

Canada: Fernwood.

Richardson, C. & Wade, A. (2014, April). *Resistance to violence is ever-present*. Paper

presented at the Response-Based Practice in Action: Addressing and Promoting

Social Justice Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.

Richardson, C. & Wade, A. (2015, April). *Dignity: The social emotion*. Paper

presented at Dignity 2015 Conference, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.

Robertson, N. R., & Busch, R. (1993). *Hamilton abuse intervention pilot project: Two*

year Review. Hamilton, New Zealand: University of Waikato.

Robertson, N., Busch, R., D'Souza, R., Lam Sheung, F., Anand, R., Balzer, R.,

Simpson, A., & Paina, D. (2007). *Living at the cutting edge: Women's*

experiences of protection orders, Volume 1: The women's stories. University of

Waikato and Ministry of Women's Affairs. Retrieved from

<http://research.waikato.ac.nz/CuttingEdge/VolOne.pdf> (Aug, 2017).

Robinson, A. L. (2006). Reducing repeat victimization among high-risk victims of

- domestic violence: The benefits of a coordinated community response in Cardiff, Wales. *Violence Against Women*, 12(8), 761-788. doi: 10.1177/1077801206291477
- Robinson, A. L., & Howarth, E. (2012). Judging risk: Key determinants in British domestic violence cases. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(8), 1489-1518. doi: 10.1177/0886260511425792
- Robinson, A. L., & Tregidga, J. (2007). The perceptions of high-risk victims of domestic violence to a coordinated community response in Cardiff, Wales. *Violence Against Women*, 13(11), 1130-1148. doi: 10.1177/1077801207307797
- Rogaski, R. (1997). Beyond benevolence: A Confucian women's shelter in treaty-port China. *Journal of Women's History*, 8(4), 54-90. doi: 10.1353/jowh.2010.0174
- Roy, A. (2004). *Peace and the new corporate liberation theology*. The 2004 Sydney Peace Prize lecture delivered at the Seymour Theatre Centre, University of Sydney. Retrieved from <http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=279>
- Royal, C. (2011). Preface. In T. McIntosh & M. Mulholland (Eds.), *Māori and Social Issues, Volume 1* (pp. vii-viii), Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.
- Sakall, N. (2001). Beliefs about wife beating among Turkish college students: The effects of patriarchy, sexism, and sex differences. *Sex Roles*, 44(9-10), 599-610. doi: 10.1023/A:1012295109711
- Savin-Baden, M., & Howell Major, C. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide*. Oxon, NY: Routledge.
- Schensul, J. J. (1987). Perspectives on collaborative research. In D. D. Stull & J. J. Schensul (Eds.), *Collaborative research and social change: Applied anthropology in action* (pp. 211-219). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. New

Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Shakti New Zealand. (2017). *Shakti is an associate member of National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR) / Women's Refuge, New Zealand*. Retrieved from <http://shakti-international.org/shakti-nz/help-nz/>
- Shepard, C. M. F., & Pence, E. L. (1999). *Coordinating community responses to domestic violence: Lessons from Duluth and beyond*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
doi: 10.4135/9781452231952
- Simons, H. (1986). *Getting to know schools in a democracy: The politics and process of evaluation*. London, United Kingdom: Falmer Press.
- Simons, H. (1996). The paradox of case study. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(2), 225-240. doi: 10.1080/0305764960260206
- Smith, A., Richie, B. E., Sudbury, J., & White, J. (2006). *The color of violence: The INCITE! anthology*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.
- Sokoloff, N. J., & Dupont, I. (2005). Domestic violence at the intersections of race, class, and gender: Challenges and contributions to understanding violence against marginalized women in diverse communities. *Violence Against Women*, 11(1), 38-64. doi: 10.1177/1077801204271476
- Stark, E. (2007). *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Stark, E. (2009). Rethinking coercive control. *Violence Against Women*, 15(12), 1509-1525. doi: 10.1177/1077801209347452
- Stark, E. (2010). Do violent acts equal abuse? Resolving the gender parity/asymmetry dilemma. *Sex Roles*, 62, 201-211. doi: 10.1007/s11199-009-9717-2
- Stene, L. E., Dyb, G., Tverdal, A., Jacobsen, G. W., & Schei, B. (2012). Intimate

partner violence and prescription of potentially addictive drugs: Prospective cohort study of women in the Oslo Health Study. *British Medical Journal Open*, 2(2). doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2011-000614

Strega, S., & Janzen, C. (2013). Asking the impossible of mothers: Child protection systems and intimate partner violence. In S. Strega, J. Krane, S. Lapierrre, C. Richardson, & R. Carlton (Eds.), *Failure to protect: Moving beyond gendered responses* (pp. 49-76). Nova Scotia, Canada: Fernwood.

Strega, S., Krane, J., & Carlton, R. (2013). G-D couldn't be everywhere so he created mothers: The impossible mandate of maternal protection in child welfare. In S. Strega, J. Krane, S. Lapierrre, C. Richardson, & R. Carlton (Eds.), *Failure to protect: Moving beyond gendered responses* (pp. 11-29). Nova Scotia, Canada: Fernwood.

Strong, T., & Busch, R. (2013). DSM-5 and evidence-based family therapy? *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 34, 90-103.
doi:10.1002/anzf.1009

Sullivan, C. M. (2011). Evaluating domestic violence support service programs: Waste of time, necessary evil, or opportunity for growth? *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16(4), 354-360. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2011.04.008

Sullivan, C. M., & Bybee, D. I. (1999). Reducing violence using community-based advocacy for women with abusive partners. *Journal of Consulting Clinical Psychology*, 67(1), 43-53. Retrieved from
<http://psycnet.apa.org.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/doi/10.1037/0022-006X.67.1.43>

Sullivan, C., Bybee, D., & Allen, N. (2002). Findings from a community-based program

- for battered women and their children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17, 915-936. Retrieved from <http://journals.sagepub.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260502017009001>
- Tan, C., Basta, J., Sullivan, C. M., & Davidson, W. S. (1995). The role of social support in the lives of women exiting domestic violence shelters: An experimental study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 10(4), 437-451. doi: 10.1177/088626095010004004
- Terrance, C., Plumm, K., & Little, B. (2008). Maternal blame, battered women and abused children. *Violence Against Women*, 14(8), 870-885. doi: 10.1177/1077801208321331
- Thelen, R. (2000). *Advocacy in a coordinated community response: Overview and highlights of three programs*. Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse Electronic Clearinghouse. Retrieved from <http://www.mincava.umn.edu/documents/bwjp/communityv/communityv.pdf>
- Thiesmeyer, L. (2003). Introduction: Silencing and discourse. In L. Thiesmeyer (Ed.), *Discourse and silencing* (pp. 1-37). Norwich, United Kingdom: John Benjamins.
- Todd, N., & Wade, A., with conversational partner Renoux, M. (2004). Coming to terms with violence and resistance: From a language of effects to a language of responses. In T. Strong & D. Pare (Eds.), *Furthering talk: Advances in the discursive therapies* (pp. 145-161). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.
- Todd, N., Weaver-Dunlop, G., & Ogden, C. (2014). Approaching the subject of violence: A response-based approach to working with men who have abused others. *Violence Against Women*, 1-21. doi: 10.1177/1077801214549638
- Tong, A., Sainsbury, P., & Craig, J. (2007). Consolidated criteria for reporting

- qualitative research (COREQ): A 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 19(6), 349-357. doi: 10.1093/intqhc/mzm042
- Towns, A. J., & Adams, P. J. (2015). "I didn't know whether I was right or wrong or just bewildered": Ambiguity, responsibility, and silencing women's talk of men's domestic violence. *Violence Against Women*, 1-25. doi: 10.1177/1077801215605918
- Towns, A., Adams, P. J., & Gavey, N. (2003). Silencing talk of men's violence towards women. In L. Theismeyer (Ed.), *Discourse and silencing: Representation and the language of displacement, Volume 5* (pp. 43-77). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Trujillo, M. P., & Ross, S. (2008). Police response to domestic violence making decisions about risk and risk management. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23(4), 454-473. doi: 10.1177/0886260507312943
- UN Women. (2011). *2011-2012 Progress of the world's women: In pursuit of justice. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* (Report). Retrieved from <http://progress.unwomen.org>
- Wade, A. (1997). Small acts of living: Everyday resistance to violence and other forms of oppression. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 19(1), 23-39. doi: 10.1023/A:1026154215299
- Wade, A. (2007). Despair, resistance, hope: Response-based therapy with victims of violence. In C. Flaskas, I. McCarthy and J. Sheehan (Eds.), *Hope and despair in narrative and family therapy: Adversity, forgiveness and reconciliation* (pp. 63-74). East Sussex, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Wade, A. (2014, April). *Victims' tactical responses and perpetrators strategic actions*.

Paper presented at the Response-Based Practice in Action: Addressing and Promoting Social Justice Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.

Wangmann, J. (2010). Gender and intimate partner violence: A case study from NSW.

The University of New South Wales Law Journal, 33(3), 945-969. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2360912

Weaver, J., Todd, N., Ogden, C., & Craik, L. (2007). *Honouring resistance: How*

women resist abuse in intimate relationships. Calgary, Canada: Calgary

Women's Shelter. Retrieved from

www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/documents/Honoring_Resistance.pdf

Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory (2nd Ed.)*. Oxford,

United Kingdom: Blackwell.

Weisz, A. N., Tolman, R. M., & Saunders, D. G. (2000). Assessing the risk of severe

domestic violence: The importance of survivors' predictions. *Journal of*

Interpersonal Violence, 15(1), 75-90. doi: 10.1177/088626000015001006

Weldon, S. L., & Htun, M. (2013). Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy

change: Why governments take action to combat violence against women.

Gender & Development, 21(2), 231-247. doi: 10.1080/13552074.2013.802158

Wilbraham, L. (2004). Discursive practice: Analysing a loveliness text on sex

communication for parents. In D. Hook (Ed.), *Critical psychology* (pp. 487-521)

Cape Town, South Africa: Cape Town University Press.

Williamson, E., & Abrahams, H. (2014). A review of the provision of intervention

programs for female victims and survivors of domestic abuse in the United

Kingdom. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 29(2), 178-191. doi:

10.1177/0886109913516452.

Wilson, D., Smith, R., Tolmie, J., & de Haan, I. (2015). Becoming better helpers:

Rethinking language to move beyond simplistic responses to women experiencing intimate partner violence. *Policy Quarterly*, 11(1), 25-31.

Woodward, N. (2013). *Christchurch Women's Refuge 40th anniversary and Aviva brand launch: 9 May 2013*. Speech delivered by Nicola Woodward, Chief Executive Officer, Christchurch Women's Refuge. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miQUcyoPKj4>

Woolson Neville, D. & Gremillion, H. (2015). *Experiencing women's advocacy: Connections with and departures from a feminist socio-political movement to end violence against women*. Unitec ePress Research Report Series (2). Retrieved from <http://www.unitec.ac.nz/epress/>

World Health Organization. (2014). *Global status report on violence prevention 2014*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization. Retrieved from www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/en/

Yoshihama, M. (1999). Domestic violence against women of Japanese descent in Los Angeles: Two methods of estimating prevalence. *Violence Against Women*, 5, 869-897. doi: 10.1177/10778019922181536

Yuen, A. (2007). Discovering children's responses to trauma: A response-based narrative practice. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 4, 3-18. Retrieved from <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=059632175830395;res=IELIND>> ISSN: 1446-5019.

Yuen, A. (2009). Less pain, more gain: Explorations of responses verses effects when working with the consequences of trauma. *Explorations: An e-journal of narrative practice*, 1(6), 6-16. Retrieved from <https://dulwichcentre.com.au/explorations-2009-1-angel-yuen.pdf>

Appendix A: Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Reo) and The Treaty of Waitangi (English) refers to documents signed in 1840, by Māori rangatira (chiefs) and the British Crown. In contemporary times Te Tiriti and The Treaty are widely understood to be the founding documents of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Te Reo version promised rights to Māori encompassing full citizenship of the British Empire and on-going possession of lands and resources in exchange for allowing the British Crown exclusive rights to purchase and assume governorship. Throughout the 19th Century the British began the colonisation of Aotearoa which endures to the present through warfare, introducing diseases, alienating Māori from lands and kinship structures, and legislation suppressing customary practices (Bennett & Liu, 2017, p. 2). I refer to the following by Emeritus Professor Sir Mason Durie as an insightful commentary:

In exchange for the right to govern (kāwanatanga), the Crown guaranteed to Māori continued exercise of rangatiratanga (chiefly authority)...Many Māori perspectives on the Treaty of Waitangi revolve around rangatiratanga, and the desire to maintain, regenerate, and sustain for future generations the cultural, intellectual, spiritual, and physical foundations of Māori communities—their taonga. This ranges across natural resources such as lands and waterways, to cultural / intellectual properties such as knowledge and language. Mason Durie (2004) refers to these aspirations as the desire “to live as Māori.” Māori enjoy these taonga as part of their human rights, and their rights as an indigenous people. Māori see Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a tool through which Māori can protect and advance their human and indigenous rights in Aotearoa...Many Māori therefore see the Treaty of Waitangi as a guarantee of Māori rights to

wellbeing. For example, because Māori were promised equal citizenship in Article Three of the Treaty, they can expect to enjoy socio-cultural and economic outcomes equivalent to that enjoyed by non-Māori. This includes the enjoyment of full participation in decision-making fora and in wider society. In guaranteeing rangatiratanga in Article Two of the Treaty, it follows that Māori should expect to achieve these outcomes, and participate in society, in a way that is congruent with their cultural framework (as opposed to having to assimilate)...Te Tiriti o Waitangi therefore has acted as a rallying point for Māori making claims on the Government to provide the means by which Māori can uphold their wellbeing. This includes the redress of past and current injustices against Māori communities, and a greater degree of political power to determine Māori futures (M Durie, 2013, paras 1-4). New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, 2013).

Appendix B: Six Factors in Response-Based Contextual Analysis

(Bonnah, et al., 2014, pp. 9-11).

Social and material conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and social existence is restricted by, enabled by, and responsive to the social and material conditions in which people live. • Access to the material necessities for life (e.g., food, safety, water), and the benefits of civil society (e.g., safety, law, medicine) are distributed unequally. • Social representations and structures influence the quality of social responses to victims and offenders and their families. These include professional and public representations of victims and offenders and, tied to these representations, policies and practices that provide or deny adequate social responses.
Social situation and interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions in social situations take place in specific social and material conditions. • Humans are inherently social and orient to one another as social agents with the capacity to choose. Humans are understood better as responding agents than as affected objects. • Dignity is central to social life and to individual and collective well-being. • Language-use is part of social interaction: Representation of one's self and others, and salient events, is ever-present in social interaction.
Offender actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and psychological violence is profoundly harmful and an affront to human dignity. • Violence is, with rare exceptions, deliberate and controlled: Offenders anticipate and work to suppress victim resistance. Most offenders can desist prior to intervention. • Violent acts are unilateral (rather than mutual) in that they entail actions by one person or group against the will and well-being of another.
Victim responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims resist violence and injustice and work to preserve dignity. Resistance can be open and direct or subtle and disguised, depending on the circumstances. • Victims respond to violence biologically (i.e., epigenetically, neurologically, physiologically), mentally, socially, and spiritually.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims responses reveal “emergent capacities”, purposes, and aspirations that can become a basis for safety planning and other social responses.
<p>Social responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims and offenders and their families encounter social responses from strangers, members of their social networks, authorities, and the larger society (e.g., media). • Social and material conditions enable/encourage some social responses and restrict/prevent others. • Language can be used to (a) conceal or reveal violence and injustice, (b) clarify or obscure offender and social responsibility (i.e., responsibility of authorities), (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses and resistance, and (d) blame and pathologize or contest the blaming and pathologizing of victims. • The quality of social responses is correlated with the level and form of victim distress and the likelihood of offender desistance.
<p>Responses to social responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims and offenders take actual and possible social responses into account in committing and responding to violent acts, respectively. • In response to negative and unjust social responses, victims are more likely to experience confusion, fear, disqualification, isolation, distress – and humiliation. Offenders are more likely to commit further violence. • In response to positive and just social responses, victims are more likely to disclose the facts and to experience clarity, relief, safety, affirmation, community, wellness – and dignity. Offenders are more likely to talk about their actions and concerns, and less likely to commit further violence.

Appendix C: Client Recruitment Information for Advocates

Jess Reedy (Researcher)
 Massey University
 School of Psychology
 Postgraduate Suite T4
 Wellington Campus
 P O Box 756
 Wellington, 6140
 Tel: 04 801 5799 ext. 62528
 Email: kereru100@gmail.com

xx xxx 2014

(name of client advocate)
 (name of) Women's Refuge Trust
 PO Box xx
 (city/town)

Re. Research Project: Clients' understandings and experience of social responses to domestic/family violence and interventions informed by Response-Based Practice

Dear (advocate's name),

Thank you for supporting this research project to date. The purpose of this letter is to ask you to distribute the accompanying Information Sheet (attached with this letter) to those of your clients who are registered to participate in your Women's Safety Group Programme and aged 18 or over. As discussed with you previously, a vital aspect of the research is to interview clients directly for the following reasons:

- to document their experiences of abuse and any interventions in which they have previously been involved, to identify the social responses to violence before their involvement in Response-Based Practice interventions;
- to focus on the details of client's stories to identify resistance to violence, so that the ways in which they are already committed to non-violence are better understood;
- to analyse ways in which clients' understandings and responses to violence change through their involvement with Response Based Practice and the Women's Safety Group.

It is of utmost importance that the Women's Safety Group client's rights to privacy and confidentiality are upheld. For the recruitment process to respect these rights, it would be appropriate that the Client Information Sheet is distributed to potential participants by their Refuge contact person. The Information Sheet provides information about this study and invites clients to contact me directly if they are potentially interested in participating in the research. It also explains that the client's decision to participate will only be known to her, my supervisor Mandy Morgan and me, unless the client chooses to tell someone else (i.e. neither Mandy nor I will inform others about who is and is not participating in the research).

I appreciate that after initially agreeing to participate, some clients may then decide to opt out or may not be able to participate for a number of reasons. Hence, I would aim to interview 4-5 clients on two occasions with the understanding that some interviews may not eventuate as originally planned. The first series of interviews would take place just after clients have registered to participate in the Women's Safety Group Programme. The second interviews would occur approximately 9 weeks later.

I appreciate your time and thank you for your contributions to this project to date. If you would like to discuss this stage of the study in more detail or have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor Mandy Morgan.

Yours sincerely,

Jess Reedy

Contact details

Researcher: Jess Reedy
Massey University
School of Psychology
Postgraduate Suite T4
Wellington Campus
P.O Box 756
Wellington, 6140
Phone: 04 8015799 ext 62528
Email: kereru100@gmail.com

Supervisor: Mandy Morgan,
School of Psychology,
Massey University,
Palmerston North
Phone: 06 3505799 ext 85058
Email: C.A.Morgan@massey.ac.nz

Appendix D: Letter of Support from Women's Refuge

25 June 2014

Jessica Reedy
14 Jackson Street
Island Bay
Wellington
6023

Re: Support for Research:

Dear Jess,

On behalf of Palmerston North Women's Refuge I write to express my enthusiasm for your proposed research: *Clients' understandings and experience of social responses to domestic/family violence and interventions informed by Response-Based Practice* as a partial requirement for completion of a Doctorate of Clinical Psychology at Massey University.

Given our joint membership with Tu Mai Awa, and our meetings together to date, I am assured of our common philosophical aims of working collaboratively and in a manner that upholds the dignity of all people involved in the research including Refuge clients and advocates, and Tu Mai Awa members.

At a practical level, I see this research as an important opportunity to collaboratively develop and evaluate a new resource in the form of a template for our women's group programme. Having this resource will be very timely for our organisation as we have, for some time now, sought a programme that better reflects new and more inclusive understandings in the area of women's group advocacy and particularly, one that reflects a Response-Based Practice approach.

Having previously worked with your primary supervisor Mandy Morgan, and Massey University, I am confident that our relationship will be constructive throughout the research process.

I look forward to collaborating with you on this project.

Yours sincerely,



Appendix E: Massey University Low Risk Ethics Approval Letter



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

25 July 2014

Jessica Reedy
14 Jackson Street
Island Bay
WELLINGTON 6023

Dear Jessica

Re: Refuge Advocates' Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 24 July 2014.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

You are reminded that staff researchers and supervisors are fully responsible for ensuring that the information in the low risk notification has met the requirements and guidelines for submission of a low risk notification.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research."

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc Prof Mandy Morgan, HoS
School of Psychology
PN320

Dr Ruth Gammon
School of Psychology
Wellington

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 3505573; 06 3505575 F 06 350 5622
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz; animaethics@massey.ac.nz; gtc@massey.ac.nz www.massey.ac.nz

Appendix F: Massey University Human Ethics Approval



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

25 September 2014

Jessica Reedy
14 Jackson Street
Island Bay
WELLINGTON 6023

Dear Jessica

Re: HEC: Southern A Application – 14/73
Clients' understandings and experiences of social responses to domestic/family violence and interventions informed by response-based practice

Thank you for your letter dated 24 September 2014.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Brian Finch, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A

cc Prof Mandy Morgan
School of Psychology
PN320

Dr Ruth Gammon
School of Psychology
WELLINGTON

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 3505573; 06 3505575 F 06 350 5622
E humanethics@massev.ac.nz: animalethics@massev.ac.nz: nrc@massev.ac.nz www.massev.ac.nz

Appendix G: Participant Consent Form (for Clients)

Women's Experience of Responses to Domestic Violence

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Full Name - printed

.....

Appendix H: Information Sheet (for Clients)

Women's Experience of Responses to Domestic Violence

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Women's Safety Group member,

I am passing this information to you through a contact person at Palmerston North Women's Refuge. My name is Jess Reedy and I am currently completing research at Massey University. I would like to invite you to take part in a research project on Women's Refuge clients' experiences of responses to domestic violence.

Palmerston North Women's Refuge have offered their support for this research and for this Information Sheet to be distributed to you as a potential participant in the research. Please note that you are under no obligation to participate and should you choose to participate, your decision will only be known to my research supervisor and me. If you would like to tell your Women's Refuge contact person that you are taking part, that is absolutely fine and is your choice. I would like to assure you that at this stage that I do not have your contact details and will only contact you if you give your contact details to me directly and think that you might be interested in participating in this research.

What is this study about?

The idea for this research came about because of the need to improve how people and organisations respond to women, families and whānau who experience violence. In particular, the study aims to learn about and promote responses to domestic violence that enhance people's dignity and safety. For this, it's important for me to learn about your experiences of abuse, how you and other people responded to the abuse, and whether you've been involved with any other organisations aiming to help reduce domestic violence.

This research project also involves developing a Women's Safety Group Programme at Palmerston North Women's Refuge. For this reason, it would be of great value to learn about your experiences before and after your involvement with the women's group. To participate in this research you need to be 18 or older and signed up for the Women's Safety Group Programme.

What does your participation involve?

First of all, if you think you might be interested in participating, you would let me know by either filling out and returning the attached Participation Form, or emailing or phoning me (my contact details are at the end of this Information Sheet).

If you agree to participate, you would have up to two interviews with me. In the first interview I would ask you some open-ended questions, but my main concern would be for you to have the opportunity to talk about your experiences of abuse, and how you and other people responded to the abuse. If you agree to being interviewed a second time, I would ask you about your experiences of the Women's Safety Group and the kinds of responses to abuse that you would find helpful now. The first interview would take place just after you have signed up to participate in the Women's Safety Group and the second interview would take place about 12 weeks later.

I expect each interview will take between 1 to 2 hours, but they may take a little longer depending on how much you would like to share of your experiences. Your participation in the interviews will be confidential and each will take place at a time and location safe and convenient to you, for example, either at your home, or in a quiet and private interview room in town or at Massey University.

Your interviews will be audio-recorded and then transcribed word for word by me. You will have the opportunity to review the two interview transcripts to check that you are comfortable with what is written and to make changes. These two reviewing activities might each take an additional 30 minutes to an hour.

To protect your privacy and confidentiality, the recorded interviews will be destroyed once transcribed. Your name, and any other names mentioned in the interview, will not be identified on the transcript or in the written research report. Transcripts will be stored electronically on a password-protected computer and will only be accessible to my two supervisors and me. It is important that you are aware that while your privacy and confidentiality cannot be absolutely guaranteed, they will be protected to the greatest possible extent.

It is important that your participation is through a safe and respectful process. You will be asked to reflect on your experiences of abuse and this could be emotionally upsetting. Please be assured I have received training and have experience in interviewing people about sensitive subjects including domestic violence. In the event that you find either interview distressing, I will be able to put you in touch

with a therapist from Massey University Psychology Clinic, who is available to provide support should you wish.

Your rights as a participant

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study at any time before the transcript is signed off by you;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used;
- be given a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

About me:

For this project, I am working alongside Tu Mai Awa, a group committed to improving social responses to violence in families. I have worked as an advocate for women experiencing sexualised abuse and their families on the South Island's West Coast - my home community. Advocates' understandings of the impacts of domestic violence in rural communities was the topic of my Honours research.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. If you would like to participate in this research or have any questions about it, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor Mandy Morgan.

Jess Reedy

Contact details

Researcher: Jess Reedy

Massey University

School of Psychology

Postgraduate Suite T4

Wellington Campus

P.O Box 756

Wellington, 6140

Phone: 04 8015799 ext 62528

Email: jessica.reedy.1@uni.massey.ac.nz

Supervisor: Mandy Morgan,

School of Psychology,

Massey University,

Palmerston North

Phone: 06 3505799 ext 85058

Email: C.A.Morgan@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 14/73. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Brian Finch, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 84459, email humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz

Participation Form

I give permission for Jess to contact me about participating in an interview for this study.

My name: _____

How Jess can contact me (complete only what you think is necessary for Jess to reach you):

My phone number: _____


My email address: _____

Another option is for Jess to contact you via you Women's Refuge advocate/support person. If you would prefer Jess to do this please write your advocate's name here:

Please enclose in the envelope provided and place in the box at Women's Refuge Reception

Thank you! 😊

Appendix I: Authority for the Release of Transcript Form (for Clients and Advocates)



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

Women's experience of responses to domestic violence

**AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS
Interview One**

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name - printed _____

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

Massey University School of Psychology – Te Kura Hinengaro Tangata
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442 T +64 6 356 9099 extn 85071 F +64 6 350 5673 www.massey.ac.nz



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

Women's experience of responses to domestic violence

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS Interview Two

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

Refuge Advocate's Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix J: Interview Schedules 1 and 2 (for Clients)

Clients' understandings and experiences of social responses to domestic/family violence and interventions informed by Response-Based Practice

Schedule for Interview One

The interview will be semi-structured, using the following questions and accompanying prompts as a guide, but with an emphasis on facilitating participant's sharing of their experiences, stories and understandings. In keeping with a Response-Based Practice approach, the interview involves a contextual analysis and continued monitoring of the participant to check that she is experiencing dignity throughout the interview (observing her face, voice, posture, engagement). Emphasis will be on listening for the often very subtle micro-details and contexts of the participant's experiences of and responses to abuse. Thus, the questioning process aims to be responsive to the participant's contributions as the interview unfolds. Also, questions are unlikely to be asked in the order shown, and - contingent on what the participant shares - some new questions will arise. The questions here will serve to ensure that information relevant to the research focus has been covered.

Introduction

I really appreciate you giving your time to be interviewed. I will ask you some open-ended questions, but my main concern will be for you to have the opportunity to talk about your experiences and your responses to the abuse. I will also ask you about the ways that other people in your life have responded to you during and since your partner's, or expartner's, abuse, and any previous involvement with domestic violence services you have had.

Some aspects of our interview today will involve me asking you to share some difficult and painful experiences. Finding out about the details of the abuse you have experienced and the ways you and others have responded to these experiences is important for understanding your situation and for learning about the ways you have kept yourself and others safe, and maintained your dignity.

If you are not sure about anything in this interview, please feel free to ask me at any time. Before we begin, at this point do you have any questions about it?

1. Beginning the conversation

To start, I would like to hear about the background of your involvement with Women's Refuge?

- *Prompt: I am aware that you applied for a Protection Order. Would you be able to tell*
- *me about the situation that led up to making the application?*
- *As I listen to the client's story, as needed, I would ask for additional details about her history of the current interventions she is involved in, with police, with the courts, with Refuge and any other professional agencies.*
- *I will ask prompts to get a sense of how she (and her family or whānau if relevant) experience these present interventions, and how people in these services relate to her and her family and whānau.*

2. Seeking a clear description of the violence in context and actions of the violent (ex)partner in detail

For me to understand the nature of the abuse you experienced, I would like to ask you to tell me about your partner's abuse and violence?

- *I will ask about the abuse the client experienced / is experiencing. This will include asking details about the immediate circumstances during her (ex)partner's abusive acts, and for her to clearly describe her partner's actions (what, where, when, how, who was there).*

3. The client's responses and resistance to her partner's abuse

How did you respond when your (ex)partner said / did that (state the various specific actions of the abusive partner relating to the violence that the client identifies)?

- *I will ask the client to describe how she responded to her partner's abuse and control at different stages of it being carried out.*
- *I will ask her to describe in detail what she did, what she felt, and what she thought about at different steps during and since the different forms of abuse.*
- *I would ask her to talk about how she responded in ways that indicate varying forms of physical, emotional, intellectual (in her thoughts) and spiritual resistance.*
- *I would be listening for and asking about ways the client indicates how she tried to keep herself safe, protect others and keep her self-respect and dignity.*

4. The (ex)partner's responses to the client's responses and resistance

I would also like to hear about how your (ex)partner reacted when you did/said that (state the client's specific responses relating to her partner's abuse that the client identifies)?

- *I would try to get a sense of how the client's (ex)partner responded to her responses and resistance - did the partner carry out actions to try to suppress her resistance or try to stop other people from finding out about his abuse?*
- *For example, I would listen for how the client provides indications of her (ex)partner's surveillance, threats, attributing blame to her or others, denying responsibility, undermining her, accusations, physical control and violence, sexualised abuse, hurting or threatening to hurt others such as her children, control of money or other resources, isolating her from friends, family, work, being secretive/ hiding evidence of their abusive actions.*

5. Social responses to the client

I would now like to ask you to tell me about the kinds of responses you received from your family and friends, and from services such as police, the courts, with Refuge and any other professional agencies?

- *Contingent on the client's accounts, I would ask her to describe specific actions/comments of her friends and family that she received as she experienced her partner's abuse.*
- *I would ask her about their responses since the abuse became apparent. (e.g. what did he/she/they/ your relative say when they found out about xxx...? What did your friend do when you told her about xxx...?)*
- *I would listen for reports of negative or unhelpful social responses and about responses that the client found helpful. In both cases I would ask about the specific details of the responses (who was there, in what ways, when, where, what did they say, what did they do?).*
- *Could you tell me about the ways that services such as police, the courts, Refuge and any other professional agencies responded.*
- *Again, I would listen for reports of negative or unhelpful social responses and about responses that the client found helpful. In both cases I would ask about the details of these responses (who, in what ways, when, where, what did they say, what did they do?).*

6. Client's responses to the social responses she received

What was it like for you when (specify person or agency identified by client) said / did that (specify the person/ people's / agency's responses)?

- *I would listen and ask about how the client responded, e.g "what did you do when xxx happened?"*

- *"What did you think at the time?"*
- *"How did you manage then?"*
- *"When (specify identified action) happened, how did you protect yourself?"*
- *"Are there things that you do now to get through it?"*

7. Is there anything you would like to add that you think is important for me to know about?

Thank you for sharing your experiences, thoughts and time. It's of great value to talk to you and your contribution to this research is very much appreciated.

Schedule for Interview Two

As with the first interview, this will be semi-structured, using the following questions and accompanying prompts as a guide, but with an emphasis on facilitating participants' sharing of their experiences, stories and understandings. In keeping with a Response-Based Practice approach, the interview involves a contextual analysis and continued monitoring of the participant to check that she is experiencing dignity throughout the interview (observing her face, voice, posture, engagement). The focus will be on listening for the often very subtle micro-details and contexts of the participant's experiences of and responses to abuse. Thus, the questioning process aims to be responsive to the participant's contributions as the interview unfolds. Also, questions are unlikely to be asked in the order shown, and - contingent on what the participant shares - some new questions will arise. The questions here will serve to ensure that information relevant to the research focus has been covered.

Introduction

I really appreciate you giving your time to be interviewed again. Like in the first interview, I will ask you some open-ended questions, but my main concern will be for you to have the opportunity to talk about your experiences and your responses to the abuse. I will ask you about how the Women's Refuge safety group has been going for you. I'll also ask about the ways that other people in your life have responded to you during and since your partner's abuse.

Like in our first interview, some aspects will involve me asking you to share some difficult experiences. Finding out about the details of the abuse you have experienced and the ways you and others have responded to these experiences is important for understanding your unique situation and for learning about the ways you have kept yourself and others safe, and maintained your dignity. If you are not sure about

anything in this interview, please feel free to ask me at anytime. Before we begin, at this point do you have any questions about it?

As I mentioned before, I'm interested in hearing your views in regard to the women's safety group at Refuge.

- *Can you tell me about particular things about the group that are going / have gone well?*
 - *What aspects of the group programmes have helped you feel safer from your (ex)partner's abuse?*
 - *What aspects have helped your family / children become safer?*
 - *In your view, what has supported you to participate in the safety group?*
 - *What about at other times throughout the programme?*
 - *For example, things happening at home, concerns to do with your (ex)partner, personal things, children and other family, practical issues, cultural considerations, things to do with the court process, police, Refuge, other agencies.*
 - *Things happening within the safety group?*
 - *Changes that you have experienced in your life, for you as a person, for the people you care about? For your children? For your (ex)partner?*

- *Were there things in your life that stood in the way of your involvement with the group when it first started?*
 - *For example, things happening at home, concerns to do with your (ex)partner, personal things, children and other family, practical issues, cultural considerations, things to do with the court process, police, Refuge, other agencies.*
 - *Things happening within the safety group?*
 - *Changes that you have experienced in your life, for you as a person, for the people you care about? For your children? For your (ex)partner?*
 - *What about at other times throughout the programme?*

- *One of the main focuses of the women's safety group is honour women's dignity and resistance in the face of others' abuse.*
 - *Has your involvement with the group helped you become more aware of ways that you have resisted abuse and control at different times in your life?*
 - *Could you describe a situation where you have resisted a person's / your (ex) partner's) abuse?*
 - *(Focusing on the micro-details: What did they do?*
 - *How did you respond?*
 - *Who was there, where were you?*

- *What happened then?*
 - *What did you think/ feel/ do then?*
 - *How did (the abusive person or other people there) respond to you doing that*
 - *What thoughts went through your mind?*
 - *What kept you going? How did you manage? How did you know to do that? Where did you learn to do that? ...*
 - *Would you be able to talk about ways that you have kept yourself safe at different times of your life?*
 - *What about times when you have tried to protect someone else?*
 - *Can you tell me about things you have done to keep your dignity?*
- *Since participating in the women's safety group, how have you thought about the responses of others that know about your (ex)partner's abuse towards you? e.g. friends, family, whānau, police, informal networks, church, other?*
 - *Or who you have sought help from? Or have offered support?*
 - *What has that (reiterate client's identified social responses) meant for you personally?*
 - *Since your involvement in the women's group, have you noticed changes in how you understand domestic violence?*
 - *And changes in your understanding of who is responsible for the abuse?*
 - *Has your understanding of your own situation and your (ex)partner's abuse towards you changed?*
 - *Has your awareness of support and services available to you (and if relevant, your children / family) in the (name of city) area changed?*
 - *What supports and resources have you used or would consider using in the future?*

It has been of great value for me to talk to you. Your contribution to this research is very much appreciated. Thank you again for sharing your experiences, thoughts and time.

Note:

In writing this interview schedule, I gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade and in particular, their 2013 article, *Creating Islands of Safety; Contesting Failure to Protect and Mother-Blaming in Cases of Paternal Violence against Children and Mothers*. In Strega, Krane, Lapierre, Richardson & Carlton (Eds.), *Failure to Protect; Moving Beyond Gendered Responses*. (pp. 146-186): Winnipeg, Manitoba; Fernwood.

Appendix K: Research Kaumātua Letter of Support

29 July 2014

Jessica Reedy
14 Jackson Street
Island Bay
Wellington, 6023

Huia Taumata
19 Wakefield Street
Westport, 7825

Letter of support for your research

Dear Jess,

It's great to hear that you are interested in continuing your studies at Massey and especially in the important area of family violence prevention. I enjoyed the times we spent together last year discussing your Honours Project. I would be happy to continue to be there to support you as you undertake your current research.

I look forward to hearing more about this new study and sharing our thoughts and ideas when I next see you on the West Coast. As you know, I will be more available after the month of September when the busiest period of my work for the Electoral Commission is over. For now, keep your calmness and keep smiling because there is no need to tell you to take care, your personality will be shining through.

Yours faithfully,


Huia

Appendix L: Information Sheet (for Advocates)

Refuge Advocates' Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear (advocate's name),

My name is Jess Reedy and I am currently completing research at Massey University. For this, I am working alongside Tu Mai Awa, a group committed to improving social responses to violence in families. I am aware of the critical work done by advocates in the domestic violence sector. I have worked as an advocate for women experiencing sexualised abuse and their families on the South Island's West Coast - my home community. Advocates' understandings of the impacts of intimate partner violence in rural communities was the topic of my Honours research.

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project on clients' understandings and experiences of social responses to domestic violence and interventions informed by Response-Based Practice. Ang Jury (Palmerston North Women's Refuge Manager) has offered her full support for this research and for distributing this information to you as a potential participant. Please note however, that you are under no obligation to participate in this study and your decision to participate will only be known to my two research supervisors, Mandy Morgan and Ruth Gammon, and me and, should you be willing to participate in the group feedback part of the study, those of your colleagues who also have chosen to participate.

What is the purpose of this study?

An initial aim of this research is to develop a Response-Based Practice group programme for Palmerston North Women's Refuge so that it is ready to be delivered and evaluated in 2015. For this, it's important for me to learn about your work as an advocate, and particularly, your thoughts about women's group programmes within Refuge. I would also like to hear your ideas about Response-Based Practice. This will involve learning about any issues and concerns you might have regarding current women's group programmes, and about what is working and what could be helpful for strengthening these.

This research is part of a broader study, which will involve:

- documenting Refuge clients' experiences of abuse and any interventions in which they have previously been involved, to identify the social responses to violence experienced before their involvement in Response-Based Practice interventions;
- focusing on the details of client's stories to identify resistance to violence, so that the ways in which they are already committed to non-violence are better understood;
- analysing ways in which clients' understandings and responses to violence change through their involvement with Response-Based Practice.

What does your participation involve?

If you agree to participate, you would initially have an interview with me. In the interview you would be asked some open-ended questions about your work as an advocate. I would anticipate the interview taking about one hour, but it may take longer depending on how much you would like to share of your experiences. Your participation in the interview will be confidential and will be conducted at a time and location convenient to you, i.e. either at your workplace during normal work hours or elsewhere outside work hours.

Your interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed word for word by me. You will have the opportunity to review the transcript to check its accuracy and make changes. This review process might take an additional hour. To protect your privacy and confidentiality, the recorded interview will be destroyed once transcribed. Your name, and any other names mentioned in the interview, will not be identified on the transcript or in the written research report. Transcripts will be stored electronically on a password protected computer and will only be accessible to me and my supervisors. It is important that you are aware that while your privacy and confidentiality cannot be absolutely guaranteed, they will be protected to the greatest possible extent.

The second stage will involve my collating of feedback from your interview and those of other participating advocates, and then - with your permission - discussing this with you and your colleagues as a group. This will likely involve two group feedback sessions, each of approximately one hour in duration. This information sharing and further feedback gathering will be crucial for generating an ethical and workable women's group programme.

As your involvement will be part of your Refuge work, your time participating will be added to your paid work hours. It is important that your participation is through a safe and respectful process. In the unlikely event that you find the initial interview distressing, I will be able to put you in touch with one of my research supervisors, Dr Ruth Gammon, a registered Clinical Psychologist, who is available to assist should you wish.

Your rights as a participant

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study at any time before the transcript is signed off by you;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used;
- be given a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

I will be in touch with you within the fortnight to discuss your involvement in this research. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor Mandy Morgan.

I really look forward to talking to you,

Jess Reedy

Contact details

Jess Reedy (researcher)
 Massey University
 School of Psychology
 Wellington Campus
 Wellington
 Email: kereru100@gmail.com

Supervisor: Mandy Morgan,
 School of Psychology,
 Massey University,
 Palmerston North
 Phone: 06 350 5799 ext 85058
 Email: C.A.Morgan@massey.ac.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher, Jess Reedy and her supervisor are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director, (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix M: Interview Schedule (for Advocates)

Refuge Advocates' Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

Interview Schedule

The interview will be semi-structured, using the following questions and accompanying prompts as a guide, but with an emphasis on facilitating participants' sharing of their experiences as advocates from their own perspective. The questioning process aims to be responsive to participants' contributions as the interview unfolds. Thus, questions may not be asked in the order shown, or need to be asked at all. Rather, questions will serve to ensure that information relevant to the research focus has been covered.

Introduction

I really appreciate you giving your time to be interviewed. I'm especially interested in learning about your work as an advocate in promoting safety and wellbeing for women and particularly, your thoughts about women's group programmes within Refuge. I would also like to ask you to share your ideas about Response-Based Practice.

Your background

To begin, I would like to hear about how you became involved with Women's Refuge.

- *How long have you been doing this work?*
- *What inspired you to work for Refuge?*
- *Had you worked in similar roles in the past, e.g. informally in the community/family/whānau/ or for other services?*

As I mentioned before, I'm interested in hearing your views in regard to providing women's group advocacy at Refuge.

- *Can you tell me about particular things about the group programme that are going well?*
- *What about aspects of the group programme that could be improved?*

Additional prompts:

- *What aspects of the group programmes have a protective role in making individual women and their families and whānau safer from violence?*
- *In your view, what factors support women to participate in the programmes?*
- *In relation to the group programmes, can you describe barriers that might stand in the way of women from participating and engaging throughout the programme?*
- *Are you aware of tensions that exist in delivering the programmes?*

- *What other ideas have you thought about in regard to how the programme could work really well?*
 - *When thinking about barriers or helpful factors for women's group programmes, what about individual, personal, family, organisational, cultural and practical considerations?*
 - *In what ways do you think client's perceptions of the programmes might encourage their engagement - or alternatively - stand in their way of engaging in the group programmes?*
 - *How do you see the availability of other supports women may seek help from (e.g. family, whānau, police, informal networks, church, other) as supporting (or discouraging) their engagement?*

- *Do you see a place for Response-Based Practice in the women's programmes?*
- *Can you share any additional thoughts you have about Response-Based Practice?*

- *Do you have any additional recommendations, concerns or hopes you would like to share during this interview?*
- *Are you happy to have the things you have spoken about in this interview shared with other advocates in a group feedback session provided your name isn't identified?*

Thank you for sharing your experiences and thoughts. It's of great value to hear your perspective. Thanks again for your contribution and for the important work you do.

Appendix N: Participant Consent Form (for Advocates)

Refuge Advocates' Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix O: Focus Group Participant Consent Form

Refuge Advocates' Understandings and Experiences of Women's Safety Programmes

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Full Name - printed

.....

Appendix P: Summary of Findings for Feedback Session with Advocates

Advocates' interview responses were used to identify needs in developing and delivering a new RBP Women's Group Programme. The following is a summary of advocates' understandings of what is working and what could be helpful for strengthening the Women's Group Programme, including advocates' ideas about the potential use of RBP.

Reflection

During my early discussions with the Women's Refuge Manager, she expressed a pressing need for a new RBP Women's Group Programme. I noted her concern that the current programme was very outdated and of poor quality. As I interviewed the Manager and other advocates it was interesting then to reflect on the passion, depth of knowledge, and respect they all held for many aspects of the original programme. Advocates recounted numerous stories about women's lives and relationships that took place in context of the Women's Group. They connected their weekly delivery the Women's Group to important events in the women's lives and their changing understandings.

While the advocates suggested some changes to the Programme, including incorporating RBP, they also wanted to retain much of its original content within a similar timeframe for programme delivery. As the Manager had asked me to create a new Women's Group Programme, this realisation was a little daunting: How would I create a new, substantively different programme, without losing the content and intention of the old programme? Of great reassurance however was how the Manager signalled her deep trust and belief in the advocates' and clients' abilities.

For this reason, needs identification begins by finding out what is working well and of value in the Women's Group. Equally, it was apparent that advocates were keen to create a supportive environment that encourages innovation and risk-taking in imagining and planning the new Women's Group Programme.

The Analysis

In thinking about advocates' accounts during our interviews and how these could be synthesized in a way that is useful for developing, delivering, and evaluating the RBP Women's Group Programme, the feedback focuses on three overarching themes: Our Kaupapa and Takepū - Group Purposes, Our Mahi - Group Processes, and Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure. This gives a framework for conceptualising why the Women's Group functions, and how advocates and clients contribute to this. These themes are shown in the table below.

Themes presented in the analysis of advocates' interview texts

Overarching Theme	Subordinate Theme
1. Our Kaupapa and Takepū - Group Purpose and Values	1.1 Social connectedness
	1.2 Positive social responses and upholding mana and dignity
	1.3 Learning together and from one another
	1.4 Enhancing safety
	1.5 Restoring wellbeing and mauri
	1.6 Resource building
2. Our Mahi: Group Processes	2.1 Facilitator skills and tasks
	2.2 Facilitators' on-going learning and Response-Based Practice
	2.3 Women participating and engaging
3. Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure	3.1 Group programme structure
	3.2 Session structure - procedures
	3.3 Individual session content

1. Our Kaupapa and Takepū - Group Purpose and Values

All of the advocates described transformative experiences of working in groups for women victims. They spoke with conviction of the particular power of the group to enable learning, support, and healing through reciprocation. Throughout interviews, advocates referred to the Women's Group as making a positive difference in the lives of women victims and their children.

The Women's Group - that's where I've seen the most change, is through the Group programme in women's lives, yeah...I believe in the programme that much...one of my young clients, she just sent me a photo the other week, thanking us and saying how much she loved the programme and, it was her and her son, they've moved away and she took a photo and it meant a lot. I think I put it in the [Group programme] book in the evaluation part because we never got an evaluation from her and I thought; well that's an evaluation in itself [A 5; 619-623].

- Tensions exist in defining the group kaupapa and how this could be problematic for different stakeholders. In particular, referring agencies such as the Courts and Child Youth and Family expect a strong education focus in the Group Programme and are understood to place less emphasis on women's healing and recovery. Advocates suggested that emphasising educating women about domestic violence could be perceived by clients as patronising if not handled with sensitivity.
- From clients' perspectives, the main purpose and appeal of the Women's Group is to receive and give support to other women in similar circumstances:

My biggest draw card that I always use is the supportive environment and it really does, like, it's amazing as soon as you say that it's quite a supportive environment and you will meet other women in similar circumstances, that seems to be what draws them in...Whereas, I think if you just said it's an education programme, they go "oh yeah", [unenthusiastically] and a couple of my clients - that's their sole purpose for going - is to get that support and meet other women in the same circumstance [A 3; 118-141].

- One advocate's expectations for the Women's Group: Balance between learning, recovery, and being challenged in a supportive environment:

I want a programme that is challenging to our women so that they are not just being educated and supported, but that they are being challenged to grow and to take on new ideas [A 4; 779-782].

- Advocates' awareness of their work as something that is value driven was evident. Takepū, or advocates' own values provide a culturally responsive and ethical framework for working:

The takepū [values] have been really useful actually for me...to identify things, not only professionally but personally... we don't really [separate personal from work] because we're a whole person, we, on a personal level bring so much forward, in whatever job we're in [A 5; 98...110].

In the following section, I draw on takepū, or values, as indicated by advocates that form the basis of the Women's Group.

1.1 Social connectedness

- Comparing one-to-one work and the Women's Group, advocates consistently referred to the closeness that develops between the women through working together. This involves sharing deeply personal experiences, which create conditions for women to support and trust one-another.
- Women in the group often maintain contact with one-another after completing the Programme. Sometimes they stay in touch with the local Women's Refuge.
- Advocates also talked about the longing of women clients to connect with other women and how this can motivate them to participate in the group:

The women do form very, very strong bonds and end up with very good friendships and I think that they like that - whenever I talk to the women about joining the programme...that kind of sparks their interest about forming bonds with other women who have been through a similar thing [A 3; 49-62].

- Having "willing and active engagers" was considered an important ingredient for creating a supportive group environment.
- Facilitator skills and programme content are crucial for encouraging willing and active engagement.

A lot of it, they don't actually realise but they run the group - a lot of their conversations, they run the group - we just put out little bullet points and touch base but they take it away... they make their own rules too, in the group, so leaving that to them as well [A 2; 311-332].

- Making social connections has many positive consequences for women's safety and wellbeing. Isolation can be used by abusive partners, and it can arise from negative social responses women receive during and after victimisation.
- The Women's Group counters this isolation. Through women's participation in the group, learning they were not alone was a vital source of reassurance and eased their experience of isolation:

I always recommend it to my women to attend the programme because it's quite supportive and can be quite eye opening and it helps them realise that they're not alone - and I like that. Sometimes they feel like they are the only ones it's happened to and that other people won't understand, so I think it's quite good for them to see that people do understand and people have been through it before [A 3; 49-62].

- Advocates made connections between enhancing women's immediate safety and reducing their isolation through participation in the group. The group setting has the advantage of many different women supporting each other:

They're having weekly contact. Sometimes it's quite easy to go without seeing someone, maybe once a month. But it's also the other women, because they start sharing their stories and the other women will give them encouragement. Like, "oh he came over last night," and "oh, but you know..." They'll say [challenging] things like that that we can't say. So we can say things to encourage the women but the other women can be quite blunt and actually challenge them. So I think that's really helpful for their own safety [A 5; 646-657].

Summary

- Advocates indicated that a major purpose of the Women's Group is for clients to give and receive support, and to relate to other women who have had similar experiences in a safe, non-stigmatising environment.
- The Women's Group context counters women's isolation and enables them to develop trust and interdependence. These experiences contribute to group participant's immediate and long-term safety and healing.

1.2 Positive social responses and upholding mana and dignity

- Clients deal with shame and self-blame, and other people's negative judgement and disbelief. The Group focuses on countering victim-blaming and supporting participants to overcome shame and self-blame:

One of the really big themes for Women's Refuge is, you know, it's about not blaming women... definitely, that's a really big part of not being judgmental [A 3; 146-150].

- The Women's Group is a place for clients to come where they will not be blamed for their partners' abuse, and where they are told, often for the first time in their life, that their victimisation is not their fault.
- The Group is helpful for women to be less self-blaming but that it can take a long time for women to realise that they are not responsible for the abuse.

Yes, [we try to] shift the blame - shift it to where it belongs - it has worked for some, not for all - that will take time, and again, building up her mana, and letting her know that his or her actions that he, or she have done, shouldn't result in her feeling like shit really, because he or she chose to do this, doesn't mean that you should wear the blame - again wording around that is really quite difficult with women, but they would see it as "it's all my fault" because he kicked off or she kicked off for this that and the other, or "it's my fault because the kids got a twack last

night" - quite hard to translate that so they can understand but once they get it, it's like a light bulb goes off [A 2; 183-191].

