The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence

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THE WINGS OF CHANGE: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

by

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A Scholarly Project
Submitted to the Occupational Therapy Department
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This Scholarly Project Paper, submitted by Lainie Donahue and Dianna Steen in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master’s of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

Faculty Advisor

11-29-06
Date
PERMISSION

Title Aftercare Women’s Group
Department Occupational Therapy
Degree Master’s of Occupational Therapy

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ABSTRACT

Literature indicates that the current services provided to women of domestic violence typically include emergency housing, crisis counseling, and short-term legal and financial assistance (Gorde, Helfrich, & Finlayson, 2004). While these resources provide necessary immediate support to the victim, she may often feel powerless to make long-term changes. If adequate long-term resources and support are not available to the victim, the victim is more likely to return to an abusive situation.

The review of literature focuses on obtaining a deeper understanding of the needs that exist for women subsequent to leaving an abusive relationship, and how to prevent the risk of re-victimization. Factors that influence the woman to remain in the abusive situation are the cycle of abuse, the types of abuse and their subsequent effects, and the daily living skills needs of the women that are not addressed in current programs. A needs assessment with the Community Violence Intervention Center and the literature determined that women require assistance with a variety of daily living skills. One possible way to stop this cycle of return is participation in a long term group to support independent functioning of victims of domestic violence within their communities.

Therefore, an activity manual was developed to assist the women with developing the daily living skills necessary to remain free of an abusive relationship. The manual is titled: *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence*. *The Wings of Change* manual was created for Occupational
Therapists to implement in an aftercare women’s group setting for victims of domestic violence.

*The Wings of Change* manual is divided into four areas: 1) Personal Skill Development, 2) Social Skill Development, 3) Work, Education and Leisure Skill Development, and 4) Family Skill Development. These areas address the living skill that victims of domestic violence victims are currently experiencing challenges. Each activity provides guidance for the therapist to prepare, administer, and process the group activity. These activities assist the women in becoming their own agent of change in their daily lives.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Each year, it is estimated that four million women will report domestic violence in the United States (Gorde et al., 2004). According to the U.S. Census Bureau report in July 2004, there were approximately 136 million women in the United States. This means that one out of every twenty women over the age of eighteen will be a victim of domestic violence sometime during their lifetime, thereby making domestic violence cases largely underreported.

Current services for women of domestic violence typically include emergency housing, crisis counseling, and short-term legal and financial assistance (Gorde, Helfrich, & Finlayson, 2004). While these resources provide necessary immediate support to the victim in her current situation, she is often left powerless to make a long-term change. The lack of adequate long-term resources emotional and support increases the odds that a woman will return to an abusive relationship. To stop this cycle of return, a long term group is needed to support independent functioning of victims of domestic violence within their communities.

The need for long-term resources and emotional support has resulted in the design of a manual of activities, titled: The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence. The Wings of Change manual was created with two uses in mind. The primary use of the activity manual is to provide Occupational
Therapists with activities to be used in the field with female victims of domestic violence.

The secondary use of the activity manual is utilization by Occupational Therapy students in an aftercare women’s group at the Community Violence Intervention Center. The focus of the manual is to guide occupational therapists, based upon the Occupational Adaptation (OA) Model, to assist victims of domestic violence to gain independence.

Occupational Adaptation is a process that allows each person to master and respond adaptively to the various occupational challenges that are encountered in the course of a lifetime. Occupational adaptation theory presumes a developmental process where occupational readiness skills in the person subsystems (sensory, cognitive, and psychosocial) set the stage for interacting in the environmental context of work, play and leisure (University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy Department (UND OT), 2006, p. 6).

_The Wings of Change_ is designed to prepare the women to assume the roles and occupations that have been slowly and involuntarily removed from them, through the cycle of abuse. This preparation follows the developmental process beginning with the provision of foundational activities (occupational readiness) to help ground her knowledge of who she is via personal, social and family skill development. The foundational activities are designed to develop or strengthen her readiness skills. These readiness skills set the stage to prepare her to more successfully adapt to the challenges she is and will be experiencing in the environmental contexts of: work, play and leisure. The next step, in the process, is to then provide her the opportunity to ‘try on’ these skills in the various roles occupations she needs to reassume. This ‘trying on’ occurs in an environmental context that is safe and supportive while still challenging her to move to the next level. This entire process culminates with the woman gaining a feeling of competence as she regains her personal control and masters her roles and occupational functioning. This entire model and process is based on the belief that engagement in
occupation drives the adaptive process through which changes in occupational functioning occur (UND OT).

CONCLUSION

It is felt that this project will have an impact on the lives of women who have been victims of domestic violence. The eradication of domestic violence from society is a process that will take time to establish and force an individual and societal cultural change; therefore, it is necessary to address the needs of the victims until such eradication occurs.

KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY

Key concepts and terminology are utilized throughout this project. To assist with understanding, the concepts and terms are defined in the following:

1. Occupation:
   Law, Polatajko, Baptiste, & Townsend defined occupation as: [A]ctivities…of everyday life, named, organized, and given value and meaning by individuals and a culture. Occupation is everything people do to occupy themselves, including looking after themselves…enjoying life…and contributing to the social and economic fabric of their communities… (as cited in Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process, 2002).

2. Occupational readiness:
   Schkade and Schultz’s definition of occupational readiness: “consists of interventions that are designed to address deficits in the Person systems (sensorimotor, cognitive, or psychosocial) that are interfering with performance in the selected occupational role” (Perspectives in Human Occupation, 2003, 614).


Introduction and Organization of Project

Chapter II provides an extensive literature review on the problems facing women who have survived domestic violence and the need for long-term services. In addition,
the proposed program manual of activities, *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Domestic Violence*, is presented to meet the needs identified.

The methodology used for the development of *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence*, is discussed in Chapter III with the activity manual in its entirety, presented in Chapter IV. This activity manual will be used by Occupational Therapists in an aftercare women's group. It contains a series of activities that target four areas: Personal Skill Development; Social Skill Development; Work, Education, and Leisure Skill Development; and Family Skill Development.

Chapter V is a summary of the project and identifies recommendations made for action to reduce the likelihood of women returning to an abusive relationship. Chapter V further identifies the need for research to support the efficacy of long-term programs addressing the needs of female domestic violence victims.
CHAPTER II
INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is defined as violence in the form of physical, emotional, psychological, or financial that occurs to an individual by a partner within the home environment (Keeling, 2002). Domestic violence against women is a global problem with the number of actual cases difficult to determine due to the acceptance of this behavior in some cultures (Dubnova & Joss, 1997). Domestic violence can affect people of any age, gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status (Gorde, Helfrich, & Finlayson, 2004; Keeling, 2004).

The United States experiences the same challenge in determining the number of cases. Each year, it is estimated that four million women will report domestic violence in the United States (Gorde et al., 2004). According to the U.S. Census Bureau report in July 2004, there were approximately 136 million women in the United States. This means that one out of every twenty women over the age of eighteen will be a victim of domestic violence sometime during their lifetime, thereby making domestic violence cases largely underreported.

Underreporting or lack of data regarding the number of women, who are victims of domestic violence, is often related to the feelings experienced by the victims. Victims feel fear, shame, embarrassment, and guilt, which are commonly experienced following an abusive act (Sleutel, 1998; Forte, Cohen, DuMont, Hyman, & Romans, 2005). These
feelings experienced by the victims, contribute to their silence and concealment of the violence that they are experiencing. This in turn enables the abusive acts to continue through a series of stages termed, the cycle of abuse (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc., n.d.). The cycle of abuse will be discussed in more depth later in the literature review.

