Why Do Women Stay?

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Why do women stay in abusive, controlling relationships?

Why do men abuse women?
Stages of relationships when control and abuse are involved.
1-Attraction

- Maximize similarities
- Minimize differences
- Task: See potential
- Danger: Superficial-”Bull Shit”—Like A Crooked Politician On A Campaign
Then it gets serious, talk of going out or going steady.

Abusers starts set a boundary around the relationship.

Makes up rules as relationship progresses. (usually double standards)

Isolation becomes reinforced with jealous behaviors.
2-Power Struggle (Conflict)

- Maximize Differences
- Minimize Similarities
- Tactics of control in the form of Physical, Psychological, Spiritual and Sexual.
- Task: Individuate (look at self and see what needs to change)
- Danger: Scar (something has already been said or done that can’t be forgotten)
Power Struggle (Conflict), cont.

Women at this point have 3 options;
1- Leave (avg. 7 times)
2- Fight Back (women who use violence)
3- Stay for a variety of reasons each different based on their own personal situation.

Let's take a look at “Why Indian Women Stay: Barriers To Escaping”
3-Differentiation

- Moratorium
- Task: Accept Difference
- Danger: Drift
4-Love Connection (Commitment)

- Co-Creation
- Intimacy
- Task: Value difference – Value similarities
Why Indian Women Stay: Barriers To Escaping Violence

1. Fear of another beating or being murdered
2. Can’t stop the threats, stalking, or harassment
3. No where safe to go
4. No money, food, or transportation
5. Fear of losing children
6. Retaliation by his family and friends
7. Can’t get protection orders or custody orders enforced
8. The “System” believes him or doesn’t hold him accountable
9. Would lose job, home, family, and community
10. Negative response from community, police, court, or social service
11. Afraid of impact on children; “they need their father”
12. Fear of partner doing something to get me in trouble with the law or social services
13. Need time to prepare and plan to leave
14. Advice of spiritual person/ritual abuse
15. Guilt about what I did; I’m responsible for the violence
Why Indian Women Stay: Barriers To Escaping Violence

16. Cultural beliefs
17. Can’t use resources because of how they’re provided
18. Believed things would get better after the arrest
19. If I stayed I know what to expect
20. Fear of being alone. This is the best I can do
21. I still care about him
22. Too exhausted-Not healed from the beating
If women stop being violent to men, men will not stop being violent to women. However, if men stop being violent to women, women will stop being violent to men.
Fight Back—Retaliation

- Context
- Violence is often reactionary
  - Self defense
  - Defense of the children/family or others
  - Trying to escape
  - Tolerance Break
Why Women Leave

- 7-11 times on the average
- Resources/services
- Advocacy
- Education
- Support
- Children
- Choose to live and be well
- Injured and impaired
- Just had enough
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