

When the Victim Leaves the Abuser

When a victim leaves an abusive relationship, the abuser exhibits many predictable behaviors. The following are a few of these behaviors:

- **INDIFFERENCE:** The abuser may say things like, “Go ahead and leave. I don’t care. I don’t need you.”
- **MANIPULATIVE ANGER:** Now the abuser shows his “anger”. Anger is a tool batterers use to gain and maintain control. The abuser may try to manipulate the children by saying the victim is keeping him from seeing them.
- **HONEYMOON:** The abuser uses manipulation to get the victim to “come back”. Abusers often make promises like “I will quit drinking,” or “I have decided to go to counseling.” He won’t discuss the abuse; he will talk only about past good times and the promise of good times to come.
- **DEFAMING THE VICTIM:** Abusers often tell lies about their partners. Their goal is to isolate their partner from family and friends and convince everyone that the victim is causing the problems. Many times, the partner does not know about the lies. One of the most common lies is that the victim was having an affair.
- **ANGER AND MURDER:** The most dangerous time for victims is when the abuser realizes the victim is not coming back. Abusers are far more likely to carry out threats made during the relationship at this point. 75% of domestic violence assaults that are reported to law enforcement occur after the partners have separated.

Source: Sable House, Dallas, OR; Mid-Valley Women’s Crisis Service, Salem, OR



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