Women who have grown up surrounded by violence tend to see domestic violence as a normal societal function and find it difficult to change the environment because they do not see the problems. The women often choose a partner that exhibits the traits they have attributed to a previous abusive relationship or other abusive experiences during their earlier years (Cox & Stoltenberg, 1991).

The abusers tend to be individuals who seek to control, manipulate, and wield their power over another individual (Keeling, 2004). The perpetrators of abuse may also have “rigid gender role beliefs, low self-esteem, and a feeling of ownership towards their female partner” (Keeling, 2004, p. 28). The abuser uses this power over the victim to alienate them from their family and friends. This in turn leads to the victim feeling isolated, helplessness, and dependent on the abuser.

Although domestic violence is a major health concern worldwide and in the U.S., there has been minimal effort put forth to determine the efficacy of intervention programs that reach beyond the initial contact with the victim. The limited information includes the data to substantiate the dimensions of abuse and the development of appropriate interventions (McFarlane, Soeken, Reel, Parker, and Silva, 1997; Bybee and Sullivan, 2002; Dubanova and Joss, 1997).
The purpose of this literature review is to identify and present the complexity of the domestic abusive relationship, specifically the victim, whose significant needs are not adequately being addressed by contemporary interventions. Based upon the findings a program will be proposed to meet those needs.

TYPES AND EFFECTS OF ABUSE

Domestic violence is comprised of more than just the physical abuse experienced by the victims, although this is the common perception. The abuse can take on many different forms and have effects that are farther-reaching than the outward bruises or markings carried by the women. In addition to physical abuse, women can experience emotional or psychological abuse, and financial abuse. Although each type of abuse is different, all have lasting effects on the victim. In this section of the literature review, each type of abuse and effects will be presented in more detail.

Physical Abuse

There are numerous physical health problems that occur in women who are victims of domestic violence such as: burns, fractures, knife wounds, miscarriages, bite marks, partial loss of hearing, joint injuries, internal injuries, detached retinas, head trauma, and death (Dubnova and Joss, 1997; Sutherland, Bybee, and Sullivan, 1998).

Although the outward physical signs of abuse can be significant and visible, the visible signs can also be a forewarning of deeper wounds. Women may experience other disease processes that are a result of the physical injuries including: arthritis due to broken bones, chronic pain, urinary tract infections, pelvic inflammatory disease, dyspareunia, and pelvic pain (Keeling, 2004). This information is concurrent with a study conducted by Dubnova and Joss (1997), which found that women had more
somatic complaints such as “chronic headache, abdominal pains, muscle aches, [and] recent vaginal infections…” (p. 81). Sutherland et al., (1998), also cited back and limb problems, and disturbing physical sensations.

A systematic review of literature, conducted by Wathen and MacMillan (2003), found that “health consequences include, a 50-70% increase in gynecological, central nervous system, and stress related problems” (p. 590). Table 1 identifies specific forms of physical abuse participants experienced in Jaffe, Zerwer, & Poisson (2005) study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act of Physical Abuse</th>
<th>Percentage of Participants that experienced the Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threatened with being hit with a fist or something to cause physical harm</td>
<td>84.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects thrown at them to cause physical harm</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushed, grabbed, or shoved</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slapped</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicked, bit, or hit with a fist</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit with an object causing physical harm</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced physical injuries</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choked</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical harm by gun or knife</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Sutherland, et al., (1998), women can experience a combination of three to seven physical symptoms at one time, which can have debilitating effects on the women’s well-being and daily functioning. This symptom clustering can create difficulty in evaluation by healthcare providers. Even with the horrific information provided regarding the physical abuse women endure, women report that emotional or psychological abuse is the worst form of abuse (Jaffe et al., 2005).
Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Women state that emotional and psychological abuse is worse because it does not heal quickly nor completely, even with time (Jaffe et al., 2005). The fact that this area is frequently overlooked (Sutherland et al., 1998) may significantly contribute to the minimal or lack of emotional and psychological healing.

In a personal communication with the Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC), it was identified that women often report facing emotional or psychological problems in the following areas: quality of life, self-esteem, social relationships, support system, communication and child rearing (Jan. 4, 2007). These areas will be presented and discussed in the following subsections:

*Quality of Life*

The effects of domestic violence have a direct impact on a woman’s quality of life. Quality of life has been conceptualized to mean the individual’s perception of social relationships, financial independence, overall psychological well-being, and physical well-being (Bybee and Sullivan, 2002).

An individual’s quality of life is affected by dependency on the abuser. A study by Leung, Leung, Ng, and Ho (2005), concludes, “the baseline quality of life of the victims is significantly impaired in all aspects, including the physical health, psychological health, environment, and social relationship” (p. 261). The women’s quality of life can be increased through availability and match of resources to the women’s own personal goals (Bybee and Sullivan, 2002).
Self-esteem

A strong part of a person’s ability to function without dependency on others is the person’s self-esteem (Keeling, 2004). Without the ability to believe in yourself and in what you can accomplish independently, it is difficult to move away from someone who is forcefully controlling your life. According to Keeling (2004), “the constant erosion of self-esteem undermines the confidence and decision making abilities, eventually leading to a learned helplessness and apathy” (p. 28).

Women who experience self-esteem issues are more likely to stay with the abuser or return to abusive situations because they believe they cannot handle life on their own. Women may be told that they are worthless, not good enough, are nothing, or that they need the person they are with. Jaffe et al., (2005), found that of the women in the study, “96.7% experienced name calling and threats” (p. 2). As a result of the abuser’s domineering, controlling, and manipulative behaviors; the women believe they are not worthy of their partners love, and they deserve the physical abuse they are receiving. These victims have presented with feelings that have manifested as guilt, decreased self image, fear, humiliation, denial, isolation, and breaking the law for their partner (Keeling, 2004).

Assertiveness has a direct correlation with self-esteem and women of domestic violence lack the ability to be assertive. If the woman is assertive, her abuser views this as an insubordinate behavior and harm is inflicted upon her for standing up for herself. Because the abuser is aggressive, the women learn to be passive for survival. The learned survival mechanism of passivity is one of the components that keep the abuser in control. Self-esteem should be the main focus of long-term domestic violence.
intervention programs. Without the ability to feel good about oneself, it is difficult to believe that they have the ability to control their own life.

Social Relationships

Women who are experiencing or living in a domestic violence situation lack the ability or opportunity to meet other individuals. This is largely due to the abuser maintaining control over the victim and not allowing the victims to have contact with individuals who may sense that there is a dangerous situation (Keeling, 2004).

Sleutel (1998) found that “battered women consistently identified behaviors where the husbands assumed the role of the jailer; controlling, isolating, and severing contact with others” (p. 527). Jaffe et al., (2005) state that 80% of women experienced a limitation in their contact with family and friends and 78.3% experienced their abuser monitoring where they went and who they saw (pg. 2).

The victims are often unaware, early in the relationship that this is occurring. Later the woman finds herself merely trying to survive a desperate situation that can radically change from day to day. Therefore, the women tend to lack the ability to develop friendships and relationships with others that could encourage a support system.

Support System

The inability to forge relationships outside of the abusive relationship prevents the development of a support system for the victim. According to Bybee and Sullivan (2002), it is just as important for a person to be able to perceive that support is available as it is to actually have the direct support present. The presence of support assists the women with decreasing the feelings of depression, and decreasing the risk of reoccurrence of abuse. The impact of this support can still be seen two years post shelter stay, and contributes to
increasing her overall quality of life. Women with higher levels of social support also have decreased difficulty obtaining community resources leading to increased protection from abuse (Bybee and Sullivan, 2002; Staggs and Riger, 2005).