- The response-based emphasis on reinstating dignity through using language and practices that do not blame or pathologise victims was apparent in the way advocates spoke about their clients and their work in the Women's Group. Promoting positive social responses and reinstating client's dignity seemed to be part of the culture of this Women's Refuge:

It's really good for the women that come along to hang out with other women and recognise - you know, for all that we talk about how common it is and the one-in-three and all that... honestly for so many of those women, this is the first - when they come into the programme - this is the first time that they actually believe that - when they actually sit in a room with half a dozen or so other women and while the details might be different, they all get it - and you can almost see their light bulb going on for some of them: "oh, really, so he did that to me and that's not really disgusting and strange and weird cause that happened to her too? And so, I think that's one of the primary benefits to [the Women's Group] [A 4; 52-61].

- Clients often experience distress and dread from thinking they will be expected to disclose their stories in the Women's Group. What happens instead is that women tend to receive kindness, support and respect from all of the group members:

She did it, she just stayed and talked all about it and said exactly what had happened - this is what had made her leave, and everyone was like, "you're amazing, you did what you needed to do to protect your babies." Yes, he's sitting in jail now and will do for quite some time but yes, it's awesome that she was able to tell her story in a room full of women [A 1; 746-754].

Summary

- Advocates emphasised the crucial relationship between women's safety and the Group as a place where they will not be evaluated negatively by advocates and other clients. For the women to not experience blame, judgement and shame, but to know that they are always welcome regardless of what is going on in their lives -that they will never be turned away - was recognised as extremely important to their safety, mana and dignity.

1.3 Learning together and from one another

- The Women's Group is a place for clients to begin to make sense of their experiences of victimisation - this allows them to gain perspective and recognise patterns of abuse in helpful ways:

They start to put a little bit of structure around their experience, they can make a little bit of sense - it stops being so chaotic - we talk a bit about the chaos and all of that sort of stuff, but they can put an organising frame around it [A 4; 63-70].

- The Power and Control Wheel helps to broaden women's understandings of DV and to legitimise their experiences of victimisation. This activity is also seen as a way to facilitate relationship building in the group.

There is one exercise that we do with the Power and Control Wheel and that's normally in the second session - first session they're pretty quiet. They don't really want to talk. I haven't met

many that will actually share on that first day, by the time they come back on the second week they actually want to start opening up a little bit more and they normally tell me at the end that session 2 needs to actually be longer because they're all writing down on a piece of paper their own experiences and where it fits on the Power and Control Wheel and they're also having the conversation with each other...that's where they really start talking and to form those bonds - and they get it that actually everybody else in this room understands. It may be a slightly different situation - but they get it [A 1; 99-110].

- As women learn about DV in the group setting, including control and non-physical forms of abuse, this can be beneficial as they are able to recognise a much broader spectrum of what constitutes DV:

The most important one ... has been doing the Power and Control Wheel, and I also know from when I've shown women that they find it quite shocking - because a lot of the things that are counted as abuse they just thought that's how life is, so I think that's probably the most important bit and I think doing it in a supported environment rather than one on one...because then they can bounce things off each other [A 3; 74-80].

- The Women's Group is valuable for encouraging immediate and long-term safety planning as participants benefit from a large group of women with similar experiences who were willing to share and learn together:

When we do safety planning in the group it's really useful because the other women will share experiences, like "Oh, last time he found me because I had my location on Facebook". So they'll share ideas of ways to keep themselves safe and then they'll talk to each other [A 5; 657-666].

- One advocate described the knowledge-building process for women: With better-informed understandings of domestic violence, the choices available to women for seeking support and resources that contribute to becoming free from abuse increase. This advocate also indicates how the term 'empowerment' can be problematic in a Refuge setting:

Empowerment is something that's become - that's been misused almost to the point where it's become one of those nonsense words...I would prefer us to be talking about things like choice, but choice within a relative framework so there's this really clear understanding that there are always choices ...you always have choice and you always have power but there are structural constraints and there are things that are going to restrict how you play those choices out, but somehow communicating the notion which I guess is a little bit response-based, with the notion that even small acts of resistance count [A 4; 434-443].

- Advocates reinforced the value of group settings as places in which women learn together through reciprocation. For example, women learn through sharing possible solutions to similar experiences. Women also learn through examining currently held ideas and trying out new ones in a safe environment.

1.4 Enhancing safety

- The flexible group structure enabled women to discuss safety and engage in group problem-solving. E.g. dealing with breaches of safety orders or preventing abusive partners from locating clients were addressed by the whole group.

Every session is making them more aware. Even if these women plan on staying, they're more aware of him when he walks through the door...for a lot of our women, they'll say because he's not actually beating her, it's actually not family violence - they'll start to notice that actually, financially, I don't have any money every week... And they'd start noticing little things, just the way he walks through the door some days, to different things he'll say and they'll know that yep, sooner or later he's gonna kick off, and they start to prepare themselves for leaving and it may be that they usher the kids out to the neighbour's house or they ring a friend and say, "can you come and get the kids for a while?" - they may not feel safe enough to leave but they're able to get the children out sometimes, um, or they're able to get themselves into a room where it's going to be slightly safer [A 1; 294-306].

- Women learn that Refuge is a safe and inclusive environment that will provide them with the space and support to make choices rather than one that imposes limitations on women:

Once they've been through the programme...they find out that it's actually not run by a bunch of crazy man-hating lesbians, that it's not going to tell them that you have to leave your home or your partner, that you actually have the power to make choices, [and] they relax about the notion that we're not going to pack them into our van and lock them in our safe house...All of those sort of things, those myths that sit around Refuge...they become demystified through them being here and talking to us, it makes sense to them...so they're more likely to use our service in the future if they want to or need to [A 4; 118-133].

- Often, women take their learning from the group and share it among friends, families and whānau. The ripple-effect of their knowledge sharing beyond the Women's Group also contributes to DV prevention:

They're taking in things from the group and from the other women, and maybe they might not put those things in place this year but it's kind of planted a seed, especially if they are helping another whānau member or friend to speak about it ... and some of them would have their own little group sessions...[group participants] will get together and go over the content and talk about it...they're keen! [A 2; 155-156].

Summary

- Limited views of Women's Refuge as only providing the "ambulance at the bottom of the cliff" are common in social policy and practice. Advocates indicated however that client safety is enhanced through participation in Women's Groups. These benefits extend across long periods of time and throughout families and communities. Although seldom recognised, the Women's Group, and Women's Refuge services more generally, are effective for preventing further violence.

1.5 Restoring wellbeing and mauri

- The Women's Group is a place in which women's social, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing is nurtured.

Being amongst women who have experienced the same experiences gives them support, them talking about it with each other, restoring their mana in some way, which is good in a group setting...I talk about health with the ladies because in my experience if you don't look after

number one, then you can't look after a,b,c,d - the children - if you're running on a half tank, then so are your kids, so taking care of yourself means that you can take care of your children a lot better than what you would if you were running on empty [A 2; 81-84...225-237].

- The Women's Group provides a forum for participants to grow and become stronger through working together.
- The positive social responses women receive from advocates and other clients enable them to reposition themselves as capable and healthy and to recontextualise their responses to their partner's abuse as understandable and reasonable:

When it's time to start sharing...they finally can't wait to tell people out loud what happened to them. Especially the ones who haven't had physical violence, I think it's a really great opportunity for them to go, "hey, all of this was abuse and that's what happened to me!" you know - "I thought I was crazy" and it's really validating [A 5; 293-297].

- The following Group participant's actions convey the creative resistance that emerged as her understanding of domestic violence developed together with her own courage and power:

There was one lady who was photocopying parts of her book and sending [those pages] to him in jail and saying 'this is what you do to me' and highlighted parts in it [A 1; 406-408].

Summary

- Advocates made connections between clients' increased wellbeing and restoration of dignity through participating in the Women's Group. Wellbeing and health in the Women's Group encompassed working towards personal wellness and social justice, resistance, and solidarity for women victims.

1.6 Resource building

- For victims of domestic violence, availability of positive social resources is strongly related to wellbeing and safety from further violence. Formally identifying sources of support in clients' lives and increasing supports was not part of the Group programme content. Developing this focus in sessions would be beneficial. However, increasing clients' social resources was an informal part of the group process:

The other thing I think that's really effective with the group is the support that they get from one another. It's amazing, I've seen so many really awesome friendships start out of there, and some generally good support systems. Some of the women we see, they don't have any, and some in particular, they only had us - which is not a place that we want to be in, that the only support system they have is us [A 5; 311- 316].

- For many clients, simply knowing what services and informal supports are available, even if they choose not to use them, can make a crucial difference in terms of the kinds of decisions they make when assessing their own immediate and long-term safety.
- The following shows this relationship between women's awareness of sources of support, such as Refuge, and the decisions they make in negotiating safety and recovery:

[The participants] feel generally by and large when they get to the end of the programme, they know that there's going to be support for them, if they run up against issues with Child Youth and Family or police they know they're not gonna have to deal with it by themselves, so they get some trust in us, umm, they have a lot more information than they came into the programme with, and while from the outside it might look like they haven't actually done much with that information, they've still got it and they might not use it tomorrow or the next day but six months down the track they might [A 4; 85-100].

Summary of Theme 1: Our kaupapa and takepū - Group purpose and values

- Listening to advocates talk about their ideas and practices as Women's Group facilitators, I grew to understand the activities that took place in the Women's Groups as a collective work undertaken by advocates and clients. Advocates' accounts reinforced the idea that the Women's Groups offer important opportunities for women with similar experiences and concerns to become a source of support, strength and hope for each other.
- Although difficult to separate, the group purposes and kaupapa involved upholding the following principles: social connectedness, positive social responses and reinstating mana and dignity, and learning together and from one another. These principles contributed to enhancing safety, restoring women's wellbeing and mauri, and building resources in the lives of Group participants.

2. Our Mahi - Group Processes

2.1 Facilitator skills and tasks

- Advocates engage in a range of tasks before, during, and after facilitating each 10-week Programme. As part of the planning process, advocates carefully recruit potential group participants. This requires awareness of women's unique situations and sensitivity to their concerns:

It can be quite daunting knowing that you're going to be meeting another group of women and discussing your experiences so initially that can be quite challenging to get them to come and meet the group and make sure that they feel safe enough to actually engage in the group... I encourage them to attend just one session and see if it's something that they want to do - or whether I meet them and introduce them the group or whatever I can do to make them feel comfortable [A 3; 211-220].

- Before registering as a Women's Group participant, clients often work with an advocate over several weeks. This one-to-one engagement provides opportunities to build trust and to provide information and support to clients. During this time, advocates undertake detailed safety assessments with clients. This allows advocates to evaluate whether their client is safe to participate and is likely to benefit from the Women's Group:

We have that good understanding of what they're going through and we can figure out at the time whether or not [the Women's Group's] for them [A 2; 41-42].

- The planning stage necessitates preparation of and familiarity with session content, aims and goals. It also requires willingness to lay plans aside in response to situations that arise

for individual women, and to allow group processes that offer useful or powerful learning to occur.

The fact that we are flexible, that if we need to go longer, then we can most days. Because it may be that a woman will come in and something has happened over those past days since we've seen her and perhaps she's going to need a little longer to pretty much filter and try and work out what actually happened and try and get other people's responses to that as well and then she can actually have a bit of a game plan going forward [A 1; 63-68].

- Creating and maintaining a supportive environment is an important facilitator skill and task. This involves attending to individual women and groups of participants through careful listening and observing. It also requires respectfully asking questions to gain and gauge understanding, to give emotional support, and encourage learning and reflection. In addition, an important facilitator task is to establish emotional safety in the group:

I think it's really up to the facilitators as well to make sure that people stay engaged and it is a safe environment and everyone feels comfortable talking [A 3; 143-144].

- One advocate spoke about the potential of the Women's Group to provide a forum for safely challenging women. Her perspective derived from a view of clients as being much stronger and more capable than they are often recognised to be. Challenging women in a supportive way was seen as crucial for enhancing their dignity and valuing the Group:

You know there's a bit of a balance between making it really easy and making it so easy that they don't give it any respect...like we used to go and pick women up, bring them down, take them home afterwards, look after their kids and just sort of wrap them up in cotton wool, and some women just didn't take it seriously because we were so soft and fluffy...I think they didn't value it - and I don't think we valued it enough either - and I think we communicated that [A 4; 532-549].

- This advocate welcomed a new Women's Group as one that facilitators would take pride in and they and clients would value. The following account conveys this idea:

I'm trying to sort of push the idea that this is something that will be good for - you know - women will get some value out of this and that this is a good thing to be doing...and that's what you need to be selling to your clients, not just it's something that might be useful but, you know, be a bit enthusiastic about it, don't be doubtful about it...so let's not downplay the value of this to women, let's have them taking it seriously [A 4; 532-554].

2.2 On-going learning with Response-Based Practice

- Advocates showed enthusiasm for RBP and welcomed its introduction into the Women's Group. RBP had changed advocates' understandings of domestic violence, victims' experiences, and how they relate to their clients:

Yup, keen on RBP, the training we did was fantastic. It really made me look at it in a really different light [A 1; 690-691].

- RBP pays close attention to language associated with violence. Also, victims always respond to violence and others' responses to this:

I'm going to try and incorporate that language more into when I'm dealing with women because I think it's really awesome... I think response-based, it will really change things [A 3; 282...350].

- Although advocates had received some training in RBP, as this is a philosophical rather than prescriptive approach, advocates were unsure as to how it could be applied in the Women's Group. Also, because RBP is so radically different from dominant domestic violence discourses - many of which are used to inform domestic interventions - advocates emphasised the need for further training, annual refresher training, and for it to be well-explained in their Women's Group Facilitation Guide:

I think it would be really good if it was really clear so we as facilitators know how to incorporate it [A 5; 749-750]

2.3 Women participating and engaging

- An important part of facilitation is monitoring women's engagement. The following describes a common experience for women as they negotiate day-to-day safety concerns. As part of facilitation, advocates need to be attuned to these changes.
- Advocates observed that other Group members are often well attuned to the difficulties women face and their care for each other during these hard times encourages women to return to the Group each week. This may encompass giving women space and time to listen. It may also involve laughing together, showing aroha and gentleness, or just being with that person:

Some of the women won't [always engage], they just shut off and it could be that they participated really well last week, this week they are completely shut-down - they may be absorbing it, but they're not talking at all, but the next week they might start talking again, and the other women are actually pretty good at picking it up as well that someone's not talking as much, so they'll also be like, in the breaks, "oh, do you want a hot drink, is there anything I can get you? How's your baby, or how's your dog?" Anything they can do to try and find something [A 1; 442-445].

- Revising the Women's Group Programme while maintaining its original messages will encourage greater participant engagement:

Modernising the concepts, creating more coherence so that it's not just the advocates that understand what they're there for every week, but that they [the women] go away knowing what they were there for [A 4; 593-595].

- Manaakitanga was recognised as vital for sustaining women's interest in participating in the Women's Group. Advocates emphasised being welcoming and offering hospitality and food on Women's Group days:

Food is a big part of women wanting to come in each week... food brings people together. What else works well...I think even if they weren't your client, having that weekly contact with them helped them be more comfortable around the settings [A 2; 60-64].

- Recognising and respecting diversity and getting to know women as individuals are important elements for women's engagement:

All of the women you encounter are all really different and I think it's about finding that one thing that makes you click and then building on that to build that relationship together so that you engage [A 3; 167-169].

- Learning about each Group participant provided opportunities for advocates to find out what women's needs might be in the group, and how to relate to them on their terms:

I think for them to speak out it's about feeling that they can trust not only their facilitators but also their peers, if they don't feel that then they're not going to speak out. Some people are just quiet as well. I know one group in particular, one of the facilitators was getting quite upset because one of the women just wouldn't talk and I was like, you can tell she is just a quiet person, you could tell she was thinking things over because you could see her face change and her body - she was responding with her body, she just didn't verbalise in anything. So I think to get that, the facilitator needs to be observant of everything that's happening in the group, of the unwritten, unsaid things [A 5; 730-746].

- Women's participation and negative social responses: Some clients have little family and whānau support. This partially comes from people's limited understandings of domestic violence, especially, non-physical forms of control and abuse. Women may not be considered 'real' victims and as such, others' responses suggest that they are not entitled to seek help:

Just thinking of the one client that I met the other day, her family's opinion was that it's not serious enough to consult Refuge, but when she told me her story it was amazingly bad, but I guess, because it's not the physical, in her family it was just toughen up you know...a lot of the time it's not understanding how real and how serious the situation actually is, and then there's always, a lot of people still have older views of you know, just getting on with it and it's not that bad [A 3; 229-263].

- Advocates expressed concerns about clients' own responses to their partners' abuse and others' responses to their victimisation. Not only is abuse minimised by members of clients' families and communities, but it is also normalised to the extent that women in grave situations are not recognised as being worthy of support and protection.
- In a social environment that minimises, mutualises, and blames women for the abuse inflicted upon them, women may struggle to talk about their experiences. For these reasons, they may also seek to protect themselves from further marginalisation by withholding information about their experiences, as suggested in the following:

Women will quite often play it down or it can sometimes be quite hard to actually find out what's going on, to get the full picture because they themselves don't believe that - they don't

tell you all the things and it's not until you actually get into a discussion with them about things and then it will be, "oh this happened," but they say it like it's not a big deal, it's just something that happened and it can be quite hard to explain to them that actually that's not OK, and it's quite serious, and I think a lot of that is a coping mechanism that they've built to try and get through what they are going through but a lot of it can be social stigma [A 3; 229-263].

- Negative community perceptions of Refuge may initially discourage women from participating in activities offered by Refuge. Advocates shared stories about clients' initial reluctance and shame in seeking support from Refuge. Many of these fears appeared to come from misunderstandings about the services Refuge provides. Clients and their families may fear that Refuge staff will insist they leave their abusive partners and try to make them stay at a safe house. However, once clients reach the stage of signing up for the Women's Group, generally, their perception of Refuge is very positive. This is thought to be based on women's positive experiences with advocates and better-informed understanding of services offered by Refuge.

Summary of Theme Two: Our mahi - Group processes

This section explored some strengths and areas for improvement relating to the processes of facilitating the Women's Group. Advocates spoke about the skills and tasks they saw as vital for preparation and delivery of the Group. Advocates are keen to incorporate RBP into the Programme, provided they receive adequate training and on-going learning. Instructions for applying RBP must be clearly explained in the new Group Facilitation Guide.

Factors that influence women's participation and engagement in the Women's Group: Manaakitanga and recognising diversity within the Women's Group were understood as crucial for encouraging participation and engagement. Myths surrounding services Refuge provide were seen as barriers - but only initially - to women seeking support. More generally, negative social responses towards women victims associated with limited conceptualisations of domestic violence, minimisation of abuse, and victim-blaming were understood as potential barriers to women's participation in the Group Programme.

3. Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure

3.1 Group programme structure

- Without exception, advocates indicated that they wanted additional sessions, of longer duration. This would mean an approximate increase from 10 two-hour sessions to 12-15 three-hour sessions.

A constant thing I hear from the ladies is they feel they're just getting started once session 9 or 10 hits [A 2; 121-122].

We've just kind of got there but we need one or two to wrap it up, and really feel confident in going forward. I feel like 10 weeks, they're kind of left floundering [A 5; 467-469].

- The need for co-facilitation of the Women's Group was identified as a safety measure. Co-facilitation allows advocates to observe and attend to women's emotional responses and

deliver the session content in an engaging way, while benefitting from generating ideas through working together.

- The Power and Control Wheel session needs more time than currently allocated: At least one hour is required for this in Session Two and repeated in Session Eight. This is necessary to encompass women's changing understandings of domestic violence and their increased confidence and trust in the Group at this later stage.
- It was suggested that once the new RBP programme is established, the Refuge might consider coordinating an evening Women's Group on a once-yearly basis for those unable to attend during work hours.
- Appearance and utility of the Women's Group manual: need improvements in the editing (including page numbering), accessible language, and variation in activities to accommodate women with limited literacy and English language abilities.

3.2 Session structure - procedures

- Improvements in the standard procedures across sessions: Clear and detailed explanations of the aims, goals, and rationale for every session is needed to help advocates understand the purpose of each session. Clearly outlining this in the manual would make it easier for new facilitators to understand what and how to deliver programme content.

Everything needs to be really, really clear about the purpose of everything you do as a facilitator...why are you doing this? I'm doing this exercise because I'm trying to demonstrate... even the specific DVDs you use on the day, so that all of the facilitators have the same understanding of what they are delivering on that day: what are we delivering, this is the purpose, this is the goal [A 5; 753-780].

- Need for written information about delivering RBP: This needs to clearly show key principles and how these are applied to specific session activities and in accessible language to ensure facilitators feel comfortable with RBP content.

3.3 Individual session content

Advocates requested the following changes to the content of the Women's Group manual:

- Unanimous removal of the "Hierarchies" session.
- Removal of self-affirmations at the end of sessions and the "Bucket" exercise.
- Inclusion of the "Role Model" activity for part of a session.
- No more than one hour on legal matters (including the 20 minute DVD on protection and safety orders, 10 minutes of feedback, and then 30 minutes specifically on protection orders) - these are covered during individual advocacy.
- More time on police process and MOJ offender programmes. As indicated:

A lot of the women feel guilt and feel as though they're narking on their men - so more support around the whole police process and men's programmes and that sort of stuff would be one thing I would like to get across to the ladies because they feel as though they are guilty because they want to talk to the police and you know, more worried about his feelings than their own [A 2; 134-145].

- A clear reframing of language of effects to language of responses, and careful examination of language that blames or pathologises victims, in accordance with RBP.

- Less time on safety planning in the group, this is covered in one-to-one advocacy.
- Remaking the DVDs "She'll be Sweet" and "Someone's Daughter" as they are very outdated. Continuing to use the two Stopping Family Violence DVDs.
- Devoting part of a session to addressing clients' experiences relating to a specific partner, and also abuse they may have experienced growing up and in previous relationships.
- Devoting part of a session to identifying additional sources of social support and community resources.
- More time preparing women for the session on children's experiences of domestic violence:

What needs more work is tailoring to their emotional needs because it brings up a lot of emotions for the women, a lot of them come back - they tell me they felt really angry after leaving, they might feel really angry or upset and some of them can't always identify why, so I always prepare them now, but none of that's in the manuals so it's just from knowing that I need to do that [A 5; 240-261].

- In recommending improvements to the Women's Group manual, advocates also emphasised the importance of varying activities and including plenty of interactive content. Group work learning methods include interactive, trust and relationship building games; stories from different media and role-plays. Women also learn through sharing their own stories about effective ways of resolving problems, and through exploring, discussing and debating ideas, and group reflection.

Summary of Theme 3: Our Whakatakoto - Group Structure

The final overarching theme, group structure, encompasses the practical and material aspects of running the Women's Group. In keeping with the group kaupapa, advocates' accounts conveyed their strong commitment to the messages and aims of the programme content and conviction of its value to clients. All of the advocates expressed a desire for improvements to the programme and eagerness to introduce new material and concepts. Correspondingly, it was also apparent that advocates wanted to retain much of the existing programme content. One advocate summarised her aspirations for the programme and laid the challenge for me as primary researcher to ensure that a high quality Facilitation Guide eventuates from this project:

I want a programme that I'm proud of and the girls can use and facilitate with a sense that they're actually offering the opportunity for some positive stuff every session [A 4; 572-574].

Conclusion

This summary of findings, together with an initial draft RBP Women's Safety Group Facilitation Guide, are presented to advocates in the first focus group. This provides an opportunity to review the initial draft with the benefit of having all of the research team present. This feedback session offers a forum for reflection, discussion, debate and envisaging of the Facilitation Guide to ensure its relevance and usefulness to advocates and clients.

Appendix Q: Women's Group Facilitation Guide

Women's Group Facilitation Guide

Palmerston North
Women's Refuge



National Collective of
Independent Women's
Refuges Inc.



Women's Group Facilitation Guide

Palmerston North Women's Refuge

National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges

This Women's Group Facilitation Guide is for National Collective of Independent Women's Refuge advocates facilitating Women's Group programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This Women's Group Programme was developed as a collaborative project between Massey University Doctoral Student Jess Reedy, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR), Chief Executive Dr Ang Jury, and Palmerston North Women's Refuge advocates Dani Berry, Kylie Feagaiga-Andrews and Naomi Ogg.

Acknowledgements

This Women's Group resource is the product of the ideas, perspectives, practices and writings of many. We express our gratitude to the following individuals and groups for their contributions:

We thank, Massey University Research supervisors Professor Mandy Morgan and Dr Ruth Gammon, and Tu Mai Awa, a group of practitioners committed to providing response-based service for families responding to violence in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The intent and content of the programme is deeply influenced by the work of Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade, Linda Coates, and their Response-Based colleagues in Canada and Australia. Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik from the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter have provided crucial and substantial content for this Women's Group Programme through their handbook *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships*. Likewise, documents produced by the NCIWR, the Women for Safety and Justice Ballarat Women's Programme, and Canadian Response-Based Therapist Will Bratt have been important sources of inspiration and content for this Women's Group Programme. Thanks also to Ian Wards and Tom Riley for their assistance with the audio production of Nicole's Story, and to Karen McIntyre and the Women's Art Initiative.

Through our daily work we pay tribute to the immeasurable contributions of individuals and groups who have, over decades, advocated for individual women, families and whānau responding to domestic violence.

We warmly acknowledge the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges and other domestic violence advocacy organisations that have - and continue to - challenge structural violence, and to shape broader social understandings of domestic violence, whilst continuing to support thousands of women and children to safety.

We work in honour of the women, and their families and whānau who, in responding to violence inform and guide our work.



Copyright © The National Collective of Women's Refuges Inc. and Jess Reedy.
Permission to use material from this document in other publications must be sought
from the authors.

May 2015.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Part 1: Information for Women's Group facilitators	5
Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Kaupapa - Our Purpose.....	5
Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Takepū - Our Values	5
Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Mahi - How we do our work	7
A response-based theoretical approach informs our advocacy	7
Importance of local context.....	8
Cultural safety and culturally appropriate practices	9
Women's stories of resistance.....	10
Part 2: Women's Group Session Guide for Facilitators	12
Preparing for the Women's Group: Practicalities	12
Accessibility	12
Facilitator knowledge	12
Ministry of Justice approval.....	12
Initial assessment	14
Record keeping.....	15
Liaison with other programme providers	15
Referrals	15
Family Court requirements - Checklist	16
Open/ closed groups	16
Weekly session resources.....	16
Session Format	17
Supporting women's full participation in session activities.....	17
Final individual session	19
Evaluation	19
Session plans	20
Session 1: Welcoming women and orientation	20
Session 2: What is domestic violence?	27
Session 3: Whenever people are badly treated they always resist	39
Session 4: People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse	54
Session 5: Perpetrators know victims will resist so try to stop their resistance	60
Session 6: Abusive behaviour is always deliberate.....	67
Session 7: Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence	74
Session 8: Demolishing domestic violence myths	86
Session 9: Valuing victim's emotional responses	92

at	Session 10: Children and young people's responses to a perpetrator's violence home.....	99
	Session 11: Safety planning, Protection Orders, and Men's Programmes	105
	Session 12: Your dignity, safety and healing - and goodbyes	110
	Part 3: Facilitator Resources	114
	Women's Group evaluation templates	114
	Women's Group Session Feedback Form	115
	Women's Group Session Review	116
	Women's Group Completion Questionnaire	117
	Background Information for Facilitators	119
	Response-based practice concepts	119
	Women's Refuge services for tangata whenua	127
	Women in same-sex relationships and domestic violence.....	128
	Women with disabilities and domestic violence	129
	Older women and domestic violence	130
	Migrant and refugee women and domestic violence.....	131
	Image sources.....	133
	References.....	135

Part 1: Information for Women's Group Facilitators

Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Kaupapa - Our Purpose

We aim to provide a safe place for women who are or have been victims of violence to share their experiences and knowledge, with a particular focus on clarifying the deliberate nature of perpetrators' violence, acknowledging and honouring women's resistance, and examining the social responses experienced by women.

The Women's Group seeks to enact our kaupapa and purpose by facilitating:

- Belonging, connection and support among Women's Group members;
- Positive social responses that uphold women's mana and dignity;
- Learning together and from one another: Sharing resistance stories and accounts of women preserving their dignity;
- Restoration of wellbeing and mauri;
- Resource building: increased knowledge of supports available to women in the community;
- Additional conditions for enhancing safety.

Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Takepū - Our Values

This programme centres on feminist and response-based analyses of domestic violence:

- Domestic violence is an overwhelmingly gendered violence, perpetrated by men against women;
- All people have the right to live in a safe domestic environment without violence;
- No-one is responsible for the violence perpetrated against them;
- Victims of domestic violence are responding to and resisting perpetrator's abusive actions, and other's responses - not from the effects of any inherent psychological problems or deficiencies;
- Working with awareness of structural violence including gender inequality and Māori responses to historical and contemporary colonisation. This involves challenging structural violence including deficit models of Māori and other oppressive and discriminatory practices towards marginalised peoples.

We support response-based assertions in recognising that:¹⁰

- Violence and oppression diminish dignity and without redress, perpetuate harms to victims;
- Victims prefer respect and kindness - dignity and mana are central to social life;
- Both the victim and perpetrator are agentive and active in making decisions;
- Violent behaviour is always chosen and deliberate;
- Resistance is ever-present;
- All forms of violence are designed to suppress the resistance of the victim;
- People's knowledge of how to resist comes not only from experiences of adversity, but also from experiences of connection, reverie, and love;
- The violence may be only the first in a series of indignities delivered through social responses;
- The quality of social responses may be the best single predictor of the level of victim distress;
- When there is humiliation, there needs to be just repair.

Therefore, our job is to acknowledge the dignity of the victim. This means to restore, reassert and uphold dignity by making women's resistance and ways women have preserved their dignity more visible.

Manaakitanga is central to our work

This encompasses showing hospitality, kindness, caring for others, treating people with respect, and nurturing relationships. Additional meanings and applications of manaakitanga are shown in the figure below.¹¹

¹⁰ We gratefully acknowledge Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade (2014) for their work and ideas on response-based practice in this section.

¹¹ Manaakitanga definition and figure adapted from 'Kia ita!' Te Taura Whiri I te Reo Māori, Māori Language Commission. <http://www.korero.maori.nz/news/mlw/theme.html>



We acknowledge collective experiences and responses of women in the group and also the personal and specific responses and their meaning for individual women.

Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Mahi - How we do our work

A response-based theoretical approach informs our advocacy

We work with awareness that language and people's interactions in context matter, particularly when talking about violence. This encompasses the following understandings concerning the deliberate act of violence, honouring women's resistance, and social responses:

The deliberate act of violence

A key aspect of response-based practice is to highlight the deliberate nature of violence. Within the context of working with victims of violence this is achieved by focusing on the woman's acts of resistance and the perpetrator's attempts to undermine these. For example, a woman in the past has called the police when she was assaulted so the perpetrator confiscates or breaks her phone to ensure she cannot phone for help. This act shows the woman's attempt to resist the violence and the clear intent of the perpetrator to commit violence and to attempt to prevent these acts of resistance.

Honouring women's resistance

Response based practice avoids the language of 'effects'. The term 'effect' is seen as "a strictly determined outcome of a previous event/cause...an end

state, the last link in a causal chain".¹² 'Effects' are considered as 'problems' and problems become 'symptoms' of mental ill health. In response-based practice, all individuals who experience violence respond in a way that resists this violence. A 'response' is considered "a volitional act that demonstrates judgement, imagination and will... it signals the desire to escape the violence and improve their circumstances".¹³ Examples may include staying silent in the hope of reducing the violence, sending the children out of the room in the hope of protecting them from the violence, moving out of the kitchen away from knives, or arguing with the perpetrator to take the focus of his violence from a child. Women living with a violent family member are continually looking for ways to improve their situation and maintain dignity.

By focusing on the women's emotional, physical, mental and spiritual responses to violence in context we can begin the process of recognising and honouring these as overt and covert acts of resistance. This affirms their attempts to protect themselves and their children and highlights their clear expressions of human dignity.

Social responses

A response-based approach recognises that "respectful and effective social responses help victims recover from the violence in the short and long term".¹⁴ However the approach also recognises that the majority of victims of family violence in fact receive negative social responses to their disclosure of this violence. When this occurs victims are more likely to blame themselves, and specific personal traits for this violence, rather than the perpetrator. These negative social responses are often based on biases and stereotypes formed in relation to gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, and socioeconomic status. This group will not only provide an opportunity to explore the social responses experienced by group members but exists as an example of a positive social response.¹⁵

Importance of local context

The session notes in this document are often specific and detailed to guide facilitators who may be new to this programme. It is emphasised however, that flexibility and creativity in facilitating the programme is wholeheartedly welcome and wherever possible, it is also needed, since no 'guide' can provide the detail of local and time-

¹² Todd & Wade (2004, p. 150).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Wade (2007, p. 3).

¹⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the Women for Safety and Justice Ballarat Women's Programme (2013) for ideas and words for this theoretical approach.

specific context. This is premised on the notions that locally adapted, culturally specific programmes are far more relevant, safe and engaging than generic "one size fits all" or "what works" approaches and that Women's Refuge advocates possess the necessary expertise and professional judgement in deciding how to use this programme.

Correspondingly, the programme mahi involves advocates adapting the programme in accordance with the particular needs of Women's Group members based on the strong position that women are experts on their own lives.

Cultural safety and culturally appropriate practices

Four cornerstones underpin the values of the NCIWR and therefore, our Women's Group Programme:

- **Parallel development:** Ensuring the needs of Māori are met in ways that best suit Māori;
- **Collectivism:** To ensure consensus decision-making, and in recognition that the actions of one refuge reflects on the refuge movement as a whole;
- **Feminism:** Celebrating women's contribution to society;
- **Lesbian visibility:** To eliminate discrimination of any kind against women.

At Women's Refuge, tangata whenua and tauwiwi work towards the same outcome with different processes. For instance, Te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi states that tangata whenua should have tino rangatiratanga or full chieftainship over their land and possessions. Therefore, we have tangata whenua and tauwiwi caucuses in which tangata whenua generally deal with issues for wahine and tamariki, and tauwiwi with issues for their women and children.

In offering Women's Groups, we recognise that tangata whenua are the best people to provide support for wahine and tamariki by promoting their safety and dignity in a holistic way. In keeping with this, we recognise Ako Māori, the Principle of Culturally Preferred Pedagogy, which acknowledges teaching and learning practices that are inherent and unique to Māori, as well as practices that may not be traditionally derived but are preferred by Māori.¹⁶

For these reasons, we acknowledge a limitation of this Women's Group programme: In being designed for Tauwiwi women, may not be sufficient to meet the particular needs of wahine Māori without adaption informed by Women's Refuge wahine Māori. This does not preclude any women from participating but acknowledges that a culturally specific Women's Programme may offer particular benefits to women who identify as

¹⁶ Rautaki Ltd & Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (2015).

Māori. Similarly, this Women's Group programme can be adapted for groups of more than one culture.

Responding to wahine Māori clients' needs entails offering referral to services providing a Kaupapa Māori framework grounded in tikanga Māori. This may include collective responses across whānau, hapū, iwi, and Māori communities.¹⁷ We never assume to know the ethnic, cultural or sexual identity and or understand the specific needs of clients. Therefore, we offer information about options and respect client's choices. For example, a Māori woman may prefer to participate in a general tauwiwi programme if she is aware of whakapapa links between Māori providers and the whānau of her abusive partner.

The ethnicity of the facilitators should be reflective of the cultural make-up of the group. I.e. if the group is comprised of women of more than one culture, ideally the facilitators would not both be Pākehā. Providing culturally appropriate services is fundamental to Refuge philosophy and values and is one way of working to increase cultural safety in group sessions.

Ensuring cultural safety includes identifying the ethnocentric and heterocentric beliefs and myths that support perpetrator's violence. An important role of Pākehā facilitators is to be able to highlight and challenge institutional racism. Facilitators must also address heterocentric attitudes and practices. This is particularly pertinent given the emphasis in this programme on men's violence towards women and women victims in heterosexual relationships. This limitation is acknowledged and facilitators are asked to adapt programme delivery to the specific needs of group members. Critiques of social responses that perpetuate racist and heterosexist stereotypes are incorporated throughout the content of this programme.

Women's stories of resistance

In our work, we value storytelling as a significant form of learning, healing, connecting and honouring women's experiences. Storytelling is practiced by every culture and involves listening, speaking, imagining and meaning making. We make time for this important practice in the Women's Group Programme.

*Our stories are like a braided river – a network of discrete channels that interweave their pathways. Each has a standpoint that is unique, specific, and located within the social, cultural, and historical trajectories of our lives. Yet these standpoints are interwoven with common themes.*¹⁸

¹⁷ Chetwin (2013, p. 12); Te Puni Kōkiri (2010).

¹⁸ Morgan, Benschop, & Mattson (2015).

*Storytelling is a respectful teaching practice... it serves to put experience in context, to inform the imagination and ethics of children, to teach, to soothe. Stories provide moral explanations for human action.*¹⁹

Our work and social justice

We understand the following about our work:

*The role of community workers/activists is to contribute to the making of a space in which the person who is oppressed gets to have their voice heard and listened to. Social justice requires more than being heard by a practitioner; a person's words must matter, not be dismissed, and be met with an accountable response.*²⁰

We value and make time for critical analysis - it is important to contest victim blaming in all its forms. We also make time for self-analysis - we must be willing to examine our own ideas and practice.²¹



¹⁹ Richardson & Reynolds (2012, p. 4).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Mcinerney & Carriere (2015).

Part 2: Women's Group Session Guide for Facilitators

Preparing for the Women's Group: Practicalities

Accessibility

The following factors need to be considered in coordinating the Women's Group:

- **Timing:** Traditionally Women's Groups have been run during school hours and inside school terms. Facilitators should assess the additional need for women working outside the home to participate in the Group. If there is a demand, evening groups or weekend workshops should be considered.
- **Transport, childcare and care of other dependents:** Traditionally Refuges have offered these services to women. Facilitators need to establish whether their Refuge has resources available for providing these services and whether these issues present significant barriers to women's participation in the Group.
- **Venue:** Considerations include ensuring adequate parking, public transport, good access for women with physical disabilities, and women's safety and privacy.

Facilitator knowledge

The knowledge required to ensure the programme is safe and effective includes an understanding of:

- Feminist analyses of domestic violence;
- Response-Based practice;
- Gender inequalities and socialisation;
- Colonisation and de-colonisation;
- Culturally appropriate service delivery;
- Safety issues facing victims of domestic violence;
- Local support and information agencies;
- Domestic violence and the law;
- Perpetrator programmes.

The programme has been designed to be co-facilitated by two women but can be adapted for sole facilitation if necessary.

Ministry of Justice approval²²

The introduction of the Domestic Violence Amendment Act (2013) removed previous provisions for the approval of specific safety programmes and the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) now has responsibility for approving providers rather than programmes.

The following criteria will be used by the Secretary for Justice when deciding whether to grant an approval of a service provider under s 51B(1) of the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013 (the Act).

The provider must be able to:

- Demonstrate a credible history of working in applicable domestic violence services;
- Meet the Ministry of Social Development Standards for Approval at level 2;
- Demonstrate an ability to meet the Ministry of Justice domestic violence provider Code of Practice relevant to the approval type sought.

If your Women's Refuge meets all requirements, it will be approved as a service provider of your women's adult safety programme, and contracts will be offered to deliver that service. Your Women's Refuge can offer this Women's Group Programme as one component of your service's adult safety programme for women.

Once your Women's Refuge has been contracted to deliver the women's safety programme, it can develop and tailor the programme without having to seek approval for those changes. This will give your Women's Refuge scope to provide programmes that meet the needs of the women referred to the programme, and to keep your practice up to date.

The Ministry's principles-based Code of Practice is used to ensure that service providers are delivering safe, ethical, and effective non-violence or safety programmes, and compliance with the Code is a requirement of all service providers contracting with the Ministry.

The Code of Practice is underpinned by the following principles:

Principle 1: The safety of protected people and their children is paramount.

Principle 2: Respondents must be held accountable for their behaviour.

Principle 3: Programmes should be responsive to the individual needs of participants.

²² Information for this section is from adult safety programmes – needs identification and safety planning sessions, Ministry of Justice (2014).

Principle 4: Challenging domestic violence requires a sustained commitment to safe and research- informed practice.

Principle 5: Improving safety and accountability is best achieved through an integrated, systemic response that ensures agencies work together.

Adult safety programmes (either women's or men's safety programmes) are designed for adult protected people where the court has made a protection order. The Domestic Violence Act 1995 confers a right to request the provision of a safety programme under section 51C at any time the protection order is still in place.

Eligibility for safety programmes

Only adults, who have had a protection order made in their favour, may be referred to Adult Safety Programmes:

- Adult protected people are eligible for referral to adult safety programmes if the court has made a protection order;
- Adult protected people are eligible for referral to adult safety programmes if the court has registered a foreign protection order;
- Specified people (other than children) are eligible to request an adult safety programme if the court has made a protection order in the applicant's favour and the applicant has not requested provision of a safety programme for the specified person.

Initial assessment

The initial assessment or orientation session is a meeting between the client and one of the advocates. This is a Family Court requirement. Its purpose is one of information gathering for both the client and the facilitator with a view to ensuring the programme is one from which the client can obtain maximum benefit.

Facilitators will need to take into consideration ways of accommodating women's particular situations and needs in the delivery of the programme. It may be appropriate to offer to refer a woman to a specialist agency or to deliver the Women's Group programme on a one-to-one basis if possible. Advocates will aim to make the programme accessible, flexible and inclusive wherever possible.

Particular considerations may include:

- A preference not to participate in the Women's Group but interest in programme content;
- A preference to participate in a culturally specific Women's programme such as a Women's Refuge programme for wahine Māori or iwi based programmes;
- Literacy and English language abilities;

- Issues of drug/alcohol dependency;
- Mental illness;
- Intellectual disability;
- Cultural appropriateness;
- Existing relationships between potential Women's Group participants.

At the initial assessment, the client should be given information regarding the objectives, content and processes of the programme. Information on the client's current situation and engagement of other family members in other programmes should be recorded. The client must be informed of what information is being kept, the purpose for doing so, and her rights to access this information.

The intake interview should also be used to establish a process for reviewing and monitoring the circumstances of the applicant in terms of her safety and the appropriateness of the programme.

Record keeping

After the initial assessment, the advocate will make a written record of the evaluation with their client. This will include their joint assessment of the woman's current safety, information regarding her children's safety, and any other relevant details. This should be updated regularly.

It is important to be aware that women's circumstances may change markedly during the course of the programme. Some changes may necessitate a review of the appropriateness of the intervention being offered. Referrals should also be recorded. Women's records are kept confidential and in securely stored files.

Liaison with other programme providers

Information sharing between providers of programmes is essential for the safety of women and children. It is also required under the Regulations. Information sharing is based on the following principles:

- The providers of respondent programmes shall inform the applicant programme provider of any information, which may be necessary for informed decision making on safety issues;
- The providers of applicant programmes will inform the providers of respondent programmes of any safety issues, which arise for women as a result of the respondent's programme content or delivery;
- Applicant programme providers will share information about the applicant with the respondent's programme provider only with the consent of the applicant;
- Applicant programme providers will support and encourage women to share information with the provider of her child(ren)'s programmes.

If you have concerns about the interface between information sharing and the requirements of the Privacy Act, or are unclear what information should be shared, speak to the Family Court Counselling Co-coordinator or contact National Office.

Referrals

Programme facilitators need to be aware of the limitations of the programme and make referrals to other agencies when appropriate. In some circumstances this may mean a withdrawal from the programme by a participant.

Regular contact with other agencies ensures facilitators are well informed and able to make the most appropriate referrals for their clients.

If a woman withdraws from a programme, remember to **notify the Family Court**. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to address appropriate referrals with the Family Court Counselling Coordinator.

Family court requirements - Checklist

Your programme must:

1. Provide for assessment and ongoing review of the needs of women attending.
2. Meet the goals as stated in the Domestic Violence (Programmes) Regulations 1996, Section 28.
3. Conform to the structure outlined in the Domestic Violence (Programmes) Regulations 1996, Section 29.
4. Provide a report on each programme participant at the completion of, or withdrawal from, the programme. This report is simply notification to the Family Court Registrar of completion or withdrawal.
5. Include Māori values and concepts (Domestic Violence (Programmes) Regulations 1996, Section 27) if the programme is primarily designed for Māori participants.
6. Ensure systems are in place to facilitate the sharing of information between applicant/respondent programme providers if safety issues arise.

Open / closed groups

While this programme is ideally suited for use in closed groups (i.e. the women beginning together at Session 1) it can be used for open groups provided attendance is regular from the initial session and covers the full 12 weeks. Care should be taken to ensure each topic links up with the next week's session.

Weekly session resources

For each session you will need to have available:

Kai - morning or afternoon tea, tea, coffee, milk, sugar, tissues, whiteboard and whiteboard markers, pens, felt-tips, A4 paper, poster-size sheets/paper, drawing pins, bluetack.

In addition to these general items, most sessions require specific resources for that week. A weekly resource list is included in the weekly session guidelines for facilitators to prepare any additional items in advance of the session. Ensure that any items lost, damaged or removed from the Women's Group Kit are noted and quickly replaced.

Session format

The Women's Group is a 30-hour programme designed to be delivered over 12 weeks, with each session lasting 2.5 hours. The programme can be adapted to 10 sessions of 3-hour duration if required.

The format presented for each session has been left free of timing guidelines. It is up to the facilitators to allocate timing for each activity as appropriate. This involves balancing attending to important group discussions as they arise and covering session objectives.

All sessions have been planned with the same structure. Each session begins with the co-facilitators welcoming the women in a manner appropriate for your group. The welcome is followed by any housekeeping matters. A warm-up activity and review of the Group Agreement follow.

Before the planned activities for the session begin, it is a good idea to have a brief 'clearing round'. This allows women to share with the group whatever is 'on top' for them. They may want to talk about an incident, a triumph or an issue they are currently dealing with. The round provides women with an opportunity to get to know each other and to support and encourage each other. The round can also give the facilitator a lead-in to the session topic. This should not become the focus of the entire session. It is crucial that time is monitored so there is a beginning and an end - and women can leave when they and/or their families are expecting them to. If a group member has a particularly complex matter she would like to discuss, it is important to make time for this after the session and/or for her to talk through this with her advocate.

Each session has session objectives, a resource list, activities (each with a description of the activity's purpose, procedures), points for discussion, and reflection. Following this, advocates inform women about the next week's session topic and objectives. This

provides continuity from session to session and prepares women for the next topic. The last part of the group session is a closing activity.

Post-group availability: Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Supporting women's full participation in session activities

Advocates are asked to work creatively and flexibly in facilitating the sessions and to support and accommodate women's different needs and abilities. Each group will be different and will respond more favourably to particular delivery styles. Some groups will be more comfortable than others with role plays, small group activities, written activities, brainstorming, outside presenters etc. A thorough evaluation after each session will enable you to tailor the programme to the needs and preferences of the participants. Generally changes are more likely to be in delivery than content.

Facilitators need to be aware of any women in the group who have English language and literacy difficulties. While many activities include literacy skills (reading, writing), tasks have been designed for variation and flexibility in delivery. For example, working in small groups, pairs, encouraging alternative ways to express and document ideas such as through spoken narratives, graphic tools, visual arts, and music.

Similarly, facilitators are asked to support women's sharing and documenting of their experiences in ways that are personally and culturally important to them. For example, there will be times when women in the group will prefer to work collectively and other times as individuals. Preferences will vary between using story telling mediums that rely on metaphor and lots of contextual information and expressing information more directly or with less detail. With these factors in mind, facilitators should encourage a group environment in which women feel safe:

- To express themselves in accordance with their personal and cultural values;
- To take risks and try out new ideas;
- And one in which assumptions about women based on gender and cultural stereotypes are challenged.

Keep in mind these three Response-Based ideas:

1. As facilitators, how do we monitor that women are experiencing dignity? This includes observing their face, voice, posture, engagement, and words.
When treated with dignity, people may...
 - Have light in their eyes
 - Hold their head high
 - Sparkle
 - Smile

- Soften in their demeanour
 - Experience the psychological freedom to engage, explore ideas and be playful
 - Stand tall
 - Breathe naturally
 - Feel grounded
2. We're not involved in a teaching process, we're involved in a learning process;
 3. The more potentially humiliating a person's situation, the more important it is that we uphold their dignity.²³

Final individual session

Under the regulations of the Domestic Violence Act 1995 programme participants are entitled to a final individual session with their advocate. The purpose of this session is to plan for the ongoing safety of the woman and can include any whānau or family members the woman would like to have present.

Evaluation²⁴

Process and impact evaluations are carried out to measure the overall success of the group in relation to our Kaupapa - Purpose outlined above, and session objectives. Evaluation templates are located in Part 3 of this Guide (pages 114-117).

Women are provided with a variety of options for giving feedback for evaluation (e.g. meeting with women individually after the group, group evaluation where one woman records all the feedback etc.). Group facilitators or women's individual advocates may receive women's evaluations in other mediums such as a note or letter, photos, drawings, and spoken feedback. Advocates are asked to record these other forms of evaluation in the group evaluation documentation.

Process evaluations will be carried out by considering:

- Attendance records;
- A review of group members' participation carried out by facilitators at the completion of each session;
- Weekly feedback forms available for group members to complete at their discretion;
- A satisfaction survey incorporated into post group evaluations.

²³ We gratefully acknowledge the words of Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade (2014) for these three ideas.

²⁴ We gratefully acknowledge the Women for Safety and Justice Ballarat Women's Programme (2013) for ideas for the evaluation.

Impact evaluations include ongoing observation recorded by facilitators and a post-group evaluation questionnaire based on the session objectives. The questions are designed to determine group members':

- Understanding of 'acts of resistance' and ability to identify their personal acts of resistance;
- Understanding of who is responsible for the violence and whether the acts are considered deliberate;
- Reporting a sense of belonging and safety in the group and feeling supported and less isolated because of this;
- Recognition of the violence as deliberate;
- Recognition of the social responses received when disclosing violence and what these experiences have meant for them personally;
- Knowledge of the resources and services available to them (and where relevant, their children) in their community in relation to family violence.

Session Plans

Session 1: Welcoming women and orientation

Session Objectives

- To welcome group participants and introduce ourselves to one another;
- To outline the Women's Group Kaupapa - Purpose, Takepū - Values, and structure;
- To establish group safety and a Group Agreement;
- To discuss why language matters when talking about violence;
- To clarify important terms that will be used in the Women's Group programme.

Resource List

Women's Handbooks for all group members

Large sheet of paper (for group agreement)

Large sheet of paper and markers

The Power of Language List A and List B cards

Poster: The 5 Principles of Violence and Responses to Violence

Welcome

Warmly welcome and acknowledge each woman for coming to the programme.

Warm-up

The warm-up activity for the first session should be aimed at encouraging the women to get to know each other and the facilitators.

