

## **SOME OF THE WAYS SHELTER PROGRAMS (AND OTHER HELPING SYSTEMS) REVICTIMIZE BATTERED WOMEN**

- We don't believe her.
- We don't recognize her strengths.
- We fail to realize her manipulative tendencies are survival skills.
- We question why she has stayed in the relationship or returns to it.
- We question her inconsistency and react to her not following through with goals, etc.
- We fault her parenting.
- We "evaluate" her.
- We only like "good victims" and enlightened victims.
- We hold cultural biases: we are sexist, racist and homophobic.
- We take control.
- We uphold unrealistic expectations.
- We patronize her.
- We don't allow her much or any privacy.
- We question her need for shelter protection when she makes contact with her partner.
- We buy into such labeling as: co-dependency, enabler, addicted to love, etc...; "the woman as defective" theory.
- We blame her for failing to protect her children.
- We assume that leaving an abusive partner will set her free without recognizing the social abuse and stigma that low income, single women, and women-headed families face.
- We fail to recognize her religious beliefs about marriage and family.
- We fail to validate and/or understand her positive, even loving feelings toward her partner.
- We fail to advise her about realistic outcomes of counseling for her partner.
- We fail to create bridges in the community.

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