It is also important to consider that not all social relationships provide positive support for the victim. Bybee and Sullivan (2005) found that women who had people in their support network, who made their lives harder, had an increased risk of re-abuse. This may be because their social support network does not facilitate support to leave their abuser or are another part of an abusive relationship (parents). Increasing the amount of positive social support is essential for successful coping. The challenge she faces with social participation translates to difficulty effectively and appropriately communicating her needs.

**Communication**

The challenges in communication can include; being unaware of boundaries that exist, being overly or under sensitive to non verbal language, lack the ability to engage in a meaningful conversation, communicate using unusual or unacceptable non verbal language, and simply being comfortable around other people due to the isolation (CVIC Staff, Personal communication, January 4, 2007). These difficulties in communication contribute significantly to the difficulties she is experiencing with child rearing.

**Child Rearing**

Children who have witnessed abuse are just as vulnerable to the effects of the abuse as the victim. They are in effect the silent victims of abuse. The children of domestic violence show comparable emotional and psychological issues and behaviors as that of the abused (Jaffe et al., 2005). Kim-Cohen, Caspi, Rutter, Tomas, and Moffitt
(2006) found that children, whose mothers expressed antisocial tendencies with depression, were shown to exhibit the same tendencies in their lives.

These children’s behaviors can manifest as; an increase in hypervigilent behavior, trauma symptoms, nightmares, depression, and regression to earlier stages of human development (Jaffe et al., 2005). Children can also experience difficulty with their academics and have an increased incidence of impulsive, reactive, or violence behaviors (Jaffe et al., 2005). For adolescents, these symptoms can be compounded by the increased incidence of alcohol and substance abuse, truancy at school, and abusive relationships, becoming involved in the justice system, as well as difficulty in social situations.

As stated prior, the isolation of the women results in the lack of social supports. This, in conjunction with possible depression or other mental illnesses can make their parenting ineffective (Wilke, Kamata, and Cash, 2005). Additional factors that compound the difficulties the women have with their children include: feelings of guilt experienced by the victim because of the abusive situation, the harm that they may have caused their children, and their inability to form boundaries in social situations. Female victims of domestic violence can make poor role models for their children because they may be unable to regulate their own emotions and anger (Jaffe et al., 2005). This in turn may affect the women’s ability to develop and maintain function in a healthy and loving relationship with their children. All of these issues place additional stress on the women and the situation during an already stressful period.
Another factor that makes parenting ineffective in the aftermath of domestic violence is the abuser. The abuser can use the children as a tactic to remain in control of the victim and threaten the victim with further harm.

The amount of time that children go without seeing their fathers increased their ability to adjust (Jaffe et al., 2005). Jaffe et al., (2005) also found that children who were allowed to discuss the domestic violence they witnessed, were less likely to have problems adjusting.

Several of these issues are a direct result of the psychological violence the victim suffered. Yet other issues are an indirect result of the controlling nature of the abusive relationship, and most are a combination of both. While each violent situation is unique, women may suffer these issues independently or dependent of each other and not all women will have similar situations (CVIC Staff, Personal communication, January 4, 2007).

A systematic review of literature, conducted by Wathen and MacMillan (2003), found that “impairment in mental and emotional health is associated with exposure to intimate partner violence, including depression, anxiety, suicidality, posttraumatic stress disorder, mood and eating disorders, substance dependence, antisocial personality disorders, and non-affective psychosis” (p. 589). Similar results are presented in other studies. According to Sutherland et al., (1998), as many as 70-85% of women in domestic violent situations are depressed and 30-55% are severely depressed. A study by Dubnova and Joss (1997) indicated that women who had experienced domestic violence versus women who had not, were four to five times more likely to require psychiatric treatment and five times more likely to attempt suicide. Sutherland et al., (1998),
discovered that the effects of abuse, both physical and psychological, do not diminish over time without the intervention focused on the psychological well being of the women. Another form of abuse that can have additional affects on the victim but is less frequently discussed is financial abuse.

**Financial Abuse**

Financial abuse is when the abuser uses money as a way of controlling their partner. The abuser may withhold money from the victim, which leaves her unable to purchase food, clothing, or medical treatment. The abuser may also force the women to turn over her paycheck from employment, which leaves her financially dependent on the abuser. Abusers may also put the household expenses in the victim’s name. This takes the responsibility off of the abuser and they could then leave the relationship without having the bills to contend with. Table 2 consists of information of specific forms of financial abuse participants experienced in Jaffée al’s., (2005) study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act of Financial Abuse</th>
<th>Percentage of Participants that experienced the Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financially ruining the women</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiding money or quitting a job to reduce support payments</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening a woman’s employment of opportunity to work</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending money from a joint bank account</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many women often don’t have the financial means to leave their abuser and often are unable to handle finances due to the abuser’s control. This lack of opportunity to learn financial independence leaves the women with the inability to obtain housing or a checking account. Without money, the ability to make money, build a credit history or
find housing, it is difficult to leave or remain outside of a domestic violence situation. The uncertainty of where she would go, if she left her abuser, is one of the leading reasons why she stays in the abusive relationship (Jaffe et al., 2005).

The women need the opportunity and skills to change their environment by securing financial responsibility to remain free of their abuser. Bybee and Sullivan (2002) state that women who receive social support are more likely to feel confident in their options and obtain employment and childcare. These resources allow the women a sense of self and empowerment to remain free of the abusive cycle and regain independence, removing the abusers manipulation and control. Since many don’t have the opportunity or skills to be financially independent, they often rely on government aid to fill in the gaps. The following information further discusses challenges women experience in relation to employment and government aid.

Employment

Staggs and Riger (2005) found that abuse patterns are associated with employment stability. Women who had recently been abused showed the least stable employment and worked less than women who were abused in the past or had not been abused. This study also found that women who reported health problems had less stable employment, and women with many job skills had more stable employment (Staggs and Riger, 2005).

There is a need for a program to assist these women to determine what their job skills are. By identifying these skills and using them, these women will have an increased chance of obtaining and maintaining a job. Bybee and Sullivan’s (2005) study, found that women, who were employed at 2 years following abuse, were 80% less likely
to experience re-abuse. If the women have the ability to independently support themselves, they become less dependent on others, which include the use of government aid.

**Government Aid**

Staggs and Riger (2005), state that women who are victims of domestic violence will require additional healthcare and supports before they are able to experience success working. This means that these women may benefit from utilizing the welfare system. According to Raphael (2002), many abusers restrict the women from contacting social services, but allow them to obtain medical assistance. Many women may not know how to obtain welfare benefits. They may not have access to a vehicle or support able to physically obtain the benefits, and may not want their abuser to see this information in the mail.

Providing women with information at medical facilities increases the probability that they will know where they can turn. Victims of domestic violence may benefit from further explanation regarding the welfare system and how to obtain assistance. This will provide them with the support they need as they continue to heal and begin looking for employment, further assisting these women to become self-sufficient (Staggs and Riger, 2005).

Overall, financial abuse is yet another method to keep the victim dependent on the abuser and to exploit the victim’s vulnerability. Several methods of abuse have been identified and presented. The methods of abuse depend upon the preferences of the abuser and the phases in the cycle of abuse.
CYCLE OF ABUSE

According to the Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc. webpage (retrieved 9/20/2006), there are three main phases of the abuse cycle: tension building phase, acute abuse stage, and honeymoon phase. Prior to the beginning of these phases, the women experience an abuser that is nice, courteous, and has the ability to draw them in to the rouse that this is the way things will remain. Yet, this does not represent the truth, which is quickly discovered by the victim. The following paragraphs present each phase in more detail.

Tension Building Phase

The tension building phase occurs when there is strain accumulating between the couple. This strain can be caused by problems with jobs, finances, children, and everyday life stressors. During this phase, verbal, emotional, or physical abuse are present at some level. With time, the level of abuse slowly escalates in severity. The victim may attempt to control the abuse by avoiding her partner and trying to quickly mending problems to please her partner. This form of coping works, but not consistently or effectively (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc. http://www.actabuse.com/cycleviolence.html).