- Facilitators should always participate in warm-up activities. No exceptions 😊

- Introductions:

Facilitators introduce themselves to the women covering:

- Where were you born?
- Where do you call home?
- What other places have special meaning to you?
- Additional important information as desired (e.g. children, cultural and iwi affiliation, mihi).

Invite women to introduce themselves covering the above.

Housekeeping

Ensure women are invited to enjoy the kai, know where the toilets and other facilities are, what breaks you have scheduled, smoking areas, fire exits, and any other housekeeping matters.

Activity 1: Purpose of the Women's Group:

Procedures*

- Facilitator distributes the women's handbooks and explains the kaupapa - purpose (page 3 of the Women's Handbook) and takepū - values of the group programme (page 5 of this Facilitation Guide).
- The facilitator briefly describes how the group will be structured.
- Review the handbooks and go through the format of the overall programme and weekly sessions, and the types of activities we will engage in.
- Clarify group member's questions and uncertainties, and note women's suggestions.

* It is recommended that individual advocates go through these steps with women who are starting the programme in Sessions 2-12 prior to joining the Group.

Activity 2: Group Agreement

Purpose

- The Group Agreement is important for creating a safe environment based on dignity, respect, and trust. This defines group members' expectations of one another for upholding safety and should be placed in a prominent position for the duration of the Group.

Procedures

- Write 'Group Agreement' on the whiteboard. Explain the purpose of this activity and invite women to suggest points.
- Discuss and clarify each suggestion and record when there is general agreement on the point.
- For example, confidentiality can have different meanings for each woman. In the context of building group trust, it's important that group members have a common understanding of confidentiality, i.e. what's shared in the group stays in the group. Also, there are limits to confidentiality. If for example a group member indicates she or other people are at risk of harm, safety is the priority. Facilitators will need to follow Refuge procedures if this is indicated.
- Refer to suggested points in the Sample Group Agreement below if needed.
- The sample provided below provides a starting point. Each group is asked to negotiate and draw up their own Agreement for facilitators to record and display.
- New points can be added to throughout the programme.
- Some women may feel safer if this activity is done before speaking or disclosing personal information. Facilitators will decide whether it may be necessary for the Group to make the agreement before beginning the warm-up introductions in Session One.

- Write up the finalised Group Agreement on a large sheet of paper and display during future sessions.

Sample Group Agreement

- Confidentiality
- The right to pass
- It's OK to cry
- Respectful listening - no interrupting others
- The right to different opinions
- Alcohol & illegal drug free (before and during sessions)
- Punctuality - starting and finishing on time
- Stay on topic 😊
- No violence, threats or intimidation towards other group members

Safety Plan

- Free to leave the group session at any time
- Before leaving the building, tell someone
- Don't leave upset or angry

Activity 3: Definitions - Language and the way we talk about things matter:

Purpose

- To discuss why language matters when talking about violence.
- To clarify important terms that will be used in the Women's Group programme.

Procedures

Introduce the activity with these discussion points:

(Suggestion, facilitators can have turns at reading out each of the following points)

- The way we talk about things shapes our understandings of them -especially when talking about violence.

- You've probably heard people say that words are just words – often to excuse themselves for saying things that can be hurtful and harmful.

- But words aren't just words. Language is important because that's how we make meaning, and meaning is important because it guides our actions; it shapes what we do.

- Think about these two statements:

1. *"Anger always got the better of him. He couldn't control his impulses."*
2. *"People make deliberate choices about their abusive behaviour. Most of us have bad days and feel angry at times but don't deal with this by abusing others."*

Invite women to share their responses to the two different statements.

- Prompt: How are they different?
- In the first statement, is anyone responsible for controlling their behaviour?
- In the second statement, who is responsible for the abuse?

- When people are treated abusively, the most important factor around healing is the types of responses they receive from other people.
- Not surprisingly, women who receive negative, judgmental, blaming responses are likely to have a more difficult struggle with how to achieve safety in their lives.
- On the flip side, women who are treated with compassion, understanding, support, safety, and other positive responses are likely to recover and heal with far greater ease.²⁵
- We call these positive and negative responses made by people in our lives social responses.
- Over the next few weeks we'll talk a lot about social responses of our friends, family, whānau and community members, professionals and agencies such as police, social services, the legal system, and the media (TV, newspapers, movies, internet and social media).
- Don't worry though! Although there will be a lot of talking over the next 12 sessions, we will also be doing and making things too.
- We ask you to please bear with us for this session because it is actually pretty important that we talk about some terms that will help the rest of our programme make sense.
- More importantly, many of these terms have made a big difference to our lives in understanding, honouring and respecting each other and the women and children we work with.
- It's our hope that you will also find these words and ideas helpful tools for recognising how you have upheld your dignity, and done things to improve your safety and, for our mothers here, your children's safety.
- That's really what this programme is about.

The power of language²⁶

- Divide the group into two groups.
- Give one group List A and the other group List B.
- Request a volunteer from the List A group to read out statement 1.
- Then request a volunteer from List B group to read out statement 1.

²⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2014) for many concepts in this session.

²⁶ We gratefully acknowledge the work of Allan Wade and Linda Coates, with the Centre for Response-Based Practice, for their contributions to this activity.

- Progressively work through the two lists with the groups alternately taking turns to read out each corresponding statement.

List A - The Power of Language	List B - The Power of Language
1. John punched Sina.	1. John punched Sina. Sina backed up slowly and closed the door to the bedroom where the children were sleeping.
2. Jeremy was beaten until he was unconscious and left on the side of the road	2. Witnesses said Jeremy refused to stay down after intervening to stop a man slapping a child
3. Ever since he could remember, Jimmy saw his dad beating up his mum, putting her down, telling her she was "a piece of shit".	3. Jimmy would bring his mum tea and a warm cloth and stay home from school with a stomachache.
4. Abusive relationship, dispute, argument	4. A perpetrator's control and abuse of their partner
5. Sex with a minor/ sex with a child, child prostitution	5. Rape and sexualised violation of a child by a perpetrator
6. Unwanted intercourse/ unwanted sex	6. Rape
7. Auto sharing	7. Car theft
8. A financial transaction	8. Bank robbery

- Invite women to share their thoughts about the purpose of the activity.
- Prompts: How are matched statements from lists A and B similar, how are they different?
- I.e. statement 1 on both lists is about the same situation but the two descriptions give very different meanings to the situation.
- The main focus of this activity is to see how language can be used to distort and misrepresent violent actions (as in List A).
- In other words, inaccurate use of language can:
 1. Obscure or cover up violence;
 2. Hide or lessen perpetrator responsibility;
 3. Cover up victim resistance; and
 4. Blame or pathologise victims (pathologise means giving a person a label that means they are unhealthy or mentally unwell).
- Just as language can be used to misrepresent actions, it can also be used in more helpful ways (as in List B). We can use words in clear and accurate ways to:

1. Reveal or uncover violence;
2. Make clear the responsibility that perpetrators have for their actions;
3. Make clear and honour victim resistance;
4. Challenge the blaming and pathologising of victims.

- Revisit Lists A and B. Go through the 8 statements to find examples of the four ways language is used to misrepresent violence and the four ways language is used to represent violence more accurately.

- Invite women to share their responses to the statements.

- For this next section, we're going to discuss 5 important principles about violence. These principles are the building blocks of the whole Women's Group programme.

- Display the 5 Principles poster in the room (preferably permanently).

- Go through these as a group (Women's Handbook, page 6).

The 5 Principles of Violence and Responses to Violence²⁷

1) Whenever people are badly treated, they always resist.

In our experience, people always resist violence and abuse in some way. They will stand up against, not comply with, and try to stop or prevent violence, disrespect, or oppression.

2) People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse.

Abuse can be very dangerous, so usually victims resist it in ways that are not obvious. Others probably will not even notice the resistance so they assume that victims are "passive" and "they do not do enough to stand up for themselves." In fact, victims actively resist violence, and in real life, the so-called "passive" victim does not exist.

3) Perpetrators of violence know that victims will resist, so they try to stop victims from resisting.

For instance, some women will resist their husband's abuse by leaving the house. Knowing this, some men will try to stop this resistance by taking shoes, money, bankcards and car keys. Others might pull the phone out of the wall to prevent their wives from calling for help.

4) Violent and abusive behavior is always deliberate.

As shown in point 3 above, the fact that perpetrators make plans to stop victims from

²⁷ We gratefully acknowledge the work and words of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik through their book *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007).

resisting indicates that their abuse is deliberate. Perpetrators also make decisions about how they will be abusive. For example, some men think it is “wrong to hit a woman”, but they will push, grab and verbally abuse their partners.

5) When it comes to domestic violence, appearances are deceiving.

Onlookers cannot easily see what occurs in domestic violence situations.

Typically, perpetrators and victims do not tell others what is happening. Perpetrators cover up their abusive behaviour. They may blame the victim and be friendly and charming to the outside world, so that they do not have to face the consequences of their actions.

Victims do not often like to tell the full story of the abuse to others, because

- 1) it may not be safe to do so and
- 2) they do not want people to think negatively of them.

- We will explain more about these ideas in the rest of this programme and apply these to real-life situations, including the lives of all of you in this group.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: What is domestic violence?

Closing Reflection: Opportunity for women to share their responses to the session and expectations of the group programme.

Post-group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 2: What is Domestic Violence

Session Objectives

- To reinforce the message that domestic violence is unacceptable.
- To review domestic violence prevalence in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- To clarify that women in the group are here because they have resisted violence.
- To clarify that it is the abuser who is responsible for carrying out and stopping the abuse.
- To examine ways that perpetrators abuse victims - putting the abuser into the picture.
- To show women we understand that domestic violence is destructive and is a violation of victims' rights to liberty and safety.
- To acknowledge ways perpetrators have been abusive towards women in the group.
- To discuss connections between abusers' patterns of controlling behaviour and violence.
- To recognise ways women in the group have responded to people who have been abusive.

Resource List

Network of Dominating Tactics poster

Large "tactics" circles and string for connectors

Paper and pens

Noble Qualities Cards

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up

The aim is to re-acquaint women with one another, having been apart for a week. Because this is a particularly full session, we recommend keeping the warm-up brief today.

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with the women's agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from the first session? Women may choose to pass. If any women have a particular concern they would like to discuss in detail consider whether it may be helpful to make time after the session to talk together.

Activity 1: Domestic violence is unacceptable

Purpose

To show that men's violence against women is not uncommon in Aotearoa New Zealand and in the Women's Group we take all forms of abuse seriously.

Procedures

-Read out the legal definition of domestic violence (Women's Handbooks, page 7).

The Domestic Violence Act 1995:

Violence against a person by another person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.

Following the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013: Psychological abuse now includes financial or economic abuse.

-90% of protection order applicants (victims) are women and 88% of respondents (perpetrators) are men.²⁸

How common is domestic violence?

- Lifetime occurrence of women experiencing domestic violence and sexualised violence for New Zealand is the highest amongst the 14 most economically developed countries with available data.
- 1 in 3 New Zealand women have reported domestic or sexualised violence in their lifetime.

In 2013:

- There were 95,000 NZ Police family violence investigations, of these
- 59,137 had at least one child (under 16 years) present.
- Women's Refuge received 81,7000 crisis calls.
- 7,642 women accessed Women's Refuge services in the community.
- These figures don't reflect the full extent of domestic violence in the population, they do offer a glimpse into the scale of this problem.
- A barrier to finding out rates of domestic violence occurrence is that recorded data only is available (i.e. only what is reported to Police and Women's Refuge).
- Disclosure to services such as Refuge and Police is much lower than actual rates in the community.

²⁸ New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse (2013).

- As a group reflect on this information.
- Invite women to share their responses to the data.
- Point out that the New Zealand's high rate of domestic violence indicates that even though women who experience domestic violence often feel isolated, including an abuser's intentional isolation of the partner, that you are not alone.
- A big focus of our Women's Group is to support one another and make connections and in this way reduce group member's isolation.

Activity 2: Setting the scene: We are here together today in the Women's Group because we have resisted violence.

Purpose

To clarify that women in the group are here because they have resisted violence.

To clarify that it is the abuser who is responsible for carrying out and stopping the abuse.

Procedures

- It is important to identify and acknowledge the many ways people have behaved abusively towards women in the group and this will be a significant focus of this week's session.
- Before beginning this however, we briefly reinforce the principle that whenever people are badly treated, they always resist in some way (as shown on the 5 Principles poster).
- Keep in mind that this activity is not about 'empowering' women as such - it is about reformulating the idea that it is more helpful and accurate to talk about how people *respond* to abuse rather than how victims are *affected* or *impacted* by abuse.
- We are wary that goals of empowering victims can inadvertently lead to victim blaming by sending messages that:
 - If victims were more empowered, then people would not abuse them.
 - Victims' inability to keep themselves or their children safe is a result of their decisions and choices.
 - These messages can also hide the structural barriers²⁹ that can limit choices available to victims.

²⁹ Structural barriers can arise from policies that cause poverty and social exclusion, racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, and responses to colonisation for example.

Activity 3: Upholding dignity

Purpose

Acknowledging ways we respond to other's abuse.

Procedures

- Introduce this with the following discussion points:
 - Whenever people are badly treated, they always resist in some way.
 - In many situations, victims can't escape or prevent an abuser's violence.
 - When victims openly challenge perpetrators, the response from perpetrators can lead to an intensification of control and abuse.
 - Despite this, victims do many things to uphold their dignity, and to increase their own and others' safety.
 - Often it is unsafe for victims to try openly to stop or oppose abuse, so more commonly, responses to abuse go unnoticed by anyone other than the victim.
 - We are here together today in the Women's Group because you have all resisted violence.
- Encourage group members to contribute to the discussion points.
- Introduce the 16 'Upholding dignity' points below (Women's Handbook, page 8). These can be read out.
- Options: Go around the group, each person reads one point out, or, facilitators take turns to read each point, or, women volunteer to read out points.
- Prompts: Women may not agree with some of these and are welcome to disagree with any of the points and to add more points.

Upholding Dignity:³⁰

- I am not to blame for being abused
- I have resisted abuse all along
- I have done many things to keep myself and others safe
- I have upheld my dignity
- I have upheld my mana
- I am not the cause of another person's violent behaviour
- I do not like or want to be abused, ever
- I am an important human being
- I have a strong sense of fairness
- I am a worthwhile woman
- I deserve to be treated with respect

³⁰ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for most of the Upholding dignity responses.

- I can decide for myself what is best for me
- I can make changes in my life if I want to
- I am not alone, I have proven this by asking others for support
- I have a right to safety and wellbeing
- We are together today because we have resisted violence

- Reflection: invite women to share their responses to these 16 points.

Activity 3: Network of Dominating Tactics³¹ - putting the abuser into the picture

Purpose

- To acknowledge ways perpetrators abuse victims - putting the abuser into the picture.
- To show women that we understand that domestic violence is destructive and is a violation of victims' rights to liberty and safety.
- To acknowledge ways perpetrators have been abusive towards women in the group.
- To discuss connections between abusers' patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour and violence.
- To discuss links between victim blaming, and mutualising, minimising and denying of violence.
- To recognise ways women in the group have responded to people who have been abusive.

Procedures

- Facilitators inform the group that the focus of this part of the session is to identify and examine a range of abusive behaviours.
- Emphasise that in your experience in previous Women's Groups, this activity can evoke powerful responses including anger, feeling overwhelmed, sadness, surprise, and also at times, a sense of relief in feeling understood, acknowledgement, and a feeling of making connections between your experiences of abuse for the first time. Additional responses may include powerful thoughts, feelings, memories and sensations in our bodies.
- Emphasise that part of seeing how we have resisted other people's harmful actions is to identify their abusive and controlling actions towards us.
- Emphasise our Women's Group kaupapa and purpose:
 - *To support and awahi one another.*
 - *To listen to each other's stories in order to recognise the strength each woman has shown in resisting violence.*

³¹ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas of the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, in particular their Power and Control Wheel, and Mandy Morgan for informing the Network of Dominating Tactics.

- *To build on a sense of belonging and safety in the group and feel supported and less isolated because of this.*
- We will be doing this today as we look at women's experiences of abuse.
- Introduce the idea that abusive behaviours can be roughly divided into major types including emotional or psychological abuse, isolation, intimidation, economic abuse, physical abuse, sexualised abuse, spiritual abuse, personal sexism (treating women partners as inferior), and cyber-abuse. Note that perpetrators' use of children to abuse mothers is incorporated into all 9 types.
- Show this by displaying the Network of Dominating Tactics poster and discussing the relationships between the features.
- Explain that there are many examples of forms of abuse within each of the 9 major types.
- Brainstorm³² different tactics of abuse and discuss where they might fit in the triangle. Refer to the following lists of examples of abuse tactics as necessary.
- Lay the 9 circles of abuse types on the floor as arranged on the poster.
- Providing paper and pens, encourage women to note down examples of abusive tactics and discuss and decide where to place them in relation to the abuse type circles (some may fit into more than one).
- Discuss how different tactics are connected and use the string to show some of these relationships.

Here are just a few examples of behaviours that are abusive

(Women's Handbook, page 10):^{33, 34}

1. Emotional or psychological abuse:

- Frequent insults, name calling, yelling, swearing at you, putting you down, belittling, constant criticisms, undermining your abilities as a partner, mother etc., attacking a person's belief system, culture, ethnicity;
- Abusing or neglecting children, attempting to stop the mother from intervening;
- Physically abusing, threatening to abuse, or emotionally abusing you in front of your children or while you are holding your young child;
- Mocking you; humiliating or embarrassing you in front of other people;

³² Brainstorm is a term used to explain an activity that involves participants contributing their ideas about a particular concept without judgement or censor. The intention of a brainstorm is to generate as broad a range of ideas/understandings about the topic as possible.

³³ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for much of the content for these examples of types of abuse.

³⁴ Please note, this is not a comprehensive list. For additional examples of forms of abuse experienced by women in same sex relationships, women with disabilities, older women and migrant and refugee women refer to Part 3 of this Facilitation Guide.

- Telling you (and other people) that you're "crazy" or mentally unwell;
- Using the victim's lack of legal rights to get more power and control over her (i.e. immigrants without citizenship status);
- Disrespect: Interrupting, not listening or responding, twisting your words, putting you down in front of other people, saying bad things about your friends and family;
- Abusing Trust: Lying, withholding information, cheating on you;
- Breaking Promises: Not following through on agreements, not taking a fair share of responsibility, refusing to help with child-care or housework;
- Trying to use the children to relay abusive messages;
- Minimising (e.g. making light of abusive behaviour and not taking your concerns about it seriously);
- Denying (e.g. saying the abuse didn't happen, shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour);
- Blaming (e.g. saying you caused it or someone else caused them to abuse you);
- Monitoring texts, phone calls;
- Telling you where you can and cannot go;
- Harassment: Making uninvited visits or calls, following you, checking up on you;
- Constantly telling you about your "faults" or comparing you negatively with other people;
- Shaming you in front of others;
- Making you become whakamā;
- Giving you 'the silent treatment' if they aren't in control;
- Mocking or undermining your achievements;
- Insisting on going everywhere with you.

2. Isolation:

- Preventing you from going where you want to, when you want to, and with whomever you want to e.g. trying to stop your access to family and/or friends;
- Trying to stop you from having social contacts, visitors, outside interests, or from working;
- Taking away your access to a vehicle, transportation, phone or computer;
- Being overly protective or extremely jealous to try to justify actions.

3. Coercion (threats and forcing) and intimidation:

- Destruction of property (e.g. throwing and breaking things);
- Attempting to control what you say or do not say;
- Attempting to make you account for every minute of your day;
- Threatening to hurt anyone who helps you;
- Threatening to hurt or kill children, pets, friends, or family;

- Threatening to use the legal system to stop your access to your children;
- Threatening to kidnap the children;
- Threatening to commit suicide;
- Attempting to control with fear, looks or gestures;
- Threatening to be abusive if you don't do what he wants;
- Displaying weapons as away of making you afraid or directly threatening you with weapons;
- Using his anger or “loss of temper” as a threat to get you to do what he wants;
- Threatening to disclose the victim’s sexual orientation if you don't do what the perpetrator wants;
- Threatening to report you to the authorities (e.g. police or CYFs) for something you didn't do;
- Trying to make you do illegal things;
- Trying to force you to drop charges.

4. Economic abuse:

- Keeping his money from the family;
- Trying to stop the victim from earning money or going to school, polytech or university;
- Trying to force you to work;
- Denying your access to family assets like bank accounts, credit cards, or car;
- Attempting to force you to hand over money;
- Making all the decisions about how to spend the money;
- Keeps money for themselves and leaves you struggling to buy necessities;
- Attempting to force you to account for how you spend money;
- Forcing the family to live in poverty when money is available;
- Gambles all the family money away;
- Trying to force you to ask for money to buy or do things;
- Limiting your access to medical or dental assistance;
- Does not contribute to raising children you have together;
- Tries to force you to illegally apply for a benefit;
- Puts debts and bills in your name or uses your name to get credit.

5. Physical abuse:

- Grabbing, pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking;
- Attempting to strangle, breaking bones, knifing;
- Shooting or using other weapons;
- Physically prevents you from leaving;
- Locking you out of your home; abandoning you in an unsafe place;
- Preventing you from taking medications or getting medical care;
- Denying you access to food, fluids or sleep;

- Forcing you to take alcohol or other drugs;
- Driving recklessly;
- Murder.

6. Sexualised abuse:

- Rape;
- Demanding that the victim wears more (or less) provocative clothing;
- Forcing you to do sexualised acts with objects, friends, animals;
- Trying to force you to have sex for money, food etc.;
- Insisting you act out pornographic fantasies;
- Denying your sexuality;
- Threatening to expose your sexual orientation to friends, family or employer, if you are gay or lesbian;
- Making degrading sexual comments, leering;
- Making threats if you don't comply with sex;
- Pressuring to have sex.

7. Spiritual abuse:

- Ridiculing your religious/ spiritual beliefs;
- Attempting to force or pressure you to accept spiritual beliefs or engage in religious/ spiritual practices;
- Attempting to stop you expressing, practicing or participating in spiritual practices;
- Using spirituality/religion as a way to attempt to control and manipulate you;
- Putting down your whakapapa;
- Trying to cut you off from your cultural heritage;
- Trying to stop you from following your dreams.

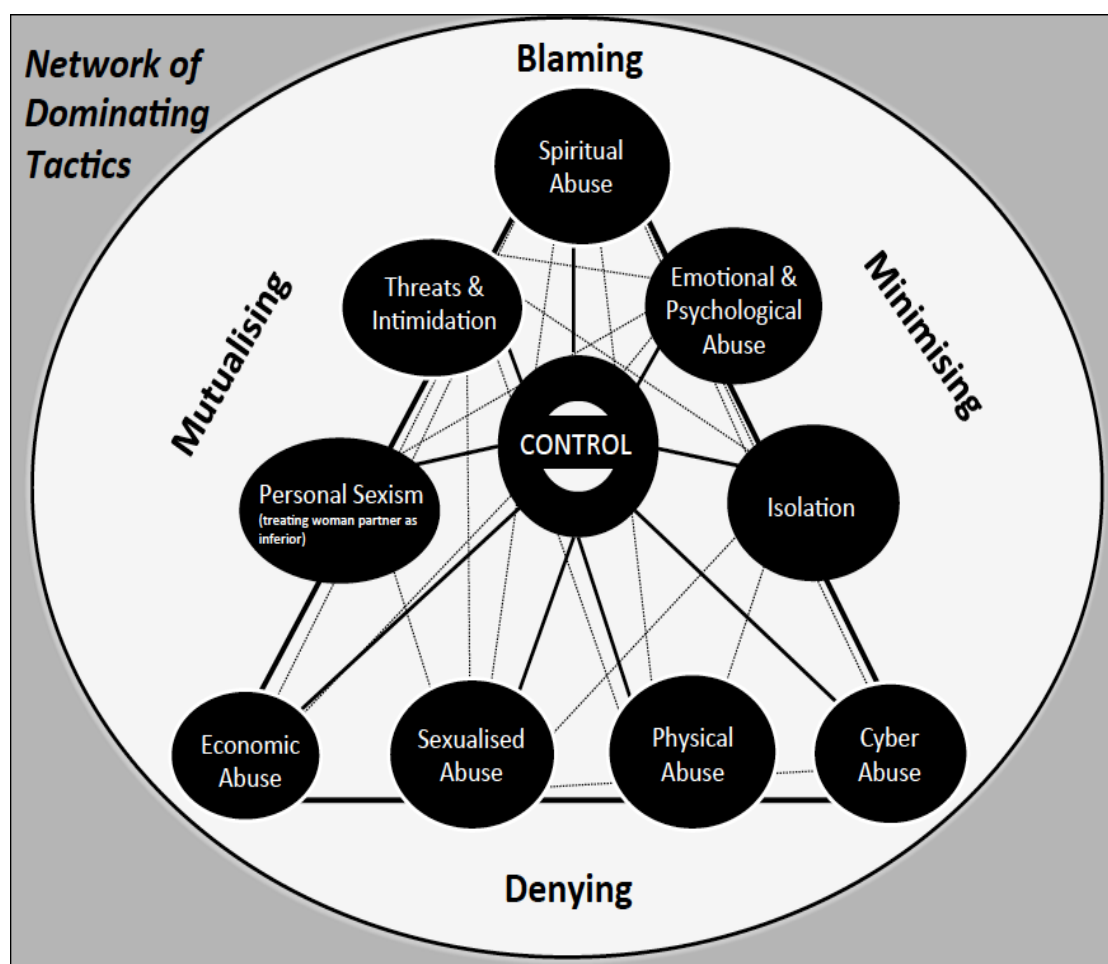
8. Personal sexism (treating women partners as inferior):

- Being the one to define men's and women's roles;
- Treating you like a servant;
- Acting like "master of the castle."

9. Cyber abuse:

- Sending/posting data/information by email, instant messaging, social networking sites, blogs, websites, mobile phones that may be threatening, harassing, blackmailing, objectionable, or stalking;
- Sending a naked or embarrassing photo of you to others to harassing or blackmail you.

- Facilitate sharing of women's examples and forms of abuse that their partner has used.
- As a group, reflect on how these forms of abuse can interconnect to form a pattern in which a partner's controlling behaviours can restrict women's freedom and undermine their dignity.
- The Network of Dominating Tactics shows how these 9 types of abuse are interconnected - and not always clearly distinguishable from each other. For example, by using isolation it may be easier to physically abuse a partner, as it will be less noticeable to other people outside the relationship.
- The Network also shows the relationship between a partner's controlling behaviour and other forms of abuse as a way for the perpetrator to dominate their partner and to get what they want.
- When the perpetrator and other people blame the victim, and deny, mutualise and minimise the abuse this works to conceal the abuse and victims' resistance to it.



- Reflect on how domestic violence usually involves the abuser's patterns of controlling and abusive behaviours over time rather than single, one-off incidences.

Taken together, a person's control and abuse over time works to suppress women and children's resistance

Activity 5: Our responses to abuse

Purpose

To recognise ways women in the group have responded to people who have been abusive.

Procedures

- Explain that even though people might try to say that you did "nothing" to stop a person from abusing them, actually, people respond in all sorts of ways. Most responses are not visible to others.
- Revisit the 9 types of abuse recorded during the previous activity and invite women to reflect on these questions:³⁵

- When something bad or harmful happened to you, what did you do?
 - a. What thoughts came into your mind?
 - b. How did you feel?
 - c. What did you notice in your body?
- If you've known someone who has dealt with something similar, how have you responded to them?
- Why do you think you responded that way, and how did you know to do that?
- Women are invited to share their responses to these questions.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Whenever people are badly treated they always resist.

Closing Activity: Noble Qualities

Purpose

Upholding women's dignity and mana.

Reinstating women's mauri and wellbeing.

Challenging stereotypes of victims as passive, deficient, and less than capable.

Challenging gender stereotypes by choosing words traditionally used to describe men's as well as women's capabilities.

Procedures

- Sprawl the noble qualities word cards onto the floor.
- Choose one that says something about you.
- Women are welcome to comment on their reason for choosing their card and others are invited to give affirming feedback.
- For all of these activities, women are welcome to use other words not in the pack.

³⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

Noble Qualities Word List (work in progress, consulting with others for Te Reo / English equivalents)

Adventurous waewae kaikapua?	Brave māia	Calm mārū	Capable māia	Compassionate aroha
Determined pūkeke	Dignified	Considerate tūpore?	Curious pākiki	Creative wairua auaha?
Direct	Gentle mārū	Skillful mātau; mahio	Smart/ clever kakama	Spontaneous ?
Strong kaha	Loving aroha	Storyteller kaitaki kōrero?	Supportive tautāwhi	Understanding mōhio
Principled matatika?	Problem-solver whakatikatika?	Quick-witted atamai	Reliable pou whirinaki (n)	Engaging whakarekareka?
Organised nahanaha?	Practical ringa rehe?	Positive ngākaupai?	Cool tau kē nei	Patient
Inclusive tae ana ki?	Kind manaki	Inspiring whakaohoho?	Warm whakaahuru	Spiritual
Motivated kipakipa?	Observant mātai	Fair tōkeke	Wise mātau, pūmahara?	Nurturing
Focused arotahi	Friendly ratarata; hoahoa	Fun pārekareka?	Funny hātakēhi	Helpful āwhina
Honest pono matatika?	Imaginative pohewatanga?			

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 3: Whenever people are badly treated they always resist

Session Objectives

- To analyse a woman's story in order to identify ways victims respond to and resist their partner's abuse.
- To challenge the harmful belief that victims are passive recipients of violence - that victims do little to keep themselves safe or uphold their dignity.
- To deepen our understanding of the idea that people always respond to violence.
- To share ways women in the group have responded to and resisted abuse to maintain their dignity and keep themselves and others safe.

Resource List

The Medicine Wheel of Responses

Materials for kete of responses activity:

Paper feathers (template in toolkit), one for each response: (mental/intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual).

Can make them on colourful or plain paper.

A real or large drawing of a kete

Audio recording of Nicole's Story and audio player

5 Principles of Violence and Responses poster

Large sheets of paper, markers and pens

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with the women's agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or pass if they choose.

Activity 1: Kete of responses

Purpose

- To challenge the harmful belief that victims are passive recipients of violence - that victims do nothing to keep themselves safe or uphold their dignity.
- To deepen our understanding of the idea that people always respond to violence.
- To identify ways women in the group have responded to and resisted abuse to maintain their dignity and keep themselves and others safe.



A kete is a basket woven from harakeke (native flax). Kete are imbued with important symbolism as carriers of sacred objects and knowledge. Feathers are taonga (treasures) so are a suitable way for women to record their resistances.

Procedures

- We begin this activity by listening to a brief story describing of man abusing a woman.³⁶
- Inform the women that this story has graphic details of violence and take care to monitor and sensitively acknowledge women's emotional responses to the account. (facilitator to read out):

A woman and man return home to their children after a dinner out, and send the babysitter home. The man then begins to yell at and threaten the woman, who responds by trying to keep quiet so as not to awaken and scare the children. However, the man becomes more aggressive and then physically violent. The oldest child comes downstairs and is terrified by the scene. The man swears and spits on the woman and kicks her in the ribs before he kicks the door open and leaves.

³⁶ We gratefully acknowledge Richardson and Wade (2013) for our use of this account and details of the woman's responses.

- For this next part, we will ask questions to support reflection and discussion that tell another story - that of how this woman, and her children, may be responding to her partner's violence:

Possible questions if needed (group members' responses will be prioritised):

- *What things did the woman do when the man started yelling and threatening her?*
- *Describe some things the women might have felt and thought about while the man started yelling and threatening her?*
- *What might the woman have done, thought about, and felt during and after his yelling and threatening and attacking until he kicks open the door and leaves?*
- *How did the oldest child respond to the man's yelling, threatening and physical attacking? How might the oldest child have responded in his or her thoughts and feelings? You might also have ideas about how the younger child responded after waking?*
- *How might the woman have responded after the man left (over minutes, hours, a day, a few weeks)? What things do you think she might have done, thought and felt over these time frames?*

- Prompts:

- Ask group members to talk about how the woman responded in ways that indicate varying forms of physical, emotional, intellectual (in her thoughts) and spiritual resistance.
- How about ways the woman might have tried to keep herself safe? Protect her children? Protect others? Ways the woman tried to keep her self-respect and dignity?

Facilitators could consider asking any of these prompts below during this discussion:

- *Would it make sense that the woman would feel terrified for herself and her children?*
- *Would it make sense that she would lie awake, night after night, wondering what will happen next?*
- *Will the police come?*
- *Will CYFs take her children?*
- *Would it make sense that the woman would "cocoon" herself, because she is too tired and sad to interact with friends and family?*
- *Would it make sense that the woman would stop doing the things that gave her pleasure, such as going to the gym after work, seeing friends for coffee,*

watching the kids at netball and league?

- *Would it make sense that the woman would feel intense despair and even consider killing herself?*
- *When she was a little girl, she saw her father beat her mother, and she promised herself her children would never see such terror. Now they have and she feels like hell. Would it make sense that, because she is focused on safety, on what might happen next, on getting through the day, on making her children feel safe, the woman would have trouble remembering the hundreds of details a parent needs to remember every day?*
- *Would it make sense that the woman might eat high-carbohydrate foods to comfort herself, or refuse to eat at all because she is sick to death of violence and fear?*

- *Say the woman goes to the local mental health service, where the policy is that a mental illness diagnosis is necessary before services are provided. Given that a lot of what is described about her are symptoms of clinical depression, she would almost certainly be seen as clinically depressed. Treatment would be aimed at her depression, because "it" would be seen as illness or disorder.*

- *What other reasons could there be for her responses to her situation and husband's abuse?*

- *We can describe how the woman resisted the violence through her physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual responses.*

- Display the Medicine Wheel of Responses and explain the background and purpose of this as a visual tool:

Cathy Richardson developed the Medicine Wheel of Responses with families belonging to Métis,³⁷ and other Indigenous peoples of Canada. The Medicine Wheel of Responses is a tool used to acknowledge how people have resisted violence and reasserted their dignity, often in seemingly "small" ways not noticed by others.

- As a group work around the Medicine Wheel discussing the woman's responses (as they relate to the story above).

- Encourage women to share their responses as the group progress around the Wheel.

- Acknowledge that the Medicine Wheel is a tool of significance to Métis, and other Indigenous peoples of Canada. In our group we have our own ways of responding, which will have some similarities and some differences to those of the Medicine Wheel.

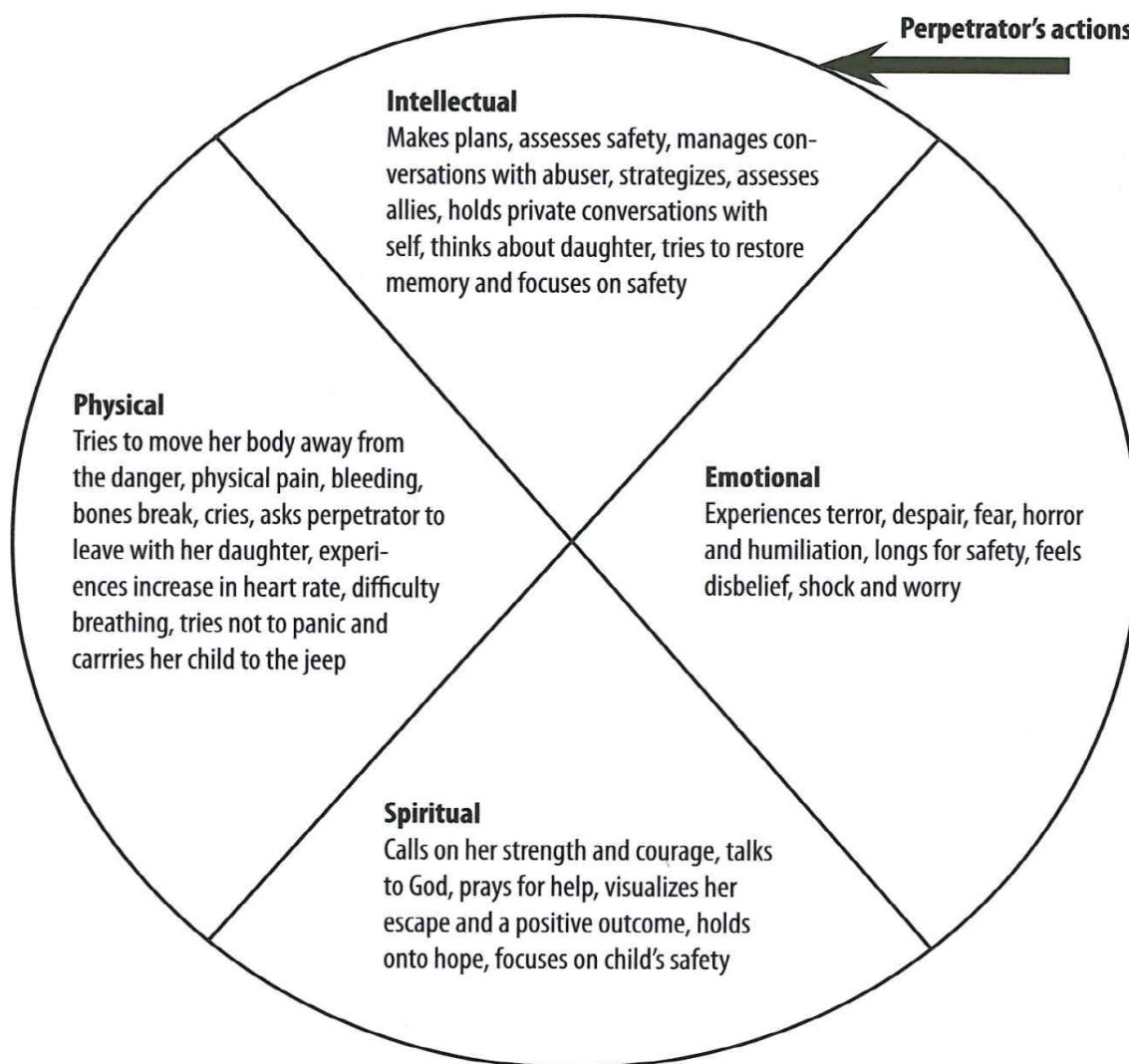
³⁷ Pronunciation of Métis is similar to maytee

- For example, some women will place particular significance on their spiritual responses while for other women, spiritual responses may not be of significance or relevance to them.
- We acknowledge, respect and value the range of understandings represented in our group.

Introduce the Kete of Responses activity.

- As a group, women are invited to take a paper feather and note down one way they responded to abuse to uphold their dignity.
- They can include the type of response (mental/ intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual).
- Women can make as many as they wish.
- The idea is to generate discussion to acknowledge women's responses in the group and create a tangible, visual record to honour these.
- During this time, facilitators will support individual women as needed in identifying their responses and writing these down.
- Place the feathers in the kete.
- Once there is a reasonable collection, review the responses as a group.

Medicine Wheel of Responses



We gratefully acknowledge the right to reproduce the Medicine Wheel of Responses courtesy of Cathy Richardson 2008 and recognise its cultural and sacred significance to Cathy Richardson and her Métis family and People.

Activity 2: Nicole's Story³⁸

Purpose

- To analyse a women's story in order to identify ways victims respond to and resist their partner's abuse.
- To challenge the harmful belief that victims are passive recipients of violence - that victims do nothing to keep themselves safe or uphold their dignity.
- To deepen our understanding of the idea that people always respond to violence.

Procedures

- Inform the group that we will be hearing "Nicole's Story" today and that as we listen women are encouraged to think about how Nicole responded to Mike's abuse.
- Play the following audio recording

Nicole's Story

I met Mike, a good-looking educated man, after the end of a 15-year marriage. I was attracted to his sense of humour, his kindness towards others and his sensitive and caring manner. He had a child from his first marriage and he spoke of how much he loved being a dad. I had two children from my first marriage and our blended family started off well.

One day I experienced a dark side of Mike. I had told him I wanted to spend the weekend visiting my sister with my two children. Mike attacked me verbally for several hours, talking down to me as if I was a child, insulting me, and making hurtful accusations against me. He paced back and forth across the floor in a rage. I was shocked.

He called me names and said I was "immature, self-centered, and uncaring." He twisted things that had happened in the past, and said they "proved I was selfish." Mike acted like a lawyer in a courtroom, accusing me of a terrible crime.

The more I stood my ground the angrier Mike became. He threatened to ignore my children and to stop doing anything together as a family. Trying to stop the verbal abuse I agreed to have him come to my sister's place. Mike calmed down and said he had gotten angry because I had provoked him.

He claimed he would not have become angry if I had been more loving and understanding. I was confused because although I didn't think I had done anything wrong – the way Mike behaved towards me made me wonder if I had actually done something wrong. Even though I doubted myself, I still believed I did not deserve to be sworn at and put down.

³⁸ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use parts of Nicole's Story and other ideas from *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007).

Mike's verbal attack on me became one of many. He began to verbally assault me every few weeks. These attacks built up over a few days. Mike's behaviour always got worse until I eventually gave into him.

An example of this was when I told Mike that one of my children needed new shoes. Mike insisted my child wear rough old shoes that didn't fit her, even though we could well afford new ones. Mike called me names, swore at me and made offensive comments about my child. He again twisted past events, and said everything proved I was "favouring my own child".

The more I stood up for my child, the more Mike abused me. He threatened to ignore my children, and to end the relationship. He even threw a heavy iron towards me. After a couple of days of these verbal attacks, I asked my mum to buy a new pair of shoes for both Mike's child and my own, even though Mike's child had new shoes.

Mike did his best to try and prevent me having contact with friends and family. For example, Mike tried to stop my relationship with a long time friend by being verbally abusive to me when I spoke with her. He accused me of not caring about the marriage, and of caring more for my friends than for him. He also grabbed the phone from me when I was talking with this friend, then yelled and cursed at my friend for four hours. After this, I talked with her only when Mike was not around.

Mike always blamed me for his anger and verbal attacks. I thought this was ridiculous. I sometimes became really angry that he twisted things around to try to make it seem it was my fault he was abusive. It was not safe for me to tell him I was angry, so I would sometimes vent my anger by going for a walk in the forest and swearing out loud about things he had done. I even used branches to hit trees.

I noticed some ways Mike showed he could control his abusive behaviour. For example, he could suddenly "turn off" his rage towards me, and be very nice to someone else moments later. I remember one time when he was yelling at me. It happened that the front door was open. Just at that moment, a friend knocked at the door, and then called out. I heard Mike swear quietly to himself. Then he said "I hope she didn't hear me." He immediately stopped yelling at me, and was very nice to our friend during her visit. By his actions, Mike obviously knew the way he was yelling at me was wrong in the eyes of others. It felt good, in a weird way, to see that Mike was fully aware his behaviour was unacceptable.

Mike also showed control over his rage by threatening me with abuse if I did not do what he wanted me to do. He knew I hated his verbal attacks, so he would often threaten to become "upset" (his code word for abuse) if I did not do what he wanted. I remember thinking "if Mike can plan in advance to be abusive, he must be able to turn on his rage when he wants to try to get control over me." It was quite a shock to realise he could control his anger.

Yet another way Mike showed control over his behaviour is that he did not physically abuse me, so although he scared me by throwing heavy objects in my direction, he never did touch

me. His verbal abuse was so horrible though, I remember thinking "I almost wish he would hit me, and then there would be something visible that would show how much he is hurting me."

I also noticed Mike was a lot meaner to me than he was with other people. When Mike was abusive to me, he often found excuses for his behaviour by saying he was "over-tired," or was "stressed" by something else in his life. I noticed, though, Mike still was able to be kind and respectful to our friends and neighbours when he was tired or stressed.

After many months of being frequently verbally assaulted by Mike, I reached the point where I was "walking on eggshells" all the time. I did not feel at all safe, so instead of being assertive, I kept things to myself. I was afraid of his verbal and emotional abuse, and also when Mike swung heavy objects in his hand and threw them in my direction. I tried to do everything he wanted, to try to stop him from getting angry.

Even though I tried to "keep under the radar," sometimes Mike's abuse was completely unpredictable. I remember feeling very hurt when Mike would start vicious verbal attacks over stupid little things. One time, I forgot to buy peanut butter from the shop, and Mike became enraged, accusing me of being "disorganised" and "incompetent." He insulted me by talking down to me as if I was a child, and instructed me on "how to better organise my life."

During these depressing times, I remember that in the midst of Mike's degrading verbal assaults, I would hold my head up high and say to myself, "stand tall," to maintain my dignity. After I started to keep my thoughts and feelings to myself, Mike started accusing me of being "cold" and "distant." I then remember numbing my feelings to lessen the pain.

Our children were also afraid of Mike. I could see they also "walked on eggshells" around him. He was controlling with them, would often yell and belittle them, and would give them harsh punishments for their mistakes. For example, he locked them in the bathroom, or sent them to the cold, unfinished garage. He knew the children were afraid of the dark so he would also turn out the lights. The children seemed to be "shut down" when they were with him, but when they were with me they behaved just like normal children.

It was not safe for me to directly oppose Mike, so I found other ways to try to support the children. For instance, Mike's own 9-year-old child forgot to bring home a notice from school, and Mike yelled at him that he was "useless." He said, "there was something wrong with his brain because he was so forgetful."

Mike made him wash down the kitchen cupboards and the floor, and then sent him to bed from 3:00 in the afternoon until the next morning. I helped my stepson with the washing when Mike went upstairs. I also played games with him when he was sent to bed and told him all of the things I liked about him.

I also noticed how Mike talked about his abuse in a way that made it sound as though we were both involved in this behaviour. He would say "he was sorry for his part in our argument" even

though I had hardly said a word. He would also talk about his abuse as “emotional intimacy.” I knew it was not safe for me to tell him this was a load of crap so I just thought it to myself.

One day, I came home to another “freak-out” from Mike. He attacked me for being away from home too much and not spending enough time with him. He swore at me, and said I was “not able to make a marriage work, and “it was no wonder I had been divorced before.” Mike then went upstairs. I heard him pacing the floors of the bedroom.

I felt at my wits’ end this time, and was so tired of “walking on eggshells.” I felt whatever I tried I was “damned if I did, and damned if I did not.” It was horrible living in such an emotionally shutdown state, and I felt I was “living a lie” by not being able to speak safely and freely to my husband. I reached a point where I thought about leaving the relationship, although it was the very last thing I wanted.

Around this time Mike escalated his abuse and told me to get out of the house and to leave the children behind. I felt really afraid, and wondered if he would be physically abusive this time. I made a final decision to flee with the kids if I had the opportunity. When Mike went to the bathroom, I grabbed the children and my packed bag, and drove to a friend’s house.

During all this time, Mike kept phoning me, saying he really wanted to get back together. He said he “would do anything to save the marriage.” For the first time ever, he was very apologetic. He admitted he had not treated me well in the marriage and promised he would change. He even told me he was seeing a counsellor for help.

I felt so confused about whether or not I should return to him so I went to counselling to help me make the decision. I thought if Mike was really sincere about changing his behaviour, going back to him would be the best solution for all of the family.

When I told the counsellor my story his response was to say, I had been part of the problem, and had let the abuse happen to me. The counsellor suggested to me that I was too indecisive, and unassertive. He also told me if I had been more assertive, Mike would love me for it and I could stop the abuse.

In my vulnerable state, when I so desperately wanted the marriage and family to be saved, I wanted to believe the counsellor was right. Maybe the power to change the marriage was in my hands, and even though I felt doubtful, it was a very appealing idea. I decided to return to Mike and that I would try being very assertive with him.

After I returned, it was only a matter of days before Mike began to be controlling and verbally abusive again. I asserted myself very strongly to try to get Mike to stop, but of course, Mike’s assaults escalated. It was then I remembered how assertive I had been at the beginning of our marriage, and how unsafe it had always been to directly resist his abuse. I found out Mike was not sincere about changing his behaviour. This time, I did not stay long in the relationship. About two weeks later, at the next chance, I left again and never returned.

After I left, Mike tried to hide the truth about his violent behaviour. He described himself to family, friends, and neighbours as an “innocent victim” of my “sudden departure from the home.” He told people I had left the home “because parenting was too overwhelming and I wished to pursue my career.” To expose the truth, I told friends and family, including some of Mike’s own family, about his abuse.

Some were supportive; however, I was discouraged by the victim-blaming reactions of others. Some people asked me why I had become involved in a relationship like this in the first place. Their questions suggested they thought there was something “wrong” with me. They would say things like “I had always thought you were a very strong person.” Didn’t they realise he was not ‘like that’ until the relationship was well established?

I noticed it was hard for others to understand how great my relationship with Mike was at the beginning. Unless people knew Mike really well over a long period of time, he seemed to be a very nice and caring person. Some friends and acquaintances that knew Mike said they would never have guessed he could be abusive.

A lawyer who later represented me said things I found offensive because he suggested I was equally responsible for Mike’s abuse. He talked about Mike’s abuse as “couple bickering” in the marriage, refused to use the word “abuse,” and always referred to the violence in the relationship as a “high conflict” situation.

People questioned why I did not leave the marriage sooner. One comment was, “I do not know how you could have put up with that.” Another comment was, “I would never have been able to stay with a man who treated me like that.” Simply the fact I had been a victim seemed to make others judge me negatively. I was frustrated people assumed I had been weak or passive in the marriage.

They did not realise I had done many things to oppose the violence and to keep my dignity. I was also frustrated that others did not understand how hard it was to leave the relationship, and that I suffered many losses in having left. I lost being a full-time parent, and the separation and divorce were really hard on the kids. I lost the relationship with my stepchild, my financial security, as well as most of my possessions, which I left behind when I fled the home. I also lost the hopes and dreams I had at the time of a happy marriage and intact family.

Well-meaning family and friends said they are afraid I will become involved in another abusive relationship. In fact, I truly feel I am a better, stronger person from having experienced this difficult situation, and from having resisted the abuse in so many ways. - ENDS

- After the audio has finished, share with the group that Nicole’s story helps us to see how **perpetrators have control over their abusive behaviours** and how **victims always resist abuse.**³⁹

³⁹ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use ideas from *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007) for this activity.

- Using examples from Nicole's story, we will now go over the five points about domestic violence that we made on the first week of the Women's Group (5 Principles of Violence and Responses to Violence poster).
- We will also use examples from other stories of domestic violence including those of women in our group.
- Note that the steps outlined below are a suggested approach to this activity. The idea is for group members to contribute their experiences and ideas about how perpetrators have control over their abusive behaviours and how victims resist abuse. Priority is given to ideas generated by group members' over the suggested activities. Given time constraints, it is unlikely that all of these steps will be covered.

Point 1. Whenever people are treated badly they always resist

Share and discuss the following points:

- In our experience of working with victims of violence, none of them complied with violence, disrespect, or oppression. They always tried to reduce, prevent or stop the abuse in some way.
- Because they are often in such danger, victims often do not resist the perpetrator's abuse openly (although some victims do resist openly anyway). Often the only way victims can resist the abuse is in their thoughts, or through small acts that are sometimes not even noticed by others.
- A victim's resistance may not stop the abuse, because the perpetrator is making his own decisions about how he wants to behave.
- A perpetrator's abusive behaviour is totally his responsibility, and he is the only one who can stop the abuse. However, the victim's thoughts or actions indicate that in no way does she "go along with" the abuse, or "let it happen." The victim's resistance shows her desire to escape the abuse, to keep her dignity, and to make a better life for herself.

