



# Violence and secondary stress

Public Solicitor's Office Training

11 February 2011

# Agenda

- Introductions
- Aims of this training
- What is violence?
- Solomon Islands context
- Effects of violence and trauma
- Secondary stress – what happens for us
- Looking after yourself
- Where to from here?

# Violence and Abuse

- What does violence mean to you?
- What kinds of violence do we see in our work?

Any act where the stronger person (perpetrator or abuser) means to control, harm, shame, or destroy the less powerful person (the victim)

# Violence causes harm to individuals, families and communities

- Types of harm

Emotional	Physical	Psychological
Financial	Sexual	Sexual identity
Social	Spiritual	Others?

# When does violence occur?

- Violence in the marriage or de facto partnership, including
  - Wife or girlfriend beating
  - Financial control
  - Social control and isolation from family and friends
- Early forced marriage
- Sexual violence against a partner
- Rape
- Forced sexual prostitution
- Forcing STIs and HIV on a person
- Incest and child sexual abuse
- Trafficking in girls and women
- Homophobic violence

# Violence at home – Family violence and domestic violence

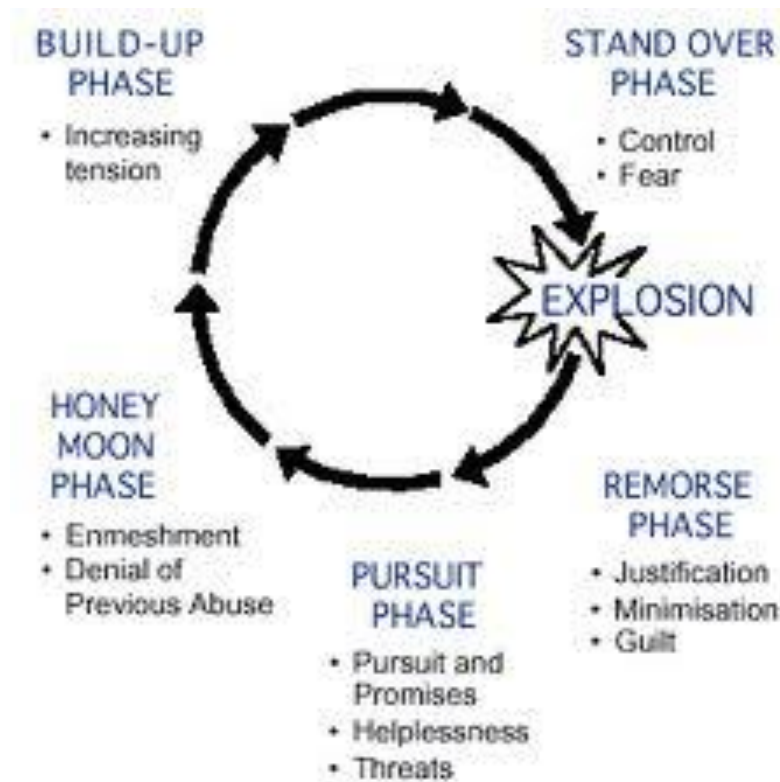
- An abuse of power by men (usually but not always) against women in a relationship or after separation
- It occurs when one partner attempts to physically and/or psychologically dominate and control the other
- Can also occur against children, older family members, in laws (taboo)

# The tensions and violence in the Solomon Islands

- Violence often occurs during armed conflict or emergency
- Continuing “kastom” practices that harm women
- Ethnic tension and hate crimes: rape and threats of violence are widely use in ethnic conflicts as a form of control

Ref: Amnesty International, *Women Confronting Violence* (2004)

# The cycle of violence



- Discussion: is this what domestic violence looks like in the Solomon Islands? What other ways can we talk about the problem?



# Effects of trauma

- What is trauma?
- People affected by trauma can experience reactions such as

Behaviour and personality changes	Emotional effects
Mental effects	Physical effects

# Behaviour and personality

- A person who has experienced trauma might become

Withdrawn	Irritable	Aggressive
Reckless	Suicidal	Others?

# Emotional effects of trauma

- Someone who has experienced trauma might feel

Depressed	Teary/crying more than usual
Anxious	Frightened

...?

# Mental effects of trauma

- Someone who has experienced trauma might

Feel confused	Have trouble concentrating
Be forgetful	...?

# Physical effects of trauma

- After trauma, people might notice in their bodies

Pain	Headaches	Broken bones
Rashes	Burns	Broken teeth
Scars	Weight loss or gain	Hearing problems or deafness

...?

# Secondary trauma

- Working with people who have suffered violence and abuse, YOU may also experience
  - thoughts, pictures and feelings that worry you
  - anxiety before and after you meet someone
  - feeling angry or frustrated with someone, or everyone
  - nightmares or changes in your sleeping habits
  - start using more alcohol and other substances
  - being frightened for yourself, family and possessions
  - feeling hopeless that you can change things
  - lose your beliefs

# Self care

- What can we do to help ourselves when working with violent issues?
  1. Meet with one other, or a a group of others who do the same work to talk over issues
  2. Allow yourself to feel upset and express feelings safely
  3. Give yourself permission to reduce contact and change support you offer after discussion with your Manager
  4. Look at other stresses in your life and reduce them
  5. Keep healthy, eat and sleep well, RELAX
  6. Keep a personal life, with community and family support
  7. Have time for reflection – strengthen your spiritual resources

# Where to from here?

- More information and training?
- Follow up sessions
- Resources: Family Violence And You
- Papers and current projects
- Family violence and procedure manual
- A family and sexual violence legal service?
  
- Discussion: what resources are we missing? What support and services do we need to do our work?