Acute Battering Phase

Once the tension reaches an intolerable point, there is an acute battering incident that cannot be controlled by the abuser or the victim. This is usually brought on by an external strain or within the abuser themselves, which makes it impossible to determine when the acute phase of abuse is going to take place. This battering is usually very serious often resulting in severe emotional, psychological, and or physical injuries.
The acute phase can consist of one incident or can be a series of abusive incidents. If the victim does not leave the abusive relationship following the acute phase, the cycle enters the honeymoon phase.

Honeymoon Phase

During this phase the abusive situation improves, however this is generally for a short period of time because the abusers revert back to abusive tendencies during times of altered mental status. This may include alcohol use, drug use, extreme anger, stress, anxiety, or the feeling of loss of control. Bybee and Sullivan (2005), conclude that “abusive men are likely to continue their violence once they have found it to be effective” (p. 85).

In this phase the abuser realizes he has gone too far with the violence. The abuser generally apologizes for his behavior and makes empty promises that it will never happen again. This behavior typically convinces the women to return to the relationship because the victim believes the promise. During this phase the couple begins to grow closer emotionally because the tension that was building up in the first phase is no longer present. The couple develops a strong bond together increasing their level of commitment to one another.

Eventually the honeymoon phase loops back into the first phase thus repeating the cycle. However, the bond that was developed in the honeymoon phase makes it more difficult for the victim to leave the abusive situation the next time the battering begins. As the cycle repeats itself, the victim’s self-esteem continues to deteriorate which also contributes to her staying in the relationship (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc.
Diagram 1

Cycle of Violence

- apologies, excuses, amends
- tension builds
- abuse takes place

The development of the bond and commitment are just one reason why the woman may stay. There are a variety of other reasons why the women continue to endure the cycle of abuse as presented in the following paragraphs.

Reasons Women Stay

Many women use various processes to rationalize their choice to stay within the cycle of abuse and with their abuser. The relationship itself makes it difficult for the victim to admit that the person they care for can cause them such harm. Due to the women's feelings associated with the person, it is difficult for them to seek outside help from law enforcement officials to end the abusive cycle. Many victims simply hope that the situation will improve if they modify their own behavior.

According to Ferraro & Johnson (1983), common rationalizations, behaviors and beliefs include: denial of the abuse, minimizing the abuse, and placating to cope with the abuse of their partner. These rationalizations are largely connected to the
emotional/psychological forms of abuse and make it difficult for the women to leave the situation.

The rationalizations can include:

1. “compared to others... my problems are small” (Mills, p. 109).
2. The woman assuming the responsibility to assist their abuser to overcome their abusive tendencies,
3. Assuming the abuse is a result of a temporary situation that must be solved
4. Ignoring that the abuse occurred
5. Self-blame
6. Not utilizing community resources
7. Fear that nobody will love them
8. Religious beliefs support staying with their partner.
9. Involvement of children and wanting to provide the children a home that has two parents (Ferraro, 1993).

There comes a point though when the woman can no longer rationalize away the situation she is in. This can materialize when there is an accumulation of occurrences or a severe occurrence that can mobilize her to leave the situation.

Process of Leaving

It generally takes extreme threats of abuse or harm to the women or their children to facilitate leaving their abusive partner. According to Ferraro and Johnson (1983), there are six factors that facilitate the women leaving their partner:

1. Increase in violence
2. Increase in ability of resources
3. Decreased affection from their partner
4. Decreased hope that the relationship will improve
5. Increase in public humiliation and abuse
6. Increase in social support to leave their partner

Jaffe et al., (2005) identified two additional factors that facilitate leaving the abuser:

1. Realization that this is harming their children
2. Safety fears for their children
According to Curnow (1997), women who are in the acute battering stage in the cycle of abuse frequently realize the severity of their abuse and are more likely to seek help, which is the open window phase. During this phase the victim looks for ways to disengage from and exit the abusive relationship (Merritt-Gray & West, 1995). Merritt-Gray & West (1995) explains that the process of leaving is complex and contingent upon the children’s needs, housing availability, and marital beliefs. Furthermore, Dunn, (1989), describes the process of ending the relationship as usually involving the victim leaving and returning many times before the relationship is completely terminated.

Even though the effects of abuse are wide reaching, there are interventions developed to assist with alleviating the situation and supporting the women who have decided to leave. The interventions include the traditional interventions as well as proposed programs to address the areas that are lacking.

**INTERVENTION**

Traditional interventions for women often include referrals to community agencies. Community agencies are those that provide shelter and short-term intervention to: 1) remove the women and their children from the immediate dangers, 2) short term support services, and 3) information regarding other resources.

Measures have been taken to educate a variety of persons in public service positions to recognize the outward signs of domestic abuse. According to Sleutel (1998), there is a vast amount of literature available for professionals such as law enforcement personnel, primary care providers, first line medical providers, and women’s health providers (Keeling, 2004; Keeling, 2002). This literature provides guidelines for handling abusive situations in an effort to address the physical needs of their clients and
direct them to community resources for additional assistance. These programs are successful at removing the victim from the abusive situation by providing immediate safety. Support services for women largely focus on the immediate needs of safety and the need for financial assistance when the victim is ready to leave the abusive situation.

Although this current system promotes immediate removal of the victim from the situation, it lacks the continuation of support needed to prevent re-victimization. In addition, the providers and nurses who treat the physical injuries of the victims often ignore the social and emotional problems also (Sleutel, 1998). There is a gap in services when assistance to the victims is limited to only meeting short term survival needs. This gap in services is indirectly promoting the re-victimization of the victim. In a study by Sullivan, Melbin, and Cain (2003), one woman stated the following concerning her stay at a shelter:

"if you’re leaving the shelter and don’t have a support system or anywhere to go, 9 out of 10 times you’re going to go back because you don’t want your kids living on the streets. You’re going to do what it takes not to do that. If it means grin and bear another ass whipping, most women will do that."

Another women reported:

"I wouldn’t have had a choice; I would’ve had to go back. Or stay with friends or family, but probably I would’ve gone back. Financially and emotionally, I wouldn’t have been able to deal with it. This program really helped with that. I wouldn’t have been able to stay gone without the program. Either that or I wouldn’t be alive, because he would’ve been able to find me. I feel so lucky to be here, this program has really changed my life" (p.12).

According to Sullivan, Tan, Basta, Rumptz, and Davidson (1992), women who were able to seek an advocate were more likely to receive the social support and
resources necessary for survival. It is this support that is credited with increasing the
women’s overall life satisfaction and decreasing their risk of future abuse.

Gorde et al. (2004) determined that “few services focus on the women’s mental
health and life skills that are needed for living independently” (p. 692). The culmination
of psychological problems of the victim requires the implementation of long-term
intervention. According to Gorde et al., (2004) women would benefit from intervention
in the following areas:

1. Money management
2. Leisure exploration and participation
3. Effective communication
4. Assertiveness
5. Self-esteem
6. Coping
7. Support system development
8. Education opportunities
9. Attaining and managing housing
10. Attainment of items to meet basic needs
11. Employment exploration
12. Child rearing
13. Community resources

Similar results were discovered in a study conducted by Sullivan et al., (1992, p. 321-
323), where the women they interviewed identified the following:

1. 84% needed material goods
2. 79% needed social support
3. 71% identified education and of the following categories:
   a. material goods and services
   b. education
   c. transportation
   d. finances
   e. legal assistance
   f. health issues
   g. social support
   h. employment
4. Over 50% identified child care and related issues
This information was also confirmed through personal communication with the staff at CVIC January 4, 2007.