- On a large sheet of paper head up:

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does...

- tries to isolate the victim

The victim resists by...

- tries to keep relationships with friends, family, whānau
- remembers good times with loved ones

- As a group reflect on these points above.
-

- Group members are encouraged to share insights and experiences in relation abusive partner' trying to **isolate** them and resistance to this.

-The following examples show some of the many ways victims resist abuse. We will take a look at what the perpetrator tries to do, and how the victim opposes him.

Examples of resistance to isolation:

- *Mike tried to stop Nicole from having a relationship with her old friend. However, Nicole still kept her relationship with the friend by talking to her when Mike was not around.*
- *When a perpetrator refuses to allow his wife to speak to her friends, she talks on the phone with her friends after he is asleep.*

-Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or women's own stories about when a partner tries to **humiliate** the victims e.g. as below

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to humiliate the victim	The victim resists by... - thinking or acting in ways that sustain her self respect and dignity
---	--

Example of resisting humiliation:

- *Nicole remembered that she would deliberately "hold her head high" and say to herself, "stand tall", when Mike said insulting things to her.*
- *In response to her husband's constant criticisms of her physical appearance, a woman is very careful to always wear nice clothes and to have her hair styled.*

-Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **control** the victim e.g. as below

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to control the victim	The victim resists by... - thinking or acting in ways that show she refuses to be controlled
---	---

Examples of resisting control:

- *When Mike insisted that her daughter wear worn-out shoes that did not fit her properly, Nicole asked her mother to buy shoes for her daughter and Mike's child.*

- *A victim whose husband is very controlling pretends to play along with him. A husband insists that his wife put away everything in the fridge in exactly the right spot, and gets angry if anything is “out of order.” Unable to challenge him openly, the victim decides to do what he wants, but in a dramatic fashion. She puts everything away especially neatly in the “right” place. She then labels in great detail each section of the fridge where the foods “belong.”*
- *A stay-at-home mum finds different reasons to be out of the house with the children so that they can escape the perpetrator’s criticism and control as much as possible.*
- *A wife, whose husband insists that the house remain very clean all the time, refuses to do any housework at all.*

- Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **say both are responsible for the abuse** e.g. as below

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to say both of them are responsible for the abuse	The victim resists by... - thinking or acting in ways that show he is the only one responsible for his behaviour
---	---

Examples:

- *Nicole’s anger at Mike for using the word “arguments” or “emotional intimacy” to describe his abusive behaviour; her refusal to accept statements; and Nicole thinking to herself, “what a load of crap” - these were all ways that Nicole made it clear for herself she was not responsible for what Mike did to her.*
- *A perpetrator, who punches his wife in the face, says that it was just a “fight that got out of hand.” The wife calls the police, expecting that he will be charged with assault. By calling the police, the wife protects herself and demonstrates that he is responsible for the violence.*
- *A perpetrator of a sexual assault claims that it was a mutual act and that the victim enjoyed it. However the woman feels “dirty” afterward and showers often. His action demonstrates that the act was violent and offensive.*

- Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **make excuses for his violence** e.g. as below

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to make excuses for his violence	The victim resists by... - thinking or acting in ways that show for herself that there is no excuse for his violence
--	---

Examples:

- *Mike often blamed Nicole for his actions, saying that Nicole caused him to be abusive by “not meeting his needs.” However, Nicole always knew that she did not deserve Mike’s mistreatment of her. She was angry when he blamed her for his own behaviour. Nicole knew she was innocent. This knowledge, as well as the anger she vented in the safety of the forest behind her house, showed her resistance to this aspect of Mike’s abuse.*
- *An abused child whose parents believed that he “was a bad child and needed to be disciplined,” would remember and write down all the abusive things his parents did to him in a journal.*

- Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **hide his violence** e.g. as below

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to hide his violence	The victim resists by... - thinking or acting in ways that expose the violence
--	---

Examples:

- *Mike tried to hide his violence by describing himself as a “gentle bunny rabbit”, or as an “emotional, feeling person.” Nicole realized that her astonishment at hearing these statements from Mike showed her understanding of how far Mike’s descriptions of himself were from his actual behaviour. She refused to accept Mike’s description of himself as “harmless.”*
- *After Nicole left, Mike tried to hide his abusive behaviour by portraying himself as a “victim” to others. He refused to take any responsibility for his behaviour. Nicole resisted this misrepresentation by telling others—including members of his own family—about Mike’s abuse.*
- *A woman, whose boyfriend punches her in the eye, refuses to stay at home or to wear dark glasses to cover up the black eye. She intentionally goes to his place of work to show his co-workers what he did.*

- Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **make the victim stoop to his level** e.g. as below.

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does... - tries to make the victim stoop to his level	The victim resists by... - doing things to reduce, endure, or escape the pain
---	--

Examples:

- *Nicole resisted Mike's attempts to hurt her by refusing to show her emotional pain to Mike. Instead, she kept her feelings to herself. When he mocked her, she joked along with him.*
- *Nicole also opposed Mike's abuse by numbing her feelings when he verbally assaulted her.*
- *Nicole would comply with Mike's demands in order to stop his abuse of her.*
- *During a physical assault, a victim takes her mind to a pleasant, peaceful place.*
- *A perpetrator punches a victim who refuses to do what he wants her to do. In response, she says "go ahead, jerk, punch me again, but it will not change my mind."*

- Continue to discuss, and add examples from Nicole's Story, or own stories about when a partner tries to **act unpredictably, trying to make the victim afraid so he can gain control of her**

When people are treated badly they always resist

What the perpetrator does...	The victim resists by...
- tries to act unpredictably, trying to make the victim afraid so he can gain control of her	- creating predictability or routine in her life - becoming more unpredictable herself

Examples:

- *When a husband becomes tense, the victim knows from her experience that he will become abusive. She then purposely says things that she knows will make him angry so that she has some control over when she gets hit.*
- *The victim pays close attention to the small details of everyday life to lessen the risk to herself and her children. She takes as much responsibility as possible for her own safety.*

- Completion of the activity

Facilitate group members' reflecting about the activity, e.g. any changes in how they think about their experiences of abuse? In how they think about their partners' behaviour?

Introduce Next Week's Topic: People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse.

Closing Activity

As this session has a lot of activities to cover, close the session with a brief group activity by asking women to reflect on and share if desired one thing they gained from today's Women's Group.

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Session 4: People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse

Session Objectives

- To recognise women's emotional responses to abuse as purposeful rather than pathological.
- To challenge unhelpful labels people use to describe victims.
- To uphold group members' dignity and mana.

Resource List

Choose a Picture Cards and activity prompts sheet

Noble Qualities Cards

Welcome/ Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up Activity: Choose a Picture

This activity can be used as a warm-up or closing activity in the Women's Group.

It's an opportunity for women to connect, share, and reflect.

- Examples of ways to use the cards:

Sprawl the cards on the floor facing up. Going around the group or in pairs, women can select a card in response to one of the prompts below and share a little about their choice. Just choose one or two for the examples below as time allows.

Invite women to choose a picture:

- ❖ That says something you as a person
- ❖ That says something about someone you love
- ❖ That stands out for you
- ❖ That challenges you
- ❖ That makes you feel proud
- ❖ That says something about how you feel about your current situation
- ❖ That speaks to you, a detail, a colour, a character, the background
- ❖ That reminds you of someone you know
- ❖ That represents the joy in your life or a time of joy for you
- ❖ That says something about a significant time in your life
- ❖ That says something about your view of your future
- ❖ That reminds you of someone or something you cherish / is precious to you?
- ❖ That you would like to give someone in your life as a "blessing" or as good wishes to them

- ❖ That you would like to give another Women's Group member as a "blessing" or as good wishes to them (this activity could be done by women randomly selecting another group member's name from a hat or by intentionally choosing another group member).

Invite women to choose a picture and respond to one of the following prompts:

- ❖ What in that photo would you change, if you could?
- ❖ If you were to put yourself in one of the photos, which one would it be? What would you be doing?
- ❖ If you were in one of the photos who do you imagine would be taking the photo?

Another activity is making connections between two or three cards - either purposefully selected or placed upside down and randomly selected:

- ❖ Are there 2 photos that tell a story about something in your life
- ❖ Can you see any connections between the cards you've randomly selected?
- ❖ Do any of these cards suggest something very meaningful for you?

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with the women's agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse

Purpose:

- To recognise women's emotional responses to abuse as purposeful rather than pathological.
- To challenge unhelpful labels people use to describe victims.
- To uphold group members' dignity and mana.

Procedures

Share the following points with the group:

- Last week we listened to Nicole's Story and discussed ways she responded to Mike's abuse. Group members also shared their stories.
- As we see in all of these stories, resistance by victims is often not noticed by other people.

- Nicole resisted Mike's abuse in many unobvious ways.
- Invite group members to recall some examples of resistance from last week (could be from Nicole's Story or own experience).
- *E.g. Nicole numbed her emotions, she ignored Mike's "instructions", she stopped sharing her thoughts and feelings with him, and she chose not to "stoop to his level."*
- Explain that in our experience as Refuge advocates, **victims decide how to resist abuse based on what they know of the perpetrator, what they need to do to be safe, and what they need to do to keep their dignity.**
- In this way, victim's emotional responses make a lot of sense if they are taken in context of the abuse the victim is experiencing.
- A problem that women we work with often encounter is that other people take their emotional responses out of the context of abuse and may label their responses as "sick" or "dysfunctional."
- For example we heard how Nicole's counsellor seems to have had a stereotyped view of victims as "passive". The counsellor wrongly assumed Nicole did not resist Mike's abuse and advised her to be more assertive.

Redefining unhelpful labels

As a group, share and discuss the following examples of negative labels that could be applied to Nicole (Women's Handbook, page 22):

What Nicole did to resist ⁴⁰	How others may label this negatively
Nicole resisted Mike's abuse by not sharing her emotions in the relationship	This could be labeled as "emotional detachment", as an "inability to express emotions" or as "avoidance."
Nicole resisted abuse by refusing to "stoop to his level".	This could be labeled as "passive aggressive behaviour" or "difficult uncooperative behaviour."
Nicole resisted Mike's abuse by numbing her feelings	This could be labeled as "dissociation"

- Other examples that may come up in the group could include sadness about what happened, or dissatisfaction for how they were treated by others being labeled as "depression". A women's worry for her safety in similar situations, or fear of judgment or rejection from people who don't understand may be labeled "anxiety".⁴¹

⁴⁰ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use ideas from Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships (2007) for this activity.

⁴¹ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

- The following points could be included in the discussion:
- One problem with the use of these 'labels' is that they may be hurtful and offensive to victims.
 - Another problem is that labels like these imply that both parties are responsible for ending the abuse.
 - For example, Nicole's counsellor told her that if she had been more "assertive" she could have stopped the abuse, and her husband would "love her for it." This suggestion implied that Nicole was at least equally responsible for ending the violence.
 - And another major problem with the use of labels is that they imply that the problem is in the victim's head. This both blames and pathologises the victim and shifts responsibility for dealing with the abuse from the perpetrator to the victim.
 - Some women have been discouraged by the victim-blaming messages they have heard from others. They have found that examining their resistance to violence has helped them to resolve their feelings of being "damaged" and/or somehow responsible for the abuse.

Working in pairs or threes:

- Encourage women in the group to share their experiences of disclosing or wanting to disclose violence, or discrimination.
- Acknowledge that some women will have received **negative responses**, some will have received **positive responses**, and some will have received a **combination of helpful and unhelpful responses**.
- Share the details of a time they disclosed or wanted to disclose violence or discrimination.
- Some questions for the listener could be (write on the whiteboard):

"How did the person respond to you?"

"How did you then respond?"

"What did you do?"

"How did you know to do that?"

These kinds of questions help bring fourth and honour accounts of resistance than more common questions like, "How did that make you feel?" – which implies that the person was passively acted upon, and that their feelings are an effect rather than a response.⁴²

- After the pair work, women might like to reflect on the activity as a group.

⁴² Ibid

Activity 2: Our Stories Project

So far we have discussed ways that partners abuse, the many ways victims respond to and resist their abuse, and some ways other people respond to victims. Women in the group have done this by sharing their own experiences and through examining resistance in 'Nicole's Story'. This next task invites women in the group to document and, should they wish, share their personal stories of how they resisted abuse.

Women are encouraged to use storytelling mediums of their preference. For example, spoken and written forms such as narratives, poetry, waiata, song lyrics, dialogue in a script/play, diary, letters, bullet points, comic strip, or incident reports.

Equally valid forms include visual and mixed-mediums. For example illustration, print-making, painting, kete whakairo, sculpture, siapo (Samoan tapa - inspired), Pasifika-based design, textiles, photography, video, diagrams, maps, board games, and performance including but not limited to music and dance forms...

- The idea is to support women to document their stories in a way they feel comfortable and has significance and meaning to them.
- Some women will be keen to start creating immediately. Other women may want to mull over their ideas for a while and others will choose not to share tell stories at all. Facilitators will support their choices.
- Group members might choose to work individually or in pairs or groups. This will begin over this session and continue over the next weeks.
- Women will also be encouraged to work on their stories out of session in their own time if possible as this will allow more time to create in a setting of their choice. Facilitators will check the safety of women's living arrangements before encouraging work on their stories outside the group. Space for working on stories will be made available for women who want to continue working but still don't feel safe to do it at home.
- Also, as women work through the following weekly sessions their experiences in the group will likely contribute to their changing understandings of their personal stories. For example, women will discuss how other people and services they've encountered have responded to them as victims. Some of these encounters will be positive while others will have been harmful. Therefore, women may decide to change or add to their personal stories and will be supported to do this in the group.
- Some prompts to generate ideas could be:
How did you respond?
- You may find it helpful to think about ways you responded to various abusive acts you experienced in your intimate relationship. Think about an incident where your partner was abusive towards you. Then think about all the ways you showed you did not comply with his poor treatment of you.

- What did you do, how did you feel, what kind of expression was on your face, what did your body language convey? What went through your mind?
- Then, think about what the perpetrator did next. Again, how did you respond? Recall in detail about the ways you showed resistance to his abuse? Has your resistance been labelled by other people? If so, how?

The facilitator's tasks will involve:

- Introducing and explaining the activity and facilitating a brainstorm for ways of documenting our personal stories.
- Sharing a range of examples of ways other women have documented their personal stories e.g. those created by WAI?
- Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.
- Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making and sharing (during Women's Group session times).
- Some women may not have a suitable space or safety at home to do this. Facilitators are asked to support women to identify ways of working around these difficulties.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Perpetrators know victims will resist so they try to stop their resistance

Closing Activity: Noble Qualities

Procedures:

- Sprawl 40 word cards onto the floor.
- The women's names are put into a hat then each woman, including facilitators. Select one (replace if she pulls out her own name).
- Choose a card that says something about her allocated group member and share this with the group, preferably with a little explanation.
- Others are welcome to contribute affirming comments.

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 5: Perpetrators know victims will resist so they try to stop their resistance

Session Objectives

- To acknowledge that perpetrators think about how victims will resist their abuse, and plan to try to stop this resistance.
- To examine ways perpetrators try to stop victim resistance.
- To clarify how the language of effects can conceal victim's responses and resistance to abuse.

Resource List

5 Principles of violence and responses poster

Pens, felts

Welcome/ Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up

A significant person who has helped shape me....

Going around the circle, women are invited to share a little about a person in their lives who has contributed to shaping who she is today. The facilitator can initiate this.

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Women can choose to share or pass.

Activity 1: Ways perpetrators try to stop victims from resisting

Purpose

- To acknowledge that perpetrators think about how victims will resist their abuse, and make plans to try to stop this resistance.
- To examine ways perpetrators try to stop victim resistance.
- To clarify how the language of effects can conceal victim's responses and resistance to abuse.

Principle 3: Perpetrators know victims will resist so they try to stop their resistance

- Recount last week's activities about victim's resistance and how people don't always notice that people always respond to abuse and oppression.

- We explored the idea that people can respond and resist in very subtle ways that others do not notice (ask for an example from the group, or e.g. *During a physical assault, a victim takes her mind to a pleasant, peaceful place*).

- This is often because victims know that it is unsafe for them to resist in ways that can be easily detected.

- This week we will focus on the principle that **people who abuse know that victims resist, so perpetrators act in ways to try to stop or suppress victim's resistance**. Many actions of an abusive partner are designed to stop their partner from resisting their abuse.

- Share the following ideas with the group for discussion:

- Perpetrators do not believe that victims will be passive. Therefore, perpetrators think about how victims will resist their abuse, and make plans to try to stop this resistance. For example, bullies do not pick on children who are bigger and stronger than they are. Bank robbers assume that tellers will resist, so they make plans to try to overcome that resistance.

- What does the bank robber do before going into the bank, then at the counter?

- Invite women to share examples of ways perpetrators plan or do things to reduce the victim's chances of resisting.

- Nicole's story shows how Mike deliberately attempted to stop Nicole's resistance.

- e.g. He attacked her strengths, such as her assertiveness and the more she stood up for her child the more he abused her.

- e.g. He tried to upset her emotional wellbeing by verbally attacking her in unpredictable ways.

Here are other ways perpetrators try to stop victims from resisting

- Facilitator to read out these scenarios. After reading each one, as a group discuss how the scenario shows that the perpetrator tried to stop the resistance. A further extension of this could be to discuss the type(s) of abuse the perpetrator was using in the scenario.

1. *One man's immigrant wife did not know New Zealand law. He tried to convince her that she would be deported if she called the police for help because they would know she was a "bad" wife. He also told her "women's refuges were where bad wives went, and that this would also be a reason for her to be deported."*

2. *A perpetrator knew that his partner would find it harder to resist his violence if she had no money, so he made sure she never had any spare cash.*
3. *A husband blamed his wife for his own behaviour. He played "head games" with her and tried to confuse her so that she would be easier to control. For example, Mike attempted to confuse Nicole by labeling his abuse as "emotional intimacy."*
4. *A perpetrator knew that his partner would attempt to call the police for protection against his aggression. He called the police first, twisted events around and made up a story that she was assaulting him.*
5. *A perpetrator said sorry and gave gifts to a victim following abuse, hoping that the victim would stop feeling angry with him. He believed that this would stop any plans she was making to oppose his mistreatment of her. (Note that it is sometimes difficult for a victim to know what the perpetrator's kind and loving behaviour actually means, because sometimes perpetrators are truly sorry and actually make changes in their behaviour).*
6. *A perpetrator made an effort to be polite and friendly to all the neighbours, friends and family believing this would make it more difficult for his wife to convince others that he is abusive.*

- Invite women in the group to share examples of ways people who have been abusive have tried to stop their resistance.

- Part of this activity should include reflecting on the following discussion points:

- Perpetrators have good reasons for making it look as though their actions were not abusive. It allows them to avoid accountability, potential repercussions, and negative responses from their communities.

- By trying to cover up victims' resistance, it's easier to make victims out to be willing participants in their abuse.⁴³

"You made me do it" - Using language to blame victims

- This next part of our discussion focuses on how use of language can lead people to blame the victim. This can also mean that the victim may also blame herself for the perpetrator's abuse.

Ask the group: How often have you thought or heard someone say statements like, *"He made me angry"*, *"She made me sad"*, or *"They made me feel hopeless"*?

- Invite group members to comment and give examples.

- All three of these comments place the responsibility for the speaker's emotional response on the person they're talking about.

- A fairer set of statements would be *"When he said that, I felt mad"*, *"When she*

⁴³ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt for many concepts in this session.

walked out, I felt sad”, and “I felt hopeless when they said I couldn’t do that”.

- Again invite contributions from the group.
- The reason why we're talking about this is because this way of using language can also be used by perpetrators to justify their abusive behaviour.

For example:

“I only grabbed her wrist because she was walking away. She provoked me”

“I had to hit her to stop her being so crazy”.

- Invite contributions and examples from the group.
- In these examples, the speaker uses language to mitigate or lessen their own responsibility and blames the victim for the speaker's abusive actions.
- It’s common for expressions that hide and lessen perpetrator responsibility to do this by suggesting that the victim is to blame.

- Other common uses of language that hide perpetrator responsibility:⁴⁴

- Clichés and metaphors: *“she pushed all my buttons - then just I lost it”*
- Terminology: *“a violent relationship”*
 - Referring to rape as a result of *“an overactive sex drive”*
- Shifting responsibility by saying *“an abusive home environment”*
- Victim blaming stereotypes: *“she always picks the wrong guy”.*

- Women may have additional examples to add.

- Working in groups of 3-4, with a scribe recording group member's ideas, invite women to brainstorm ways women’s partners have tried to hold them responsible for the violence (what have the abusive partner's said or done)?

- Questions for discussion in the groups' brainstorming - write these on the whiteboard:

- *How have you seen victims blamed for their own abuse or mistreatment?*
- *How have you resisted being blamed?*
- *Have you resisted pathologising messages, for example that you are weak, sick, or deficient in any way?*
- *Has anyone ever suggested that you were responsible for someone else's harmful actions?*

- Invite groups to feedback their ideas to the whole group.
- Whole group reflection on the activity.

⁴⁴ Todd & Wade (2004)

Activity 2: Our Stories Project:

- Spend time working on these with the support of the group.
- Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:
 - Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories
 - Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.
 - Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making and sharing, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).
 - Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story sharing.

Closing Activity: A role model who gives me strength - Kylie's Activity**Purpose**

In this activity, group members identify their own capacities for upholding dignity and safety through describing a respected person and identifying their own commonalities with that person. This aims to build on women's social-worth.

Background

In different situations, we each take on different self-concepts about what it means to be "our selves" or "me" and this shapes our social-worth. Our self-concepts are the various ways we see, understand, think about and value our selves. How we think of our selves is shaped by our personal experiences interacting with other people's responses to us throughout our lives. Social messages about gender, cultural and social class expectations, for example, also shape our sense of social worth. For instance, someone might have a sense of being very competent playing netball, competitive and strong, yet when she needs to get her car fixed she might worry about being conned into paying too much or feel like she needs to pretend she knows more about mechanics that she does because she feels incompetent.

People's social responses towards women experiencing abuse can involve blaming and pathologising. This can lead to women victims' sense of social-worth becoming largely negative - including self-blaming. Working in a group to identify women's commonalities with their role models aims to build on group member's options for more a positive sense of social-worth.

"Role-Model" template in Women's Handbooks (page 25) and below

Role model's name:

Facts:

Qualities:

Things in common:

Procedures

- Explain the activity outline to the group.
- Begin with the facilitator modelling the activity in steps as below.
- Identify a person you respect and admire.
- *Prompts:* Who is your role model? Is there a person who you admire in the world? It could be someone you know or have known personally, someone no longer alive, someone famous, or a historical, fictional or mythical person (e.g. a character in a book, movie, musician, cultural leader, people's hero or hero, activist, sportsperson...).
- Write the person's name in the centre circle of the map.
- List 2-4 facts about that person's life to build a picture of the person.
- *Prompts:* what roles does/did this person play; what does/did this person do (e.g. work, family, fun); what else do you know about this person that you consider important (e.g. what are/were the person's struggles, things they had overcome, things they have contributed)?
- List 2-4 qualities you admire about that person.
- *Prompts:* what has this person done, or what does this person do that you admire about them? What are some of the qualities that you like in this person? What particular qualities do they have that make you respect them? How does this person relate to others? To themselves?
- Describe one or more commonalities between yourself and that person.

- *Prompts:* Do you have any of those qualities within yourself? What facts about that person's life do you see in your own life? What qualities of that person do you see in yourself? What common facts and or qualities do you think others might see in that person and in you?
- Invite the other group members to contribute: do others see those valued qualities in that person?

Sum-up

- Discuss with the group ideas generated from the activity.

Prompts: How does it feel to share those qualities with your role model?

Where were you when you remember feeling really good about yourself most recently, what were you doing?

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Abusive behaviour is always deliberate.

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 6: Abusive behaviour is always deliberate

Session Objectives

- To examine the principle that abusive and violent behaviour is always done deliberately.

Resource List

Noble Qualities Cards

5 Principles of Violence and Responses poster

DVD: She'll be Sweet

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-Up Activity: Noble Qualities

Purpose

- Upholding women's dignity and mana.
- Reinstating women's mauri and wellbeing.
- Challenging stereotypes of victims passive, deficient, and less than capable.
- Challenging gender stereotypes by choosing words traditionally used to describe men's as well as women's capabilities.

Procedure

- Sprawl 40 word cards onto the floor

Activity suggestions:

- Choose one that says something about an important person in your life.

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Women can choose to share or pass.

Activity 1: Principle 4: Abusive and violent behaviour is always done deliberately.

Procedures⁴⁵

Advocates present the following information:

- Perpetrators of violence often try to avoid responsibility for their abusive behaviour. They may blame someone or something else. They may find excuses for their violence such as, “they were in a blind rage,” or, “they were so out of control with their anger that they did not know what they were doing.”
- As well, they may blame their behaviour on their partners, an abusive childhood, stress, alcohol problems, their cultural background, financial problems, or their personalities (i.e. an “intense” personality; a tendency to “overreact”).
- Unfortunately, sometimes professionals, such as counselors, lawyers and judges, also hold beliefs about violent behaviour that excuse perpetrators of responsibility for their own behaviors.
- Nobody knows why some people are violent in their intimate relationships. Many studies have been done, but nobody has been able to find a “cause” of violent behaviour. We believe that this is because violence doesn’t have a particular cause. It is a tactic that perpetrators use to get what they want or think they deserve. In any case, we believe that there are no acceptable reasons for one partner abusing another in an intimate relationship.
- It is not surprising that many victims are also confused about their partner’s violent behavior, and do not understand why he does such mean and hurtful things. In our view, this “failure to understand” is another way that victims resist abuse. It shows that victims know that there are no acceptable reasons for abusive behavior.
- We have found from our experience as advocates that perpetrators' abuse is planned and deliberate. The most obvious ways perpetrators show that their abusive behaviour is deliberate is by trying to stop victims from resisting, as we discussed last week.

The following are some additional ways that perpetrators show they actually do have control over their behaviour:

- The perpetrator can suddenly change his behaviour in the middle of an abusive episode. Nicole noticed that Mike was able to stop his verbal attack when a friend

⁴⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use ideas from *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007) for this activity.

unexpectedly showed up at their door. He quickly switched from being enraged to pleasant and friendly.

- The perpetrator threatens to be abusive if the victim does not do as he wishes. By threatening to “get upset” (i.e. abusive), Mike showed that he could predict his abusive behaviour. Another man, who had smothered his wife on several occasions with a pillow, threatened further smothering to attempt to control her.

- The perpetrator does not abuse others - only his wife. Mike excused his behaviour towards Nicole by saying he was “overtired” or “stressed.” However, Nicole noticed that he chose to be kind and considerate to others when he was tired and stressed. Apparently, Mike was able to choose the target of his “stressed” behaviour.

- The perpetrator makes decisions about the type and amount of abuse. Even when they become abusive, perpetrators have rules about how far they will go. For instance, Mike never physically hit Nicole. His abusive behaviours included throwing objects towards her (but never actually hitting her with the objects), and being verbally abusive. Other perpetrators will push, grab, or slap but they will not punch their partner. Others will never use a degrading name but they will constantly criticise.

- Perpetrators are selective about where they will inflict injury on a victim’s body. Victims of physical abuse often say that perpetrators bruise them on parts of their bodies where the bruises will not be seen. Abusing victims in this manner allows perpetrators to better escape the consequences of their actions from others. Other perpetrators have deliberately assaulted their partners on their faces, thinking that they will then stay home and not dare to show their bruises to others. Actions such as these by perpetrators suggest that they are quite purposeful about how and where they are physically abusive towards their victims.

- Perpetrators are selective about when and where they will be abusive. An example of this behaviour is when a wife disagreed with something her husband said while they were together in the mall, but rather than responding abusively in public, her husband waited until they were in the privacy of their car before attacking her verbally. In contrast, other victims report that their partners wait until they are in a public situation to humiliate the victim by insulting her in front of others.

In pairs:

1. *Reflect upon some of your abusive (ex)partner's behaviours.*
2. *Can you see evidence that some of these behaviours were deliberate, controlled or planned?*
3. *Does he or did he act differently when other people are/ were around?*

4. Is there any one who he lets see him abuse you? How do they respond when he does abuse you in front of them? *
5. *How has he attempted to stop your resistance to his abuse?*
6. *Does he or did he treat others with respect and you with disrespect?*
7. *Write down all the evidence you have that indicates his abuse was deliberate?*
8. *What is it like for you to think of the perpetrator's behavior in this way?*

* This question refers to situations where friends or family may support the abuser or to be abusive.

- Write these questions on the whiteboard for the group to refer to.
- Pairs may want to note down their responses.
- Invite pairs to feedback their responses to the whole group.
- Follow with a whole group reflection on the activity.

- Watch DVD 'She'll be sweet'

- This begins with two scenarios that show perpetrators trying to control their partners and children using psychological abuse. If you are pushed for time, this DVD could be viewed in session 10: Children and young people's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home.

- As a group discuss examples from the DVD of each of the 5 Principles of Violence and Responses to Violence.

- A further activity could be to comment on how the different characters are represented in the scenarios. This could also involve discussing whether these scenarios realistically show how victims respond to abuse, how perpetrators have control over their behaviour and how others' respond to victims and perpetrators.

Some commonalities among perpetrators⁴⁶

- Review the following points about commonalities of perpetrators (Women's Handbook, page 28).

- As a group, read through the commonalities and pause for discussion and clarification between each.

- Over the years that Women's Refuge advocates and researchers have been working with and trying to understand domestic violence, they have noted some commonalities among some perpetrators. There are many differences too. For example, abusers come from all walks of life, some might be wealthy and others poor, some might be religious and others might not, some might be young and others much

⁴⁶ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCJWR (1996) for much of the content for Some commonalities among perpetrators.

older, some might be shy and not have many friends and others might be outgoing and really well liked. The commonalities that have been identified are not characteristics of perpetrators, because some perpetrators don't fit with these descriptions. Even so, among all the different men who abuse, it is likely that they will share some or all of the following beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

Beliefs about rigid gender roles

The perpetrator has a strong belief in gender role stereotypes, often expecting his partner to serve him. He views women as inferior to men, responsible for the menial tasks, less intelligent, and unable to be a whole person without a male partner. Essentially, he believes the men have the right to control the behaviour of their female partners, with force if necessary.

Controlling behaviour

A perpetrator may believe absolutely and unquestioningly that his needs, wants and interests are more important and have more significance than his partner's. He also believes that self-worth and a secure masculine identity are about male dominance or being in control.

Unrealistic expectations

A perpetrator may expect his partner to meet all of his needs, to take care of everything for him emotionally and domestically. He may expect children to perform beyond their capabilities and may punish them excessively. For example, he may hit a two year old for wetting a nappy.

Jealous and possessive

A perpetrator may equate jealousy with love. He may question the victim about who she talks to, accuse her of flirting and having affairs or become jealous of her time spent with others. He may react with violence to any suggestions that his partner might consider leaving him. He may block his partner's access to use of a vehicle or telephone in the home. As a result, the victim is often isolated as her ties are severed to outside support and resources. A perpetrator may accuse his partner of having affairs with others, especially after his partner has taken a bath, or put on make-up, and clean clothes. Whenever his partner leaves the house, he may work himself/herself into a rage wondering where she is; exploding with jealousy when she returns.

Use of threats and/or mind games

He may threaten his partner with anything from taking away the children to suicide, with real potential for carrying out these threats. He may say things that are cruel and degrading, alongside proclaiming his love and need for his partner.

Convinced he is a victim

Historically, perpetrators were protected by traditions of privacy and the sanctity of marriage. Social values have changed and these men may feel that they've had something taken away. Many perpetrators will blame the system for their violent behavior. He may say that the police have no right to interfere in his family or he may say that the courts are causing family dysfunction by separating fathers from their families, even when he has been violent to his family.

Blaming

A perpetrator will often blame his partner or others for his own shortcomings and his violence. He may use this to justify the violence while believing that his partner is at fault and is exaggerating the issues.

Minimising or denying his violence

A perpetrator will often refuse to acknowledge that he has a problem or take responsibility for his actions (e.g. "alcohol made me do it"). He will often deny that there is violence and only acknowledge that there are "communication problems" between himself and his partner. He may blame his partner for the violence saying it was her fault because she made him do it and that she needs to shape up.

High level of reoffending

Without legal intervention, many perpetrators often abuse more frequently and more violently over time. Even with legal intervention, perpetrators often have very high rates of recidivism (repeat offending). There are no quick fixes: it takes years to change deeply rooted behaviours. Although many men can stop some forms of violent behaviour fairly quickly while on a programme, lasting change takes many years and they may use other less noticeable forms of abuse.

Manipulation of the criminal justice system

To avoid taking legal responsibility for his violence and/or to continue harassing his partner after separation, the perpetrator may apply for a protection order in retaliation to one taken out against him. He may try to delay court hearings and add to his partner's financial hardship. He may defend himself so that he can directly question her on the witness stand. He may report false crimes about his partner to government agencies.

- As a group reflect on the commonalities.
- Group members may like to share personal experiences and insights in response to this activity.

Our Stories Project: Spend time working on these with the support of the group.

Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

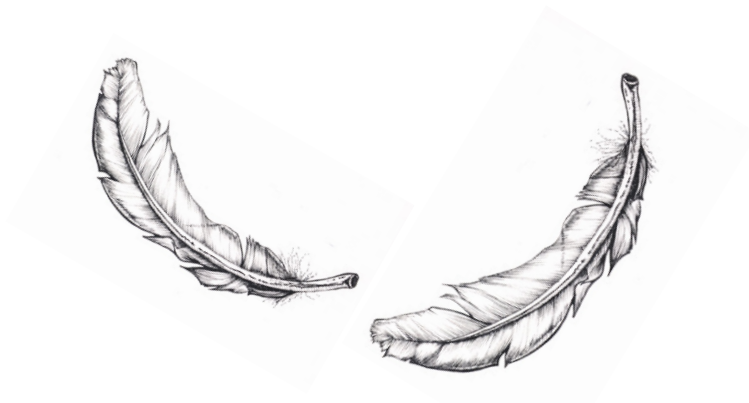
- Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories
- Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.
- Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).
- Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence

Closing Activity: Close the session with a brief group activity by asking women to reflect on and share if desired one thing they gained from today's Women's Group.

Post Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 7: Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence

Session Objectives

- Identify and discuss damaging and helpful messages victims encounter.
- *Examine commonly encountered excuses for domestic violence and challenging these.*
- *Examine how other people's responses (social responses) can blame and pathologise victims and challenging these.*
- *Examine how other people's responses can reveal perpetrator's abusive actions, acknowledge injustice for the victim, and contest the blaming and pathologising of victims.*
- Acknowledge the social responses group members have received when disclosing violence and what these experiences have meant for them personally.

Resource List

Choose a Picture Cards and activity prompts sheet

News paper/ magazine articles (e.g. see Response Based Media analysis sheet)

Pens or highlighters

Regular-sized and large sheets of paper

No Excuses card pack containing 13 cards

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up

Choose a Picture (see activity prompts sheet)

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through the points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: Other people's responses to victims and perpetrators

Purpose:

- Identifying damaging and helpful messages victims encounter.
- *Examining commonly encountered excuses for domestic violence and challenging these.*
- *Examining how other people's responses (social responses) can blame and pathologise victims and challenging these.*
- *Acknowledging the social responses group members have received when disclosing violence and what these experiences have meant for them personally.*

Discussion points Part 1:

- In previous sessions we've focused on the idea that because victims' resistance to abuse is often not noticed, some people assume they haven't done enough to protect themselves.

- Some people may then believe that victims create their own misfortunes.

- As well, victims tend not to talk about their experiences of abuse. They may choose not to talk so that they are safer from the perpetrator, and they also may wish to avoid the negative judgments of others. Often family, friends, and professionals do not hear the full story of how much victims have suffered or have resisted the abuse.

- We've also looked at the idea that perpetrators are often good at hiding their violence, blaming the victim, and showing other people a positive image of themselves.

- Because of this deception, outsiders may view their abusive actions as being "out of character" and impulsive behaviour. People also tend to think that stress or other matters beyond the perpetrator's control cause the abusive actions.

- Since people tend not to notice victims' resistance to abuse, they may judge them harshly. Similarly, since they tend to excuse perpetrators, they may judge them mildly.

- Many victims of violence encounter messages that are painful and disheartening. For example, remember how in Nicole's Story a counsellor labeled her as indecisive and unassertive. This counsellor also implied that Nicole was responsible for the abuse in her marriage because "she did not assert herself strongly enough."

- But what happened when she did assert herself? (Mike tried to suppress her by being more abusive).

- Sometimes people imply that the victim was "damaged" and "responsible for the abuse." Well-meaning family and friends may feel there was something wrong with the victim for having "picked" an abuser to marry, and that "she is still so damaged that she is likely going to pick another abuser."

- Invite women to share their examples of harmful hurtful messages they have received or are aware of.
- To support the discussion, here are some other examples of damaging messages encountered by victims that could be included (Women's Handbook, page 31):



- Encourage women to share their responses to these messages.
- For some women in the group, understandably, some of these messages may align with their currently held views so this will be a useful exercise for challenging these positions.
- Through this discussion the idea is to encourage reflection on how these messages can link to victim blaming and excusing the perpetrator.

- Encourage group members to come up with alternative messages to replace victim blaming i.e. with messages that reflect greater understanding of who is responsible for the abuse.

e.g. 1. *"She has a target on her forehead."*

Verses: - *"When she and her partner first met, he was kind and thoughtful and they had fun together. After a while, though, he started to behave like a bully who had picked her as his target."*

Discussion Points Part 2:

- As we discussed last week, perpetrators aren't the only ones who try to hide victims' responses through language.
- It's also common for the media and helping professionals to talk about violence in ways that hide it or fail to acknowledge responses.
- Most instances in which professionals hide responses are due to careless uses of language to describe victims' responses.
- Often victims' responses are left out of description of the account. In fact, it's rare for news media to include how victims respond and resist when describing acts of violence.

- On the other hand, people often excuse perpetrators of their responsibility for their actions, and they fail to see that perpetrators deliberately try to stop victims' resistance.

Some typical statements made about perpetrators are:

- *"He was an outstanding member of our community. I would never have thought he could do something like this. Stress must have caused him to behave out of character."*
- *"He seemed like such a caring person. He was devoted to his family. I cannot understand how this could have happened."*
- *"He wrestled with his demons for a long time, but they finally overcame him."*
- *"He witnessed his father abusing his mother, so this was all he knew."*
- *"Anger always got the better of him. He could not seem to control his temper."*
- *"Once he had a few drinks, the alcohol took over and he became scary."*

- Encourage women to share their responses to these messages and their experiences of ways perpetrators they know of have tried to justify their violence.
- Encourage women to share experiences of ways other people such as family, whānau, friends, community, health or legal professionals have said or done things that excuse the perpetrator.

Discussion Points Part 3:

- So far, our discussion suggests that a perpetrator's responsibility for their abuse can be hidden or lessened through descriptions that attribute their abusive actions to outside forces beyond their control.
- We do this when we describe people as “losing control”, “blacking out”, or “losing their temper”.
- These statements indicate that when someone is in control, they do not harm others, and they only act abusively when they lose control.
- But we know from our session last week that perpetrators do lots of things to try to stop victims from resisting and that they are virtually always in control of their decisions about who, when, and how they act abusively.

- Researchers Linda Coates and Allan Wade (2004) searched through dozens of reports written by professionals, especially judges, and found many examples of statements that justify perpetrators' abusive actions. Here are some of these:

- *“Alcohol was undoubtedly involved.”*
- *“The offender was overwhelmed by sexual urges.”*
- *“Because of his/her difficult childhood...”*
- *“At the time of the offence, the accused had lost his mother.”*
- *“This incident is completely out of character.”*
- *“He was angry.”*
- *“He/She could not stop him/herself.”*

- A crucial point here is that these statements make people out to be responsible only for their “good” behaviour, absolving them of responsibility when they act in ways that harm others.

This example was taken from the website of a helping service:

“Our model for counseling enables women to cope with the effects of assault ranging from anger and grief to issues around sexuality, intimacy and trust.”

- Discuss ways that this message might hide women's responses.

Prompts:

- By saying “anger, grief, issues around sexuality, intimacy, and trust” are *effects* of an assault, the service's message conceals how the victim *resists*.
- Those “effects” suggest that it is problems in the women's head that need to be cured.
- On the other hand, if we frame them as responses, it becomes clearer that the victim is resisting.

Analysing news reporting of violence

- Working in small groups
- Using the ideas from Discussion Points 2-3 search through newspaper and magazine articles that report violence and analyse ways language is used:
 - To acknowledge and describe the victim's responses (if at all).
 - To show whether and how the perpetrator was responsible for their violence.
 - To find evidence of excusing the perpetrator or (or holding them responsible), or of mutualising the violence (making out that both parties were responsible).

E.g. of media comment for analysis (Women's Handbook, page 33).

Blaming victim cry of powerful⁴⁷

By Jay Kuten

Wanganui Chronicle, 29 April 2015

IT IS accurate to say I have been a critic of John Key's policies. I have certainly disagreed with several of the policies of the Prime Minister, particularly his assumption of an absolute power to send our young men and women to war without consent of the citizens.

This time is different in that the personal becomes political when the behaviour of the highest-ranking politician exceeds the permissible boundaries required of civil society. John Key has admitted to repeatedly invading the personal space of waitress Amanda Bailey, a nonconsenting adult female by pulling her ponytail. Both parties agree on the facts - it is the interpretation that is different. John Key seeks to minimise the gravity of the offence when he says it was "horsing around".

The powerful - usually men - attempt to make themselves look the aggrieved victim instead of the other way round. Key says: "We have lots of fun and games there." By repeatedly stressing the playful nature of his hair pulling, Key prepares us to see Ms Bailey as somehow "over-sensitive". In other words, she is the one who is out of line, not him.

The media are beginning to blame the victim. A NZ Herald reporter first ousted Ms Bailey, then ascribed a motive to the young woman's going public "because the Prime Minister "feels he is untouchable". We are led to believe Ms Bailey has a pre-existing agenda.

⁴⁷ Retrieved from http://m.nzherald.co.nz/wanganui-chronicle/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503423&objectid=11440279

Mr Key's latest attempt of an explanation, in which he says he failed - in retrospect - to read her signals, is far from believable. Ms Bailey says she was uncomfortable each time he sought her out to repeat the pulling of her ponytail. She sought to hide from him.

To believe that a practised politician of Mr Key's experience has suddenly lost the ability to read another person's non-verbal cues requires a massive suspension of disbelief. In none of Mr Key's putting of light gloss on this behaviour, nor of his "apologies", does he deign to mention this woman by name, though known to all. Even there, she is objectified by him.

Ms Bailey's plight is what concerns me. As to John Key, the retrieved video showing the PM doing the same thing to little girls is even more serious. While children are unlikely to complain, they are also unable to consent. That is creepy.

Try putting yourself in Ms Bailey's shoes. He is the PM and you are a young worker who, presumably, needs to keep her job in the hospitality industry. You are repeatedly subjected to this man's impulses to touch your "tantalising" hair – every time he does it you feel more powerless until one day you burst with anger and tell the world about it. What do you think will happen to you? John Key will be fine. In the unlikely event he is forced to resign, he can retire to a beach house in Hawaii. It is the lingering consequence for Amanda Bailey that is worrisome.

In the US, President Bill Clinton's affair with 22-year-old Monica Lewinsky caused him temporary political pain, but he has earned over \$110 million since leaving office. Forty-year-old Ms Lewinsky, who was made into a joke, cannot get a job.

If John Key gets away with invading the personal space that is the privacy of an unwilling 26-year-old Amanda Bailey, what can he do to the rest of us? Oh, I forget - politically, he is supporting doing exactly that.



Jay Kuten (in photo) is an American-trained forensic psychiatrist who emigrated to New Zealand for the fly fishing. He spent 40 years comforting the afflicted and intends to spend the rest afflicting the comfortable.

Reader's comments:⁴⁸

Temp8127 - 09:06 AM Sunday, 26 Apr 2015 wrote:

Enough already. NZ has much more serious problems to deal with than just a few minor indiscretions. Practically all men do silly things or behave inappropriately at one time or another in their lives. What else is new?

Being a boring, staid, uptight person doesn't make them a capable leader of a country, nor does a few minor indiscretions make a person unfit to lead a country. Many of the world's great leaders have behaved badly on a personal level, but still have led their countries well.

If NZ'ers think that the most serious problem of the country and they base their decisions on it, is the playful touching of someone's pony-tail, I hate to think what the country will come to. Grow up, New Zealand! Look at the big picture. Make your political choices based upon the serious problems affecting NZ.

He wasn't bullying the waitress, he was just being silly, like men often are. Since women who are out of nappies are used to men behaving badly and it comes as no surprise when they do, even though they don't like it, this storm in a tea-cup won't make much difference to them. Most women have the brains to make their decisions on what matters and this incident is trivial.

Wiseacre - New Zealand - 09:07 AM Sunday, 26 Apr 2015 wrote:

"Men in authority have a long history of bullying and humiliating service staff, then - when called out on it - downplaying the situation by declaring it all just good fun. Essentially blaming the victim for being 'unable to take a joke'.

It is about power and entitlement, with never a thought given to the rights and feelings of those being tormented.

Even when he knew offence had been taken and his advances where unwanted, John Key continued chasing the waitress around her workplace, humming the ominous 'Jaws' theme while trying to touch her inappropriately for his own amusement.

If I chased a waitress around pulling her ponytail, I would be trespassed. If I did the same in my office, I would be fired.

If it had been revealed before the election that then-Leader of the Opposition, David

⁴⁸ Readers comments retrieved from

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=466&objectid=11438244

Cunliffe, had been tormenting a waitress in this manner, would he have been permitted to get away with an admission and a so-called apology?

No. Media outlets would have rightfully been demanding his resignation.

Once again, you fail to hold John Key to the same standards."

*Articles and readers' comments abridged.

Discussion Points Part 4: Positive social responses

- *Group members may have also received social responses from people that are helpful and supportive.*
- *Invite women to share which social responses they have found helpful (e.g. from friends, family, whanau, neighbours, services and professionals, media messages, strangers and random people...*
- *Invite women to describe in detail kinds of responses they found helpful.*
- *Invite women to comment on how these helpful responses from other people made a positive difference e.g. to their own choices, options, safety, dignity, mana, wellbeing, mauri, other differences?*
- *Invite women to describe the kinds of social responses they would like to receive.*
- *Write all of these examples of positive responses down (either women can do this individually or a scribe/facilitator for the whole group).*

Examples of positive responses:

- **Write a *Women's Group Guide for Positive Responses:***
- *As a group, produce a list of pointers to guide other people in ways that support women.*
- *This can include practical and emotional recommendations e.g.*
 - ❖ *Don't judge*
 - ❖ *Listen*
 - ❖ *Believe*
 - ❖ *Let me know it's not my fault*
 - ❖ *Let me know there are no excuses for violence: Abuse is unacceptable*
 - ❖ *Don't make excuses for the abuser*
 - ❖ *Acknowledge my strength, courage, and resistance.*
 - ❖ *Acknowledge that showing strength and courage may be my way of looking after you and trying to make you feel comfortable, so allowing me to feel weak, tired, sad, afraid and angry can sometimes help too.*

Reflections:

- *Consider how other people's responses can reveal perpetrator's abusive actions, acknowledge injustice for the victim, and contest the blaming and pathologising of victims.*

Activity 2: There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence

Purpose

- To challenge commonly encountered excuses people use to justify domestic violence.
- To acknowledge group members' experiences when people have tried to excuse perpetrators' abuse and what these experiences have meant for them personally.

Procedures

Use the "No Excuse Cards" from the toolkit (with a commonly encountered excuse on one side and the challenge to this on the reverse).

- Share this statement:

Sometimes people try to excuse perpetrators' violence towards their partners and family and whānau members. But the message is clear: Domestic violence is never acceptable. There are ways to deal with problems and difficulties that do not involve violence.

- Circulate cards around the group (women may want to work individually or in pairs).

- Group member reads out her card's "Excuse" side.

- Other members invited to comment on their view of the excuse.

- Group member then reads out the "No Excuse" on the flip side.

Some commonly repeated excuses are:⁴⁹

1. *She wouldn't listen to me/I had no option/she drove me to it – asked for it/provoked me (it was her own fault).*

No excuse. *Violence has no place in family relationships whatever the provocation or supposed reasons. People can learn other ways to deal with conflicts, frustrations or disagreements.*

2. *She neglected the children/spent all the money/dented the car/slept with someone else/got drunk/acted stupidly (it was her own fault).*

No excuse. *Violence will only add to problems a family experiences. Difficulties and frustrations need proper attention and a resolution that does not involve violence.*

3. *It's my right and duty to discipline my family (she needed it/deserved it etc.).*

No justification. *Genuine discipline does not involve violence. Families can learn to interact in ways that respect the rights of each person. Protection from family violence is a right recognised by the law.*

⁴⁹ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for ideas for the No Excuses activity.

4. *Everyone does it (it's normal/necessary/nothing wrong with it etc.).*

Not true. *Everyone does not do it. It is not normal or necessary. It is against the law and is harmful to everyone involved and to society.*

5. *I was brought up in a violent home. (I can't change what I was taught etc.).*

No excuse. *Not everyone brought up in a violent home repeats the cycle. Many people choose not to be violent because they know from experience the suffering caused by violence in the home. People can reject what they were taught. Old patterns and attitudes can be replaced and new ideas can be learned.*

6. *I had too much to drink/was stoned/out of it/I can't even remember etc.*

No excuse. *If someone chooses to drink or abuse drugs and becomes violent he is choosing to be violent. Alcohol and drugs alone do not cause the violence.*

7. *It was a bad time for me/I was exhausted/stressed/worried/at the end of my tether etc.*

No excuse. *Bad times happen to everyone. There are ways of dealing with difficulties that don't involve violence.*

8. *We've got a whole lot of problems and they make me react like that/we're poor/unskilled/ hopeless people etc.*

No excuse. *Violence adds to the problems of poverty, lack of skills and despair. Those problems themselves do not cause people to be violent.*

9. *I pay the bills, I'm in charge. (I keep control/I'm the boss/I make the rules etc.).*

No justification. *No one is permitted to be violent towards those they are responsible for. Attitudes about keeping control and being in charge are not suited to an adult relationship.*

10. *I have a problem with anger.*

No excuse. *Violence is a behaviour that may or may not have anything to do with anger. Anger can be openly expressed and managed. It is not acceptable or lawful to use violence to express anger.*

11. *I lost control, I can't help myself.*

No excuse. *The offender makes the decision to be violent and acts upon it. He also decides when to stop behaving violently. He chooses when, where and who will be at the receiving end of his violent outbursts. He is very much in control of the situation.*

12. *We (particular religious/ethnic/cultural groups/bikies/gang members/military etc.) do things this way.*

No excuse. *The law does not permit violence. It is unacceptable in all societies. Stereotypes and myths have built up around different groups of people and attitudes to violence. Violence against women is not and has never been a necessary part of any cultures' traditional and respected practices. There is no evidence that some ethnic groups are genetically more violent than others.*

13. *I'm sick. I can't help myself.*

No excuse. *If there is an underlying illness that is linked to violent behaviour, the person responsible for the violence needs to take responsibility for seeking treatment and becoming healthy again.*

- Finish the activity with a group reflection.