A study by Jaffe et al., (2005), found that in order for services to be effective, the individuals providing the support needed to be knowledgeable in the dynamics of domestic violence. Dubnova and Joss (1997), stated that the health professional community could be doing more to establish a holistic and responsive approach to the needs of the women; through the referral to support agencies, research into efficacy of programs, and the education of the population as a whole as to the extent of the effects of violence against women.

Occupational therapy is based on the belief of establishing a holistic and responsive approach for client-centered care. The profession believes that engagement in role(s) and occupation drives the individual in developing an adaptive response and change in the person’s function and independence.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY’S ROLE

Occupational therapy practitioners are skilled professionals whose education includes the study of human growth and development with a specific emphasis on the social, emotional and physiological effects of illness and injury both physical and psychosocial. This background provides the OT with the unique ability to assist these women in breaking out of the cycle of abuse.

Occupational therapists also have training to provide counseling services in a group setting incorporating life skills and occupational roles. This allows the woman to develop the skills she needs to gain control and mastery over her environment and remain
outside of the abusive situation. Interventions that focus on the emotional and psychosocial components can facilitate both personal and societal change.

A review of the literature indicates that current programs are lacking long-term support services for the following skill areas (Gorde et al., 2004):

1. Money management
2. Leisure exploration and participation
3. Effective communication
4. Assertiveness
5. Self-esteem
6. Coping
7. Support system development
8. Education opportunities
9. Attaining and managing housing
10. Attainment of items to meet basic needs
11. Employment exploration
12. Child rearing
13. Community resources

Based upon these identified needs and service gaps, *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence* activities manual and program was developed.

**PROPOSED PROGRAM**

**Introduction**

It is proposed that CVIC and the University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy (UND OT) Program develop a collaborative relationship to implement an aftercare women’s group titled: *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence*. CVIC has direct contact and rapport with individual’s who would benefit from such a group and offers a location that is secure and safe for the women and the staff members. In-kind, the UND OT program has exceptional students
who receive professional preparation through their academic endeavors. The students will apply their knowledge through facilitation of the aftercare women’s group under the supervision of UND OT Department faculty and CVIC staff. The UND OT faculty will be responsible for preparing the occupational therapy (OT) students to understand the complexity of domestic violence issues.

The proposed program is to be used in a group setting with women who have been victims of domestic violence in a long-term aftercare program. The group will meet monthly for education on the daily living skills, identified prior, with the primary goal of decreasing the risk of re-victimization.

In this manual and program, The Wings of Change, activities are provided for the OT Faculty and students with the primary purpose of each activity listed in the Table of Contents under one of the four sections. If the activity has a secondary purpose, it is listed in the index that is located at the end of the activity manual. The activities are organized in the following four sections:

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   a. Assertiveness
   b. Self-esteem
   c. Coping skills, and
   d. Goals

2. Social Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   a. Communication
   b. Support system development

3. Work, Education, and Leisure Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   a. Education opportunities
   b. Employment
   c. Home attainment and management
   d. Attainment of basic needs
   e. Money management, and
   f. Leisure

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4. Family Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   a. Issues with child rearing

Included in the manual are templates which are organized in the same following format: 1) the main purpose as well as possible secondary purposes, 2) rationale, 3) materials needed, 4) administration of the activity, and 5) processing of the activity. This layout provides the therapist or students with the necessary information to prepare, administer, and process the group activity to allow the women to take control of their own lives and make the changes they need to for success.

The theoretical model that provides the foundation of manual and program is Occupational Adaptation (OA). This is the same theoretical model that is also used by the UND OT Department. Application of this model will ease the integration and transition of the program *The Wings of Change* into the UND OT curriculum.

Occupational Adaptation is a process that allows each person to master and respond adaptively to the various occupational challenges that are encountered in the course of a lifetime. Occupational adaptation theory presumes a developmental process where occupational readiness skills in the person subsystems (sensory, cognitive, and psychosocial) set the stage for interacting in the environmental context of work, play and leisure (University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy Department (UND OT), 2006, p. 6).

A primary purpose of *The Wings of Change* is to prepare the women to assume the roles and occupations that have been unjustly removed from them, through the cycle of abuse. This preparation follows the developmental process beginning with the provision of foundational activities (occupational readiness) to help ground her knowledge of who she is via personal, social and family skill development. The foundational activities are designed to develop or strengthen her readiness skills. These readiness skills set the stage to prepare her to more successfully adapt to the challenges
she is and will be experiencing in the environmental contexts of: work, play and leisure. The next step, in the process, is to then provide her the opportunity to ‘try on’ these skills in the various roles occupations she needs to reassume. This ‘trying on’ occurs in an environmental context that is safe and supportive while still challenging her to move to the next level. This entire process culminates with the woman gaining a feeling of competence as she masters her roles and occupational functioning. This entire model and process is based on the belief that engagement in occupation drives the adaptive process through which changes in occupational functioning occur (UND OT).

Conclusion

It is felt that this project will have an impact on the lives of women who have been victims of domestic violence. The eradication of domestic violence from society is a process that will take time to establish and force an individual and societal cultural change; therefore, it is necessary to address the needs of the victims until such eradication occurs.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The process for developing *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence* began with an extensive review of the current literature on women and domestic violence, the incidence, contributing factors, types and effects of abuse to identify the needs of women. Topics of importance to *The Wings of Change* include:

1. Money management
2. Leisure exploration and participation
3. Effective communication
4. Assertiveness
5. Self-esteem
6. Coping
7. Support system development
8. Education opportunities
9. Attaining and managing housing
10. Attainment of items to meet basic needs
11. Employment exploration
12. Child rearing

The process of developing the literature review involved numerous search engines such as OT Search, PubMed, and Cinahl. Library resources were used to obtain articles, books, scholarly projects/theses, and textbooks. In addition, the development of *The Wings of Change* included a prior phase and a corresponding phase.

This first phase began in an OT management course where the assignment was to develop a program plan. The program that was chosen was the Community Violence
Intervention Center (CVIC). A mini needs assessment was completed with the staff of CVIC that indicated that female victims of domestic violence require long-term assistance and the topics of importance presented prior were identified as needs. The program plan did not allow for the complete development of a program or project to be to meet the identified needs via the needs assessment. Based on this, the OT students decided to pursue this as their graduate scholarly project. CVIC has been provided a copy of the original program plan and are awaiting the final project to implement the program in a collaborative model with the University of North Dakota (UND) Occupational Therapy (OT) department.

The corresponding phase occurred in the Innovating Management course where a Program Business Plan was completed. This plan addresses the budgeting needs for this project and outlines the financial, legal, and structure of the program to ensure success of the project through communication and execution.

This scholarly project was designed based on a review of the literature and integration of the two phases presented prior. The prior collaboration with CVIC was significant in the pursuing this project and the review of literature corroborated what the staff indicated the women at their facility were experiencing.
CHAPTER IV

PRODUCT

Introduction

It is proposed that CVIC and the University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy (UND OT) Program develop a collaborative relationship to implement an aftercare women’s group titled: *The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence.*

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   ii. Self-esteem
   iii. Coping skills, and
   iv. Goals

b. Social Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   i. Communication
   ii. Support system development

c. Work, Education, and Leisure Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   i. Education opportunities
   ii. Employment
   iii. Home attainment and management
   iv. Attainment of basic needs
   v. Money management, and
   vi. Leisure

d. Family Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   i. Issues with child rearing

Included in the manual are templates which are organized in the same following format: 1) the main purpose as well as possible secondary purposes, 2) rationale, 3) materials needed, 4) administration of the activity, and 5) processing of the activity. This layout provides the therapist or students with the necessary information to prepare, administer, and process the group activity to allow the women to take control of their own lives and make the changes they need to for success.

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A primary purpose of *The Wings of Change* is to prepare the women to assume the roles and occupations that have been unjustly removed from them, through the cycle of abuse. This preparation follows the developmental process beginning with the provision of foundational activities (occupational readiness) to help ground her knowledge of who she is via personal, social and family skill development. The foundational activities are designed to develop or strengthen her readiness skills. These readiness skills set the stage to prepare her to more successfully adapt to the challenges she is and will be experiencing in the environmental contexts of: work, play and leisure. The next step, in the process, is to then provide her the opportunity to ‘try on’ these skills in the various roles and occupations she needs to reassume. This ‘trying on’ occurs in an environmental context that is safe and supportive while still challenging her to move to the next level. This entire process culminates with the woman gaining a feeling of competence as she masters her roles and occupational functioning. This entire model and process is based on the belief that engagement in occupation drives the adaptive process through which changes in occupational functioning occur (UND OT).

The product is presented in the next section in its entirety.
Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Domestic Violence Victims

*Lainie Donahue, MOTS*  
*Dianna Steen, MOTS*
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INTRODUCTION

The Wings of Change:

Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence

Background Information

Each year, it is estimated that four million women will report domestic violence in the United States (Gorde et al., 2004). According to the U.S. Census Bureau report in July 2004, there were approximately 136 million women in the United States. This means that one out of every twenty women over the age of eighteen will be a victim of domestic violence sometime during their lifetime, thereby making domestic violence cases largely underreported.

Current services for women of domestic violence typically include emergency housing, crisis counseling, and short-term legal and financial assistance (Gorde, Helfrich, & Finlayson, 2004). While these resources provide necessary immediate support to the victim in her current situation, she is often left powerless to make a long-term change. The lack of adequate long-term resources emotional and support increases the odds that a woman will return to an abusive relationship. To stop this cycle of return, a long term group is needed to support independent functioning of victims of domestic violence within their communities.

The need for long-term resources and emotional support has resulted in the design of a manual of activities, titled: The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence.
Program

*The Wings of Change* manual was created with two uses in mind. The primary use of the activity manual is to provide Occupational Therapists with activities to be used in the field with female victims of domestic violence. The secondary use of the activity manual is utilization by Occupational Therapy students in an aftercare women’s group at the Community Violence Intervention Center.

The focus of the manual is to guide occupational therapists, based upon the Occupational Adaptation (OA) Model, to assist victims of domestic violence to gain independence.

Occupational Adaptation is a process that allows each person to master and respond adaptively to the various occupational challenges that are encountered in the course of a lifetime. Occupational adaptation theory presumes a developmental process where occupational readiness skills in the person subsystems (sensory, cognitive, and psychosocial) set the stage for interacting in the environmental context of work, play and leisure (University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy Department (UND OT), 2006, p. 6).

Design

*The Wings of Change* is designed to prepare the women to assume the roles and occupations that have been slowly and involuntarily removed from them, through the cycle of abuse. This preparation follows the developmental process beginning with the provision of foundational activities (occupational readiness) to help ground her
knowledge of who she is via personal, social and family skill development. The foundational activities are designed to develop or strengthen her readiness skills. These readiness skills set the stage to prepare her to more successfully adapt to the challenges she is and will be experiencing in the environmental contexts of: work, play and leisure. The next step, in the process, is to then provide her the opportunity to ‘try on’ these skills in the various roles occupations she needs to reassume. This ‘trying on’ occurs in an environmental context that is safe and supportive while still challenging her to move to the next level. This entire process culminates with the woman gaining a feeling of competence as she regains her personal control and masters her roles and occupational functioning. This entire model and process is based on the belief that engagement in occupation drives the adaptive process through which changes in occupational functioning occur (UND OT).

Organization

In this manual and program, The Wings of Change, activities are provided for the OT Faculty and students with the primary purpose of each activity listed in the Table of Contents under one of the four sections. If the activity has a secondary purpose, it is listed in the index that is located at the end of the activity manual. The activities are organized in the following four sections:

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   b. Employment
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   d. Attainment of basic needs
   e. Money management, and
   f. Leisure

4. Family Skill Development with subsections focusing on:
   a. Issues with child rearing

Included in the manual are templates which are organized in the same following format: 1) the main purpose as well as possible secondary purposes, 2) rationale, 3) materials needed, 4) administration of the activity, and 5) processing of the activity. This layout provides the therapist or students with the necessary information to prepare, administer, and process the group activity to allow the women to take control of their own lives and make the changes they need to for success.

Conclusion

It is felt that this project will have an impact on the lives of women who have been victims of domestic violence. The eradication of domestic violence from society is a process that will take time to establish and force an individual and societal cultural change; therefore, it is necessary to address the needs of the victims until such eradication occurs.
PERSONAL
SKILL
DEVELOPMENT
Just Say NO!

1. Purpose: To assist the participants in their ability to be assertive when faced with people who are aggressive.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to use positive communication. This activity allows the women to practice assertive communication in a safe environment and to learn from one another how to positively say no.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pencils or pens
   - Possibly a dry erase board, chalk board, or flip chart and appropriate writing tool for group completion of the activity

4. Activity:
   - Provide each participant with a handout and ask them to fill them in
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of being assertive in communication in all aspects of their lives
   - Ask the participants if they can recall a time that someone asked them to do something that they didn’t want to do, but did it anyway because they couldn’t say no.
   - Discuss with the group that by not saying no or what they feel in a positive way, they are being passive.
   - Ask the group to identify situations that they have been involved in or will be involved in that require them to speak up for themselves.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Individual completion: ask each of the participants to share the responses that they have and discuss with the group when this type of situation may be needed.
   - Group completion: ask each of the participants when they might use these skills and how they work in their daily lives.
Just Say NO!

Things I must ask me to do
1. __________
2. __________
3. __________
4. __________
5. __________
6. __________

How I will say NO:
1. __________
2. __________
3. __________
4. __________
5. __________
6. __________
Bounce Back

1. Purpose: To assist the participants in recognizing comments made that are aggressive or passive and how to change them into assertive communication.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to use positive communication. This activity allows the women to practice assertive communication in a safe environment and to learn from one another how to turn a potentially negative response into a positive response.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pencils or pens
   - Possibly a dry erase board, chalk board, or flip chart and appropriate writing tool for group completion of the activity

4. Activity:
   - Provide each participant with a handout and ask them to fill them in
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of being assertive in communication in all aspects of their lives
   - If participants are having difficulty completing this activity individually, this activity could also be performed as a group and listed on a dry erase board, flip chart, or chalk board for group participation.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Individual completion: ask each of the participants to share the responses that they have and discuss with the group when this type of situation may be needed.
   - Group completion: ask each of the participants when they might use these skills and how they work in their daily lives.