Our Stories Project:

- Spend time working on these with the support of the group.

- Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories.

Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.

Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).

Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Demolishing domestic violence myths

Closing Activity

As a group, briefly reflect on women's responses to the news media activity. Are women more aware of how news reporting of violence shapes other people's understanding of violence and their responses to perpetrators and victims?

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.



Session 8: Demolishing domestic violence myths

Session Objectives

- Examine and challenge myths about domestic violence.
- Examine how these myths can lessen the perpetrator's responsibility for their abuse and can blame and pathologise victims.
- Acknowledge how these myths contribute to the social responses group members have received and what these experiences have meant for them personally.

Resource List

Bowl of M&Ms

14 card Myths List set

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up Activity: Getting to know each other (with M&Ms 😊)

Procedures

Bowl of M&Ms (or Pebbles or Smarties).

Everyone sitting in a circle.

Explain the activity, write the questions on the whiteboard read out.

A question is assigned for each colour.

Blue: *What song is your theme song right now?*

Green: *If time and money were no object, what would you be doing right now?*

Yellow: *Describe your favourite place*

Red: *Describe one thing that gives you joy*

Brown: *One of my hidden (or not hidden) talents is...*

Orange: *Share something about the place where you grew up / pass*

- Facilitator does the activity first, can make it light-hearted.
- Hand around the bowl for participants to select an M&M.
- Do a few more rounds as time allows.

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through the points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: DEMO!ISHING Domestic Violence Myths

Procedures:

- Facilitator shares the following information:
- There are many myths about domestic violence. These myths help continue violence by concealing violence, hiding perpetrator responsibility, hiding victim responses and resistance, and blaming and pathologising the victim.⁵⁰
- In these ways domestic violence myths can make the perpetrator's actions seem ok. This can discourage women from seeking help and discourage others from helping.
- Domestic violence myths are damaging to victims and perpetrators.
- Working in groups of 3-4, evenly distribute the Demolishing DV Myths cards between groups.
- Allow 10-15 minutes for groups to review and discuss their cards together.
- Facilitators role-play a conversation about a woman being abused by her partner. Use the myths (use the 14 item "Myths List") to explain why the victim is being abused by her partner.
- The characters in your role-play can be anyone you choose i.e police, friends, neighbours, family, whānau, doctors, nurses, teachers, Income Support workers...
- Groups can interject when one of their allocated myths is used and can "DEMO!ISH" the myth.

The Myths List:⁵¹

1. People make a big deal about domestic violence, but it's not that common.
2. *She asked for it / she probably deserved it.*
3. If she wanted to she could just leave.
4. *It will get better.*
5. *Her partner is only jealous because he loves her.*
6. *Violence doesn't happen to middle-class women.*
7. Violence only happens in poor/ Māori/uneducated families.
8. Children need fathers.
9. He'd had a few drinks too many.
10. *Religious men are not violent.*
11. She does it too.
12. He just lost control.

⁵⁰ Coates, Todd, & Wade (2000).

⁵¹ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for most of the Myths List content.

13. *Domestic violence is a heterosexual thing and is rare in lesbian and gay relationships.*

14. It's not that bad, it's just the bash.

Demo!ishing the Myths

1. People make a big deal about domestic violence, but it's not that common.

One in three NZ women experience physical and/or sexualised abuse throughout their lifetime. Women and children are more at risk of violence in their homes than in the street. As a private crime behind closed doors, domestic violence never shows up in statistics as much as it occurs.

2. She asked for it / she probably deserved it

No one has the right to abuse another person. Drunk or sober, provocative or agreeable, everyone has the right to be safe from violence. By focusing on provocation, we excuse the person actually committing the violence. Violence against women is a criminal act. Violence against any person is a criminal act.

No one 'deserves' or 'asks' to be beaten or emotionally tortured, least of all by someone who says they love you. Abusers often blame women and children for provoking them, but no behaviour justifies an abusive response. Children can be disciplined in other ways; family problems can be resolved without violence. There is no excuse for violence. The responsibility for violence lies firmly with the abuser. They make the choice to abuse.

3. It will get better

The longer the violence continues, the more serious the violence becomes. The relationship will only get better once the abuser stops violent and controlling behaviour.

4. Her partner is only jealous because he loves her

Being jealous of someone, and acting on that jealousy, is a form of control. Fighting over someone is about control. Remember, we don't own anyone. Jealousy is not an indication of someone's love for another person.

5. Violence doesn't happen to middle-class women

Violence occurs across all classes and socio-economic groups. Wealthy abusers may use their resources to control their partner. Violence is reported less often amongst higher socio-economic groups.

6. Violence only happens in poor/ Māori/uneducated families

Abusers come from all walks of life, and anyone can be abused. Violence happens in all types of families, in urban and rural communities, in all ethnic groups, in rich, poor and middle-class families, of any age. The formal education of women in relationships with abusers ranges from no qualification to doctorate.

7. Children need fathers

Children need safety, security, healthy attachments to others, and good role models. Fathers who choose to be violent and abusive cannot provide any of these for their children. Fathers can choose to be non-violent with their women partners and children.

8. If she wanted to she could just leave

Many people do not understand why women experiencing their partner's abuse don't leave. Remember, it should not be the woman's responsibility to avoid the violence, it's the abuser who should stop being violent.

There are many reasons why women stay with someone who has been violent towards them. For example, reasons include hoping things will get better and believing his promises that things will change or he will change. Women will stay for economic reasons such as economic abuse or being in debt to others and having few options for supporting herself and or her children. Some perpetrators may threaten their partners and others with increased violence if they leave. Women may not be aware of sources of support and safety outside of their relationship. Some women may be pressured by family, whānau, and broader community expectations to stay with their abusive partner. These are a few reasons why women stay with abusive partners.

Most women with seriously violent partners eventually do leave, but may take a long time to get out, leaving and returning several times. We need to understand leaving as a process rather than a one-off event.

Some abusive partners intentionally use lots of negative behaviours to try to keep their boyfriend/girlfriend under control. For example, threats of self-harm/suicide, possessiveness, and ongoing promises to change. These actions can make it hard to leave partners without support.

9. Drinking causes violence

Alcohol and other drug abuse don't cause violence but may contribute to increasing the severity of the abuse. It is often used as an excuse for violence. Many violent offenders do not abuse alcohol or drugs, or may not be violent when intoxicated. Violent offenders who abuse alcohol or drugs need to address both problems. Continuing alcohol or drug abuse will reduce the effectiveness of stopping violence programmes.

10. Religious men are not violent

Men who have religious beliefs are just as likely as other men to be violent. Religious beliefs often stress male superiority in the household. This thinking underlies violence as men believe they are justified to punish women and children for not being obedient.

11. Women are just as violent as men

In all family violence statistics in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, the majority of victims of violence are women and the majority of violent people are men. Some women are violent towards their children and partners. Sometimes women who are being abused respond violently in self-defence and this can include 'pre-emptive strikes' when the abuser is vulnerable i.e. when they are drunk or asleep. It's unusual for men to be seriously injured or killed by a woman, and very few men live in fear of their lives because of their female partner's violence.

In 2013, only 7% of applications for Protection Orders were from men, while 91% were from women (2% unknown gender). Some groups quoted in the media recently say that women are more violent than men. These claims are based on research that has been shown to be highly flawed. It uses 'conflict tactics scales', which counts acts of violence used by men and women in relationship conflict resolution. However, the intention, cause, or severity of the act of violence is not taken into account. In this research, there is no difference between an act of self-defence and an act of intimidation or one that produces fear. Also, a slap that breaks someone's jaw is counted the same as one that does not leave a mark. In addition, anything other than physical violence is ignored within these studies.

12. Violent men cannot control their violence.

Most people who get angry don't use violence to deal with it. There are other ways to manage anger. Men often believe this, which enables them to avoid taking responsibility for their own behaviour. Violence is a tactic of choice - men choose who, when and where they abuse. Most men who are violent to their partners appear reasonable and "respectable" outside the family. Most people who get angry don't use violence to deal with it.

There are other ways to manage anger. Abusers make the choice to be violent, and they also make the choice about who is going to be on the receiving end of the violence (i.e. their partner, whanau or family, but not to other people like workmates, neighbours etc.). Abusers can be calm and calculating when they use violence. The abuser is trying to get their own way through using violence, it's not just because they have a problem managing their anger.

13. Domestic violence is a heterosexual thing and is rare in lesbian and gay relationships

There is the same incidence of domestic violence in lesbian and gay relationships as in heterosexual relationships. The partner who is the abuser is not necessarily the one who is physically stronger, and there can be different forms of control used, i.e. one partner may threaten to out the other partner to her family or employer.

14. It's just the bash

Domestic violence is not just physical violence. When one act of physical violence occurs, there has usually been a long period of threats, controlling behaviour, mind-games, verbal abuse, and

other forms of psychological and emotional violence. Women who have been abused often say that the emotional violence is far worse than the physical violence.

- Once the myths have been demolished, open the discussion up to the whole group for reflection.

Ideas for discussion:

- Use this activity to connect women's personal experiences to broader social, cultural, institutional supports to domestic violence. These activities can be used to contextualise women's personal experiences of violence into a broader picture of systemic abuse.

- Examine ways that women in the group have responded to these myths.

Our Stories Project

Spend time working on these with the support of the group.

Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories

Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.

Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).

Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Valuing victim's emotional responses

Closing Activity: Group members might like to revisit the activity, "Upholding dignity" from Session 2 and read and discuss the 16 points about ways women have responded to abuse (page x of this Facilitation Guide and page x of Women's Handbooks).

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Session 9: Valuing victim's emotional responses

Session Objectives

- To examine victim's emotional responses to violence and social responses.
- To critique language that pathologises victims.
- To reflect on the value of emotions.
- To acknowledge the emotional responses of women in the group as reasonable and understandable responses to violence and social responses.

Resource List

Choose a Picture Cards and activity prompts sheet

Paper, pens

Audio recordings of Will Bratt on emotions and Will Bratt on grief)

Welcome/Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-Up

Choose a Picture activity

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through the points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with the women's agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: Making sense of our emotional responses to violence

Purpose

- To examine victim's emotional responses to violence and social responses.
- To critique language that pathologises victims.
- To acknowledge the emotional responses of women in the group as reasonable responses to violence and social responses.

Procedures

Discussion points:

- In previous sessions we discussed how victims receive a range of social responses during and after the violence, that is responses from other people including family, whānau, friends, professionals and media.
- We talked about ways that these social responses can sometimes be helpful and other times quite damaging to victim's safety, dignity and mana.
- One of the problems with negative social responses is that they position victims as damaged or disordered: as having something wrong with them.
- This happens a lot when we talk about the "effects" of violence on victims because this kind of talk does not allow much room for recognising all of the things victims think and do to try to keep their dignity and mana and create safety.
- In this way, a victim's responses get taken out of context, so other people often fail to understand how the victim's responses actually make sense in her situation.
- What happens when we talk about "effects" of violence on victims is that we start to see victim's actions and emotional responses to violence as underlying psychological problems in the victim's head. In these ways, people can think that it is the victim who has the problem that needs "fixing".
- As a group, encourage women to contribute to the discussion and following examples:

Some common responses to violence and oppression include:⁵²

- Sadness, despair, crying, or depression.
- Anxiety or worry.
- Difficulty focusing (selective concentration).
- Anger, rage, irritability.
- Flashbacks to those terrible moments.
- Social withdrawal.
- Feeling detached from others and emotionally numb (moderating emotional pain).
- Difficulty sleeping and nightmares.
- Being quick to startle.
- Freezing (actually vigilance or heightened awareness).
- Using drugs and/or alcohol (moderating emotional pain).
- Being preoccupied with food in restrictive or excessive ways.
- Gambling.
- Smoking.

⁵² We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

- Shopping excessively or spending beyond your means.
- Being extremely careful with money and other resources such as food.
- Using TV and other media to avoid the present moment.
- Exercising excessively or very little.
- Engaging in reckless or risky behaviours.

Additional responses experienced by victims that make sense in the context of violence.⁵³

1. *Fear: Fear of continued abuse, of what your partner will do to you or your children, other's disapproval, of going "crazy". Fear of no-where to go, that no-one will love and support you, of having no money. Fears can escalate into feelings of panic. Fears need to be listened to because they are vital signals about a threat to our wellbeing or safety.*
2. *Shame or being whakama: Other peoples responses to victims can give the message that "there is something wrong with me". A woman may feel disrespected, inadequate, unworthy or defective. Humiliation is a reasonable response to being abused. Victims often respond to feelings of shame by withdrawing from other people. You might feel stupid because you "let the violence go on for so long". You might feel embarrassed that people will judge you. It is important to recognise shame as a form of psychological abuse that happens when the perpetrator manipulates other people's negative social responses to try to destroy your confidence, keep you silent and try to stop you seeking help.*
3. *Guilt: A woman may respond by feeling guilty when she falls short of the impossible standards of a controlling partner, or society. Others' expectations that she should be a "perfect" mother, wife, daughter, employee, and woman also contribute to victims' feelings of guilt.*
4. *Anger: Anger is a healthy response to being humiliated, rejected, put down or violated in any way. Many women receive messages that "good" women are nice, accommodating, understanding and forgiving. These social responses can discourage women from expressing anger. Understandably, victims may work to protect themselves from a partner's further abuse by not expressing anger openly.*
5. *Sadness: Women who are abused by their partners may grieve for the loss of their dreams for the future and the end of the relationship even before it actually passes.*
6. *Confusion: When a partner twists events and changes the rules, victims may respond by being confused. Confusion may lead her to question her interpretation of events*

⁵³ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for these additional responses.

and doubt her own capabilities and mental health.

- It makes sense that victims are more likely to have these kinds of responses when they receive signals from other people that there is something wrong with them, that they are mutually responsible for their partner's abusive behaviour, and when the perpetrator is excused for his abusive behaviour.
- It makes sense that when victims receive unhelpful, unsupportive responses from other people they begin to believe that there is something wrong with or bad about themselves.
- What do you think is meant by this statement: *"There is great wisdom behind our feelings"*?
- Invite group members to share examples of their own responses to abuse and oppression and to reflect on how these make sense in the context of being in danger, and humiliated because of their partner's abusive actions.

Will Bratt's Audio Recording

Will Bratt is a Canadian therapist who works with people who have experienced abuse and makes some interesting points about the value of victim's emotional responses.

- This is what Will Bratt says about why we should value our emotions:

- Play audio recording: Will Bratt on valuing emotions

In the context of abuse and oppression, our emotional responses are important for signaling our need for dignity and safety.

When we look at our emotions as meaningful responses to events in our lives, they become far more understandable. This contextual information helps things make sense. When we withhold or fail to acknowledge important pieces of context, the picture looks distorted and our emotions make less sense.

When we respond to violence and oppression in these ways, it shows we have a pulse and are tuned in to our environments.

Our emotions can work like a compass, pointing at things we need to consider and address in our lives. Rather than fruitlessly working to stop experiencing our feelings, we can look at the things our emotions are pointing to and make meaningful changes in those areas. For example, in some cases anxiety may be a response to anticipated danger. As such, we can take measures to help ourselves feel safer.

I'd like to say something about the value of anger

Anger is an emotion with a bad reputation in some circles. The reason for this is understandable. A lot of people equate anger with the actions that they or other people engage in when they're feeling angry. Sure, some people can be angry while staying cool as a cucumber, expressing themselves in calm, purposeful, and respectful ways.

However, most people relate anger's bad reputation to things people do that can be really unsettling. It's far less common for people to do harm or use violence against others when they're feeling excited or overjoyed than when they're feeling angry or frustrated. However, I'm of the opinion that in those instances the problem isn't anger – the problem is the aggressive, abusive, or violent actions the person engages in.

When people talk about anger being a problem, it's usually in combination with aggression, violence, or abusive behaviours. When people are angry and they do things to hurt others physically or emotionally, it isn't anger doing the hurting, it's that person's actions.

Once we recognize that anger can be as useful and valid as joy or excitement, we can take steps toward using more considerate or respectful actions when we feel angry.

Responding to Loss and Change

Experiences of loss and change can turn your world upside down. It could be the end of an intimate relationship or friendship. It might involve a dramatic change of location, moving from everything that's familiar to a new community. Or it may be the loss of ability through illness or injury, and the dreams that go with it.

Social Responses to Loss

The social responses we receive around any experience of adversity can have a lot to do with how we adjust, heal, and recover. "Get over it; "That happened a long time ago; "Be strong; "Shouldn't you be over that by now?"; "It really wasn't that big of a deal".

These are all invalidating, yet common messages that many people responding to loss and change receive from a variety of sources – such as the media, friends, or family. Comments like these show that there are a lot of unhelpful ideas about grief and loss.

What is Grief?

Grief can be one of the most complex processes we go through as human beings. When people ask me what grief is, I often say this:

- *Grief is the process of adjusting to loss and change.*

Grief is not an illness. It is not weakness. It is not a sign that you're going "crazy." It is a healthy and necessary response and process. It serves as proof that things matter to you.

As a holistic process and response, grief relates to the five life areas or domains that we occupy: Emotional, physical, mental, social and spiritual.

By this, I mean that when we're grieving, we're likely to experience responses that fit with these five life areas. Examples of emotional responses could be sadness, guilt, anger, or relief. Physical responses could include fatigue, headaches, stomachaches, and changes in appetite. Some of the ways we respond may be tied to several life areas at once - or even all five.

Unhelpful Responses to Grief

For example, men often feel discouraged from crying publicly because the act of shedding tears is likened to femininity and "weakness". This sexist position leads to judgment against men for doing what could be most supportive of their healing.

Women may have been labeled as "too emotional", "moody", and "emotionally unstable" when responding to significant loss, change, and trauma. These judgments imply that it's problematic or even pathological to feel and express our emotions when we have a very good reason to do so.

Helpful Responses to Grief

Positive, supportive, non-judgmental social responses to grief are, at the very least, helpful in terms of encouraging healing and recovery. - ENDS.

- Encourage group members to reflect on the following questions:

- 1. How have you responded to people (professionals or otherwise) suggesting that your emotions were the main problem?*
- 2. What are some things you find helpful to think or do when it comes to addressing the concerns your emotions point at?*
- 3. What other ways do emotions enrich your life?*

Reinforce these points:

- It is helpful to understand that everyone has their own unique ways of responding to loss and change.
- It is helpful to support people to grieve on their own terms, and do what fits for them when it comes to healing.
- Also, we should not assume that loss and change always leads to grief as some women may also feel relief at this time.

- Encourage group sharing and reflection on this topic.

The following questions may be helpful:

Have you ever felt that your grief was invalidated (not recognised and taken seriously) by another person's response?

Has anyone ever responded in a way that was particularly helpful after you went through a big loss or change?

What's important to you when it comes to the kinds of responses you receive when you're grieving?

Activity 2: "A letter to myself"

Purpose

- To reflect on the value of emotions.
- To acknowledge the emotional responses of women in the group as reasonable response to violence and social responses.

Procedures

The activity focuses on compassionate letter writing in the group but writing can be substituted for a spoken-based activity such as "Three Compassionate Statements"

- The intention is for women to write or talk about three or so ways they responded emotionally to another person's abuse or other's social responses. Describe the emotional response and why it made/ makes sense in the context of the abuse. The key idea of this is to focus on being inwardly gentle, understanding, compassionate and self-supportive.

Our Stories Project: Spend time working on these with the support of the group.

Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories

Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.

Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).

Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Children and young people's responses to violence at home

Note: Advocates report that the theme of next week's session can be deeply distressing for group members. Women's emotional responses may include sadness, guilt and self-blame. It can be helpful to take time this week to assure women sensitively that they are not responsible for another person's abusive behaviour. Also, by focusing on the session objectives, emphasise that the session involves supporting women non-judgmentally.

Closing Activity

If women wish, their letters / three spoken statements from Activity 2 can be shared in the group.

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Session 10: Children and young people's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home

Session Objectives

- To discuss children's experiences, attempts to resist violence and positive ways mothers can respond.
- To acknowledge group members' resistance stories as girls.
- To acknowledge and uphold the mother-child bond.

Resource List

Large sheets of paper and markers

Welcome/ Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-Up

Choose a Picture Activity

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through the points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: Children and young people's responses to violence at home

Discussion Points

(note that in delivery of this session, references to children and tamariki should also include young people and rangatahi).

- Reinforce these messages from last week about this session on children and young people's responses to violence:

- Some group members find this week's session quite distressing. Women's responses may include sadness, guilt and self-blame. We would like to emphasise that group members are not responsible for another person's abusive behaviour.

- Over the previous sessions we have examined in detail the many ways that women respond to their partner's abuse.
- Children and young people also respond to violence in many different ways. They respond when a perpetrator directs abuse at them. Children and young people also respond when they see, hear or know about one of their parents abusing their other parent. This can be extremely distressing for children. That's why it is psychological abuse of children when the violent person allows your children to see or hear you (or anyone else) being abused.
- Many children experience similar kinds of physical abuse as their mothers do. Perpetrators may assault children when they get in the way of, or try to protect their mothers from being hit; so even very young children can try to stop the violence by standing in the middle of their parents.

- It is important to acknowledge that for some women in the group, this session will evoke thoughts, memories and emotions about their own childhood experiences of abuse and powerful thoughts and emotions about their own children's experiences.

- Take this opportunity to revisit the kaupapa and purpose of the Women's Group Programme: (page 4 of Women's Handbook)

The Women's Group seeks to enact our kaupapa and purpose by facilitating:

- *Belonging, connection and support among Women's Group members;*
- *Positive social responses that uphold women's mana and dignity;*
- *Learning together and from one another: Sharing resistance stories and accounts of women preserving their dignity;*
- *Restoration of wellbeing and mauri;*
- *Resource building: increased knowledge of supports available to women in the community;*
- *Additional conditions for enhancing safety.*

Some experiences of mothers who are victims of domestic violence

- Perpetrators can make life extremely difficult and distressing for women when they have children together.

- For example, perpetrators may try to manipulate their role as father of their children to stop their partner from leaving or to get her to do things she doesn't want to do. They may threaten to stop her from seeing her children if she leaves.

- Mothers may also be pressured by their families or whānau to stay with their abusive partner for the children's sake.

- Mothers also receive responses from wider society and media and religion-based sources that children need their fathers. Messages like these often prioritise the

nuclear family above women's and children's safety and wellbeing. They also fail to value the contributions of other family members such as grandparents, whānau and extended families in raising children.

- Remember: *Living in a home free from violence is a clear message to children that they are loved, accepted and safe.*⁵⁴

- Invite women to reflect on and share experiences as mothers.
- Inform the group that all contributions are valued, including those of women who do not have children.

Children's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home

- Children who experience violence at home may respond with unhappiness, anger, and other forms of emotional distress (Women's Handbook, page 48).

- Feeling fear, sadness, anxious and worried, increases in illnesses, tummy aches, headaches, irritability, being secretive, not always being honest, being violent or aggressive, bedwetting, self-blame, misusing alcohol and other drugs, withdrawing from their friends, having trouble at school, having eating or sleeping problems, copying controlling and violent behaviour (hurting siblings, their mother or abusive partner), avoiding home or running away from home, or hurting themselves.⁵⁵

- Children may also respond by behaving extremely diligently, i.e. by being "super good" and well behaved, they might often be the "peace-maker", protector and negotiator, take on extra responsibilities, they may take extreme care to avoid offending anyone or try to be invisible, to "not cause trouble" or attract attention.

- As a group or in small groups, discuss how any of these "effects on children" are actually responses.

- Work through each response to clarify the "personal logic" of the response, i.e. in what ways can the response can be seen as reasonable and make sense in the context of violence?

- Work through the different responses here and consider what kinds of social responses people might have towards a child or young person in each.

- Do people's responses tend towards the positive (understanding and helpful) or negative (blaming and unsupportive) end of the spectrum?

- Think about the responses children receive in different social settings (at home, with family and whānau, at school, with their friends). Consider then how children and young people might respond in turn to other people's responses.

⁵⁴ NCIWR: Women's Refuge Fresh Start (2012, p. 36)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

- *Reflect back to the whole group.*

Discussion point:

- Children's responses to violence are actually resistance. To feel angry, unhappy or depressed, and to act out in response to abuse indicates that these children are taking a position against the abuse -making a stand - and these actions, thoughts, emotions, are their resistance.⁵⁶ Some of children's responses identified above such as bedwetting, tummy-aches for example, can also be forms of resistance. As part of this discussion, it may be helpful to review the responses of children above and explore how these could be acts of resistance in some circumstances too.

- Invite women to reflect on and share their experiences of their own or their children's resistance.

Activity 2: Children's voices of resistance

Procedures

Introduce the activity:

- The following accounts come from children who have worked with Women's Refuge advocates. These stories are very sad but are also testimonies to children's courage, resourcefulness and resistance. The intention of sharing these accounts is to convey hope and to honour child victims' resistance.

- All of these accounts challenge the idea of children as passive "witnesses" to violence. Instead, they demonstrate the resourcefulness of children of all ages to try to protect, comfort and uphold the dignity of themselves and family members.

- Some women in the group will relate closely to the children's accounts. This may be because of their own childhood experiences of abuse and / or because of their children's experiences.

- While these accounts are read out, group members are asked to reflect on the child's resistance.

- The facilitator reads out one account at a time and the group are invited to identify and discuss on the resistance indicated by the child's actions or intentions.

- On the whiteboard, record the forms of resistance identified by group members.

"While he was kicking my Mum I was holding Michael and crying".

Toby, age 8.

"Mummy locked herself in the bathroom and cried because she was scared of Daddy. I wanted to be with her, but I couldn't open the door".

Natasha, age 6.

⁵⁶ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

“Dad had been drinking. He pushed Mum on the floor and got a big knife from the kitchen. He strangled her. He said, ‘I am going to kill your Mother tonight’. I said, ‘No Dad, don’t hurt Mum’ but he wouldn’t stop. Mum was saying to me, ‘help me’ but I didn’t know what to do”.

Poppy, age 10.

“My eyes stay awake (at night). My Dad might hurt my Mum in the night. He hit her bad before.”

Paul, age 4.

- Angel Yuen, a therapist who works with children responding to abuse offers some additional accounts:

- *A six-year-old boy shared that he taught his two-year-old toddler brother how to count to ten in English, French, and Spanish, to distract him and lessen the effects of abuse after beatings. From this conversation, I also learnt how that toddler, barely able to talk, would comfort his big brother by bringing him a tissue when he cried.*
- *I also learn about children deliberately finding ways to not show distress, anger, fear, or sadness on their face in order to minimise the severity of abuse or to lessen the effects of trauma on their everyday life. One child named this skill his ‘fixing-face abilities’ while another young woman who experienced years of sexual abuse as a little girl called it ‘putting on my outside happy look while at school’.*
- *Michael, a seven-year-old boy who faced emotional abuse, which he described as ‘the bad, angry, and scary voice’, would often hide from place to place in his house in attempts to ‘get away’ from the harsh voice. His hiding place of choice was a closet that was never used. By simply asking where Michael hid, he became more in touch with how he responded, When I asked him, ‘So when you hid in the closet, what did you do to comfort yourself once you were safe?’, he replied, ‘The way I made myself feel better was to sing a song to myself and that would make the tears go away’.⁵⁷*

Reflective discussion

- Encourage women to reflect on their responses to these activities.

⁵⁷ We gratefully acknowledge the work of Angel Yuen (2007, p. 7) for her accounts.

Activity 3: Acknowledging and upholding the mother-child bond

- This activity aims to gather information from women in the group about actions they do, and are aware of and would like to do to respond to their children.
- Ensure that all contributions are valued, including those of women who do not have children.
- As a group, brainstorm suggestions and record these on a large sheet of paper-

Prompts:

Examples of positive ways mothers can respond to their children:

Show them that you love them

Give them lots of positive attention and hugs

Reassure them that they are not to blame

Encourage them to talk about their responses

Listen to their feelings and let them know it's okay to have them, even if they're feeling upset or angry with you

Encourage and support their friendships

Try to bring them into contact with other adults they can relate to and trust⁵⁸

End of session reflection

- For some women, this session can be particularly emotionally painful. It can also be very powerful in positive ways as group members are likely to express immense support, aroha and compassion for each other. It is especially important that time is made for women to reflect and share in a safe and sensitive way, particularly at the end of the session.

Our Stories Project:

Spend time working on these with the support of the group.

Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories

Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.

Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).

Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Safety Planning, Protection Orders, and Men's Programmes.

⁵⁸ NCIWR: Women's Refuge Fresh Start (2012).

Closing activity: The Three Joys

Go around the group, describe one place that gives you joy (can be real or imaginary), one person who gives you joy, and one activity that gives you joy. It might be interesting to cover one question at a time (i.e. do three circuits of the group).

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Session 11: Safety planning, protection orders, and men's programmes

Session Objectives

- To provide information that enhances women's ability to use the Domestic Violence Act.
- To provide information about Protection Orders and Men's Programmes.
- To support women to develop safety plans.
- To discuss women's meanings of equality and nonviolence between people.

Resource List

Choose a Picture activity and activity prompts sheet

DVD: Talking about Family Violence: Stories of Positive Change.

A3 Equality Wheel and additional 8 equality slices.

Department of Courts pamphlet "Domestic Protection Orders".

Welcome/ Housekeeping

Welcome the participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Warm-up

Choose a Picture activity

Review Group Agreement

Ensure the Group Agreement is displayed. Go through the points checking that women are still in agreement. Add anything further women would like to include, with their agreement.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1: Protection Orders

- Introduce this week's session, which focuses on the Domestic Violence Act and supporting women to develop safety plans.
- Inform women that we will cover two specific aspects of the Domestic Violence Act: Protection Orders and Men's Programmes.
- Play DVD Talking about Family Violence: Stories of Positive Change. Dramas (Roimata, Tessa, Amanda and Sonali).

- Hand out copies of the Department of Courts pamphlet "Domestic Protection Orders".
- Invite the group raise any questions or uncertainties they may have about Protection Orders.
- Answer these questions and clarify uncertainties. As many of the women will have already had one-to one discussions with their advocate about Protection Orders, it may not be necessary to go into great detail about individual group member's specific questions. Therefore, to avoid replication, in some situations, a group member may have a specific question that would be better to discuss one-to-one after the session.
- For further reference, some group members may like to read pages 90 - 101 on Protection Orders in the Women's Refuge Fresh Start Guide (2012) issued to women when they initiate contact with Women's Refuge.

The Basics:

Protection orders – what are they?

- Protection for the victims of the family violence and any children in their care. They are a family court order made by a judge. They have two main parts to them:
- Non- violence – the respondent cannot use any violence on the applicant (this is always enforced).
- Non-contact – the respondent cannot have any contact with the applicant (this part can be put to sleep if the applicant wishes but is resumed on the applicant's request).
- Orders are usually made on the same day they are filed. They are temporary for 3 months and then become final if the respondent makes no application.
- Custody is usually given in association with the Protection Order and the judge will usually require access to be supervised.
- Respondents cannot have firearms when there is a Protection Order in place.

If the conditions are broken, the respondent is charged with breaching the Protection Order in the criminal court. They will normally be held in custody for 24 hours.

What support is available?

- The respondent is sent to a compulsory Stopping Violence Programme.
 - The applicant can chose to go to a family violence education programme.
 - The children can attend a support programme.
- These programmes are all paid for through the courts.

Activity 2: Men's Programmes

- Ask the group to share what they know about Men's (Respondent's) Programmes. Brainstorm a list of their expectations of Men's Programmes. Record this so it can be used with the Men's Programme facilitator.
- Explain the changes between the old Domestic Protection Act 1982 and the Domestic Violence Act 1995 i.e if a man has a Protection Order made against him (if he is a Respondent) he will be ordered by the Family Court to attend a Men's Programme.
- Play DVD Talking about Family Violence: Stories of Positive Change (Men's Programmes section).
- Invite the group raise any questions or uncertainties they may have about Men's programmes.
- Answer these questions and clarify uncertainties.
- The facilitator can speak about the realities of Men's programmes and answer any questions women have.

Activity 3: Developing Safety Plans

Discussion Points:

Before beginning the activity, emphasise these key Messages:

1. Your partner is the only person who can stop the violence, but you can respond in ways to keep safe.
2. Making a plan can increase your safety and make your situation easier for you but remember that the most important thing is for you and your children to get away to get out safely. If the time is right to leave, just leave. It doesn't matter if you haven't made a plan or got your things with you.
3. If you have to leave to save your life - leave fast, take nothing, go to the nearest safe place and call 111 for help.
4. Identify your support people and familiarise yourself with their contact details.

- Most women in the group will have created safety plans independently and or during their initial one to one sessions with their advocate. To avoid replication, this activity may not require in-depth work on safety planning.

- However, group members are likely possess a wealth of experience, and recommendations that will be helpful for other women in the group.

- Likewise, this session provides an opportunity for women in the group to share and honour the many ways they have enhanced the safety of themselves and, where relevant, their family and whānau members.

- For further reference, women may be directed to pages 42-47 on Safety Planning in the Women's Refuge Fresh Start Guide (2012) issued to women when they initiate contact with Women's Refuge.

This covers five components of Safety Planning:

- Are you in Immediate Danger?
- Making Plans for your safety
- Safety Planning for Leaving
- Safety Planning for after you or the abuser has left

- Safety Planning for Staying
- Planning for safety in a crisis (pages 70-71)

Our Stories Project: Spend time working on these with the support of the group

Developing ideas from the previous week, facilitator's tasks will involve:

- Clarifying the activity of documenting group member's personal stories.
- Being available to assist women as they generate ideas and identify ways they responded and resisted.
- Being available to awhi and emotionally support women at different stages of their story making, including women who choose not to document their stories (during Women's Group session times).
- Facilitating group reflection and discussion on the process of group member's story telling.

Introduce Next Week's Topic: Your dignity, safety and healing.

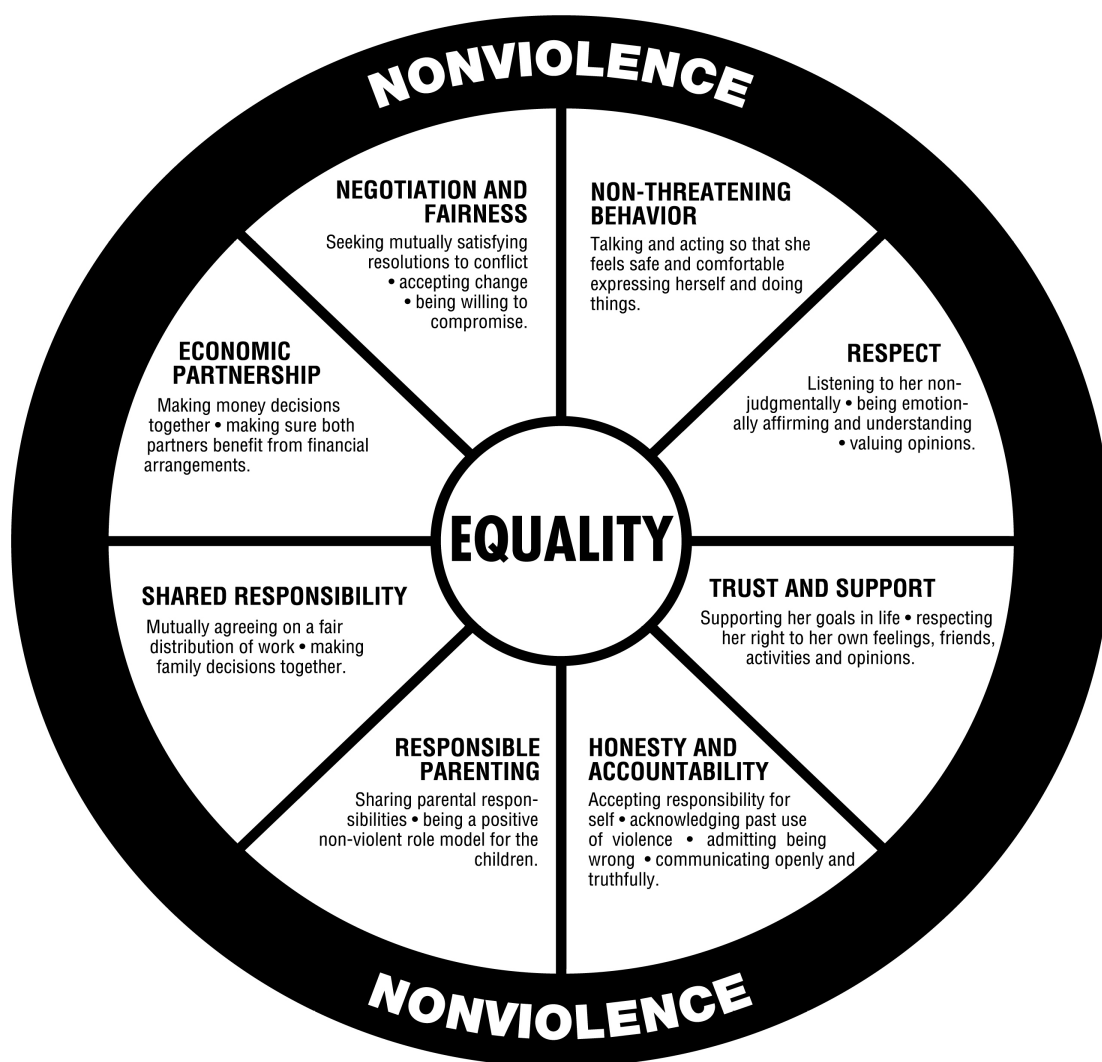
Closing Activity: What does equality mean to you?

Purpose

- To discuss women's meanings of equality and nonviolence between people.

- Use the Equality Wheel⁵⁹ as a tool for discussing nonviolence between people:
- Place the large A3 nonviolence ring and equality centre on the floor.
- Invite women to work in pairs or threes, distribute the additional slices of equality to each group.
- Ask women to read their slice of equality and briefly talk about what it means to them in their pair/ group.
- Invite the pairs/ groups to share their ideas with the group then add their slice to the Wheel and open up for wider discussion.
- Include discussion about the relationships between the 8 slices and the outer "nonviolence" ring.

⁵⁹ We gratefully acknowledge the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project for use of the Equality Wheel.

**DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT**

202 East Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-722-2781
www.duluth-model.org

Post-Group Availability

Facilitators are available to group members to talk privately after the session.

Session 12: Your dignity, safety and healing (and goodbyes for women completing the 12 week programme)

Session Objectives

- Enhancing group members' dignity, safety and healing through sharing their personal resistance stories.
- Reinforcing group members' rights in intimate relationships.

Resource List

If this is a general programme ending for all group members (e.g. before breaking for Christmas), give thought to planning a special event for goodbyes - see ideas below.

Welcome/ Housekeeping

Welcome participants to the group. Welcome and introduce new participants using the warm-up format in Session 1.

Opening Round

Check how women have been since the previous week. Is there any feedback from last week's session? Support women to participate or to pass if they choose.

Activity 1. Our Stories Project: Resistance and upholding dignity

- By Session 12, some women will have completed the process of documenting and sharing their personal stories of resistance.
- This final session will provide an opportunity all of the women to share their story and/ or their reflections on this activity should they wish to.
- Facilitator's tasks will involve supporting group reflection and discussion on the process of group members' story telling.

Activity 2. Your Rights in a Relationship⁶⁰

Procedures:

- As a group, read out and review the following rights (Women's Handbook, page 54). Women may like to circulate the group with each reading out a right or reading the rights out together.

- To be treated with respect and define what respect is for you.
- To decide what is important for you and set your priorities.
- To have and express your own feelings and opinions.
- To have a different view and not feel guilty.

⁶⁰ NCIWR (1996).

- To be listened to and taken seriously.
- To ask for what you want.
- To make mistakes and be allowed to try again.
- Each right has a responsibility - to behave in the same way towards the other person.

Personal Bill of Rights

- I have the right to be treated with dignity
- I have the right to think, feel, and practice in accordance with my beliefs and culture
- I have the right to ask for what I want
- I have the right to say no to requests or demands I can't meet
- I have the right to express all of my feelings, positive or negative
- I have the right to change my mind
- I have the right to make mistakes and not have to be perfect
- I have the right to follow my own values and standards
- I have the right to say no to anything when I feel I am not ready, it is unsafe, or it violates my values
- I have the right to determine my own priorities
- I have the right not to be responsible for others' behaviour, actions, feelings or problems
- I have the right to expect honesty from others
- I have the right to feel angry with someone I love
- I have the right to be uniquely myself
- I have the right to feel scared and say, "I'm afraid"
- I have the right to say, "I don't know"
- I have the right not to give excuses or reasons for my behaviour
- I have the right to make decisions based on my feelings
- I have the right to my own needs for personal space and time
- I have the right to be playful and frivolous
- I have the right to be healthier than those around me
- I have the right to make friends and be comfortable around people
- I have the right to change and grow
- I have the right to have my needs and wants respected by others
- I have the right to be happy
- I have the right to be treated with respect
- I have the right to have and express my own feelings and opinions
- I have the right to say "no" without feeling guilty
- I have the right to ask for what I want
- I have the right to get what I pay for – including non-patronising information

from professionals, such as doctors and lawyers

- I have the right to set my own priorities
- I have the right to choose not to assert myself, where or when it is not "appropriate"
- I have the right to refuse to answer intrusive, personal questions
- I have the right to protect my physical space

Concluding reflection⁶¹

Discussion points

- In our experience as advocates, victims always resist abuse and violence. Even when they oppose abuse only in their thoughts, their resistance is still very important because it shows that in no way do victims experience mistreatment passively.

- We have found that victims feel empowered when they focus on their resistance and on the many ways they keep their own dignity and character in the face of mistreatment and degradation.

- From our work with perpetrators, we conclude that they always anticipate that victims will resist their attempts to control, dominate, and inflict pain. Perpetrators take deliberate steps to stop such resistance. Other evidence has shown that perpetrators are able to control their anger. Their actions are planned and deliberate. We feel that recognising the deliberate nature of abusive behaviour is respectful of perpetrators, in that it expresses confidence in their ability to control their own actions, rather than being “helpless victims” of forces beyond their control.

- Our intention in providing support to women in the group is to focus our attention on victims’ resistance and perpetrators’ responsibility. We also aim to challenge messages from other people that blame the victim or excuse the perpetrator.

- Recall back to Nicole's Story. Nicole said she felt like she had been in a “sea” of victim-blaming messages. She gained a better understanding of her experiences when she met someone who helped her to see how she had opposed mistreatment. As a result, she experienced “many light bulbs go off.” She said that it was “refreshing and liberating” to be honoured for her resistance rather than blamed for her victimisation.

⁶¹ We gratefully acknowledge the work and words of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik through their book *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007) for these concluding remarks.

- It is our hope that all of the women in this group now know that you have responded to and resisted abuse all along and have done and thought many things to uphold your dignity and improve your own safety and that of others important to you.

For Women completing the 12 week programme:

Evaluation

Ensure women are provided with a variety of options for giving their feedback and evaluation e.g. meet with women individually after the group, do a group evaluation where one woman records all the feedback etc.

The evaluation form provided in the Resource Section is a sample only. The facilitator or women's individual advocates may receive women's evaluations in other mediums such as a note or letter, photos, drawings, spoken feedback. Advocates are asked to record these other forms of evaluation in the group evaluation documentation.

Closing and Goodbyes

Invite women to come up with ideas and options about how they could finish their last session. The facilitator still has a central role to play, even though the session has been handed over to the participants.

(The group may already have decided last week what they want to do).

Some ideas for finishing could include:

- Each woman in the group has a turn of being acknowledged by the whole group
Women move around the room and speak briefly to one another saying their goodbyes.
- Circulating around the group - each woman identifies three helpful things she has gained from the Women's Group.
- Discuss women's options for maintaining contact and supporting one-another.

Some Possibilities for finishing activities:

- Have a shared lunch, e.g. Meet for a picnic lunch in the local park, special morning or afternoon tea.
- Have a "Trees of Dignity" tree planting outing.
- Contribute a few hours to a community ecological restoration project together.
- Watch an uplifting movie/ DVD together.
- Screen-print beautiful/ meaningful messages or symbols on pillowcases, T-Shirts...

* * *

Part 3: Facilitator Resources

Women's Group Evaluation Templates follow:

Women's Group Weekly Session Feedback Form

Women's Group Weekly Session Review

Women's Group Completion Questionnaire for Evaluation

Women's Group Weekly Session Review

Completed by facilitator(s): _____

Date: _____

Weekly Session number: _____

Comment on any of the following questions:

1. Do you think women felt comfortable and safe engaging in today's session activities?
 2. Were there any parts of the session that seemed particularly helpful or of value to women?
 3. Were there aspects of today's session that women did not seem to find helpful?
 4. Were there any particularly inspiring or interesting things that came out of today's session?
 5. Are there any aspects of today's session that you would like to change?
 6. Are there any aspects of today's session that you would like additional support with as a facilitator?
 7. Do you have any other observations and thoughts that would be helpful for future sessions or programme planning?
-

Women's Group Completion Questionnaire for Evaluation

This can be completed by individual women or as a group evaluation (with questions as prompts for reflection).

Date: _____ Facilitator name(s): _____

In the Women's Group, how often did you have these experiences? (Circle a number)

0 Never 1 Rarely 2 Sometimes 3 Often 4 Most of the time

1. I felt comfortable and safe	0	1	2	3	4
2. I was treated respectfully	0	1	2	3	4
3. I was a valued member of the Group	0	1	2	3	4
4. I felt a sense of connection with other women in the Group	0	1	2	3	4
5. I felt comfortable sharing my experiences, stories and view points with the other women	0	1	2	3	4
6. I felt a sense of belonging in the Group	0	1	2	3	4
7. I felt comfortable asking Women's Refuge advocates for help and advice	0	1	2	3	4
8. I had opportunities to identify ways I have resisted violence in the Women's Group	0	1	2	3	4
9. I had opportunities to talk about responses of friends, family whānau, and services (such as Police, Women's Refuge) during and after experiencing domestic violence	0	1	2	3	4

Please indicate whether you agree with these statements:

11. I can describe some helpful and unhelpful responses from other people during and after experiencing domestic violence.

Agree / Disagree

12. I am not to blame for another person's abusive behaviour towards me.

Agree / Disagree

13. I know that the person who acted abusively towards me is responsible for these actions.

Agree / Disagree

Background Information for Facilitators

Response-Based Practice Concepts

Definitions:

*Perpetrator*⁶²

The person in a close relationship who chooses to behave in ways that harm, control, or dominate another. We also recognise that there can be more than one perpetrator in a domestic setting. For example, additional perpetrators can be other family members or gang members.

*Victim*⁶³

The term *victim* is often used as a stigmatising or disapproving label to mean 'deficiencies'. In other words, things that are 'wrong' with a person such as weakness and passiveness. Understandably, women who have been labeled a victim after experiencing abuse sometimes prefer to not use this term.

In this programme, however, 'victim' means the person who has been purposely and wrongfully harmed by the unwanted actions of another person. The victim is in no way responsible for the abusive actions of another. Victims always oppose and try to stop abuse and often show great strength in doing so. In this way, using 'victim' draws our attention to the wrongful harms experienced by the victim rather than making these invisible.⁶⁴

Abuse

Deliberate behavior in which one person chooses to dominate, control, or harm another person. Perpetrators abuse against the will of victims, who never ask or choose to be abused.

Resistance to Abuse

Whenever people are abused, they do many things to oppose the abuse and to keep their dignity and their self-respect. This is called resistance. The resistance might include not doing what the perpetrator wants them to do, standing up against, and trying to stop or prevent violence, disrespect, or oppression. Imagining a better life may also be a way that victims resist abuse.

⁶² Weaver, Todd, Ogden, and Craik (2007).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Richardson & Wade (2013).

He/She, Him/Her

In the Women's Group, we often use 'she' to describe the victim, and 'he' to describe the perpetrator, because most of our clients have been in heterosexual relationships in which they have been abused by men. However, sometimes women within heterosexual relationships can be abusive towards men. Within lesbian relationships they can sometimes be abusive towards other women. Homosexual men can also be abusive towards their partners.

Effects verses responses

Many people believe victims of domestic violence share some common "effects" of abuse by their partners. They assume that victims passively accept violence, and lack self-esteem, assertiveness, or boundaries. Much attention is paid to these "effects" of violence. Unfortunately, this leads people to have a stereotyped, negative view of victims.

In the Women's Group, we look at what victims do when they are being abused. By looking at what victims do to oppose abuse and to keep their dignity, we hope people will form a more realistic view of victims. We also hope victims will reconsider any feelings that they are "damaged", and, instead, to look at the strengths they have shown in resisting abuse.

In the Women's Group we also look at what perpetrators do when they are abusive. A lot of time, energy and money are spent on trying to understand the reasons why people are abusive. For example, it has been suggested that perhaps people are abusive because they themselves were abused as children, or they have mental health disorders. Unfortunately, this sometimes leads to excusing perpetrators from taking responsibility for their behaviour.

In fact, people who work with perpetrators have found that they are in control of their actions, and that they make deliberate choices about their abusive behaviour. We believe perpetrators can, at any point in time, choose to change and to behave respectfully towards others.

Five principles of violence and responses to violence⁶⁵

1. *Whenever people are badly treated, they always resist in some way.
An example of resistance could be when a woman has sex with her abusive husband as a way of placating him when he is angry or demands sex.*

⁶⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the work and words of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik through their book *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007).

- In many situations, victims can't escape or prevent an abuser's violence.
- When victims openly challenge perpetrators, the response from perpetrators can lead to an intensification of control and abuse.
- Despite this, victims carry out a multitude of actions to uphold their dignity, and to increase their own and others' safety.
- Because, however, in the vast majority of situations it is unsafe for victims to openly oppose abuse, more commonly, responses to abuse are likely imperceptible to anyone other than the victim.

2. *People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse.*

For example, a woman tucks her kids up in bed before her abusive husband gets home from the pub.

- Abuse can be very dangerous, so usually victims resist it in ways that are not obvious. Others probably will not even notice the resistance so they assume that victims are “passive” and “they do not do enough to stand up for themselves.”
- Violence is typically concealed from view of people outside the relationship.
- To avoid negative consequences of their abusive actions, often, perpetrators strategically present themselves to others in a positive light. For example, a perpetrator might behave in a charming manner and may also blame the person they abuse for their “relationship problems”.
- Equally, victims may tactically avoid disclosing their partner's abuse to others because it's unsafe to do so and they want to prevent other's negative responses, including harsh judgment towards them.
- Usually, victims are acutely aware of negative social responses towards people who have been victimised (Todd et al, 2004; Wade, 1997).

3. *Perpetrators know that victims will resist, so they make plans to stop the victim from resisting.*

- For instance, some women resist their partner's abuse by leaving the house. Knowing this, some partners will try to stop this resistance by taking shoes, money, bankcards and car keys.

4. *Violent and abusive behavior is always done deliberately.*

- The reality that domestic violence is far more likely to be hidden from view in the privacy of home rather than in public offers strong evidence that perpetrators choose who, when and how they abuse.
- Response-Based Practice perpetrator intervention emphasises perpetrators' choice to abuse or desist, recognises their ability to be non-abusive and respectful, and holds them accountable for their actions.

- Relating to perpetrators as agentic individuals may uphold their dignity, and so encourage them to persevere in changing their behaviour.
5. *When it comes to domestic violence, appearances are deceiving - Onlookers cannot easily see what occurs in domestic violence situations.*
- Typically, perpetrators and victims do not tell others what is happening. Perpetrators cover up their abusive behaviour. They may blame the victim and be friendly and charming to the outside world, so that they do not have to face the consequences of their actions.

Social Responses towards victims and perpetrators⁶⁶

- The quality of social responses towards victims and perpetrators is the single most important predictor of the severity and nature of a victim's distress, and whether the perpetrator desists.
- In response to unhelpful social responses, offenders are more likely to commit further violence. Victims are more likely to experience confusion, fear, distress, humiliation, becoming whakamā, social exclusion, and isolation, and their safety is further undermined.
- Mother blaming is a prevalent negative social response towards victims. Mothers who maintain contact with abusive partners are often seen as "failing to protect" their children, in which it is assumed that mothers are responsible for stopping their partner's abuse and ensuring the safety of themselves and their children.⁶⁷ Mother blaming undermines women's and children's safety and dignity.
- In response to helpful social responses, victims are more likely to disclose the abuse and experience relief, safety, mana, sense of community, wellness, and dignity.
- Offenders are more likely to talk about their actions and concerns, and less likely to commit further violence.

This Women's Group does not focus on trying to find the causes of domestic violence:

- In conventional responses to domestic violence, considerable effort is spent trying to understand causes of violence.

⁶⁶ Response-based ideas and table information from Richardson & Wade (2010) unless otherwise indicated.

⁶⁷ Haight, Shin, Linn & Swinford (2007); Hester (2011); Hughes, Chau, & Poff (2011); Richardson & Wade (2010; 2013).

- A common theme across most discourses of domestic violence is the positioning of perpetrators as having little or no control over their abusive actions while ironically, victims are positioned as capable of and hence responsible for stopping the violence and changing their circumstances. Perpetrators are often portrayed as "victims" of biological, psychological, or social circumstances beyond their control (for example, personality traits, stress, alcohol, or financial difficulties).⁶⁸
- Attributing abusive behaviour to pathological causes minimises perpetrators' responsibility and their own view of their ability to stop abusing.

Effects verses response-based explanations for violence

- Often, domestic and family violence intervention attends to the effects or impacts of abuse on victims. For example, women who have been victimised are often portrayed as damaged, submissive - or alternatively - as mutually aggressive in their relationships.⁶⁹ Victims are often construed as having poor boundaries, assertiveness skills and self-esteem.⁷⁰

A consequence of such stereotyping is that victims are more likely to be viewed negatively by others, and in particular, pathologised and blamed for the abuse they are subjected to.⁷¹

Effects-based explanations	Response-based explanations
The victim: a co-agent, "brought it on herself," attracted to the violence due to psychological problems or predisposition	Victims prefer respect and kindness - dignity is central to social life
The perpetrator and victim are passive objects	Both the victim and perpetrator are agentive, active subjects who make decisions
The problems exists in the head of the victim	The problem exists in the social world, between people
Based on the individual and a focus on the self	Assessing and understanding the negative and positive social responses to the victim is a key part of the work.

⁶⁸ Hoyle & Sanders (2000); Jenkins (1991); McLaren (2010); O'Neill (1997); Todd & Wade (2004; 2014).

⁶⁹ Campbell, Rose, Kub, & Nedd (1998); Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Todd & Wade (2004).

⁷⁰ Richardson & Wade (2013); Weaver, Todd, Ogden, & Craik (2007).

⁷¹ Coates & Wade (2004; 2007), Humphries & Thiara (2003), Wade (1997).

	Also based on a microanalysis of language, social interaction, and social context.
--	--

Dignity

- Dignity - the process of treating one another respectfully, and honouring each other's autonomy, freedom and social and personal safety - is central to Response-Based Practice
- In this sense, Response-Based Practice focuses on restoring, reasserting and upholding dignity and derives this from the observation that violence and oppression diminish dignity and without redress, perpetuate harms to victims.⁷²

A Response Based Practice view is that Dignity is related to victims' and perpetrators'

- Social Esteem
- Mana
- Self Worth
- Autonomy and Inclusion
- Care for Others
- Physical and Psychological Integrity.⁷³

Response-Based Practice involves examining the conditions, in micro-detail, in which a person is able to abuse, and understanding how victims specifically respond to and resist abuse.

- Making resistance more visible enables victims and others to make connections between the "situational logic" of victim' s responses and their pre-existing skills and knowledge.
- In this regard, the particular historical, social, and immediate physical contexts in which a perpetrator abuses and desists and a victim responds and resists, assume great importance for providing evidence of victims' capacity to protect themselves and others, perpetrators' capacity to act respectfully.
- Questioning victims in order to obtain detailed and precise descriptions at micro-level about these circumstances helps elucidate resistance and in this way positions victims as active in pursuing safety and dignity.
- In becoming aware of the many ways they respond and resist, victims might also reposition themselves as someone who refused to cooperate, even if in extremely subtle ways, with those who abused them.

⁷² Wade (1997; 2007).

⁷³ Richardson & Wade (2013).

- Similarly, detailed descriptions of social responses received by victims and their subsequent responses to these are sought. This process helps identify helpful and unhelpful responses and assists victims make sense of and dignify the "personal logic" of their own responses in relation to others' responses.⁷⁴

Response-Based contextual analysis in cases of violence⁷⁵

Key factors:

Social and material conditions

Individual and social existence is restricted by, enabled by, and responsive to the social and material conditions in which people live.

Access to the material necessities for life (e.g., food, safety, water), and the benefits of civil society (e.g., safety, law, medicine) are distributed unequally.

Social representations and structures influence the quality of social responses to victims and offenders and their families. These include professional and public representations of victims and offenders and, tied to these representations, policies and practices that provide or deny adequate social responses.

Social situation and interaction

Interactions in social situations take place in specific social and material conditions. Humans are inherently social and orient to one another as social agents with the capacity to choose. Humans are understood better as responding agents than as affected objects.

Dignity is central to social life and to individual and collective wellbeing.

Language-use is part of social interaction: Representation of one's self and others, and salient events, is ever-present in social interaction.

Offender actions

Physical and psychological violence is profoundly harmful and an affront to human dignity.

Violence is, with rare exceptions, deliberate and controlled: Offenders anticipate and work to suppress victim resistance. Most offenders can desist prior to intervention.

⁷⁴ Richardson & Wade (2013); Wade (1997).

⁷⁵ We gratefully acknowledge Linda Coates, Cathy Richardson, & Allan Wade (2014) for their words and ideas in this section.

Violent acts are unilateral (rather than mutual) in that they entail actions by one person or group against the will and wellbeing of another.

Victim responses

Victims resist violence and injustice and work to preserve dignity. Resistance can be open and direct or subtle and disguised, depending on the circumstances.

Victims respond to violence biologically (i.e., epigenetically, neurologically, physiologically), mentally, socially, and spiritually.

Victim's responses reveal “emergent capacities”, purposes, and aspirations that can become a basis for safety planning and other social responses.

Social responses

Victims, offenders and their families encounter social responses from strangers, members of their social networks, authorities, and the larger society (e.g., media).

Social and material conditions enable/encourage some social responses and restrict/prevent others.

Language can be used to (a) conceal or reveal violence and injustice, (b) clarify or obscure offender and social responsibility (i.e., responsibility of authorities), (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses and resistance, and (d) blame and pathologize or contest the blaming and pathologizing of victims.

The quality of social responses is related to the level and form of victim distress and the likelihood of offender desistance.

Responses to social responses

Victims and offenders take actual and possible social responses into account in committing and responding to violent acts, respectively.

In response to negative and unjust social responses, victims are more likely to experience confusion, fear, disqualification, isolation, distress – and humiliation. Offenders are more likely to commit further violence.

In response to positive and just social responses, victims are more likely to disclose the facts and to experience clarity, relief, safety, affirmation, community, wellness – and dignity. Offenders are more likely to talk about their actions and concerns, and less likely to commit further violence.

Further information and resources can be found on the Centre for Response-Based Practice website: <http://responsebasedpractice.com>

Women's Refuge Tangata Whenua services⁷⁶

As part of the NCIWR constitution, and in recognition of Māori as tangata whenua and of tino rangatiratanga, the NCIWR is committed to parallel development. In short, this is an agreement between Māori and other cultures that enables each to develop domestic violence support services that are culturally appropriate and complementary.

Māori Whare

Women's Refuge has 14 Māori whare offering services designed by Māori for Māori. Māori whare apply kawa and tikanga of the mana whenua to their practice and delivery of services within the rōhe they operate.

The goals of Māori whare are:

- The elimination of violence
- Promoting wellbeing of our whānau, hapū and iwi, and the communities in which we live
- Promoting mana Māori motuhake
- Designing and promoting kaupapa Māori models
- Promoting processes of transformation that liberate and inspire whānau, hapū and iwi to the goal of tino rangatiratanga in all facets of their spiritual, political, social and physical realities.

The values for Māori whare are:

Whakapapa It is kinship that determines the collectivity between whānau, hapū and iwi – a collective consciousness. It is the way in which we engage, so that the reciprocity and obligatory nature of whakapapa means that it can be used to create productive and enduring relationships to support change. Whakapapa informs a person about being a human, being of a culture, being of a place.

Whānaungatanga Tribal identity and cohesion enable Māori people to confidently interact. Whānaungatanga is what cements Māori, and embraces a collective responsibility. When functioning and applied properly, whānaungatanga ensures the wellbeing of an individual within a larger group. A nuclear family model is an alien concept for Māori.

Wairua The existence of the spiritual realm is fundamental to wellbeing from a Māori cultural frame of reference. Wairua is exercised through the practice of tapu.

⁷⁶ The content of this section, Women's Refuge services for wahine Māori is found on <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get%20help/Maori%20wahine.htm>.

Mauri Tau training programme

Women's Refuge continues to develop services to enable whānau to work together to resolve and plan long-term solutions to domestic violence.

The Mauri Tau training programme is a framework to revitalise Māori values and beliefs. It offers an analysis of whānau violence and healing to sustain ora for whānau. Mauri Tau recognises that iwi already have the tools to obtain whānau ora from within, and aims to enhance their knowledge.

The programme emphasises harmony and keeping whānau intact – keeping mother and child together, and having families supporting women with their own plans for living free from violence.

Further information is available in the guide: *Ko Te Oranga o Te Kōwhai Hei Arahi (Women's Refuge's Guide for Responsiveness to Tangata Whenua)*. This sets standards for improved responsiveness and service delivery for Women's Refuge advocates. It guides advocates in interactions with tangata whenua as users of our services, as members of the public, or as members of the refuge movement.

Women in same-sex relationships and domestic violence⁷⁷

Violence occurs in relationships between two women at a similar rate to relationships between women and men. For lesbians/wahine takatapuhi, there are patterns of power and control in an abusive relationship just as there are in heterosexual relationships, but they can feel worse because of the hatred and fear of homosexuality that is expressed by others in society, and even internalised by lesbians themselves.

It is likely that denial and under-reporting of violence happens for similar reasons to women identified in heterosexual relationships, that is, fear for personal safety, and fear of not being believed. For wahine takapuhi/lesbians who are victims of violence there are additional issues:

- Fear of outing (exposure of sexual orientation) to parents, former partners or employers.
- Fear of private information being made public to the wider community.
- Fear of homophobic responses from Police, courts, support agencies and media.
- Fear of anti-gay attitudes affecting access to children.
- Concerns for the safety of their partner if arrested and held in custody.

⁷⁷ The content of the section, Women in same-sex relationships and domestic violence is found on <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get%20help/Maori%20wahine.htm>.

What can professionals working with lesbians experiencing violence do?

- Never assume that a woman's partner or abuser is a male.
- Make your workspace a safe place with literature and posters that support lesbians and celebrate different sexual orientations.
- If possible, have specialist workers to work with wahine takatapuhi/lesbian/queer/bisexual women who use your services.
- Challenge your own homophobia.
- Be aware that the Domestic Violence Act does cover same sex relationships, including for Protection Orders and education programmes.

Women with disabilities and domestic violence⁷⁸

- 'Disability' refers to the marginalisation of people due to discriminatory social and cultural attitudes (stigma) and physical and environmental barriers. Disability affects women with physical, intellectual, or cognitive impairment, and women with mental illness.
- Intersecting conditions of gender, disability and socio-economic discrimination increase risk of women with disabilities for domestic violence and negative social responses during and following violence.
- Because of myths around 'asexuality' and ineligibility for marriage, it is rarely assumed that women with disabilities have intimate partners, so domestic violence often goes undetected (Barnett et al 2005, p 353).
- Adults with disabilities are 1.5 times more likely to be victims of violence than those without a disability; while adults with mental health conditions are at nearly four times the risk of experiencing violence (Hughes, Bellis, Jones, Wood, Bates et al 2012).
- Women with disabilities are at least twice as likely as non-disabled women to be victims of rape, sexualised abuse and domestic violence (Chenoweth, 1996; Nosek, Howland & Hughes 2001; Hassouneh, Phillips & Curry, 2002; Brownridge 2006; Smith 2008).
- The most common perpetrators of violence against women with disabilities are their male partners (Brownridge, 2006; Brownridge, 2009, Milberger, 2003; Martin et al 2006; McFarlane et al 2001; Young et al 1997).

Risk factors for violence against women with disabilities

- Women with disabilities' experiences and risks of violence are compounded by physical, sensory or intellectual impairments, marginalisation from society and inaccessible environments.

⁷⁸ We gratefully acknowledge Ingrid Van Der Heijden (2014) for ideas and some content for this section, Women with disabilities and domestic violence.

- Increased physical, economic and social dependence is a key risk factor associated with domestic violence.
- Reliance on others increases disabled women's risk of disability-based psychological and physical abuse, such as being prevented from using a wheelchair or other assistive device, being over or under-medicated, being socially isolated, or being neglected or refused help. The misuse of Work and Income benefits and allowances by family members adds further exploitation and vulnerability (Curry, Renker, Hughes et al 2009).
- The social and cultural myths around disability equally work to increase a women's likelihood of victimisation.

Further information on Women's Refuge services for women with disabilities can be found <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get%20help/Women%20with%20disabilities.htm> at:

Older women and domestic violence⁷⁹

Older women experience domestic violence in the form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse from their partners and other family members. Older women tend not to seek help at the same rate as younger women. Often they are invisible to domestic violence service providers.

Older women who are abused experience the same challenges as younger women, but they face additional ones, too. These may include:

- Having married during a time when domestic abuse was considered a 'private matter.'
- Having married during a time when a marriage commitment was unquestioningly lifelong
- Feeling afraid to live alone after being with someone for many years
- Having lived with abuse for many years, which may have added to feelings of isolation, lack of career or independent income
- Not knowing who to ask for help
- Being dependent on their partner for care
- Feeling a duty to take care of an ageing partner
- Having less of a support network, such as when friends retire and move away, or pass on.

Women's Refuge services are for women of all ages. Advocates and clients who are older may find it helpful to also engage with Age Concern:

⁷⁹ The content of the section, Older women and domestic violence is found on <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Older-women.htm>

<https://www.ageconcern.org.nz>. Age Concern has resources and advocacy services for older adults experiencing abuse or neglect.

Migrant and refugee women and domestic violence⁸⁰

Women's Refuge services are for women of all nationalities, and cultural and ethnic identities. An additional service is Shakti, a Women's Refuge associate member that provides culturally appropriate domestic violence intervention services to women of Asian, African and Middle Eastern origin and their children regardless of age, immigration status, religion and sexual orientation, see Women's Refuge or Shakti websites for details of services provided by Shakti.

Considerations when working with migrant and refugee women:

In addition to the more commonly known types of domestic violence, some Asian, African and Middle Eastern women may experience these additional forms:

The use of immigration as a tool of control

Abusive partners may withhold important legal and immigration information and documents from their partners. Perpetrators may try to use a woman's immigration status or lack of knowledge about NZ law as a tool of control and abuse. All people have a right to know what visa they hold and when it expires. Women may be told by the person holding their passport that they don't have a valid visa or work permit after it has expired, and that they will be deported if you try and get help.

Honour-based violence

It's against New Zealand law for anyone to hurt or threaten to hurt or kill a family member or anyone else.

According to Domestic Violence London (2015):

'Honour' based violence (HBV) is a form of domestic abuse perpetrated in the name of so called 'honour'. The honour code it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives. Women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame on the family. Infringements may include a woman having a boyfriend; rejecting a forced marriage; pregnancy outside of marriage; interfaith relationships; seeking divorce, "inappropriate" dress or make-up and even kissing in a public place.

Men can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of a relationship deemed to be inappropriate, if they are gay, have a disability or if they have assisted a victim.

⁸⁰ The content of the section, Migrant and Refugee women and domestic violence is found on <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/Get-help/Migrant-and-refugee-women.htm>

Forced and underage marriage

According to New Zealand law, both parties in a marriage or civil union must be consenting. This means that both parties in the couple agree to the marriage.

Migrant and refugee women may be more likely to experience the following forms of control and abuse in the form of family or community pressure:

- Being repeatedly told that the family honour will be destroyed if they refuse marriage
- Being told by a family member that they are ill and/or dying and their last wish is for her to agree to the marriage
- Being told or been made to feel she is worthless if she has been raped and that marriage is her only choice
- Being threatened with, or being abused sexually, as a result of refusing marriage.

Dowry abuse

Dowry abuse occurs when the husband or his family continues to harass the wife or her family - sometimes with threats of physical violence - for more money, or other gains after the marriage. Shakti has worked with women who have been abused and/or abandoned because of their family's inability to meet these demands.

Abandonment, being made to work in slave-like conditions, or abused in another manner as a result of insufficient dowry payments or increased dowry demands, are forms of domestic violence.

Community pressure

No major world religion condones domestic violence. Anyone who claims that leaving a violent relationship or forced marriage is wrong according to religion is using religion as a tool of control and a form of abuse.

Image sources for Facilitation Guide and Women's Handbook

Cover page blue/silver design: Adapted by J Reedy from screen-printed postcard attributed

to "artisan of Eastern Screen Printers".

Feather motif throughout both documents retrieved from

<http://data3.whicdn.com/images/13224963/original.jpg>

Karearea - New Zealand falcon retrieved from

http://www.mackenziemagic.net.nz/assets/galleries/falcons/_resampled/ResizedImage600399-DMF1607-2.jpg

Kete photo retrieved from http://www.taongatukuiho.co.nz/images/kete_kai.jpg

Image sources for Choose a Picture Activity

1. image: <http://disabilitypridenyc.com>
2. Whina Cooper and her mokopuna Irene starting the hikoī at Te Hapua. Courtesy of the New Zealand Herald, 1975.
3. http://wallpaperswide.com/tropical_paradise_4-wallpapers.html
4. <http://gardenblog.winterthur.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/4-25-2012-planting-wild-garden-april-26-2011-kl5-017.jpg?w=300>
5. <https://journeytothestars.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/moon-and-me-2.jpg>
6. https://scenesfromthetrail.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/dsc_69251.jpg
7. <http://www.3dwallhd.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/27/beach-Autumn-Lake-Wallpapers.jpg>
8. <http://www.3dwallhd.com/river-wallpapers-2.html>
9. http://images.sodahead.com/polls/001893075/558363296_AnimalLove_xlarge.jpeg
10. <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/de/65/2e/de652e38626168e3f88c564d6d0be6ed.jpg>
11. Photograph by Jess Reedy
12. http://ep.yimg.com/ca/l/yhst-139405794561446_2312_85958
13. <http://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/media/11140/police-generic-nz-herald.jpg?mode=crop& width=635&height=357&quality=80&scale=both>
14. http://www.stuff.co.nz/content/dam/images/1/2/3/y/q/j/image.related.StuffLands_cape_SixteenByNine.620x349.12eqjw.png/1425250568510.jpg
15. <http://rakai.co.nz/img/karl-weaving.jpg>
16. <http://images.natureworldnews.com/data/images/full/7340/baby-baboon.jpg?w=600>
17. Photograph by John Halvorson, National Geographic Your Shot
18. Photograph by Terry Allen, National Geographic Your Shot
19. Photograph by Jess Reedy
20. <http://www.theexchange.org.nz/assets/Uploads/project-2362x800-07.jpg>
21. Photograph by Graham McGeorge, National Geographic Your Shot
22. http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3918/15099109805_affc7a82e5_m.jpg

23. Photograph by Patrick Quinn, National Geographic Your Shot
24. Photograph by [Chris Prescott](#), National Geographic Your Shot
25. Photograph by [Julian Bound](#), National Geographic Your Shot
26. Photograph by Cedric Delves, National Geographic Your Shot
27. Photograph by Kersti Kalberg, National Geographic Your Shot 040514-pod-best-of-april-03.jpeg
28. http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/667/cache/storm-clouds-chile_66705_990x742.jpg
29. http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/835/cache/coppery-headed-emerald-hummingbird_83584_990x742.jpg
30. <http://cdn.3news.co.nz/3news/AM/2013/5/6/296700/140448263.jpg>
31. Photograph by Hideta Nagai, National Geographic Your Shot
32. Photograph by [Candy Caldwell](#), National Geographic Your Shot
33. Photograph by Joel Sartore, National Geographic Your Shot
34. http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2213/2099651169_43424494dc_m.jpg
35. https://c3.staticflickr.com/3/2219/2099637037_231989208e_n.jpg
36. <http://www.ashams.com/admin-aps/cro.php?width=640&height=360&cropratio=6.4:3.6&image=/Files/2015-04/20150417-175518368919645.jpg>
37. http://rlv.zcache.com/peace_and_love_postcard-r8647781c36c6429bb9788e9968b8befc_vgbaq_8byvr_324.jpg
38. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/content/dam/images/1/3/c/j/9/1/image.related.StuffLandscapeSixteenByNine.620x349.13cizn.png/1424120685940.jpg>
39. Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, Photograph by Carl Walrond
40. from ; <http://www.womenslifelink.com/money-issues-and-your-health/>
41. <http://www.stress.eu.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Definition-du-stress.jpg>
42. <https://www.californiakids.org/images/kids2.jpg>
43. <https://dailyamrim.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/protect-children.jpg>
44. http://farm8.static.flickr.com/7567/15295718344_ef12959e24_m.jpg Steve Tylor
45. <http://www.hearos.com/images/toddler-covering-ears.jpg>
46. Aaron Glemboski: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/31849406@N08/6937035531>

Appendix R: Women's Group Handbook



Women's Group Handbook

Palmerston North
Women's Refuge



**WOMEN'S
REFUGE**

National Collective of
Independent Women's
Refuges Inc.
Ngā Whare

Women's Group Handbook

My name (optional):

Women's Group start date: _____ End date:

Weekly session day and time:

Location:





Welcome - Haere mai!

Thank you for joining the Women's Group. We acknowledge the brave step you have made in joining us today and we all look forward to getting to know you over the next 12 weeks.

This handbook is yours to keep. It contains the hand-outs that we will discuss during the Women's Group sessions, so please make sure you bring this with you to each session. There may be some hand-outs that we won't have time to cover - so we ask you to please look over each section at home following sessions.

Some of this information may not be useful for you right now; but we encourage you to keep this handbook in a safe place so that you can look over the material in future - you never know when a particular sentence or paragraph may "click" with you as you reflect on your experiences.

If you have any questions about the material in this folder, or if you need to get hold of us at any time, please contact us using the numbers below.

*Kia kaha, Kia toa, Kia manawa nui.
Be strong, be brave, be full of heart.*

Palmerston North Women's Refuge
10 Linton Street
PO Box 573
Palmerston North 4440
pnwr@inspire.net.nz
Public Office: (06) 354 5355
3640

Levin Women's Refuge
C/- Footsteps Building
534 Queen Street
Levin 5510
pnwrlevin@gmail.com
Public Office: (06) 368

24-hour Crisis Line: (06) 356 5585
0800 REFUGE

Copyright © The National Collective of Women's Refuges Inc. and Jess Reedy
Permission to use material from this document in other publications must be sought from the authors.
May 2015.

Table of Contents

Your Women's Group information	1
Welcome - Haere Mai!	2
Women's Refuge contact details.....	2
Palmerston North Women's Refuge Women's Group: Our Kaupapa - Our Purpose	4
Weekly session schedule	4
Group Agreement.....	5
The 5 principles of violence and responses to violence	6
What is domestic violence?.....	7
Upholding Dignity	8
Network of Dominating Tactics	9
Examples of behaviours that are abusive.....	10
Our responses to abuse.....	14
Whenever people are badly treated they always resist.....	15
Kete of responses	15
Nicole's Story	17
People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse.....	22
Perpetrators know victims will resist so try to stop their resistance	24
A role model who gives me strength.....	25
Abusive behaviour is always deliberate	26
Some commonalities among perpetrators.....	28
Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence	30
Media article: Blaming Victim Cry of Powerful	33
<i>Women's Group Guide for Positive Responses</i>	36
<i>There's no excuse for domestic violence</i>	37
Demolishing domestic violence myths	39
Valuing victim's emotional responses	43
Children and young people's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home	47
Safety planning, Protection Orders, and Men's Programmes.....	52
The Equality Wheel.....	53
Your dignity, safety and healing	54
Women's Group Session Feedback Form	57
Women's Group Completion Questionnaire	58

Women's Group Programme: Our Kaupapa - Our Purpose

We aim to provide a safe place for women who are or have been victims of violence to share their experiences and knowledge, and to acknowledge and honour women's resistance.

The Women's Group seeks to enact our kaupapa and purpose by supporting:

- Belonging, connection and support among Women's Group members;
- Positive social responses that uphold women's mana and dignity;
- Learning together and from one another: Sharing resistance stories and accounts of women preserving their dignity;
- Restoration of wellbeing and mauri;
- Resource building: increased knowledge of supports available to women in the community;
- Additional conditions for enhancing safety.

Weekly Session Schedule

Session	Topic
1	Welcoming women and orientation
2	What is domestic violence?
3	Whenever people are badly treated they always resist
4	People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse
5	Perpetrators know victims will resist so try to stop their resistance
6	Abusive behaviour is always deliberate
7	Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence
8	Demolishing domestic violence myths
9	Valuing victim's emotional responses
10	Children and young people's responses to perpetrators' violence at home
11	Safety planning, Protection Orders, and Men's Programmes
12	Your dignity, safety and healing

Group Agreement

The Group Agreement is important for creating a safe environment based on dignity, respect, and trust. This defines group members' expectations of one another for upholding safety.

Sample Group Agreement

- Confidentiality
- The right to pass
- It's OK to cry
- Respectful listening - no interrupting others
- The right to different opinions
- Alcohol & illegal drug free (before and during sessions)
- Punctuality - starting and finishing on time
- Stay on topic 😊
- No violence, threats or intimidation towards other group members

Safety Plan

- Free to leave the group session at any time
- Before leaving the building, tell someone
- Don't leave upset or angry



The 5 Principles of Violence and Responses to Violence⁸¹

These principles are the building blocks of the whole Women's Group programme.

1) Whenever people are badly treated, they always resist.

In our experience, people always resist violence and abuse in some way. They will stand up against, not comply with, and try to stop or prevent violence, disrespect, or oppression.

2) People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse.

Abuse can be very dangerous, so usually victims resist it in ways that are not obvious. Others probably will not even notice the resistance so they assume that victims are “passive” and “they do not do enough to stand up for themselves.” In fact, victims actively resist violence, and in real life, the so-called “passive” victim does not exist.

3) Perpetrators of violence know that victims will resist, so they try to stop victims from resisting.

For instance, some women will resist their husband's abuse by leaving the house. Knowing this, some men will try to stop this resistance by taking shoes, money, bankcards and car keys. Others might pull the phone out of the wall to prevent their wives from calling for help.

4) Violent and abusive behavior is always deliberate.

As shown in point 3 above, the fact that perpetrators make plans to stop victims from resisting indicates that their abuse is deliberate. Perpetrators also make decisions about how they will be abusive. For example, some men think it is “wrong to hit a woman”, but they will push, grab and verbally abuse their partners.

5) When it comes to domestic violence, appearances are deceiving.

Onlookers cannot easily see what occurs in domestic violence situations.

Typically, perpetrators and victims do not tell others what is happening. Perpetrators cover up their abusive behaviour. They may blame the victim and be friendly and charming to the outside world, so that they do not have to face the consequences of their actions.

⁸¹ We gratefully acknowledge the work and words of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik through their book *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007).

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is unacceptable

Men's violence against women is not uncommon in Aotearoa New Zealand and in the Women's Group we take all forms of abuse seriously.

Legal definition of Domestic Violence

The Domestic Violence Act 1995:

Violence against a person by another person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.

Following the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 2013: Psychological abuse now includes financial or economic abuse.

90% of protection order applicants (victims) are women and 88% of respondents (perpetrators) are men.⁸²

How common is domestic violence?

- Lifetime occurrence of women experiencing domestic violence and sexualised violence for New Zealand is the highest amongst the 14 most economically developed countries with available data.
- 1 in 3 New Zealand women have reported domestic or sexualised violence in their lifetime.

In 2013:

- There were 95,000 NZ Police family violence investigations, of these
- 59,137 had at least one child (under 16 years) present.
- Women's Refuge received 81,7000 crisis calls.
- 7,642 women accessed Women's Refuge services in the community.
- These figures don't reflect the full extent of domestic violence in the population, they do offer a glimpse into the scale of this problem.
- A barrier to finding out rates of domestic violence occurrence is that recorded data only is available (i.e. only what is reported to Police and Women's Refuge).
- Disclosure to services such as Refuge and Police is much lower than actual rates in the community.

⁸² New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse (2013).

Upholding Dignity

- ❖ I am not to blame for being abused
- ❖ I have resisted abuse all along
- ❖ I have done many things to keep myself and others safe
- ❖ I have upheld my dignity
- ❖ I have upheld my mana
- ❖ I am not the cause of another person's violent behaviour
- ❖ I do not like or want to be abused, ever
- ❖ I am an important human being
- ❖ I have a strong sense of fairness
- ❖ I am a worthwhile woman
- ❖ I deserve to be treated with respect
- ❖ I can decide for myself what is best for me
- ❖ I can make changes in my life if I want to
- ❖ I am not alone, I have proven this by asking others for support
- ❖ I have a right to safety and wellbeing
- ❖ We are together today because we have resisted violence



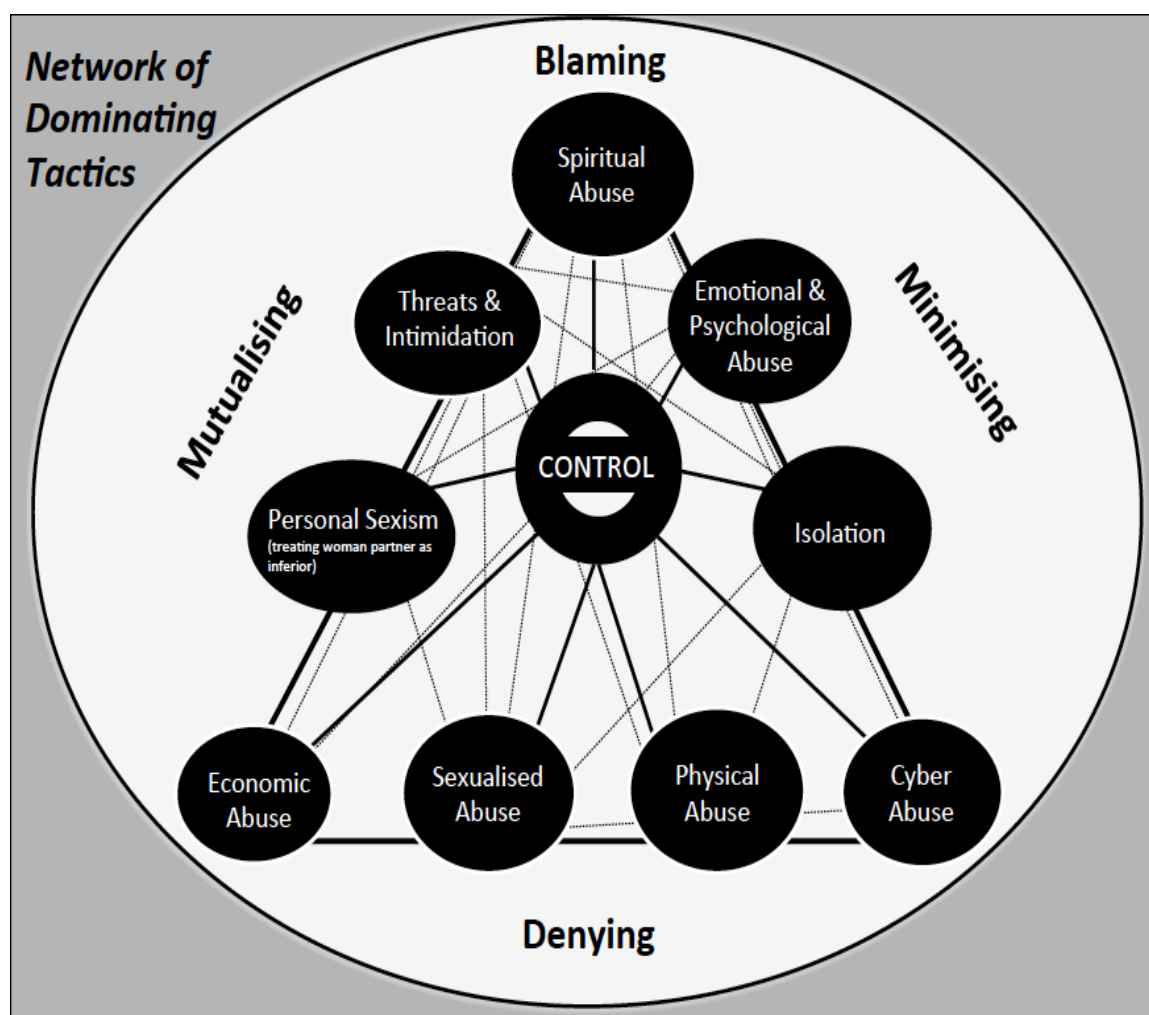
Network of Dominating Tactics

Purpose of this section

- To acknowledge ways perpetrators abuse victims - putting the abuser into the picture.
- To show that domestic violence is destructive and is a violation of victims' rights to liberty and safety.
- To acknowledge ways perpetrators have been abusive towards women in the group.
- To recognise ways women in the group have responded to people who have been abusive.

Abusive behaviours can be roughly divided into major types including emotional or psychological abuse, isolation, intimidation, economic abuse, physical abuse, sexualised abuse, spiritual abuse, personal sexism (treating women partners as inferior), and cyber-abuse. There are many examples of forms of abuse within each of these 9 major types.

- The Network of Dominating Tactics shows how these 9 types of abuse are interconnected - and not always clearly distinguishable from each other. For example, by using isolation it may be easier to physically abuse a partner, as it will be less noticeable to other people outside the relationship.
- The Network also shows the relationship between a partner's controlling behaviour and other forms of abuse as a way for the perpetrator to dominate their partner and to get what they want.
- When the perpetrator and other people blame the victim, and deny, mutualise and minimise the abuse this works to conceal the abuse and victims' resistance to it.



Here are just a few examples of behaviours that are abusive:

1. Emotional or psychological abuse:

- Frequent insults, name calling, yelling, swearing at you, putting you down, belittling, constant criticisms, undermining your abilities as a partner, mother etc., attacking a person's belief system, culture, ethnicity;
- Abusing or neglecting children, attempting to stop the mother from intervening;
- Physically abusing, threatening to abuse, or emotionally abusing you in front of your children or while you are holding your young child;
- Mocking you; humiliating or embarrassing you in front of other people;
- Telling you (and other people) that you're "crazy" or mentally unwell;
- Using the victim's lack of legal rights to get more power and control over her (i.e. immigrants without citizenship status);

- Disrespect: Interrupting, not listening or responding, twisting your words, putting you down in front of other people, saying bad things about your friends and family;
- Abusing Trust: Lying, withholding information, cheating on you;
- Breaking Promises: Not following through on agreements, not taking a fair share of responsibility, refusing to help with child-care or housework;
- Trying to use the children to relay abusive messages;
- Minimising (e.g. making light of abusive behaviour and not taking your concerns about it seriously);
- Denying (e.g. saying the abuse didn't happen, shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour);
- Blaming (e.g. saying you caused it or someone else caused them to abuse you);
- Monitoring texts, phone calls;
- Telling you where you can and cannot go;
- Harassment: Making uninvited visits or calls, following you, checking up on you;
- Constantly telling you about your "faults" or comparing you negatively with other people;
- Shaming you in front of others;
- Making you become whakamā;
- Giving you 'the silent treatment' if they aren't in control;
- Mocking or undermining your achievements;
- Insisting on going everywhere with you.

2. Isolation:

- Preventing you from going where you want to, when you want to, and with whomever you want to e.g. trying to stop your access to family and/or friends;
- Trying to stop you from having social contacts, visitors, outside interests, or from working;
- Taking away your access to a vehicle, transportation, phone or computer;
- Being overly protective or extremely jealous to try to justify actions.

3. Coercion (threats and forcing) and intimidation:

- Destruction of property (e.g. throwing and breaking things);
- Attempting to control what you say or do not say;
- Attempting to make you account for every minute of your day;
- Threatening to hurt anyone who helps you;
- Threatening to hurt or kill children, pets, friends, or family;
- Threatening to use the legal system to stop your access to your children;
- Threatening to kidnap the children;
- Threatening to commit suicide;

- Attempting to control with fear, looks or gestures;
- Threatening to be abusive if you don't do what he want;
- Displaying weapons as away of making you afraid or directly threatening you with weapons;
- Using his anger or “loss of temper” as a threat to get you to do what he wants;
- Threatening to disclose the victim’s sexual orientation if you don't do what the perpetrator wants;
- Threatening to report you to the authorities (e.g. police or CYFs) for something you didn’t do;
- Trying to make you do illegal things;
- Trying to force you to drop charges.

4. Economic abuse:

- Keeping his money from the family;
- Trying to stop the victim from earning money or going to school, polytech or university;
- Trying to force you to work;
- Denying your access to family assets like bank accounts, credit cards, or car;
- Attempting to force you to hand over money;
- Making all the decisions about how to spend the money;
- Keeps money for themselves and leaves you struggling to buy necessities;
- Attempting to force you to account for how you spend money;
- Forcing the family to live in poverty when money is available;
- Gambles all the family money away;
- Trying to force you to ask for money to buy or do things;
- Limiting your access to medical or dental assistance;
- Does not contribute to raising children you have together;
- Tries to force you to illegally apply for a benefit;
- Puts debts and bills in your name or uses your name to get credit.

5. Physical abuse:

- Grabbing, pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking;
- Attempting to strangle, breaking bones, knifing;
- Shooting or using other weapons;
- Physically prevents you from leaving;
- Locking you out of your home; abandoning you in an unsafe place;
- Preventing you from taking medications or getting medical care;
- Denying you access to food, fluids or sleep;
- Forcing you to take alcohol or other drugs;
- Driving recklessly;

- Murder.

6. *Sexualised abuse:*

- Rape;
- Demanding that the victim wears more (or less) provocative clothing;
- Forcing you to do sexualised acts with objects, friends, animals;
- Trying to force you to have sex for money, food etc.;
- Insisting you act out pornographic fantasies;
- Denying your sexuality;
- Threatening to expose your sexual orientation to friends, family or employer, if you are gay or lesbian;
- Making degrading sexual comments, leering;
- Making threats if you don't comply with sex;
- Pressuring to have sex.

7. *Spiritual abuse:*

- Ridiculing your religious/ spiritual beliefs;
- Attempting to force or pressure you to accept spiritual beliefs or engage in religious/ spiritual practices;
- Attempting to stop you expressing, practicing or participating in spiritual practices;
- Using spirituality/religion as a way to attempt to control and manipulate you;
- Putting down your whakapapa;
- Trying to cut you off from your cultural heritage;
- Trying to stop you from following your dreams.

8. *Treating women as inferior:*

- Being the one to define men's and women's roles;
- Treating you like a servant;
- Acting like "master of the castle."

9. *Cyber abuse:*

- Sending/posting data/information by email, instant messaging, social networking sites, blogs, websites, mobile phones that may be threatening, harassing, blackmailing, objectionable, or stalking;
- Sending a naked or embarrassing photo of you to others to harassing or blackmail you.

- These forms of abuse can interconnect to form a pattern in which a partner's controlling behaviours can restrict women's freedom and undermine their dignity.
- Domestic violence usually involves the abuser's patterns of controlling and abusive behaviours over time rather than single, one-off incidences.
- Taken together, a person's control and abuse over time works to suppress women's and children's resistance.

Our responses to abuse

- Even though people might try to say you did "nothing" to stop a person from abusing you, actually, people respond in all sorts of ways. Most responses are not visible to others.
- Revisit the 9 types of abuse and reflect on these questions:⁸³
 - When something bad or harmful happened to you, what did you do?
 - d. What thoughts came into your mind?
 - e. How did you feel?
 - f. What did you notice in your body?
 - If you've known someone who has dealt with something similar, how have you responded to them?
 - Why do you think you responded that way, and how did you know to do that?

⁸³ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

Whenever people are badly treated they always resist

Purpose of this section

- To challenge the harmful belief that victims are passive recipients of violence - that victims do nothing to keep themselves safe or uphold their dignity.
- To deepen our understanding of the idea that people always respond to violence.
- To identify ways women respond to and resist abuse to maintain their dignity and keep themselves and others safe.

Activity 1: Kete of Responses



A woman and man return home to their children after a dinner out, and send the babysitter home. The man then begins to yell at and threaten the woman, who responds by trying to keep quiet so as not to awaken and scare the children. However, the man becomes more aggressive and then physically violent. The oldest child comes downstairs and is terrified by the scene. The man swears and spits on the woman and kicks her in the ribs before he kicks the door open and leaves.

What things did the woman do when the man started yelling and threatening her?

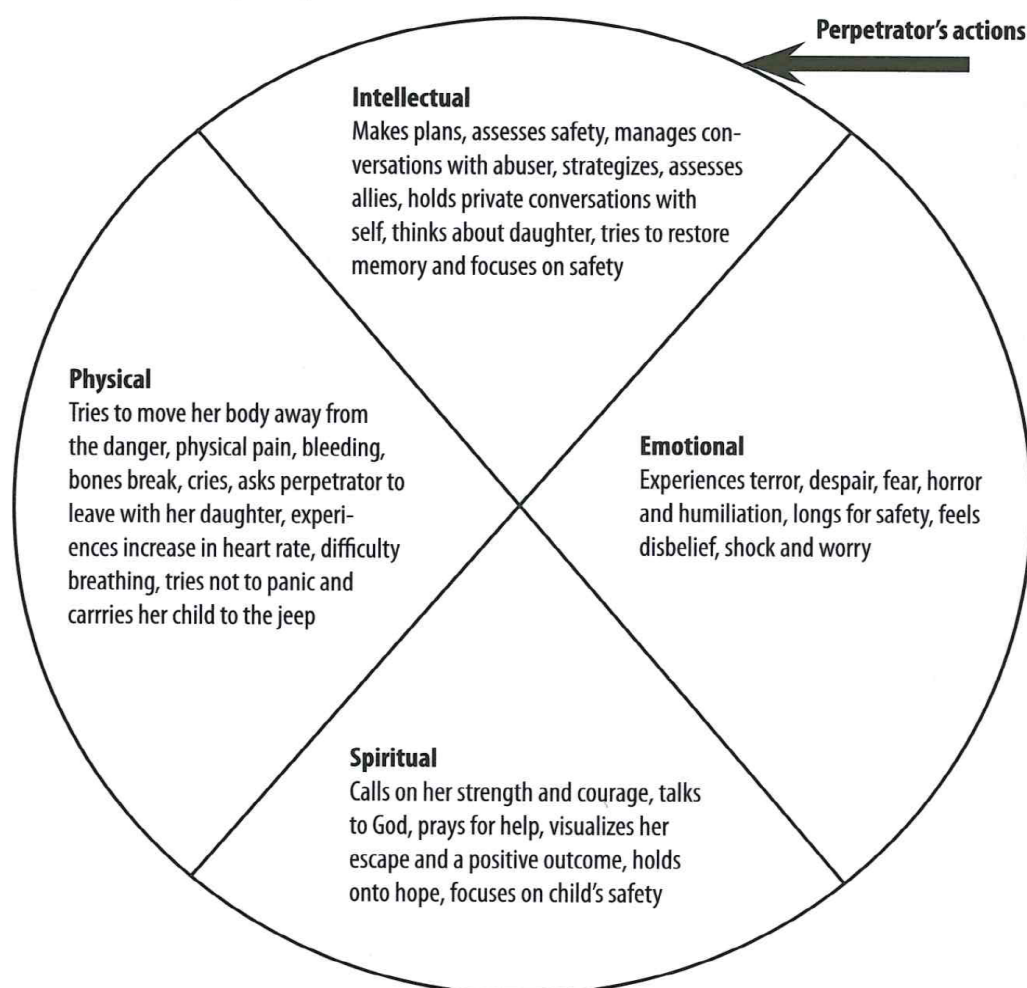
- *Describe some things the women might have felt and thought about while the man started yelling and threatening her?*
- *What might the woman done, thought about, and felt during and after his yelling and threatening and attacking until he kicks open the door and leaves?*
- *How did the oldest child respond to the man's yelling, threatening and physical attacking? How might the oldest child have responded in his or her thoughts and feelings? You might also have ideas about how the younger child responded after waking?*
- *How might the woman have responded after the man left (over minutes, hours, a day, a few weeks)? What things do you think she might have done, thought and felt over these time frames?*

- How did the woman respond in ways that indicate physical, emotional, intellectual (in her thoughts) and spiritual resistance.
- How did the woman try to keep herself safe? Protect her children? Protect others? Keep her self-respect and dignity?

- *We can describe how the woman resisted the violence through her physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual responses.*

Cathy Richardson developed the Medicine Wheel of Responses with families belonging to Métis,⁸⁴ and other Indigenous peoples of Canada. The Medicine Wheel of Responses is a tool used to acknowledge how people have resisted violence and reasserted their dignity, often in seemingly "small" ways not noticed by others.⁸⁵

Medicine Wheel of Responses



⁸⁴ Pronunciation of Métis is similar to maytee.

⁸⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the right to reproduce the Medicine Wheel of Responses courtesy of Cathy Richardson 2008 and recognise its cultural and sacred significance to Cathy Richardson and her Métis family and People.

- Reflect on some ways you have responded to abuse to uphold your dignity in relation to the Medicine Wheel.

Activity 2: Nicole's Story⁸⁶

I met Mike, a good-looking educated man, after the end of a 15-year marriage. I was attracted to his sense of humour, his kindness towards others and his sensitive and caring manner. He had a child from his first marriage and he spoke of how much he loved being a dad. I had two children from my first marriage and our blended family started off well.

One day I experienced a dark side of Mike. I had told him I wanted to spend the weekend visiting my sister with my two children. Mike attacked me verbally for several hours, talking down to me as if I was a child, insulting me, and making hurtful accusations against me. He paced back and forth across the floor in a rage. I was shocked.

He called me names and said I was “immature, self-centered, and uncaring.” He twisted things that had happened in the past, and said they “proved I was selfish.” Mike acted like a lawyer in a courtroom, accusing me of a terrible crime.

The more I stood my ground the angrier Mike became. He threatened to ignore my children and to stop doing anything together as a family. Trying to stop the verbal abuse I agreed to have him come to my sister's place. Mike calmed down and said he had gotten angry because I had provoked him.

He claimed he would not have become angry if I had been more loving and understanding. I was confused because although I didn't think I had done anything wrong – the way Mike behaved towards me made me wonder if I had actually done something wrong. Even though I doubted myself, I still believed I did not deserve to be sworn at and put down.

Mike's verbal attack on me became one of many. He began to verbally assault me every few weeks. These attacks built up over a few days. Mike's behaviour always got worse until I eventually gave into him.

An example of this was when I told Mike that one of my children needed new shoes. Mike insisted my child wear rough old shoes that didn't fit her, even though we could well afford new ones. Mike called me names, swore at me and made offensive comments about my child. He again twisted past events, and said everything proved I was “favouring my own child”.

The more I stood up for my child, the more Mike abused me. He threatened to ignore my children, and to end the relationship. He even threw a heavy iron towards me. After a couple

⁸⁶ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use parts of Nicole's Story and other ideas from *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007).

of days of these verbal attacks, I asked my mum to buy a new pair of shoes for both Mike's child and my own, even though Mike's child had new shoes.

Mike did his best to try and prevent me having contact with friends and family. For example, Mike tried to stop my relationship with a long time friend by being verbally abusive to me when I spoke with her. He accused me of not caring about the marriage, and of caring more for my friends than for him. He also grabbed the phone from me when I was talking with this friend, then yelled and cursed at my friend for four hours. After this, I talked with her only when Mike was not around.

Mike always blamed me for his anger and verbal attacks. I thought this was ridiculous. I sometimes became really angry that he twisted things around to try to make it seem it was my fault he was abusive. It was not safe for me to tell him I was angry, so I would sometimes vent my anger by going for a walk in the forest and swearing out loud about things he had done. I even used branches to hit trees.

I noticed some ways Mike showed he could control his abusive behaviour. For example, he could suddenly "turn off" his rage towards me, and be very nice to someone else moments later. I remember one time when he was yelling at me. It happened that the front door was open. Just at that moment, a friend knocked at the door, and then called out. I heard Mike swear quietly to himself. Then he said "I hope she didn't hear me." He immediately stopped yelling at me, and was very nice to our friend during her visit. By his actions, Mike obviously knew the way he was yelling at me was wrong in the eyes of others. It felt good, in a weird way, to see that Mike was fully aware his behaviour was unacceptable.

Mike also showed control over his rage by threatening me with abuse if I did not do what he wanted me to do. He knew I hated his verbal attacks, so he would often threaten to become "upset" (his code word for abuse) if I did not do what he wanted. I remember thinking "if Mike can plan in advance to be abusive, he must be able to turn on his rage when he wants to try to get control over me." It was quite a shock to realise he could control his anger.

Yet another way Mike showed control over his behaviour is that he did not physically abuse me, so although he scared me by throwing heavy objects in my direction, he never did touch me. His verbal abuse was so horrible though, I remember thinking "I almost wish he would hit me, and then there would be something visible that would show how much he is hurting me."

I also noticed Mike was a lot meaner to me than he was with other people. When Mike was abusive to me, he often found excuses for his behaviour by saying he was "over-tired," or was "stressed" by something else in his life. I noticed, though, Mike still was able to be kind and respectful to our friends and neighbours when he was tired or stressed.

After many months of being frequently verbally assaulted by Mike, I reached the point where I was "walking on eggshells" all the time. I did not feel at all safe, so instead of being assertive, I kept things to myself. I was afraid of his verbal and emotional abuse, and also when Mike swung heavy objects in his hand and threw them in my direction. I tried to do everything he wanted, to try to stop him from getting angry.