Future Activity or Expansion of this activity:
Have the participants use these sheets and provide a role playing activity for the participants to practice using the responses they have provided in a “real” life situation. Process the group’s responses and discuss other ways to incorporate assertiveness into daily life.
Bounce Back

- When They Say (Aggressive)
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________

- I Say (Passive)
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________

- I Will Say (Assertive)
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
  __________________________________________
Don’t Cross My Line

1. Purpose: This activity assists with setting boundaries.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence experience difficulty with being assertive due to the passive/aggressive relationship with the abuser. This activity allows the women to set boundaries that will assist them with being assertive as they will know what they will allow and what they will not.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Ask the participants to identify what behaviors they will not tolerate
   - Discuss with them what they can do if someone crosses this boundary
   - Discuss the need for setting boundaries with individual’s up front to assist with alleviating confusion because all parties will be aware of what behavior is tolerated and what behavior is not
   - Ask the participants to recall a time that they didn’t know the “rules” for behavior and how this affected them or how they felt
   - Ask the participants to fill out the handout

5. Processing activity:
   - Ask each of the participants to share the information they identified on their handout
   - Ask them to role play their responses
   - Ask them to identify when they might use this information

6. This activity can also be repeated to work with children. The women can fill out the form addressing behaviors that they need to change with their children and identify strategies to handle the behaviors. This can then be discussed with the children so that they are aware of the rules and consequences for their behavior.
Don’t Cross my Line

What Behaviors will I not accept
1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
7. __________________________
8. __________________________
9. __________________________

How I can Respond to those Behaviors
1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
7. __________________________
8. __________________________
9. __________________________
Junk in the Trunk

1. Purpose: To determine what baggage or junk they are carrying around and how that may interfere with their goals. This activity is designed to be used for self-esteem. This activity could also be used for:
   - Housing attainment
   - Employment
   - Educational pursuits
   - Parenting
   - Basic needs attainment

2. Rationale: Women recovering from a domestic violence situation may have a variety of barriers that are causing them difficulty with achievement of their goals. This activity assists with realizing what those barriers might be and developing a plan to eliminate the barrier to fulfill their goals.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants what things might be barriers to achieving their goals
   - Ask each participant to fill in the information that is extra baggage for them that is weighing them down
   - Provide examples such as a parent, getting a job, breaking free of the negative relationships, etc., if there is difficulty with identifying barriers

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each person to share their ideas on how to unload the trunk
   - Discuss the positive aspects of ridding oneself of the barriers and the ways that this can be accomplished
   - This activity can be tied back into the goal writing activity
   - The participants can be asked to look at their goals and determine if these barriers are also limiting other areas of their lives.
What is in your trunk?
1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________
4. ____________________

How does it affect you?
1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________
4. ____________________

Ideas to Unload
1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________
4. ____________________
What makes Me, Me

1. Purpose: To identify who their positive traits and what they want to strengthen by focusing on positive traits to build self-esteem. Discuss with the group that each of them has positive traits and that they can use these to build from. This is NOT an activity to dwell on the negative. Participants should not be encouraged to note negative traits that they would like to change.

2. Rationale: Due to the negativity of abusive relationships, the women may have a negative perception of who they are. This activity assists them with breaking free of this mold and developing a new one by accentuating their positive traits.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Participants fill in the worksheet identifying how they see themselves and how others see them

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each of the participants to share the information on the paper
   - If participants are struggling with the activity, ask other participants to assist with identifying traits in each other
   - Discuss with the participants what goals they have and how they can build on their strengths
   - Discuss that many people work on self improvement on a regular basis and this is a normal process of development.
What Makes Me, ME!!

I AM

I WILL BE
I am Strong!

1. Purpose: To assist the women with seeing their strengths to build self-esteem

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have been told and treated as though they are not worthy and less than human. Therefore, the women have developed a low self-esteem. To remain free of domestic violence, it is important for the women to develop self-esteem.

3. Activity:
   - Discuss with the women what things they do well
   - Ask them to think about how this makes them feel and then discuss this
   - Ask each of the women to list their strengths and what they like about themselves on the handout

4. Materials needed
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the women to share what they have written
   - Discuss with the women the importance of believing the information they put on the handout
   - Discuss with the women using the information to repeat or read it on a daily basis
   - Discuss where they could put this information to use when they are not feeling so great about themselves
I am Strong

My Strengths

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 

What I like about Me

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8.
A Flower in the Garden

1. Purpose: To assist with building self-esteem

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have been told and treated as though they are not worthy and less than human. Therefore, the women have developed a low self-esteem. To remain free of domestic violence, it is important for the women to develop self-esteem.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Scissors

4. Activity:
   - Ask each of the women how they feel when they get a compliment
   - Ask each of the women how they feel when they know the compliment is sincere
   - Discuss how it feels to tell someone how you feel about them
   - Ask each of the women to fill out the handout making a positive statement about each member in the group
   - Have the participants cut out the flowers to hand to the people they wrote them about after the activity has been processed

5. Processing the activity
   - Ask each of the participants to share the information they gave about the other people in the group
   - Ask each of the participants how this makes them feel
   - Discuss the importance of self-esteem
   - Discuss how this information could be used on a daily basis
A Flower in the Garden
My time, Your time, Who’s time

1. Purpose: to relieve stress through balance of time.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to control their own time. Therefore, they may be struggling with what to do or how to manage the time they now have. This activity assists them with managing their time, while incorporating goals, leisure, and parenting activities.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handout
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of managing time to alleviate stress
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of time management for achievement of goals
   - Discuss with the participants the concept of time that they decide how it is used, time that someone else decides, and time that is used because that is the way it is (self imposed, boss imposed, system imposed time)
   - Discuss with the participants the ways to balance this time and not take away the time for themselves or how to make sure they are not taking on more than they have time for
   - Have each of the participants fill out the handout

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their ideas for keeping the time for themselves, yet still having the time for others
   - Discuss ways to save or utilize time more efficiently
My time, Your time, Who's time

Time I Have to Give to Others
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________

Thing I could give away to Others to make more time for myself
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________

Things I don’t really have to do
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________
1. Purpose: to relieve stress through balance of time.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to control their own time. Therefore, they may be struggling with what to do or how to manage the time they now have. This activity assists them with managing their time, while incorporating goals, leisure, and parenting activities.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handout
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of managing time to alleviate stress
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of time management for achievement of goals
   - Ask the participants to think about things that they do each day and how they could change this to free up more time (i.e., combining things or sharing duties)
   - Have each of the participants fill out the handout

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their ideas for time management
   - Discuss ways to save or utilize time more efficiently
$1+1=3?$

Example is cooking, make a larger meal and freeze part for another evening.

Things I do each day...
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________

Ways to combine them...
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________

Things I could share with someone else...
1. __________________
2. __________________
3. __________________
4. __________________
5. __________________
6. __________________
Finding Your Way out of the Dark

1. Purpose: for the participants to recognize that they have the skills to find their way. They just need to be aware of their senses, emotions, feelings, or gut reactions.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence experienced difficult situations that they sensed was going to occur, yet didn’t have a plan established to assist them with remaining safe. This activity allows them to realize that they have the skills necessary; they just need to listen to themselves and trust their instincts.

3. Materials needed:
   • Handouts
   • Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   • Ask the participants to identify times that they were aware of a situation being negative and what feelings they can identify with this situation that told them it was negative
   • Discuss ways that people realize things are negative and the fight or flight response of the body to these situations
   • Ask the participants to write down the senses that they have when something is negative and how they can respond to these situations

5. Processing the activity:
   • Each participant to asked to share the information they have written down
   • Participants should be encouraged to listen to themselves and realize that they have the ability to keep themselves safe
   • Discuss things to do if they feel unsafe and resources they could use in this situation
Finding Your Way

TOOLS YOU HAVE

HOW TO USE THEM
Ownership

1. Purpose: to identify the things that are theirs that can not be taken away from them

2. Rationale: Women of who have been victims of domestic violence have suffered at the hands of their abuser and lack the skills to take control of their lives. This activity allows them to realize they all own things that can never be taken away from them.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants that we all have things that can not be taken away from us (ie.. pride, self-esteem, self-confidence, positive thinking, etc...)  
   - Discuss with them times that they felt these were taken away and how they could change that situation
   - Ask each participant to make a list of the things that they own

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share the information on their handouts
   - Ask them to share their plans to change their thinking
OWNERSHIP

WHAT THINGS CAN NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU

1. ___________________
2. ___________________
3. ___________________
4. ___________________
5. ___________________
6. ___________________
7. ___________________
8. ___________________
9. ___________________
10. ___________________
11. ___________________
12. ___________________
Relaxation Techniques

1. Purpose: to be used for stress management and wellness that

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence experience stressors and have not had the opportunity to focus on their own wellness. This activity allows them the chance to use a relaxation technique that reduces their stress and increases their overall wellness.