Even though I tried to “keep under the radar,” sometimes Mike’s abuse was completely unpredictable. I remember feeling very hurt when Mike would start vicious verbal attacks over stupid little things. One time, I forgot to buy peanut butter from the shop, and Mike became enraged, accusing me of being “disorganised” and “incompetent.” He insulted me by talking down to me as if I was a child, and instructed me on “how to better organise my life.”

During these depressing times, I remember that in the midst of Mike’s degrading verbal assaults, I would hold my head up high and say to myself, “stand tall,” to maintain my dignity. After I started to keep my thoughts and feelings to myself, Mike started accusing me of being “cold” and “distant.” I then remember numbing my feelings to lessen the pain.

Our children were also afraid of Mike. I could see they also “walked on eggshells” around him. He was controlling with them, would often yell and belittle them, and would give them harsh punishments for their mistakes. For example, he locked them in the bathroom, or sent them to the cold, unfinished garage. He knew the children were afraid of the dark so he would also turn out the lights. The children seemed to be “shut down” when they were with him, but when they were with me they behaved just like normal children.

It was not safe for me to directly oppose Mike, so I found other ways to try to support the children. For instance, Mike’s own 9-year-old child forgot to bring home a notice from school, and Mike yelled at him that he was “useless.” He said, “there was something wrong with his brain because he was so forgetful.”

Mike made him wash down the kitchen cupboards and the floor, and then sent him to bed from 3:00 in the afternoon until the next morning. I helped my stepson with the washing when Mike went upstairs. I also played games with him when he was sent to bed and told him all of the things I liked about him.

I also noticed how Mike talked about his abuse in a way that made it sound as though we were both involved in this behaviour. He would say “he was sorry for his part in our argument” even though I had hardly said a word. He would also talk about his abuse as “emotional intimacy.” I knew it was not safe for me to tell him this was a load of crap so I just thought it to myself.

One day, I came home to another “freak-out” from Mike. He attacked me for being away from home too much and not spending enough time with him. He swore at me, and said I was “not able to make a marriage work, and “it was no wonder I had been divorced before.” Mike then went upstairs. I heard him pacing the floors of the bedroom.

I felt at my wits’ end this time, and was so tired of “walking on eggshells.” I felt whatever I tried I was “damned if I did, and damned if I did not.” It was horrible living in such an emotionally shutdown state, and I felt I was “living a lie” by not being able to speak safely and freely to my husband. I reached a point where I thought about leaving the relationship, although it was the very last thing I wanted.

Around this time Mike escalated his abuse and told me to get out of the house and to leave the children behind. I felt really afraid, and wondered if he would be physically abusive this time. I made a final decision to flee with the kids if I had the opportunity. When Mike went to the bathroom, I grabbed the children and my packed bag, and drove to a friend's house.

During all this time, Mike kept phoning me, saying he really wanted to get back together. He said he "would do anything to save the marriage." For the first time ever, he was very apologetic. He admitted he had not treated me well in the marriage and promised he would change. He even told me he was seeing a counsellor for help.

I felt so confused about whether or not I should return to him so I went to counselling to help me make the decision. I thought if Mike was really sincere about changing his behaviour, going back to him would be the best solution for all of the family.

When I told the counsellor my story his response was to say, I had been part of the problem, and had let the abuse happen to me. The counsellor suggested to me that I was too indecisive, and unassertive. He also told me if I had been more assertive, Mike would love me for it and I could stop the abuse.

In my vulnerable state, when I so desperately wanted the marriage and family to be saved, I wanted to believe the counsellor was right. Maybe the power to change the marriage was in my hands, and even though I felt doubtful, it was a very appealing idea. I decided to return to Mike and that I would try being very assertive with him.

After I returned, it was only a matter of days before Mike began to be controlling and verbally abusive again. I asserted myself very strongly to try to get Mike to stop, but of course, Mike's assaults escalated. It was then I remembered how assertive I had been at the beginning of our marriage, and how unsafe it had always been to directly resist his abuse. I found out Mike was not sincere about changing his behaviour. This time, I did not stay long in the relationship. About two weeks later, at the next chance, I left again and never returned.

After I left, Mike tried to hide the truth about his violent behaviour. He described himself to family, friends, and neighbours as an "innocent victim" of my "sudden departure from the home." He told people I had left the home "because parenting was too overwhelming and I wished to pursue my career." To expose the truth, I told friends and family, including some of Mike's own family, about his abuse.

Some were supportive; however, I was discouraged by the victim-blaming reactions of others. Some people asked me why I had become involved in a relationship like this in the first place. Their questions suggested they thought there was something "wrong" with me. They would say things like "I had always thought you were a very strong person." Didn't they realise he was not 'like that' until the relationship was well established?

I noticed it was hard for others to understand how great my relationship with Mike was at the beginning. Unless people knew Mike really well over a long period of time, he seemed to be a

very nice and caring person. Some friends and acquaintances that knew Mike said they would never have guessed he could be abusive.

A lawyer who later represented me said things I found offensive because he suggested I was equally responsible for Mike's abuse. He talked about Mike's abuse as "couple bickering" in the marriage, refused to use the word "abuse," and always referred to the violence in the relationship as a "high conflict" situation.

People questioned why I did not leave the marriage sooner. One comment was, "I do not know how you could have put up with that." Another comment was, "I would never have been able to stay with a man who treated me like that." Simply the fact I had been a victim seemed to make others judge me negatively. I was frustrated people assumed I had been weak or passive in the marriage.

They did not realise I had done many things to oppose the violence and to keep my dignity. I was also frustrated that others did not understand how hard it was to leave the relationship, and that I suffered many losses in having left. I lost being a full-time parent, and the separation and divorce were really hard on the kids. I lost the relationship with my stepchild, my financial security, as well as most of my possessions, which I left behind when I fled the home. I also lost the hopes and dreams I had at the time of a happy marriage and intact family.

Well-meaning family and friends said they are afraid I will become involved in another abusive relationship. In fact, I truly feel I am a better, stronger person from having experienced this difficult situation, and from having resisted the abuse in so many ways. -

Whenever people are treated badly they always resist

- In our experience of working with victims of violence, none of them complied with violence, disrespect, or oppression. They always tried to reduce, prevent or stop the abuse in some way.
- Because they are often in such danger, victims often do not resist the perpetrator's abuse openly (although some victims do resist openly anyway). Often the only way victims can resist the abuse is in their thoughts, or through small acts that are sometimes not even noticed by others.
- A victim's resistance may not stop the abuse, because the perpetrator is making his own decisions about how he wants to behave.
- A perpetrator's abusive behaviour is totally his responsibility, and he is the only one who can stop the abuse. However, the victim's thoughts or actions indicate that in no way does she "go along with" the abuse, or "let it happen." The victim's resistance shows her desire to escape the abuse, to keep her dignity, and to make a better life for herself.

People tend not to notice that victims resist abuse

Purpose of this section

- To recognise women's emotional responses to abuse as purposeful rather than pathological (bad, wrong or mentally unwell).
- To challenge unhelpful labels people use to describe victims.
- To uphold group members' dignity and mana.

Redefining unhelpful labels

Reflect on the following examples of negative labels that could be applied to Nicole:

What Nicole did to resist ⁸⁷	How others may label this negatively
Nicole resisted Mike's abuse by not sharing her emotions in the relationship	This could be labeled as "emotional detachment", as an "inability to express emotions" or as "avoidance."
Nicole resisted abuse by refusing to "stoop to his level".	This could be labeled as "passive aggressive behaviour" or "difficult uncooperative behaviour."
Nicole resisted Mike's abuse by numbing her feelings	This could be labeled as "dissociation"

- Other examples could include sadness about what happened, or dissatisfaction for how you were treated by others being labeled as "depression". A women's worry for her safety in similar situations, or fear of judgment or rejection from people who don't understand may be labeled "anxiety".

- One problem with the use of these 'labels' is that they may be hurtful and offensive to victims.

- Another problem is that labels like these imply that both parties are responsible for ending the abuse.

- For example, Nicole's counsellor told her that if she had been more "assertive" she could have stopped the abuse, and her husband would "love her for it." This suggestion implied that Nicole was at least equally responsible for ending the violence.

⁸⁷ We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik for allowing us to use ideas from Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships (2007) for this activity.

- And another major problem with the use of labels is that they imply that the problem is in the victim's head. This both blames and pathologises the victim and shifts responsibility for dealing with the abuse from the perpetrator to the victim.
- Some women have been discouraged by the victim-blaming messages they have heard from others. They have found that examining their resistance to violence has helped them to resolve their feelings of being "damaged" and/or somehow responsible for the abuse.
- Reflect on your experiences of disclosing or wanting to disclose violence, or discrimination.
- Some of the responses you have received may have been **negative**, some responses will have been **positive**, and some responses will have been a **combination of helpful and unhelpful responses**.
- Share the details of a time they disclosed or wanted to disclose violence or discrimination.
- Some questions for you to consider could be:

"How did the person respond to you?"

"How did you then respond?"

"What did you do?"

"How did you know to do that?"



Perpetrators know victims will resist so they try to stop their resistance

Purpose

- To acknowledge that perpetrators think about how victims will resist their abuse, and make plans to try to stop this resistance.
- To examine ways perpetrators try to stop victim resistance.
- To clarify how the language of effects can conceal victim's responses and resistance to abuse.

People who abuse know that victims resist, so perpetrators act in ways to try to stop or suppress victim's resistance. Many actions of an abusive partner are designed to stop their partner from resisting their abuse.

- Perpetrators do not believe that victims will be passive. Therefore, perpetrators think about how victims will resist their abuse, and make plans to try to stop this resistance. For example, bullies do not pick on children who are bigger and stronger than they are. Bank robbers assume that tellers will resist, so they make plans to try to overcome that resistance.

- What does the bank robber do before going into the bank, then at the counter?

- Consider examples of ways perpetrators plan or do things to reduce the victim's chances of resisting.

- Nicole's story shows how Mike deliberately attempted to stop Nicole's resistance.

- e.g. He attacked her strengths, such as her assertiveness and the more she stood up for her child the more he abused her.

- e.g. He tried to upset her emotional wellbeing by verbally attacking her in unpredictable ways.

- Reflecting on this information do you notice any changes in how you think about your experiences of abuse? In how you think about the behaviour of the person who was abusive towards you?

A role model who gives me strength

Role model's name:

Facts:

Qualities:

Things in
common:

Abusive behaviour is always deliberate

- Perpetrators of violence often try to avoid responsibility for their abusive behaviour. They may blame someone or something else. They may find excuses for their violence such as, “they were in a blind rage,” or, “they were so out of control with their anger that they did not know what they were doing.”
- As well, they may blame their behaviour on their partners, an abusive childhood, stress, alcohol problems, their cultural background, financial problems, or their personalities (i.e. an “intense” personality; a tendency to “overreact”).
- Unfortunately, sometimes professionals, such as counselors, lawyers and judges, also hold beliefs about violent behaviour that excuse perpetrators of responsibility for their own behaviors.
- Nobody knows why some people are violent in their intimate relationships. Many studies have been done, but nobody has been able to find a “cause” of violent behaviour. We believe that this is because violence doesn’t have a particular cause. It is a tactic that perpetrators use to get what they want or think they deserve. In any case, we believe that there are no acceptable reasons for one partner abusing another in an intimate relationship.
- It is not surprising that many victims are also confused about their partner’s violent behavior, and do not understand why he does such mean and hurtful things. In our view, this “failure to understand” is another way that victims resist abuse. It shows that victims know that there are no acceptable reasons for abusive behavior.
- We have found from our experience as advocates that perpetrators' abuse is planned and deliberate. The most obvious ways perpetrators show that their abusive behaviour is deliberate is by trying to stop victims from resisting, as we discussed last week.

The following are some additional ways that perpetrators show they actually do have control over their behaviour:

- The perpetrator can suddenly change his behaviour in the middle of an abusive episode. Nicole noticed that Mike was able to stop his verbal attack when a friend unexpectedly showed up at their door. He quickly switched from being enraged to pleasant and friendly.
- The perpetrator threatens to be abusive if the victim does not do as he wishes. By threatening to “get upset” (i.e. abusive), Mike showed that he could predict his

abusive behaviour. Another man, who had smothered his wife on several occasions with a pillow, threatened further smothering to attempt to control her.

- The perpetrator does not abuse others - only his wife. Mike excused his behaviour towards Nicole by saying he was "overtired" or "stressed." However, Nicole noticed that he chose to be kind and considerate to others when he was tired and stressed. Apparently, Mike was able to choose the target of his "stressed" behaviour.

- The perpetrator makes decisions about the type and amount of abuse. Even when they become abusive, perpetrators have rules about how far they will go. For instance, Mike never physically hit Nicole. His abusive behaviours included throwing objects towards her (but never actually hitting her with the objects), and being verbally abusive. Other perpetrators will push, grab, or slap but they will not punch their partner. Others will never use a degrading name but they will constantly criticise.

- Perpetrators are selective about where they will inflict injury on a victim's body. Victims of physical abuse often say that perpetrators bruise them on parts of their bodies where the bruises will not be seen. Abusing victims in this manner allows perpetrators to better escape the consequences of their actions from others. Other perpetrators have deliberately assaulted their partners on their faces, thinking that they will then stay home and not dare to show their bruises to others. Actions such as these by perpetrators suggest that they are quite purposeful about how and where they are physically abusive towards their victims.

- Perpetrators are selective about when and where they will be abusive. An example of this behaviour is when a wife disagreed with something her husband said while they were together in the mall, but rather than responding abusively in public, her husband waited until they were in the privacy of their car before attacking her verbally. In contrast, other victims report that their partners wait until they are in a public situation to humiliate the victim by insulting her in front of others.

9. Reflect upon some of your abusive (ex)partner's behaviours.

10. Can you see evidence that some of these behaviours were deliberate, controlled or planned?

11. Does he or did he act differently when other people are/ were around?

*12. Is there any one who he lets see him abuse you? How do they respond when he does abuse you in front of them?**

13. How has he attempted to stop your resistance to his abuse?

14. Does he or did he treat others with respect and you with disrespect?

15. Write down all the evidence you have that indicates his abuse was deliberate?

16. What is it like for you to think of the perpetrator's behavior in this way?

* This question refers to situations where friends or family may support the abuser or to be abusive.

Some commonalities among perpetrators⁸⁸

- Over the years that Women's Refuge advocates and researchers have been working with and trying to understand domestic violence, they have noted some commonalities among some perpetrators. There are many differences too. For example, abusers come from all walks of life, some might be wealthy and others poor, some might be religious and others might not, some might be young and others much older, some might be shy and not have many friends and others might be outgoing and really well liked. The commonalities that have been identified are not characteristics of perpetrators, because some perpetrators don't fit with these descriptions. Even so, among all the different men who abuse, it is likely that they will share some or all of the following beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

Beliefs about rigid gender roles

The perpetrator has a strong belief in gender role stereotypes, often expecting his partner to serve him. He views women as inferior to men, responsible for the menial tasks, less intelligent, and unable to be a whole person without a male partner. Essentially, he believes the men have the right to control the behaviour of their female partners, with force if necessary.

Controlling behaviour

A perpetrator may believe absolutely and unquestioningly that his needs, wants and interests are more important and have more significance than his partner's. He also believes that self-worth and a secure masculine identity are about male dominance or being in control.

Unrealistic expectations

A perpetrator may expect his partner to meet all of his needs, to take care of everything for him emotionally and domestically. He may expect children to perform beyond their capabilities and may punish them excessively. For example, he may hit a two year old for wetting a nappy.

Jealous and possessive

⁸⁸ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for much of the content for Some commonalities among perpetrators.

A perpetrator may equate jealousy with love. He may question the victim about who she talks to, accuse her of flirting and having affairs or become jealous of her time spent with others. He may react with violence to any suggestions that his partner might consider leaving him. He may block his partner's access to use of a vehicle or telephone in the home. As a result, the victim is often isolated as her ties are severed to outside support and resources. A perpetrator may accuse his partner of having affairs with others, especially after his partner has taken a bath, or put on make-up, and clean clothes. Whenever his partner leaves the house, he may work himself/herself into a rage wondering where she is; exploding with jealousy when she returns.

Use of threats and/or mind games

He may threaten his partner with anything from taking away the children to suicide, with real potential for carrying out these threats. He may say things that are cruel and degrading, alongside proclaiming his love and need for his partner.

Convinced he is a victim

Historically, perpetrators were protected by traditions of privacy and the sanctity of marriage. Social values have changed and these men may feel that they've had something taken away. Many perpetrators will blame the system for their violent behavior. He may say that the police have no right to interfere in his family or he may say that the courts are causing family dysfunction by separating fathers from their families, even when he has been violent to his family.

Blaming

A perpetrator will often blame his partner or others for his own shortcomings and his violence. He may use this to justify the violence while believing that his partner is at fault and is exaggerating the issues.

Minimising or denying his violence

A perpetrator will often refuse to acknowledge that he has a problem or take responsibility for his actions (e.g. "alcohol made me do it"). He will often deny that there is violence and only acknowledge that there are "communication problems" between himself and his partner. He may blame his partner for the violence saying it was her fault because she made him do it and that she needs to shape up.

High level of reoffending

Without legal intervention, many perpetrators often abuse more frequently and more violently over time. Even with legal intervention, perpetrators often have very high rates of recidivism (repeat offending). There are no quick fixes: it takes years to change deeply rooted behaviours. Although many men can stop some forms of violent behaviour fairly quickly while on a programme, lasting change takes many years and they may use other less noticeable forms of abuse.

Manipulation of the criminal justice system

To avoid taking legal responsibility for his violence and/or to continue harassing his partner after separation, the perpetrator may apply for a protection order in retaliation to one taken out against him. He may try to delay court hearings and add to his partner's financial hardship. He may defend himself so that he can directly question her on the witness stand. He may report false crimes about his partner to government agencies.

Other people's responses to victims of domestic violence

Reflection points Part 1:

- In previous sessions we've focused on the idea that because victims' resistance to abuse is often not noticed, some people assume they haven't done enough to protect themselves.
- Some people may then believe that victims create their own misfortunes.
- As well, victims tend not to talk about their experiences of abuse. They may choose not to talk so that they are safer from the perpetrator, and they also may wish to avoid the negative judgments of others. Often family, friends, and professionals do not hear the full story of how much victims have suffered or have resisted the abuse.

- We've also looked at the idea that perpetrators are often good at hiding their violence, blaming the victim, and showing other people a positive image of themselves.

- Because of this deception, outsiders may view their abusive actions as being "out of character" and impulsive behaviour. People also tend to think that stress or other matters beyond the perpetrator's control cause the abusive actions.

- Since people tend not to notice victims' resistance to abuse, they may judge them harshly. Similarly, since they tend to excuse perpetrators, they may judge them mildly.

- Many victims of violence encounter messages that are painful and disheartening. For example, remember how in Nicole's Story a counsellor labeled her as indecisive and unassertive. This counsellor also implied that Nicole was responsible for the abuse in her marriage because "she did not assert herself strongly enough."

- But what happened when she did assert herself? (Mike tried to suppress her by being more abusive).

- Sometimes people imply that the victim was "damaged" and "responsible for the abuse." Well-meaning family and friends may feel there was something wrong with the victim for having "picked" an abuser to marry, and that "she is still so damaged that she is likely going to pick another abuser."

- Reflect on examples of harmful hurtful messages you have received or are aware of.

- Here are some other examples of damaging messages encountered by victims:



Reflection Points Part 2:

- Perpetrators aren't the only ones who try to hide victims' responses through language.
- It's also common for the media and helping professionals to talk about violence in ways that hide it or fail to acknowledge responses.
- Most instances in which professionals hide responses are due to careless uses of language to describe victims' responses.
- Often victims' responses are left out of description of the account. In fact, it's rare for news media to include how victims respond and resist when describing acts of violence.
- On the other hand, people often excuse perpetrators of their responsibility for their actions, and they fail to see that perpetrators deliberately try to stop victims' resistance.

Some typical statements made about perpetrators are:

- *“He was an outstanding member of our community. I would never have thought he could do something like this. Stress must have caused him to behave out of character.”*
- *“He seemed like such a caring person. He was devoted to his family. I cannot understand how this could have happened.”*
- *“He wrestled with his demons for a long time, but they finally overcame him.”*
- *“He witnessed his father abusing his mother, so this was all he knew.”*
- *“Anger always got the better of him. He could not seem to control his temper.”*
- *“Once he had a few drinks, the alcohol took over and he became scary.”*

- Reflect on your responses to these messages and your experiences of ways perpetrators you know of have tried to justify their violence.
- Reflect on experiences of ways other people such as family, whānau, friends, community, health or legal professionals have said or done things that excuse the perpetrator.

Reflection Points Part 3:

- So far, these points suggest that a perpetrator's responsibility for their abuse can be hidden or lessened through descriptions that attribute their abusive actions to outside forces beyond their control.
- We do this when we describe people as “losing control”, “blacking out”, or “losing their temper.”
- These statements indicate that when someone is in control, they do not harm others, and they only act abusively when they lose control.
- But we know that perpetrators do lots of things to try to stop victims from resisting and that they are virtually always in control of their decisions about who, when, and how they act abusively.
- Researchers Linda Coates and Allan Wade (2004) searched through dozens of reports written by professionals, especially judges, and found many examples of statements that justify perpetrators' abusive actions. Here are some of these:

- *“Alcohol was undoubtedly involved.”*
- *“The offender was overwhelmed by sexual urges.”*
- *“Because of his/her difficult childhood...”*
- *“At the time of the offence, the accused had lost his mother.”*
- *“This incident is completely out of character.”*
- *“He was angry.”*
- *“He/She could not stop him/herself.”*

- A crucial point here is that these statements make people out to be responsible only for their “good” behaviour, absolving them of responsibility when they act in ways that

harm others.

This example was taken from the website of a helping service:

“Our model for counseling enables women to cope with the effects of assault ranging from anger and grief to issues around sexuality, intimacy and trust.”

- Reflect on ways this message might hide women's responses.
- By saying “anger, grief, issues around sexuality, intimacy, and trust” are *effects* of an assault, the service's message conceals how the victim *resists*.
- Those “effects” suggest that it is problems in the women's head that need to be cured.
- On the other hand, if we frame them as responses, it becomes clearer that the victim is resisting.

Analysing news reporting of violence

Using the ideas from Reflection Points 2-3 search through newspaper and magazine articles that report violence and analyse ways language is used:

- To acknowledge and describe the victim's responses (if at all).
- To show whether and how the perpetrator was responsible for their violence.
- To find evidence of excusing the perpetrator or (or holding them responsible), or of mutualising the violence (making out that both parties were responsible).

E.g. of media comment

Blaming victim cry of powerful⁸⁹

By Jay Kuten

Wanganui Chronicle, 29 April, 2015

IT IS accurate to say I have been a critic of John Key's policies. I have certainly disagreed with several of the policies of the Prime Minister, particularly his assumption of an absolute power to send our young men and women to war without consent of the citizens.

This time is different in that the personal becomes political when the behaviour of the highest-ranking politician exceeds the permissible boundaries required of civil society. John Key has admitted to repeatedly invading the personal space of waitress Amanda Bailey, a nonconsenting adult female by pulling her ponytail. Both parties agree on the facts - it is the interpretation that is different. John Key seeks to minimise the gravity of the offence when he says it was "horsing around".

⁸⁹ Retrieved from http://m.nzherald.co.nz/wanganui-chronicle/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503423&objectid=11440279

The powerful - usually men - attempt to make themselves look the aggrieved victim instead of the other way round. Key says: "We have lots of fun and games there." By repeatedly stressing the playful nature of his hairpulling, Key prepares us to see Ms Bailey as somehow "over-sensitive". In other words, she is the one who is out of line, not him.

The media are beginning to blame the victim. A NZ Herald reporter first outed Ms Bailey, then ascribed a motive to the young woman's going public "because the Prime Minister "feels he is untouchable". We are led to believe Ms Bailey has a pre-existing agenda.

Mr Key's latest attempt of an explanation, in which he says he failed - in retrospect - to read her signals, is far from believable. Ms Bailey says she was uncomfortable each time he sought her out to repeat the pulling of her ponytail. She sought to hide from him.

To believe that a practised politician of Mr Key's experience has suddenly lost the ability to read another person's non-verbal cues requires a massive suspension of disbelief. In none of Mr Key's putting of light gloss on this behaviour, nor of his "apologies", does he deign to mention this woman by name, though known to all. Even there, she is objectified by him.

Ms Bailey's plight is what concerns me. As to John Key, the retrieved video showing the PM doing the same thing to little girls is even more serious. While children are unlikely to complain, they are also unable to consent. That is creepy.

Try putting yourself in Ms Bailey's shoes. He is the PM and you are a young worker who, presumably, needs to keep her job in the hospitality industry. You are repeatedly subjected to this man's impulses to touch your "tantalising" hair – every time he does it you feel more powerless until one day you burst with anger and tell the world about it. What do you think will happen to you? John Key will be fine. In the unlikely event he is forced to resign, he can retire to a beach house in Hawaii. It is the lingering consequence for Amanda Bailey that is worrisome.

In the US, President Bill Clinton's affair with 22-year-old Monica Lewinsky caused him temporary political pain, but he has earned over \$110 million since leaving office. Forty-year-old Ms Lewinsky, who was made into a joke, cannot get a job.

If John Key gets away with invading the personal space that is the privacy of an unwilling 26-year-old Amanda Bailey, what can he do to the rest of us? Oh, I forget - politically, he is supporting doing exactly that.



Jay Kuten (in photo) is an American-trained forensic psychiatrist who emigrated to New Zealand for the fly fishing. He spent 40 years comforting the afflicted and intends to spend the rest afflicting the comfortable.

Reader's comments:⁹⁰

Temp8127 - 09:06 AM Sunday, 26 Apr 2015 wrote:

Enough already. NZ has much more serious problems to deal with than just a few minor indiscretions. Practically all men do silly things or behave inappropriately at one time or another in their lives. What else is new?

Being a boring, staid, uptight person doesn't make them a capable leader of a country, nor does a few minor indiscretions make a person unfit to lead a country. Many of the world's great leaders have behaved badly on a personal level, but still have led their countries well.

If NZ'ers think that the most serious problem of the country and they base their decisions on it, is the playful touching of someone's pony-tail, I hate to think what the country will come to. Grow up, New Zealand! Look at the big picture. Make your political choices based upon the serious problems affecting NZ.

He wasn't bullying the waitress, he was just being silly, like men often are. Since women who are out of nappies are used to men behaving badly and it comes as no surprise when they do, even though they don't like it, this storm in a tea-cup won't make much difference to them. Most women have the brains to make their decisions on what matters and this incident is trivial.

Wiseacre - New Zealand - 09:07 AM Sunday, 26 Apr 2015 wrote:

"Men in authority have a long history of bullying and humiliating service staff, then - when called out on it - downplaying the situation by declaring it all just good fun.

⁹⁰ Readers comments retrieved from

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/opinion/news/article.cfm?c_id=466&objectid=11438244

Essentially blaming the victim for being 'unable to take a joke'.

It is about power and entitlement, with never a thought given to the rights and feelings of those being tormented.

Even when he knew offence had been taken and his advances were unwanted, John Key continued chasing the waitress around her workplace, humming the ominous 'Jaws' theme while trying to touch her inappropriately for his own amusement.

If I chased a waitress around pulling her ponytail, I would be trespassed. If I did the same in my office, I would be fired.

If it had been revealed before the election that then-Leader of the Opposition, David Cunliffe, had been tormenting a waitress in this manner, would he have been permitted to get away with an admission and a so-called apology?

No. Media outlets would have rightfully been demanding his resignation.

Once again, you fail to hold John Key to the same standards."

*Articles and readers' comments abridged.

Discussion Points Part 4: Positive social responses

- You may have also received social responses from people that are helpful and supportive.
- Reflect on which social responses you have found helpful (e.g. from friends, family, whanau, neighbours, services and professionals, media messages, strangers and random people...
- Reflect on how these helpful responses from other people made a positive difference e.g. to your own choices, options, safety, dignity, mana, wellbeing, mauri, other differences?
- Reflect on the kinds of social responses you would like to receive.

An examples of positive responses:

- Here is a list of pointers to guide other people in ways that support victims.

Women's Group Guide for Positive Responses

- ❖ *Don't judge*
- ❖ *Listen*
- ❖ *Believe*
- ❖ *Let me know it's not my fault*
- ❖ *Let me know there are no excuses for violence: Abuse is unacceptable*
- ❖ *Don't make excuses for the abuser*

- ❖ *Acknowledge my strength, courage, and resistance.*
- ❖ *Acknowledge that showing strength and courage may be my way of looking after you and trying to make you feel comfortable, so allowing me to feel weak, tired, sad, afraid and angry can sometimes help too.*

Reflections:

- *Consider how other people's responses can reveal perpetrators' abusive actions, acknowledge injustice for the victim, and contest the blaming and pathologising of victims.*

There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence

Some commonly repeated excuses are:⁹¹

1. *She wouldn't listen to me/I had no option/she drove me to it – asked for it/provoked me (it was her own fault).*

No excuse. Violence has no place in family relationships whatever the provocation or supposed reasons. People can learn other ways to deal with conflicts, frustrations or disagreements.

2. *She neglected the children/spent all the money/dented the car/slept with someone else/got drunk/acted stupidly (it was her own fault).*

No excuse. Violence will only add to problems a family experiences. Difficulties and frustrations need proper attention and a resolution that does not involve violence.

3. *It's my right and duty to discipline my family (she needed it/deserved it etc.).*

No justification. Genuine discipline does not involve violence. Families can learn to interact in ways that respect the rights of each person. Protection from family violence is a right recognised by the law.

4. *Everyone does it (it's normal/necessary/nothing wrong with it etc.).*

Not true. Everyone does not do it. It is not normal or necessary. It is against the law and is harmful to everyone involved and to society.

5. *I was brought up in a violent home. (I can't change what I was taught etc.).*

No excuse. Not everyone brought up in a violent home repeats the cycle. Many people choose not to be violent because they know from experience the suffering caused by violence in the home. People can reject what they were taught. Old patterns and attitudes can be replaced and new ideas can be learned.

6. *I had too much to drink/was stoned/out of it/I can't even remember etc.*

No excuse. If someone chooses to drink or abuse drugs and becomes violent he is choosing to be violent. Alcohol and drugs alone do not cause the violence.

7. *It was a bad time for me/I was exhausted/stressed/worried/at the end of my tether etc.*

No excuse. Bad times happen to everyone. There are ways of dealing with difficulties that don't involve violence.

⁹¹ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for ideas for the No Excuses activity.

8. *We've got a whole lot of problems and they make me react like that/we're poor/unskilled/ hopeless people etc.*

No excuse. *Violence adds to the problems of poverty, lack of skills and despair. Those problems themselves do not cause people to be violent.*

9. *I pay the bills, I'm in charge. (I keep control/I'm the boss/I make the rules etc.).*

No justification. *No one is permitted to be violent towards those they are responsible for. Attitudes about keeping control and being in charge are not suited to an adult relationship.*

10. *I have a problem with anger.*

No excuse. *Violence is a behaviour that may or may not have anything to do with anger. Anger can be openly expressed and managed. It is not acceptable or lawful to use violence to express anger.*

11. *I lost control, I can't help myself.*

No excuse. *The offender makes the decision to be violent and acts upon it. He also decides when to stop behaving violently. He chooses when, where and who will be at the receiving end of his violent outbursts. He is very much in control of the situation.*

12. *We (particular religious/ethnic/cultural groups/bikies/gang members/military etc.) do things this way.*

No excuse. *The law does not permit violence. It is unacceptable in all societies. Stereotypes and myths have built up around different groups of people and attitudes to violence. Violence against women is not and has never been a necessary part of any cultures' traditional and respected practices. There is no evidence that some ethnic groups are genetically more violent than others.*

13. *I'm sick. I can't help myself.*

No excuse. *If there is an underlying illness that is linked to violent behaviour, the person responsible for the violence needs to take responsibility for seeking treatment and becoming healthy again.*



DEMOLISHING domestic violence myths

Purpose of this section:

- To examine and challenge myths about domestic violence.
- To examine how these myths can lessen the perpetrator's responsibility for their abuse and can blame and pathologise victims.
- To acknowledge how these myths contribute to the social responses group members have received and what these experiences have meant for them personally.

- There are many myths about domestic violence. These myths help continue violence by concealing violence, hiding perpetrator responsibility, hiding victim responses and resistance, and blaming and pathologising the victim.⁹²

- In these ways domestic violence myths can make the perpetrator's actions seem ok. This can discourage women from seeking help and discourage others from helping.

- Domestic violence myths are damaging to victims and perpetrators.

1. People make a big deal about domestic violence, but it's not that common.

One in three NZ women experience physical and/or sexualised abuse throughout their lifetime. Women and children are more at risk of violence in their homes than in the street. As a private crime behind closed doors, domestic violence never shows up in statistics as much as it occurs.

2. She asked for it / she probably deserved it

No one has the right to abuse another person. Drunk or sober, provocative or agreeable, everyone has the right to be safe from violence. By focusing on provocation, we excuse the person actually committing the violence. Violence against women is a criminal act. Violence against any person is a criminal act.

No one 'deserves' or 'asks' to be beaten or emotionally tortured, least of all by someone who says they love you. Abusers often blame women and children for provoking them, but no behaviour justifies an abusive response. Children can be disciplined in other ways; family problems can be resolved without violence. There is no excuse for violence. The responsibility for violence lies firmly with the abuser. They make the choice to abuse.

3. It will get better

The longer the violence continues, the more serious the violence becomes. The relationship will only get better once the abuser stops violent and controlling behaviour.

⁹² Coates, Todd, & Wade (2000).

4. Her partner is only jealous because he loves her

Being jealous of someone, and acting on that jealousy, is a form of control. Fighting over someone is about control. Remember, we don't own anyone. Jealousy is not an indication of someone's love for another person.

5. Violence doesn't happen to middle-class women

Violence occurs across all classes and socio-economic groups. Wealthy abusers may use their resources to control their partner. Violence is reported less often amongst higher socio-economic groups.

6. Violence only happens in poor/ Māori/uneducated families

Abusers come from all walks of life, and anyone can be abused. Violence happens in all types of families, in urban and rural communities, in all ethnic groups, in rich, poor and middle-class families, of any age. The formal education of women in relationships with abusers ranges from no qualification to doctorate.

7. Children need fathers

Children need safety, security, healthy attachments to others, and good role models. Fathers who choose to be violent and abusive cannot provide any of these for their children. Fathers can choose to be non-violent with their women partners and children.

8. If she wanted to she could just leave

Many people do not understand why women experiencing their partner's abuse don't leave. Remember, it should not be the woman's responsibility to avoid the violence, it's the abuser who should stop being violent.

There are many reasons why women stay with someone who has been violent towards them. For example, reasons include hoping things will get better and believing his promises that things will change or he will change. Women will stay for economic reasons such as economic abuse or being in debt to others and having few options for supporting herself and or her children. Some perpetrators may threaten their partners and others with increased violence if they leave. Women may not be aware of sources of support and safety outside of their relationship. Some women may be pressured by family, whānau, and broader community expectations to stay with their abusive partner. These are a few reasons why women stay with abusive partners.

Most women with seriously violent partners eventually do leave, but may take a long time to get out, leaving and returning several times. We need to understand leaving as a process rather than a one-off event.

Some abusive partners intentionally use lots of negative behaviours to try to keep their boyfriend/girlfriend under control. For example, threats of self-harm/suicide, possessiveness, and ongoing promises to change. These actions can make it hard to leave partners without support.

9. Drinking causes violence

Alcohol and other drug abuse don't cause violence but may contribute to increasing the severity of the abuse. It is often used as an excuse for violence. Many violent offenders do not abuse alcohol or drugs, or may not be violent when intoxicated. Violent offenders who abuse alcohol or drugs need to address both problems. Continuing alcohol or drug abuse will reduce the effectiveness of stopping violence programmes.

10. Religious men are not violent

Men who have religious beliefs are just as likely as other men to be violent. Religious beliefs often stress male superiority in the household. This thinking underlies violence as men believe they are justified to punish women and children for not being obedient.

11. Women are just as violent as men

In all family violence statistics in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the majority of victims of violence are women and the majority of violent people are men. Some women are violent towards their children and partners. Sometimes women who are being abused respond violently in self-defence and this can include 'pre-emptive strikes' when the abuser is vulnerable i.e. when they are drunk or asleep. It's unusual for men to be seriously injured or killed by a woman, and very few men live in fear of their lives because of their female partner's violence.

In 2013, only 7% of applications for Protection Orders were from men, while 91% were from women (2% unknown gender). Some groups quoted in the media recently say that women are more violent than men. These claims are based on research that has been shown to be highly flawed. It uses 'conflict tactics scales', which counts acts of violence used by men and women in relationship conflict resolution. However, the intention, cause, or severity of the act of violence is not taken into account. In this research, there is no difference between an act of self-defence and an act of intimidation or one that produces fear. Also, a slap that breaks someone's jaw is counted the same as one that does not leave a mark. In addition, anything other than physical violence is ignored within these studies.

12. Violent men cannot control their violence.

Most people who get angry don't use violence to deal with it. There are other ways to manage anger. Men often believe this, which enables them to avoid taking responsibility for their own behaviour. Violence is a tactic of choice - men choose who, when and where they abuse. Most men who are violent to their partners appear reasonable and "respectable" outside the family. Most people who get angry don't use violence to deal with it.

There are other ways to manage anger. Abusers make the choice to be violent, and they also make the choice about who is going to be on the receiving end of the violence (i.e. their partner, whanau or family, but not to other people like workmates, neighbours etc.). Abusers can be calm and calculating when they use violence. The abuser is trying to get their own way through using violence, it's not just because they have a problem managing their anger.

13. Domestic violence is a heterosexual thing and is rare in lesbian and gay relationships

There is the same incidence of domestic violence in lesbian and gay relationships as in heterosexual relationships. The partner who is the abuser is not necessarily the one who is physically stronger, and there can be different forms of control used, i.e. one partner may threaten to out the other partner to her family or employer.

14. It's just the bash

Domestic violence is not just physical violence. When one act of physical violence occurs, there has usually been a long period of threats, controlling behaviour, mind-games, verbal abuse, and other forms of psychological and emotional violence. Women who have been abused often say that the emotional violence is far worse than the physical violence.

- Reflect on ways you have responded to domestic violence myths.



Valuing victim's emotional responses

- In previous sessions we discussed how victims receive a range of social responses during and after the violence, that is responses from other people including family, whānau, friends, professionals and media.
- We talked about ways that these social responses can sometimes be helpful and other times quite damaging to victim's safety, dignity and mana.
- One of the problems with negative social responses is that they position victims as damaged or disordered: as having something wrong with them.
- This happens a lot when we talk about the "effects" of violence on victims because this kind of talk does not allow much room for recognising all of the things victims think and do to try to keep their dignity and mana and create safety.
- In this way, a victim's responses get taken out of context, so other people often fail to understand how the victim's responses actually make sense in her situation.
- What happens when we talk about "effects" of violence on victims is that we start to see victim's actions and emotional responses to violence as underlying psychological problems in the victim's head. In these ways, people can think that it is the victim who has the problem that needs "fixing".

Some common responses to violence and oppression include:⁹³

- Sadness, despair, crying, or depression.
- Anxiety or worry.
- Difficulty focusing (selective concentration).
- Anger, rage, irritability.
- Flashbacks to those terrible moments.
- Social withdrawal.
- Feeling detached from others and emotionally numb (moderating emotional pain).
- Difficulty sleeping and nightmares.
- Being quick to startle.
- Freezing (actually vigilance or heightened awareness).
- Using drugs and/or alcohol (moderating emotional pain).
- Being preoccupied with food in restrictive or excessive ways.
- Gambling.
- Smoking.
- Shopping excessively or spending beyond your means.
- Being extremely careful with money and other resources such as food.
- Using TV and other media to avoid the present moment.

⁹³ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

- Exercising excessively or very little.
- Engaging in reckless or risky behaviours.

Additional responses experienced by victims that make sense in the context of violence:⁹⁴

7. *Fear: Fear of continued abuse, of what your partner will do to you or your children, other's disapproval, of going "crazy". Fear of no-where to go, that no-one will love and support you, of having no money. Fears can escalate into feelings of panic. Fears need to be listened to because they are vital signals about a threat to our wellbeing or safety.*
8. *Shame or being whakama: Other peoples responses to victims can give the message that "there is something wrong with me". A woman may feel disrespected, inadequate, unworthy or defective. Humiliation is a reasonable response to being abused. Victims often respond to feelings of shame by withdrawing from other people. You might feel stupid because you "let the violence go on for so long". You might feel embarrassed that people will judge you. It is important to recognise shame as a form of psychological abuse that happens when the perpetrator manipulates other people's negative social responses to try to destroy your confidence, keep you silent and try to stop you seeking help.*
9. *Guilt: A woman may respond by feeling guilty when she falls short of the impossible standards of a controlling partner, or society. Others' expectations that she should be a "perfect" mother, wife, daughter, employee, and woman also contribute to victims' feelings of guilt.*
10. *Anger: Anger is a healthy response to being humiliated, rejected, put down or violated in any way. Many women receive messages that "good" women are nice, accommodating, understanding and forgiving. These social responses can discourage women from expressing anger. Understandably, victims may work to protect themselves from a partner's further abuse by not expressing anger openly.*
11. *Sadness: Women who are abused by their partners may grieve for the loss of their dreams for the future and the end of the relationship even before it actually passes.*
12. *Confusion: When a partner twists events and changes the rules, victims may respond by being confused. Confusion may lead her to question her interpretation of events and doubt her own capabilities and mental health.*

⁹⁴ We gratefully acknowledge the work of the NCIWR (1996) for these additional responses.

- It makes sense that victims are more likely to have these kinds of responses when they receive signals from other people that there is something wrong with them, that they are mutually responsible for their partner's abusive behaviour, and when the perpetrator is excused for his abusive behaviour.

- It makes sense that when victims receive unhelpful, unsupportive responses from other people they begin to believe that there is something wrong with or bad about themselves.

- What do you think is meant by this statement: *"There is great wisdom behind our feelings"*?

- Reflect on examples of your own responses to abuse and oppression and how these make sense in the context of being in danger, and humiliated because of a partner's abusive actions.

Responding to Loss and Change

Experiences of loss and change can turn your world upside down. It could be the end of an intimate relationship or friendship. It might involve a dramatic change of location, moving from everything that's familiar to a new community. Or it may be the loss of ability through illness or injury, and the dreams that go with it.

Social Responses to Loss

The social responses we receive around any experience of adversity can have a lot to do with how we adjust, heal, and recover. "Get over it; "That happened a long time ago; "Be strong; "Shouldn't you be over that by now?"; "It really wasn't that big of a deal".

These are all invalidating, yet common messages that many people responding to loss and change receive from a variety of sources – such as the media, friends, or family. Comments like these show that there are a lot of unhelpful ideas about grief and loss.

What is Grief?

Grief can be one of the most complex processes we go through as human beings. When people ask me what grief is, I often say this:

- *Grief is the process of adjusting to loss and change.*

Grief is not an illness. It is not weakness. It is not a sign that you're going "crazy." It is a healthy and necessary response and process. It serves as proof that things matter to you.

As a holistic process and response, grief relates to the five life areas or domains that we occupy: Emotional, physical, mental, social and spiritual.

By this, I mean that when we're grieving, we're likely to experience responses that fit with these five life areas. Examples of emotional responses could be sadness, guilt, anger, or

relief. Physical responses could include fatigue, headaches, stomachaches, and changes in appetite. Some of the ways we respond may be tied to several life areas at once - or even all five.

Unhelpful Responses to Grief

For example, men often feel discouraged from crying publicly because the act of shedding tears is likened to femininity and "weakness". This sexist position leads to judgment against men for doing what could be most supportive of their healing.

Women may have been labeled as "too emotional", "moody", and "emotionally unstable" when responding to significant loss, change, and trauma. These judgments imply that it's problematic or even pathological to feel and express our emotions when we have a very good reason to do so.

Helpful Responses to Grief

Positive, supportive, non-judgmental social responses to grief are, at the very least, helpful in terms of encouraging healing and recovery.

- Reflect on the following questions:

- 1. How have you responded to people (professionals or otherwise) suggesting that your emotions were the main problem?*
- 2. What are some things you find helpful to think or do when it comes to addressing the concerns your emotions point at?*
- 3. What other ways do emotions enrich your life?*

- It is helpful to understand that everyone has their own unique ways of responding to loss and change.
- It is helpful to support people to grieve on their own terms, and do what fits for them when it comes to healing.
- Also, we should not assume that loss and change always leads to grief as some women may also feel relief at this time.

- Have you ever felt that your grief was invalidated (not recognised and taken seriously) by another person's response?

- Has anyone ever responded in a way that was particularly helpful after you went through a big loss or change?

- What's important to you when it comes to the kinds of responses you receive when you're grieving?

Children and young people's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home

Purpose

- To consider children's experiences, attempts to resist violence and positive ways mothers can respond.
- To acknowledge group members' resistance stories as girls.
- To acknowledge and uphold the mother-child bond.

Reflection Points

- Some women find this topic quite distressing. Women's responses may include sadness, guilt and self-blame. We would like to emphasise that victims are not responsible for another person's abusive behaviour.
 - Over the previous sessions we have examined in detail the many ways women respond to their partner's abuse.
 - Children and young people also respond to violence in many different ways. They respond when a perpetrator directs abuse at them. Children and young people also respond when they see, hear or know about one of their parents abusing their other parent. This can be extremely distressing for children. That's why it is psychological abuse of children when the violent person allows your children to see or hear you (or anyone else) being abused.
 - Many children experience similar kinds of physical abuse as their mothers do. Perpetrators may assault children when they get in the way of, or try to protect their mothers from being hit; so even very young children can try to stop the violence by standing in the middle of their parents.
- For some women, this session will evoke thoughts, memories and emotions about their own childhood experiences of abuse and powerful thoughts and emotions about their own children's experiences.
- Take this opportunity to revisit the kaupapa and purpose of the Women's Group Programme:

The Women's Group seeks to enact our kaupapa and purpose by facilitating:

- *Belonging, connection and support among Women's Group members;*
- *Positive social responses that uphold women's mana and dignity;*
- *Learning together and from one another: Sharing resistance stories and accounts of women preserving their dignity;*
- *Restoration of wellbeing and mauri;*

- *Resource building: increased knowledge of supports available to women in the community;*
- *Additional conditions for enhancing safety.*

Some experiences of mothers who are victims of domestic violence

- Perpetrators can make life extremely difficult and distressing for women when they have children together.

- For example, perpetrators may try to manipulate their role as father of their children to stop their partner from leaving or to get her to do things she doesn't want to do. They may threaten to stop her from seeing her children if she leaves.

- Mothers may also be pressured by their families or whānau to stay with their abusive partner for the children's sake.

- Mothers also receive responses from wider society and media and religion-based sources that children need their fathers. Messages like these often prioritise the nuclear family above women's and children's safety and wellbeing. They also fail to value the contributions of other family members such as grandparents, whānau and extended families in raising children.

- Remember: *Living in a home free from violence is a clear message to children that they are loved, accepted and safe.*⁹⁵

Children's responses to a perpetrator's violence at home

- Children who experience violence at home may respond with unhappiness, anger, and other forms of emotional distress.

- Feeling fear, sadness, anxious and worried, increases in illnesses, tummy aches, headaches, irritability, being secretive, not always being honest, being violent or aggressive, bedwetting, self-blame, misusing alcohol and other drugs, withdrawing from their friends, having trouble at school, having eating or sleeping problems, copying controlling and violent behaviour (hurting siblings, their mother or abusive partner), avoiding home or running away from home, or hurting themselves.⁹⁶

- Children may also respond by behaving extremely diligently, i.e. by being "super good" and well behaved, they might often be the "peace-maker", protector and negotiator, take on extra responsibilities, they may take extreme care to avoid offending anyone or try to be invisible, to "not cause trouble" or attract attention.

- Reflect on how any of these "effects on children" are actually responses.

⁹⁵ NCIWR: Women's Refuge Fresh Start (2012, p. 36)

⁹⁶ Ibid.

- Think about the "personal logic" of the response, i.e. in what ways can the response can be seen as reasonable and make sense in the context of violence?
 - Read through the different responses here and consider what kinds of social responses people might have towards a child or young person in each.
 - Do people's responses tend towards the positive (understanding and helpful) or negative (blaming and unsupportive) end of the spectrum?
 - Think about the responses children receive in different social settings (at home, with family and whānau, at school, with their friends). Consider then how children and young people might respond in turn to other people's responses.
- Children's responses to violence are actually resistance. To feel angry, unhappy or depressed, and to act out in response to abuse indicates that these children are taking a position against the abuse -making a stand - and these actions, thoughts, emotions, are their resistance.⁹⁷ Some of children's responses identified above such as bedwetting, tummy-aches for example, can also be forms of resistance. As part of this discussion, it may be helpful to review the responses of children above and explore how these could be acts of resistance in some circumstances too.
- Reflect on your experiences of resistance as a child and, if you are a mother, your own children's resistance.

Children's voices of resistance

- The following accounts come from children who have worked with Women's Refuge advocates. These stories are very sad but are also testimonies to children's courage, resourcefulness and resistance. The intention of sharing these accounts is to convey hope and to honour child victims' resistance.
- All of these accounts challenge the idea of children as passive "witnesses" to violence. Instead, they demonstrate the resourcefulness of children of all ages to try to protect, comfort and uphold the dignity of themselves and family members.
- Some women will relate closely to the children's accounts. This may be because of their own childhood experiences of abuse and / or because of their children's experiences.
- As you read through these, reflect on the child's resistance.

"While he was kicking my Mum I was holding Michael and crying".

Toby, age 8.

"Mummy locked herself in the bathroom and cried because she was scared of Daddy. I wanted to be with her, but I couldn't open the door".

⁹⁷ We gratefully acknowledge the ideas and work of Will Bratt (2015) for many concepts in this session.

Natasha, age 6.

“Dad had been drinking. He pushed Mum on the floor and got a big knife from the kitchen. He strangled her. He said, ‘I am going to kill your Mother tonight’. I said, ‘No Dad, don’t hurt Mum’ but he wouldn’t stop. Mum was saying to me, ‘help me’ but I didn’t know what to do”.

Poppy, age 10.

“My eyes stay awake (at night). My Dad might hurt my Mum in the night. He hit her bad before.”

Paul, age 4.

- Angel Yuen, a therapist who works with children responding to abuse offers some additional accounts:

- *A six-year-old boy shared that he taught his two-year-old toddler brother how to count to ten in English, French, and Spanish, to distract him and lessen the effects of abuse after beatings. From this conversation, I also learnt how that toddler, barely able to talk, would comfort his big brother by bringing him a tissue when he cried.*
- *I also learn about children deliberately finding ways to not show distress, anger, fear, or sadness on their face in order to minimise the severity of abuse or to lessen the effects of trauma on their everyday life. One child named this skill his ‘fixing-face abilities’ while another young woman who experienced years of sexual abuse as a little girl called it ‘putting on my outside happy look while at school’.*
- *Michael, a seven-year-old boy who faced emotional abuse, which he described as ‘the bad, angry, and scary voice’, would often hide from place to place in his house in attempts to ‘get away’ from the harsh voice. His hiding place of choice was a closet that was never used. By simply asking where Michael hid, he became more in touch with how he responded, When I asked him, ‘So when you hid in the closet, what did you do to comfort yourself once you were safe?’, he replied, ‘The way I made myself feel better was to sing a song to myself and that would make the tears go away’.⁹⁸*

⁹⁸ We gratefully acknowledge the work of Angel Yuen (2007, p. 7) for her accounts.

Acknowledging and upholding the mother-child bond

- Reflect on actions you do (if you are a mother), or are aware of and would like to do to respond to children.

Examples of positive ways mothers can respond to their children:

- ❖ *Show them that you love them*
- ❖ *Give them lots of positive attention and hugs*
- ❖ *Reassure them that they are not to blame*
- ❖ *Encourage them to talk about their responses*
- ❖ *Listen to their feelings and let them know it's okay to have them, even if they're feeling upset or angry with you*
- ❖ *Encourage and support their friendships*
- ❖ *Try to bring them into contact with other adults they can relate to and trust⁹⁹*



⁹⁹ NCIWR: Women's Refuge Fresh Start (2012).

Safety planning, protection orders, and men's programmes

Protection orders – what are they?

- Protection for the victims of the family violence and any children in their care. They are a family court order made by a judge. They have two main parts to them:
- Non-violence – the respondent cannot use any violence on the applicant (this is always enforced).
- Non-contact – the respondent cannot have any contact with the applicant (this part can be put to sleep if the applicant wishes but is resumed on the applicant's request).
- Orders are usually made on the same day they are filed. They are temporary for 3 months and then become final if the respondent makes no application.
- Custody is usually given in association with the Protection Order and the judge will usually require access to be supervised.
- Respondents cannot have firearms when there is a Protection Order in place.

If the conditions are broken, the respondent is charged with breaching the Protection Order in the criminal court. They will normally be held in custody for 24 hours.

What support is available?

- The respondent is sent to a compulsory Stopping Violence Programme.
 - The applicant can choose to go to a family violence education programme.
 - The children can attend a support programme.
- These programmes are all paid for through the courts.

Developing Safety Plans

Key Messages:

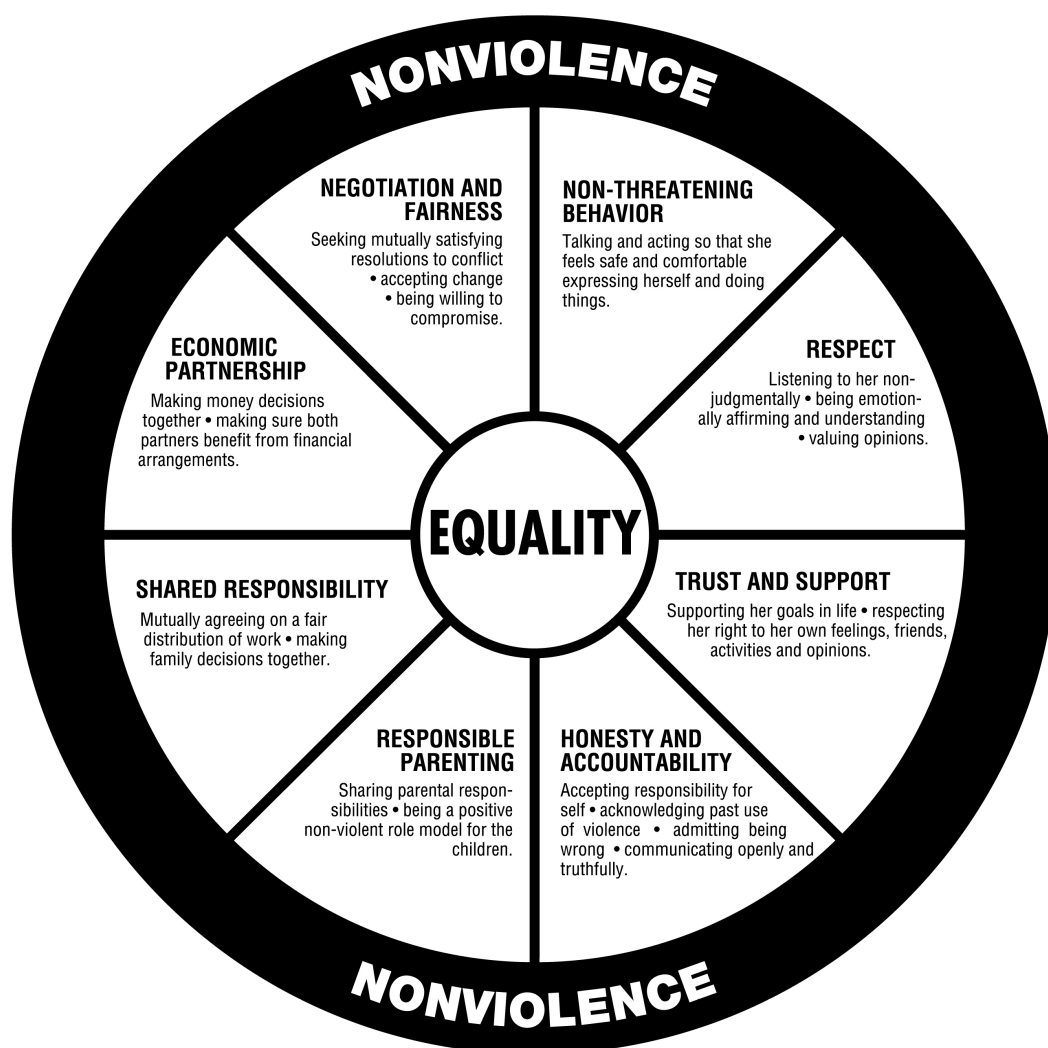
1. Your partner is the only person who can stop the violence, but you can respond in ways to keep safe.
2. Making a plan can increase your safety and make your situation easier for you but remember that the most important thing is for you and your children to get away to get out safely. If the time is right to leave, just leave. It doesn't matter if you haven't made a plan or got your things with you.
3. If you have to leave to save your life - leave fast, take nothing, go to the nearest safe place and call 111 for help.
4. Identify your support people and familiarise yourself with their contact details.

- For further reference, see pages 42-47 on Safety Planning in the Women's Refuge Fresh Start Guide (2012).

This covers five components of Safety Planning:

- Are you in Immediate Danger?
- Making Plans for your safety
- Safety Planning for Leaving
- Safety Planning for after you or the abuser has left
- Safety Planning for Staying
- Planning for safety in a crisis (pages 70-71)

What does equality mean to you?



DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT

202 East Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-722-2781
www.duluth-model.org

Your dignity, safety and healing

Your Rights in a Relationship¹⁰⁰

-Reflect on the following rights. Women may like to circulate the group with each reading out a right or reading the rights out together.

- To be treated with respect and define what respect is for you.
- To decide what is important for you and set your priorities.
- To have and express your own feelings and opinions.
- To have a different view and not feel guilty.
- To be listened to and taken seriously.
- To ask for what you want.
- To make mistakes and be allowed to try again.
- Each right has a responsibility - to behave in the same way towards the other person.

Personal Bill of Rights

- I have the right to be treated with dignity
- I have the right to think, feel, and practice in accordance with my beliefs and culture
- I have the right to ask for what I want
- I have the right to say no to requests or demands I can't meet
- I have the right to express all of my feelings, positive or negative
- I have the right to change my mind
- I have the right to make mistakes and not have to be perfect
- I have the right to follow my own values and standards
- I have the right to say no to anything when I feel I am not ready, it is unsafe, or it violates my values
- I have the right to determine my own priorities
- I have the right not to be responsible for others' behaviour, actions, feelings or problems

¹⁰⁰ NCIWR (1996).

- I have the right to expect honesty from others
- I have the right to feel angry with someone I love
- I have the right to be uniquely myself
- I have the right to feel scared and say, "I'm afraid"
- I have the right to say, "I don't know"
- I have the right not to give excuses or reasons for my behaviour
- I have the right to make decisions based on my feelings
- I have the right to my own needs for personal space and time
- I have the right to be playful and frivolous
- I have the right to be healthier than those around me
- I have the right to make friends and be comfortable around people
- I have the right to change and grow
- I have the right to have my needs and wants respected by others
- I have the right to be happy
- I have the right to be treated with respect
- I have the right to have and express my own feelings and opinions
- I have the right to say "no" without feeling guilty
- I have the right to ask for what I want
- I have the right to get what I pay for – including non-patronising information from professionals, such as doctors and lawyers
- I have the right to set my own priorities
- I have the right to choose not to assert myself, where or when it is not "appropriate"
- I have the right to refuse to answer intrusive, personal questions
- I have the right to protect my physical space \
-

If this is your final session, please complete the evaluation form at the end of this Handbook.



Concluding reflection¹⁰¹

- In our experience as advocates, victims always resist abuse and violence. Even when they oppose abuse only in their thoughts, their resistance is still very important because it shows that in no way do victims experience mistreatment passively.
- We have found that victims feel empowered when they focus on their resistance and on the many ways they keep their own dignity and character in the face of mistreatment and degradation.
- From our work with perpetrators, we conclude that they always anticipate that victims will resist their attempts to control, dominate, and inflict pain. Perpetrators take deliberate steps to stop such resistance. Other evidence has shown that perpetrators are able to control their anger. Their actions are planned and deliberate. We feel that recognising the deliberate nature of abusive behaviour is respectful of perpetrators, in that it expresses confidence in their ability to control their own actions, rather than being “helpless victims” of forces beyond their control.
- Our intention in providing support to women in the group is to focus our attention on victims’ resistance and perpetrators’ responsibility. We also aim to challenge messages from other people that blame the victim or excuse the perpetrator.
- Recall back to Nicole's Story. Nicole said she felt like she had been in a “sea” of victim-blaming messages. She gained a better understanding of her experiences when she met someone who helped her to see how she had opposed mistreatment. As a result, she experienced “many light bulbs go off.” She said that it was “refreshing and liberating” to be honoured for her resistance rather than blamed for her victimisation.
- It is our hope that you now know that you have responded to and resisted abuse all along and have done and thought many things to uphold your dignity and improve your own safety and that of others important to you.

* * *

¹⁰¹ We gratefully acknowledge the work and words of Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Nick Todd, Cindy Ogden and Laura Craik through their book *Honouring Resistance: How Women Resist Abuse in Intimate Relationships* (2007) for these concluding remarks.

Women's Group Completion Questionnaire

This can be completed by individual women or as a group evaluation (with questions as prompts for reflection).

Date: _____ Facilitator name(s): _____

In the Women's Group, how often did you have these experiences? (circle a number)

0 Never 1 Rarely 2 Sometimes 3 Often 4 Most of the time

1. I felt comfortable and safe	0	1	2	3	4
2. I was treated respectfully	0	1	2	3	4
3. I was a valued member of the Group	0	1	2	3	4
4. I felt a sense of connection with other women in the Group	0	1	2	3	4
5. I felt comfortable sharing my experiences, stories and view points with the other women	0	1	2	3	4
6. I felt a sense of belonging in the Group	0	1	2	3	4
7. I felt comfortable asking Women's Refuge advocates for help and advice	0	1	2	3	4
8. I had opportunities to identify ways I have resisted violence in the Women's Group	0	1	2	3	4
9. I had opportunities to talk about responses of friends, family whānau, and services (such as Police, Women's Refuge) during and after experiencing domestic violence	0	1	2	3	4

Please indicate whether you agree with these statements:

11. I can describe some helpful and unhelpful responses from other people during and after experiencing domestic violence.

Agree / Disagree

12. I am not to blame for another person's abusive behaviour towards me.

Agree / Disagree

13. I know that the person who acted abusively towards me is responsible for these actions.

Agree / Disagree

Appendix S: Clinical Case Study

Case Study Two

Exploring the potential utility of Response-based practice and contextual analysis in assessment, formulation and interventions for people experiencing shame, stigma and oppression.

Jessica Reedy

Massey University DClinPsych Candidate

Clinical Psychology Intern at Massey University Psychology Clinic

Wellington

This case study represents the work of Jessica Reedy during her internship in 2016. Supervision was received while undertaking the research described within this case study.

Candidate: Jessica Reedy

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Supervisors: Mandy Morgan and Ruth Gammon

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Abstract

This case study provides an overview of response-based practice (RBP) in the context addressing violence in families in Aotearoa New Zealand. This builds on my doctoral research by reflecting on the potential utility of response based-contextual analyses, particularly for interviewing clients, in clinical psychology. Specifically, while contextual analysis is a framework currently used in working with victims and perpetrators of domestic and family violence, conceivably, it may be applied more broadly in assessment, formulation and interventions with people experiencing shame, stigma and oppression.

Keywords: Response-Based Practice, RBP, contextual analysis, domestic violence, violence in families

Exploring the potential utility of Response-Based contextual analysis in assessment, formulation and interventions for people experiencing shame, stigma and oppression.

This case study provides an overview of response-based practice (RBP) in the context addressing violence in families in Aotearoa New Zealand. This builds on my doctoral research by reflecting on the potential utility of response based-contextual analyses, particularly for interviewing clients, in clinical psychology. Specifically, while contextual analysis is a framework currently used in working with victims and perpetrators of domestic and family violence, conceivably, it may be applied more broadly in interviewing to inform assessment, formulation and interventions with people experiencing shame, stigma and oppression.

Research Background

To begin however, a brief outline of my research is provided to clarify the purpose of my research activity. My project involved two major tasks, identified as Study Phase One and Study Phase Two. Study Phase One entailed researching, producing, delivering, and evaluating a RBP Women's Refuge Group Programme. The selected methodologies for this first task were action research and fourth generation evaluation. Data were collected during meetings, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with participating advocates, and through reviewing the Women's Refuge previous and new group programme documents. Thematic analysis was used to interpret data and report this back to advocates and Tu Mai Awa for this first task. Appendix A provides an example of how the findings from the analysis provided the content for the RBP Women's Refuge Programme kaupapa - Purpose and Takepū – Values.

The purpose of Study Phase Two was to provide evidence about the RBP group programme by carrying out a social analysis of ways Women's Refuge clients respond to and resist violence, encounter social responses following violence, and respond to these social responses. Specifically, participants' accounts of their experiences and understandings before intervention, and at three months following their involvement with the project, were sought to provide evidence of the ways in which the RBP Group

Programme is effective in supporting resistance to violence and changing client's understandings of responses to the situations of violence in their relationships. From this, I intend to present a synthesis of potential responses that support victims' safety and wellbeing effectively and ethically. The selected methodologies for Study Phase Two included discourse analysis and fourth generation evaluation. Data were collected during semi-structured interviews with participating Women's Refuge clients, and review of the Women's Refuge new RBP Group Programme documents. Thematic and discourse analyses were used to interpret and represent data for Study Phase Two.

For both study phases, the selected data collection methods and analytical techniques involved framing the enquiry in terms of Women's Refuge advocates and clients as "knowledgeable self-reflective informants" (Lehrner & Allen, 2009, p. 658) who, through experiencing and thinking about domestic violence, have appreciable insight into the complexities and challenges involved in becoming free from violence in the home.

Response-Based Practice: Responses and resistance to domestic violence

This section provides a critical review of RBP, the major focus of the study. Within this, social and ethical implications for women victims and their families and whānau as they respond to violence, encounter social responses following violence, and respond to these social responses are discussed. Interwoven with these themes, social and material implications of discourses of violence are described.

RBP, attributed primarily to the ideas of Canadian researchers and family therapists Alan Wade and Cathy Richardson, but also to Linda Coates and Nick Todd (Weaver et al. 2007), evolved from direct work with victims and perpetrators, and subsequent development of a framework referred to as the four operations of language in the representation of violence. In particular, they observed that victims of violence always respond to and resist abuse, covertly or overtly, in response to specific dangers and opportunities presented in their particular situation (Coates & Wade, 2007; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al. 2004; Wade, 1997). This observation contradicted prevalent understandings of victims as passive recipients of abuse and as such, drew their awareness to the ways in which perpetrator's and victim's actions are typically represented using the language of effects rather than the language of responses (see

Figure 1) (Todd et al. 2004; Weaver et al. 2007). In turn, the following five understandings in the context of domestic violence emerged from their observations and provide the foundation to RBP (Weaver et al. 2007, p. 4-5):

6. *Whenever people are treated badly, they always resist.*
7. *People tend not to notice that victims resist violence.*
8. *Perpetrators of violence know that victims will resist, so they make plans to stop the victims from resisting.*
9. *Violent and abusive behaviour is always done deliberately.*

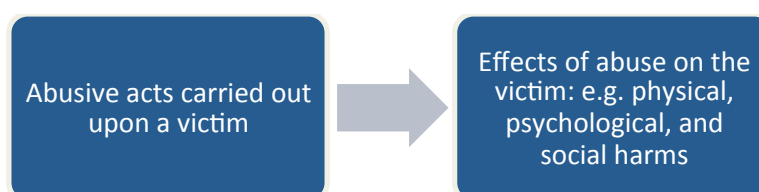


Figure 1. Effects-based model of violence

Language of Responses versus Language of Effects of Violence

In the context of RBP, a response "is a volitional act that demonstrates judgment, imagination, and will...a social communicative act that plays a part in on-going social interaction; an effect is the strictly determined outcome of a previous event/cause...an end state, the last link in a causal chain" (Todd et al. 2004, p. 51). As displayed in Figure 2 below, a RBP understanding of violence recognises that victims respond to perpetrator's actions and to social responses to their own and the perpetrator's responses (Wade, 2007). Correspondingly, perpetrators respond to victim's responses and to the social responses they receive (Wade, 2007). From this position, research findings indicate that the quality of social responses towards victims and perpetrators is the single most important predictor of the severity and nature of victims' distress (Andrews & Brewin, 1990; Andrews, Brewin, & Rose, 2003; Richardson & Wade, 2013).

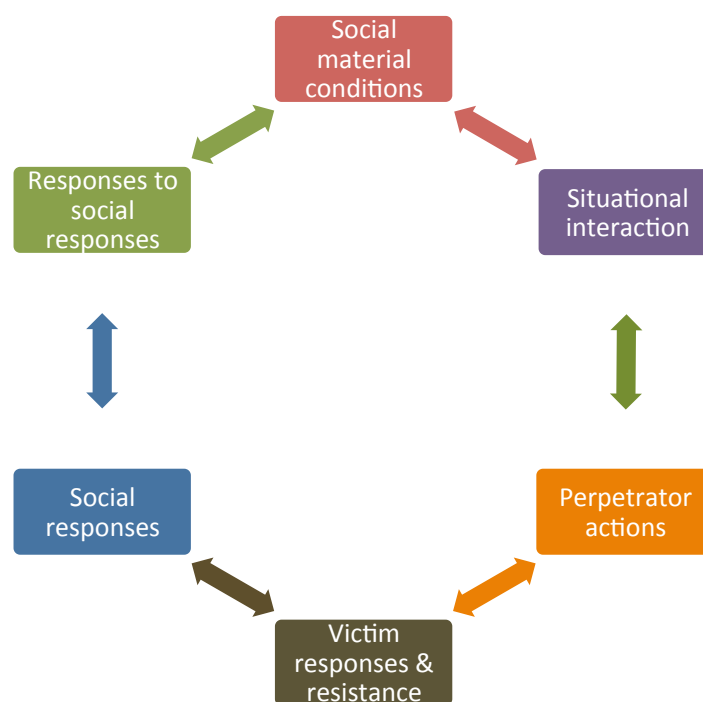


Figure 2. Response-based Practice contextual analysis (Wade, 2014)

Positive and Negative Social Responses

Several studies have established clear links between increases in quantity and quality of supportive people in victim's lives, and their quality of life and options for safety from violence (e.g. Sullivan & Bybee, 1999; Sullivan, Bybee & Allen, 2002), cessation of perpetrator offending (e.g. Grauwiler, 2008; Robinson & Tregidga, 2007) and victim's recovery (e.g. Anderson, Renner, & Danis, 2012; Grauwiler, 2008). Research in the area of social responses to violence suggests that when victims disclose their experiences of violence in informal and formal settings, they sometimes find their concerns are met with disbelief, disrespect, blame, and vindication of the perpetrator's abusive actions (Flood & Pease, 2006; Grauwiler, 2008; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Meyer, 2011; Richardson & Wade, 2010).

Among a representative sample of women victims of domestic violence in Fanslow and Robinson's (2010) study, of the approximately 75 percent of women who disclosed their partner's abuse, more than 40 percent reported receiving unhelpful responses. However, in contrast to Richardson and Wade's (2010) finding, between 50 percent and 75 percent of women victims who utilised formal services reported experiencing a helpful response. In the same study, Fanslow and Robinson (2010) established that a

significant obstacle to women victims seeking help was their own view that their partner's abuse was "normal" or not serious enough. Additional reasons for women not seeking support from formal services were shame and embarrassment, and fearing the consequences including losing their children (Fanslow & Robinson, 2010).

In regard to negative social responses, when responses to victims are unsupportive, victims and their families experience increased humiliation, social exclusion and isolation from other members of their family and community, and their safety is further undermined (Allagia, Regehr, & Jenney, 2012; Belknap et al. 2009; Grauwiler, 2008; Richardson & Wade, 2013). Conversely, positive social responses, centered around upholding dignity and obtaining a representational account of the violence by the victim and their resistance to this, have been found to be closely connected to wellness, safety, and the experience of just outcomes for victims (Coates & Wade, 2004; Richardson, 2006; Richardson & Wade, 2010).

Richardson and Wade (2013) established that compared to victims who received negative social responses from family, friends and formal agencies, those who received positive responses experienced less intense distress of shorter duration, were less likely to receive a diagnosis of mental illness, and were found to work more willingly with formal services and report violence in future. Given the high reliability of victims' predictions in estimating repeat violence by their current or ex-partners (Weisz, Tolman, & Saunders, 2000) victims' cooperation with services, including their willingness to engage in risk assessment, may be crucial in preventing further violence.

Proponents of RBP argue that the focus of enquiry and intervention in the domestic and family violence sector most often attends to the effects or impacts of abuse on victims. For example, women who have been victimised are often portrayed as damaged, submissive - or alternatively - as mutually aggressive in their relationships (Campbell et al. 1998; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005; Todd et al. 2004). Equally, victims are frequently construed as having poor boundaries, assertiveness skills and self-esteem (Richardson & Wade, 2013; Weaver et al. 2007).

Coates and Wade (2004; 2007), Humphries and Thiara (2003), and Wade (1997) assert that a consequence of such stereotyping is that victims are more likely to be perceived

negatively by themselves and others, and in particular, pathologised and blamed for the abuse they are subjected to. Such evidence of the pathologising of victims is indicated in the finding of high prescribing rates of antidepressants for women victims by general practitioners (Badbury-Jones & Taylor, 2013) and significantly higher prescribing rates of potentially addictive drugs including analgesics and antidepressants by multiple doctors to women victims compared to women who were not victims (Stene, Dyb, Tverdal, Jacobson, & Schei, 2012). Yuen (2007; 2009) argues that stereotypes of victims as "permanently scarred" for example, often originate from well-meaning and compassionate intentions but can construct perceptions of victims' as people without hope and agency.

Todd et al. (2004) maintain that the language of effects tends to preside over the language of responses because violence is typically concealed from view of people outside the relationship. In this regard, to avoid negative consequences of their abusive actions, often, perpetrators strategically present themselves to others in a positive light. For example, a perpetrator might behave in a charming manner while also garnering sympathy as a victim, and may also blame the person they abuse for their "relationship problems" (Coates & Wade, 2007; Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Todd et al. 2004; Weaver et al. 2007). Equally, victims may tactically avoid disclosing their partner's abuse to others because it is unsafe to do so and they wish to prevent other's negative responses, including harsh judgment towards them (Belknap et al. 2009; Coates & Wade, 2007; Todd et al. 2004; Weaver et al. 2007).

Because people outside of the relationship are seldom aware of victims' resistance to abuse, and because people tend to associate resistance with visible conflict, they imagine victims do not act to protect themselves and in this manner, may blame victims for "allowing" themselves to be abused (Wade, 1997; Weaver et al. 2007). Blaming women victims who are mothers for remaining with their abusive partners and "failing to protect" their children, in which it is assumed that mothers are solely responsible for stopping their partner's abuse and ensuring the safety of themselves and their children is a prevalent negative social response towards victims (Haight, Shin, Linn & Swinford, 2007; Hester, 2011; Hughes, Chau, & Poff, 2011; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013).

A striking example of maternal-blaming is indicated in Terrance et al's. (2008) study which found that compared to women who were not victims of domestic violence, those who were victims were significantly more likely to be held more responsible for the abuse of their children. Contrary to such views, maternal-blaming of victims fails to recognise women's various efforts to keep their children safe including the protection of children's physical safety when women are immediately threatened by perpetrators, providing reassurance, instilling hope, and supporting emotional recovery to children following violence (Haight et al. 2007). Research by Elizabeth et al. (2011) indicates that mothers who are victimised by their partners are not always reproached for "failing to protect" their children", however, they are at times instead portrayed as uncooperative and as obstructing abusive fathers' rights to have contact with their children, even when mothers' reasons for seeking to restrict their ex-partners access to the children are for safety reasons. Thus, in many respects, victims are acutely aware of negative social responses towards people who have been victimised (Todd et al, 2004; Wade, 1997).

Upholding Victims' and Perpetrators' Dignity

In contrast to conventional approaches in "treating" effects of abuse, fundamental to RBP is illuminating the multiple ways victims seek to oppose or lessen their partner's abuse, increase their own and others' safety, and reassert dignity (Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al. 2004; Wade, 1997). Dignity - the process of treating one another respectfully, and honouring each other's autonomy, freedom and social and personal safety - is central to this work because it is recognised as essential for individual and collective social esteem and wellness (Wade, 1997). In this sense, RBP focuses on restoring, reasserting and upholding dignity and derives this from the observation that violence and oppression diminish dignity and without redress, harms to victims endure (Wade 1997, 2007). In this approach, close attention is therefore paid to elucidating - in fine detail - victims' emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual responses during and following abuse (Richardson & Wade, 2013). The following examples illustrate victim's responses to perpetrator's actions, of which, it is argued might otherwise be disregarded or pathologised in an effects-based paradigm (Wade, 2014, p. 3-4):

Example 1. *If the perpetrator tries to inflict pain, virtually any act by which the victim reduces, withstands, escapes, or transforms the pain can be understood as a form of resistance.*

Example 2. *If the perpetrator tries to isolate the victim, virtually any physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual act by which the victim retains some connection to others, to important personal experiences, culture, or ideals can be understood as a form of resistance.*

Recognising Victim Responses and Resistance

A RBP position maintains that when victimisation is represented by the language of effects, responses such as those given above are likely to be misconstrued or overlooked. In showing responses between a perpetrator and victim, Examples 1 and 2 demonstrate the response-orientated, unilateral nature of abuse (Coates & Wade, 2007). These examples also give support to a principle argument in RBP which holds that "one of the strongest forms of evidence for the existence and vital importance of everyday resistance are the determined efforts made by the perpetrators of violence and oppression to conceal or suppress it" (Wade, 1997). The victim's responses in Example 1 might be mutualised as "relationship difficulties" in which both partners are seen as responsible for the abuse. Victim's responses in Example 1 might also be misrepresented as pathological passivity, dissociation, dependence, or masochism. In Example 2 the victim's response to her partner's abuse might be completely discounted.

In RBP it is recognised that in many situations, victims may not be able to prevent an abuser's violence or escape from the abusive person (Richardson & Wade, 2010; Scott, 1990). Moreover, when victims openly challenge perpetrators, the response from perpetrators is likely characterised by an intensification of abuse, and potentially involving increased threats, intimidation, control and assault (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007, Richardson & Wade, 2010). It is emphasised here that as it is the abusive person who is responsible for the abuse; they are the only person who can stop the abuse and the onus for acknowledging the harms they have inflicted upon others, and accepting responsibility for desisting sits with them (Jenkins, 1991; Weaver et al. 2007). Victims' resistance assumes numerous expressed and unexpressed forms of withstanding, preventing, stopping and opposing abuse (Allagia et al. 2012; Anderson & Danis, 2006;

Campbell et al. 1998; Cavanagh, 2003; Wade, 1997). Concomitantly, in the context of RBP, while resistance might involve survival, resilience and "inner strength" it is not simply a reframed equivalent of these constructs rather, more often resistance is a spontaneous response which has its origins in "fear, desperation, and powerlessness" and needs to be considered in each context-specific situation rather than a fixed character descriptor (Wade, 2014, p. 3) In this regard, Todd et al. (2004) suggest that notions such as resilience and survival are, at times, potentially implicated in concealing victim's resistance or unhelpfully casting victims in deficient or idealised terms.

On these grounds, it is considered implausible and unethical to measure the effectiveness of a victim's responses to abuse according to their ability to successfully stop the abuser's actions (Coates & Wade, 2007; Wade, 2014). A more helpful position, and one which evidently more closely represents victims' experience, is that victims consistently perform a multitude of actions to uphold their own and others' dignity, and to increase their own and others' safety (Combs & Freedman, 2012; Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Todd et al. 2004; Wade, 1997; Weaver et al. 2007; Yuen, 2007; 2009). Because, however, in the vast majority of situations it is unsafe for victims to openly oppose abuse, more commonly, responses to abuse are likely imperceptible to people other than the victim (Chalari, 2012; Scott, 1990; Wade 1997; 2007).

Paradoxically, abstaining from directly confronting an abusive person is arguably more indicative of foresight and self-preservation than of cowardliness or weakness. In this respect, for example, dreaming about or imagining safer and happier circumstances, or mentally planning possible future eventualities in the secrecy of one's own mind are understood as forms of resistance (Coates & Wade, 2007; Wade, 2014). In applying this idea to working with a victim, a RBP approach would ask her to describe in detail how she responded to the perpetrators abuse rather than how she was affected by it (Wade, 1997; Yuen, 2007).

In researching the utility of internal conversation among oppressed peoples, Chalari (2012) deduces that "resistance can be fully experienced by an individual, even if this resistance is unrecognized or unexpressed" (p. 83). Internal conversation in this sense refers to one's "inner life, and intra-active process of deliberation, evaluation and selection" (Archer, 2003, p. 63), and the "means by which the individual considers her/himself in relation to the social environment and this consideration is possible

through "reflexive deliberation" (Archer, 2007, p. 3). In the context of victimised peoples' experience, internal conversation can encompass issuing internal warnings and making promises to oneself, reaching concrete decisions, or coming to a conclusion about a particular problem" (Archer, 2007, p. 2). These findings suggest an important and common, yet seldom recognised response to abuse and give support to the RBP position that highly covert responses to abuse may be misrepresented as submissiveness or simply overlooked when an effects-based model is applied to experiences of victimisation.

Clarifying Perpetrator Responsibility

In conventional responses to domestic violence, selective denial of personal agency in victims is often similarly assumed in perpetrators. For example, in attempting to understand causes of violence, perpetrators are often portrayed as themselves victims of biological, psychological, or social circumstances beyond their control (Coates & Wade, 2004; 2007; Jenkins, 1991; McLaren, 2010; O'Neill, 1997; Richardson & Wade, 2013; Todd et al. 2004; Todd et al. 2014). Perpetrators and others often implicate a number of conditions - for example - personality traits, stress, alcohol, victim-blaming, or financial difficulties, to excuse and evade responsibility for their abusive actions (Hoyle & Sanders, 2000; Richardson & Wade, 2013; Weaver et al. 2007). Such excuses are construed as causes of violent behaviour and are maintained through discourses of domestic violence among communities and within the family violence sector (O'Neill, 1997; Todd et al. 2004). Arguably, attributing abusive behaviour to pathological causes not only negates perpetrators' responsibility and view of their ability to desist, but also shifts this responsibility to professionals in therapeutic and social service settings who potentially become liable for blame when perpetrators continue to abuse. Of greater concern is that such discourses, the victim is held responsible for stopping the violence or changing their circumstances. In this regard, it is reasoned that professionals have an obligation to attribute responsibility for abusive acts to the perpetrator rather than promoting unhelpful and unsafe causal attributions of violence.

Dominant Domestic Violence Discourses and Concealing of Violence

Of particular relevance, research by O'Neill (1997) identified five domestic violence discourses operating within social science disciplines implicated in enabling and constraining formal and informal responses to victims and perpetrators. These were, in

abbreviated form, the discourse of pathology (indicating the perpetrator and/or victim are disordered, deficient, or dysfunctional); the expressive tension discourse (indicating that anger or frustration cause the perpetrator to explode/snap/lose control); the liberal humanist discourse (indicating that the perpetrator and victim exercise choice, rationality and control); the learning discourse (based on the transgenerational cycle of violence); and the social systems discourse (implicating broader structural problems of poverty, violent culture, or patriarchy in domestic violence). O'Neill's (1997) findings, in many respects, align with the four discursive operations of language of violence proposed by Coates and Wade (2004); specifically, ways in which language used by professionals in the family violence sector conceals violence and victim resistance, obfuscates perpetrator responsibility, and blames or pathologises victims. Accordingly, domestic violence discourses such as those identified by O'Neill represent the culmination of various linguistic operations including metaphors (e.g. "she pushed all my buttons - then just I lost it"), terminology (e.g. mutualizing the unilaterality of violence by referring to "a violent relationship" or eroticizing violence in referring to rape as a result of "an overactive sex drive"), grammatical forms (e.g. obscuring agency in referring to "an abusive home environment"), and stereotypes (e.g. "she lacks appropriate boundaries") (Todd, et al. 2004). A common theme across most discourses of domestic violence is the fallacious positioning of perpetrators as having little or no control over their abusive actions while victims are positioned as capable of and hence responsible for stopping the violence and changing their circumstances.

A common explanation for a perpetrator's abusive actions derives from an intergenerational cycle of abuse discourse whereby perpetrators learn to be abusive from their own experiences of abuse. Language of effects saturates such explanations of abusive behaviour. If, as this example suggests, past or current experiences of victimisation cause perpetrators to act abusively, it transpires that they have no control over their actions. However, if this were indeed the case, random violence carried out only by people who have been abused would be the norm. Instead however, the norm is that many people who have been abused are not abusive and moreover, overwhelming evidence indicates that a clear selection process is undertaken by perpetrators as they determine who, when and where to behave abusively.

Perpetrator Choice to Behave Violently or Desist from Violence

Therefore, of crucial importance to RBP is recognising the deliberate nature of violence (Coates & Wade, 2004, 2007; Todd et al. 2004; Todd et al. 2014; Wade, 1997). That perpetrators invariably abuse people who are less able to overpower them and that they seek to suppress and conceal their abuse from others outside the relationship in terms of when, where and how they abuse clearly indicates that they do have control over their actions, that they anticipate resistance from victims, and therefore, that their abuse is deliberate and that they can desist from abusing (Coates & Wade, 2004, 2007; Richardson & Wade, 2010; Todd et al. 2004; Todd et al. 2014; Wade, 1997). In this regard, a RBP approach advocates critical analysis of relationships between violence and its representation in context, not only as a research endeavour, but also as essential to applied practice (Coates & Wade, 2007).

In regard to non-violence programmes, while some perpetrators have experienced abuse, research indicates that interventions that focus on exploring abuse experiences tend to invoke a sense of entitlement within perpetrators that is counter to helpful change (Jenkins, 1991; Todd et al. 2014; Wade 2014). Accordingly, RBP perpetrator intervention emphasises perpetrators' choice to abuse or desist, recognises their ability to be nonabusive and respectful, and holds them accountable for their actions rather than excusing or commiserating with them. In this manner, relating to perpetrators as agentic individuals may uphold their dignity, and hence encourage them to persevere in challenging their own understandings and practices, and increase the possibility that they will be less abusive (Todd et al. 2014; Weaver et al. 2007).

Response-Based Contextual Analysis

Practitioners and researchers of RBP report that victims experience increased dignity, social-worth, empowerment, a greater sense of pre-existing capability, and reduced self-blame when they discuss, identify and examine the many ways in which they have resisted abuse (Richardson & Wade, 2010; 2013; Wade, 1997; Weaver et al. 2007). Yet, a prominent pattern of language use within formal responses is one of misrepresenting violence and the responses of perpetrators and victims (Richardson & Wade, 2013).

In taking a RBP approach, a fairer, more helpful, and more-evidence-based representation of violence and resistance necessitates the following steps:

- *Obtaining clear descriptions of violent actions in context;*
- *Focussing on victim and perpetrator responses to the violence;*
- *Identifying social responses;*
- *Focusing on responses to social responses;*
- *and honouring resistance and building safety.*

(Richardson and Wade, 2013, p. 156-159)

Therefore, applying RBP to work with clients centers the enquiry on examining the conditions, in micro-detail, under which a person is able to practice violence and evade responsibility for their harmful acts, and understanding how victims specifically respond to and resist abuse. In this regard, the particular historical, social, and immediate physical contexts in which a perpetrator abuses and desists and a victim responds and resists, assume great importance for providing evidence of victims' capacity to protect themselves and others, perpetrators' capacity to act respectfully, and supports court evidence regarding the severity and nature of abuse (Richardson & Wade, 2013).

According to Wade (1997) and Richardson and Wade (2013), questioning victims in order to obtain detailed and precise descriptions at micro-level about these circumstances helps elucidate resistance and in this way positions victims as active in pursuing safety and dignity. In this manner, making resistance more visible enables victims and others, including professionals, make connections between ways of responding and victims' pre-existing skills and knowledge (Yuen, 2007). In becoming aware of the many ways they respond and resist, victims might also reposition themselves as someone who refused to cooperate, even if in extremely subtle ways, with those who abused them (McCarthy, 2010). Similarly, detailed descriptions of social responses received by victims and their subsequent responses to these are sought. This process helps identify helpful and unhelpful responses and assists victims make sense of and dignify the "situational logic" of their own responses in relation to others' responses (Richardson & Wade, 2013; Wade, 1997).

Table 2: Summary of underlying assumptions important to Response-Based Contextual Analysis (Coates et al. 2014)

**Six Key Factors in Response-Based Contextual Analysis
(Coates, Richardson, & Wade, 2014)**

Social and material conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and social existence is restricted by, enabled by, and responsive to the social and material conditions in which people live. • Access to the material necessities for life (e.g., food, safety, water), and the benefits of civil society (e.g., safety, law, medicine) are distributed unequally. • Social representations and structures influence the quality of social responses to victims and offenders and their families. These include professional and public representations of victims and offenders and, tied to these representations, policies and practices that provide or deny adequate social responses.
Social situation and interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions in social situations take place in specific social and material conditions. • Humans are inherently social and orient to one another as social agents with the capacity to choose. Humans are understood better as responding agents than as affected objects. • Dignity is central to social life and to individual and collective well-being. • Language-use is part of social interaction: Representation of one's self and others, and salient events, is ever-present in social interaction.
Offender actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and psychological violence is profoundly harmful and an affront to human dignity. • Violence is, with rare exceptions, deliberate and controlled: Offenders anticipate and work to suppress victim resistance. Most offenders can desist prior to intervention. • Violent acts are unilateral (rather than mutual) in that they entail actions by one person or group against the will and well-being of another.
Victim responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims resist violence and injustice and work to preserve dignity. Resistance can be open and direct or subtle and disguised, depending on the circumstances. • Victims respond to violence biologically (i.e., epigenetically, neurologically, physiologically), mentally, socially, and spiritually. • Victim's responses reveal "emergent capacities", purposes, and aspirations that can become a basis for safety planning and other social responses.
Social responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims and offenders and their families encounter social responses from strangers, members of their social networks, authorities, and

- the larger society (e.g., media).
- Social and material conditions enable/encourage some social responses and restrict/prevent others.
 - Language can be used to (a) conceal or reveal violence and injustice, (b) clarify or obscure offender and social responsibility (i.e., responsibility of authorities), (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses and resistance, and (d) blame and pathologize or contest the blaming and pathologizing of victims.
 - The quality of social responses is correlated with the level and form of victim distress and the likelihood of offender desistance.
- Responses to social responses**
- Victims and offenders take actual and possible social responses into account in committing and responding to violent acts, respectively.
 - In response to negative and unjust social responses, victims are more likely to experience confusion, fear, disqualification, isolation, distress – and humiliation. Offenders are more likely to commit further violence.
 - In response to positive and just social responses, victims are more likely to disclose the facts and to experience clarity, relief, safety, affirmation, community, wellness – and dignity. Offenders are more likely to talk about their actions and concerns, and less likely to commit further violence.

RBP is underpinned by several intertwined principles (a summary of these is shown in Table 2). The approach entails practicing with awareness of ways in which "language can be used to (a) conceal or reveal violence, (b) obscure or clarify perpetrator responsibility, (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses, and (d) blame and pathologize, or contest the blaming and pathologizing of victims" (Coates, Todd, & Wade, 2000, cited in Wade, 2014, p. 2). Recognising the deliberate nature of violence and holding perpetrators accountable for their abusive actions is central to RBP (Weaver et al. 2007). Furthermore, and at the heart of RBP, is the task of elucidating and honouring victims' resistance to abuse and oppression in recognition of the primacy of dignity to "individual and collective wellbeing" (Coates, Todd, & Wade, 2000, cited in Wade, 2014, p. 2).

Procedure for Interviewing Research Participants

Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were considered the most appropriate means of collecting initial data from advocates as this would enable a balance between flexibility in our discussion and coverage of important areas of research interest. Both series of client interviews emphasised facilitating participant's sharing of their

experiences, stories and understandings.

During this process, the researcher appreciates that as a separate individual, and due to the inherent ambiguity of linguistic exchanges, they cannot ever fully know and therefore directly access or convey another person's accounts of their experiences (Gavey, 1989). In response to these concerns, the researcher instead seeks to get as close as possible to participant's perspectives. These conditions are offered through in-depth interviewing. In this regard, culturally competent conduct and respectful treatment of others involved in the research was an important ethical concern. I undertake this project with the understanding that lived experiences of marginalisation, colonisation, decolonisation, and institutional and interpersonal racism - including intergenerational - intersect with women victim's experiences of control and abuse and their own and others' responses to these (Royal, 2011). Our identified culture(s) and ethnicities shape our worldviews, ways of being and relating in the world, and notions of dignity, safety, and wellbeing.

The questioning process aimed to be responsive to the participant's contributions as the interview unfolded. In keeping with the Response-Based approach of Richardson and Wade (e.g. 2013), interviews involved a contextual analysis and continued monitoring of the participant to check that she was experiencing dignity throughout the interview (observing her face, voice, posture, engagement). This entailed listening for the often very subtle micro-details and contexts of participant's experiences of and responses to abuse.

The aim of the two series of interviews was to collect data that would enable exploration of four main research questions:

1. How do clients understand domestic violence and social responses to this before, and after participation in RBP interventions?
2. How do clients' accounts of their experience give testimony to resisting violence before participation in RBP interventions?
3. How does the language clients use to tell of their experiences with RBP demonstrate the effectiveness of honouring resistance and the dignity of all people?
4. How does the language clients use to tell of their experience give testimony to

the ways in which their understandings of family violence change as they participate in RBP interventions?

Interview One

For the first series of client interviews, my main concern was for participants to have the opportunity to talk about their experiences of abuse and their responses to the abuse. I also asked about ways other people in participant's lives had responded to them during and since their partner's, or expartner's, abuse, and any previous involvement with domestic violence services. The rationale for this approach was to ascertain how clients understand domestic violence and social responses to this, and how client's accounts of their experience give testimony to resisting violence before their participation in RBP Group Programme.

I explained to participants that some aspects of our interview would involve me asking them to share difficult and painful experiences. I then gave my reasons for this as finding out about the details of the abuse clients had experienced, and the ways they and others had responded to these experiences, was important for understanding their unique situation and for learning about the ways they had kept themselves and others safe, and maintained their dignity.

Congruent with response-based contextual analysis, the interview was structured in the following way. Please note, however, interviews did not necessarily conform to this format, rather, questioning was responsive to participant's particular ways of sharing their accounts:

1. Beginning the conversation

I enquired about the background of the client's involvement with Women's Refuge and the situation that led up to this. As I listened to the client's story, as needed, I asked for additional details about her history of the current interventions she is involved in, with police, with the courts, with Women's Refuge and any other professional agencies. As this took place, I focused on sensing how the client (and her family or whānau if relevant) experienced these present interventions, and how people in these services related to her and her family and whānau. The aim of this was to ascertain the social

responses the client and those close to her received and their responses to these social responses.

2. Seeking a clear description of the violence in context and actions of the violent (ex)partner in detail

The purpose of this aspect of the interview was for me to understand the nature of the abuse the client experienced. Therefore, I asked about the abuse the client had experienced or was experiencing. This included asking details about the immediate circumstances during her (ex)partner's abusive acts, and for her to clearly describe her partner's actions (what, where, when, how, who was there).

3. The client's responses and resistance to her partner's abuse

For this third step, I asked the client to describe how she responded to her partner's abuse and control at different stages of it being carried out. Attention to micro-details relating to the client's thoughts, images, feelings and actions that had perhaps not been previously spoken about was crucial for this stage of the interview. I asked the client to describe in detail what she did, what she felt, and what she thought about at different steps during and since the different forms of abuse began. I asked the client to talk about how she responded in ways that indicate varying forms of physical, emotional, intellectual (in her thoughts) and spiritual resistance. My focus was to listen for and ask about ways the client indicated how she tried to keep herself safe, protect others, and keep her self-respect and dignity.

4. The (ex)partner's responses to the client's responses and resistance

For this aspect of the interview I attempted to get a sense of how the client's (ex)partner responded to her responses and resistance. I was interested in clarifying whether the partner undertook actions to try to suppress the client's resistance, or try to stop other people from finding out about his abuse, as indicated by Stark (2009) and Wade (1997). For example, I listened for whether the client provided indications of her (ex)partner's surveillance, threats, attributing blame to her or others, denying responsibility, undermining her, accusations, physical control and violence, sexualised abuse, hurting or threatening to hurt others such as her children, control of money or other resources, isolating her from friends, family, work, or being secretive and hiding evidence of their abusive actions.

5. Social responses to the clients

Contingent on the client's accounts, I asked her to describe specific actions/comments of her friends and family that she received as she experienced her partner's abuse. In particular, the client was asked to describe other's responses since the abuse became apparent. I also enquired about the responses of services such as police, the courts, Women's Refuge and any other professional agencies. I listened for reports of negative or unhelpful social responses, and about responses the client found helpful. In both cases I sought the specific details of the responses (who was there, in what ways, when, where, what did they say, what did they do?).

6. Client's responses to the social responses she received

I listened and asked about how the client responded to particular responses from another person or agency. I asked the client to tell me what she did and thought at the time, how she managed, and how she protected herself.

Interview Two

The second client interviews were similar to the first, but with the addition of inquiring about clients' views in regard to the RBP Group Programme. Questions focused on aspects of the programme that had helped the client experience safety and increased dignity, and any other changes the client had experienced in her life, or for people she cares about, during or since participating in the RBP Group Programme.

Questions were elicited to ascertain whether and how clients' involvement with the Group had helped them become more aware of ways they had resisted abuse and control at different times in their lives. Clients were asked to describe changes in how they understand domestic violence. For example, changes in their understanding of who is responsible for the abuse. Clients were also asked whether their awareness of support and services available to them had changed. The rationale for this approach was to ascertain how the language clients use to tell of their experiences with RBP demonstrate the effectiveness of honouring resistance and the dignity of all people and give testimony to the ways in which their understandings of family violence change after their participation in the RBP Group. I also wanted to understand how women's awareness of social support and community resources had changed.

Summary

A central assumption of RBP is that people always respond to violence and oppression and all forms of violence are designed to suppress or conceal resistance: Perpetrators operate with awareness of victim resistance so the specific ways in which their abusive actions are practiced are done so in anticipation and prevention of resistance (e.g. Todd, Wade, & Renoux, 2004; Todd, Weaver-Dunlop, & Ogden, 2014). The very reality that domestic violence is far more likely to be practiced in the private sphere of the home hidden from view rather than in public offers unequivocal evidence of the volition - and caution - perpetrators exercise in deciding who, when, and how they abuse. For these reasons, RBP de-emphasises the language of effects in describing processes of victimisation preferring instead the language of responses. This calls for a careful, critical analysis of language of violence and offers guidance on contextual analyses of situations of abuse so that safety, dignity and justice can be restored.

Contextual analysis has been developed as a framework for inquiring about the experiences of victims and perpetrators of violence. In my research I adapted this model for gathering data from participating Women's Refuge clients in order to evaluate the effectiveness of a RBP Group Programme and its relevance to people in Aotearoa New Zealand. In this regard, I find inspiration in the following guide for working with clients:

Keep in mind these three Response-Based ideas:

4. As clinical psychologists, how do we monitor that clients are experiencing dignity? This includes observing their face, voice, posture, engagement, and words.

When treated with dignity, people may...

- have light in their eyes
- hold their head high
- sparkle
- smile
- soften in their demeanour
- experience the psychological freedom to engage, explore ideas and be

- playful
 - stand tall
 - breathe naturally
 - feel grounded
5. We're not involved in a teaching process, we're involved in a learning process;
 6. The more potentially humiliating a person's situation, the more important it is that we uphold their dignity.¹⁰²

Self Reflection

Over the course of my internship at Massey Psychology Clinic I have become increasingly aware of the prevalence of clients' experiences of stigma, shame, oppression, victimization, and marginalisation. This has impelled me to reflect often on the potential relevance of RPB for people experiencing mental illness and for these reasons; I have found myself incorporating this understanding into my interactions with clients. Similarly, given clients' frequent reporting of negative social responses in relation to their experiences of mental illness, I have incorporated aspects of the contextual analysis framework into this work. I appreciate that for many clients, the symptoms they experience relate to particular mental illness categories interacting with biopsychosocial conditions and in this way, particular treatment models for specific mental disorders, such as Clark and Beck's cognitive model for panic disorder described in Case Study 1 are efficacious and well received by clients.

The particular nature of my research background has given me a particular lens from which I now think about and reflect on the language used by client's I currently work with at Massey Psychology Clinic to describe themselves and their situations. In particular, I often reflect on themes in client's language that are self-denigrating and self-blaming. I believe that being able to reflect on this with them in the moment and give feedback to clients about ways they have responded that make sense in the context of their difficulties (e.g. to do their best to protect and look after themselves and others, to try to recover and to persevere in the face of overwhelming hopelessness and helplessness) has been received well by clients. A particular challenge however, is being able to reflect back in the moment and more often it is not until after the session

¹⁰² I gratefully acknowledge the words of Cathy Richardson and Allan Wade (2014) for these three ideas.

that I think of the many ways I could have responded in more helpful ways with clients. Sometimes I am able to raise these points during the next session. I have noticed that this is appreciated by clients as they, I hope, feel listened to and that these concerns are recognised as significant to raise after a considerable time lapse.

In particular, I have found the basic RBP principle of recognising that the greater the indignity experienced by a person, the greater the importance of upholding their dignity by acknowledging their mana, capabilities and resourcefulness, and also sensitively acknowledging their experiences of shame, and fears relating to the stigma of adversities they face in their lives, often associated with mental illness. In this sense, I try use this standpoint as a reference for all of my interactions with clients, including writing about and sharing information about their situations with other people and agencies. I would like to develop these ideas further by finding a way of adapting the contextual analysis framework into the current psychological assessment and formulation.