3. Materials needed:
   - CD player
   - Relaxation music

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants how stress can affect their health and their ability to handle situations in their lives
   - Discuss with them a time that they felt stress and how they dealt with it
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of relaxation and how it can be used in their daily lives

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share how they feel after the relaxation session
   - Discuss with them when they would use this
   - Encourage the participants to try to use this at least once a week to increase their overall wellness
One Day at a Time

1. Purpose: to relieve stress and balance time.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to control their own time. Therefore, the may be struggling with what to do or how to manage the time they now have. This activity assists them with managing their time, while incorporating goals, leisure, and parenting activities.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handout
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of managing time to alleviate stress
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of time management for achievement of goals
   - Have each of the participants fill out the handout

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their ideas for time management
   - Discuss ways to save or utilize time more efficiently
### One Day at a Time

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Chill....

1. Purpose: to be used for stress management and wellness

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence experience stressors and have not had the opportunity to focus on their own wellness. This activity allows them explore times when the use of a relaxation technique could reduce their stress and increases their overall wellness.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants how stress can affect their health and their ability to handle situations in their lives
   - Discuss with them a time that they felt stress and how they dealt with it
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of relaxation and how it can be used in their daily lives
   - Ask each of the participants to fill out the handout identifying times that they feel stressed and what they could do about it (such as deep breathing, focusing on an object, taking time out, etc...)

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share when they feel stress
   - Discuss with them when they feel stress if this is something they would be able to use
   - Encourage the participants to try to use this at least once a week to increase their overall wellness
Chill

Times when I feel stress...
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 

How I can reduce the stress...
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8.
Tipping the Scale

1. Purpose: to assist with the realization that you can establish goals through making choices that can place things in your favor.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have realized that they are in a negative situation, yet have lacked the ability to break free of the situation due to the inability to react to their feelings. This activity allows the women to realize that they have the skills to reach their goals and gives them the opportunity to implement a plan when they experience the feelings.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Ask the participants to recall a time they experienced making a specific choice and how this choice allowed them to take control of their lives and place things in their favor (i.e., getting out of the relationship)
   - Discuss how we all have choices in our lives whether they have positive or negative consequences, yet ultimately this is our choice
   - Discuss that through these choices we can move ourselves into a position that leads to a desired outcome which allows us to tip the scales in our favor (i.e., education, employment, support systems)

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their feelings regarding the situations and their responses on the handout
   - Ask them to identify how they will react in the future
   - Discuss the use of the resources they have available and how these resources may assist them with staying safe or achieving their goals
Tipping the Scale

What I Feel

How to Change It
SOCIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT
What are the Signs?

1. Purpose: To determine the participant’s buttons or triggers that push them or to avoid confrontation and assist the participants with identifying behaviors that is displayed when their triggers or buttons are pushed. This activity assists the women with problem solving on how to turn confrontational situations into assertive communication. It also assist’s the women with recognizing what are buttons of the past and what are new ones.

2. Rationale: Women in domestic violence situations have not had the opportunity to communicate in an assertive manner and have had limited opportunity to develop communication skills. Women recovering from this situation need to be able to recognize what types of things may bring back unpleasant feelings and how to deal with them in an assertive manner.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants what trigger’s are
   - Discuss the benefit of recognizing what your triggers are and how to avoid them
   - Participants fill in the worksheet identifying triggers that cause them to stop (no response or panic) yield (pause), and go (assertive or aggressive)

5. Processing Activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their triggers
   - Ask the group to assist with thoughts and process as a group how to turn these situations around that are negative and how to get more of the positive
   - Ask the group to identify their behaviors during these situations and how this can be changed
   - Discuss with the group the benefits of turning things into a positive as far as anger management, self-esteem, communication skills, etc…
What are the Signs?

What makes you STOP?
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

What makes you YIELD?
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

What makes you GO?
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6.
Broken Record

1. Purpose: to identify phrases that could be used to combat aggressive communication without engagement and remaining assertive

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have experienced difficulty dealing with an individual who uses an aggressive form of communication. This activity gives them phrases to use to diffuse this situation and to allow them the control over their responses.

3. Materials Needed:
   • Handouts
   • Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   • Ask the participants to recall a time when someone was aggressive in their communication
   • Discuss with the participants the use of a repetitive phrase that can assist with this situation
   • Ask the participants to identify situations that they could use a broken record technique
   • Ask the participants to think of a phrase or phrases that could assist with the situation

5. Processing the activity:
   • Ask each of the participants to share the information they provided on their handouts
   • Ask the participants to pair up and to role play the situations using the broken record technique
   • Discuss how this could be used in everyday life
Broken Record

What they say....

What I Say....
Build a Web

1. Purpose: To identify a support system and how to build a larger and stronger one.

2. Rationale: Domestic violence victims have had limited contact with other individual’s outside of the relationship causing a lack of support to remain free of the violent relationship.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pencils or pens

4. Activity:
   - Facilitator discusses the need for support and encourages the group to use each other as resources for support
   - Facilitator assists with brainstorming ideas for support system and the group processes ideas to build a support system
   - Each participant is provided a handout and asked to complete it
   - Participants are encouraged to share ideas with one another to assist with others identifying specific people, places, or numbers to call

5. Processing the activity:
   - Discuss with participants the ideas generated
   - Discuss how they can use this information to build their support system
   - Discuss situations that a support system may be beneficial
Build a Web
Lighthouse in the Storm

1. Purpose: to identify safe places to go, support systems, resources

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have had limited to no opportunity to develop support systems outside of the relationship. The lack of support is one of the reasons that women return to the violent situation. This activity assists the women with discovering that there are other places to go and resources available to remain free of the situation.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of identifying resources for stressful situations or dangerous situations
   - Discuss that having someone else to lean on can significantly improve their own piece of mind and assist with moving forward
   - Each participant is asked to complete the handout

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their ideas
   - Ask the participants when they think they would use this information
   - Discuss with the participants a place they could keep this information to use in the event of a crisis or emergency (purse, refrigerator, make copies)
   - Discuss with the participants they similarities to networking and other areas that networking can be beneficial
Lighthouse in the Storm

Places to Go
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

People
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Resources
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
Who wants to be a Millionaire

1. Purpose: to identify lifeline: phone a friend, ask the audience, 50/50,

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have been cut off from the rest of the world by their abusers and have lacked the opportunity to develop support systems. This activity assists them with identifying who they could contact and when they could use this information.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Explain the different areas of the activity
     - Phone a friend relates to the people they could call
     - Ask the audience relates to the individual’s in the group
     - 50/50 relates to the participants gut instincts
   - Discuss the necessity of having a plan to utilize in a difficult situation
   - Discuss the different situations that may or have arisen that having someone to turn to would or is helpful
   - Discuss how we can rely on ourselves in a time of crisis

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their information
   - Discuss with them the importance of having an outlet to speak to as well as listening to themselves (this activity could be a follow up to the tools activity)
   - Discuss with them where a good location would be to use this information
   - Discuss with them the types of situations in which they may need this information
Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?

PHONE A FRIEND

ASK THE AUDIENCE

50/50
No Whammies

1. Purpose: to identify barriers to positive thinking

2. Rationale: Women who have been in domestic violence situations have had their self-esteem and self-confidence taken from them. This activity assists them with identifying that this can be their choice and they had take the control for how they feel and think.

3. Materials needed:
   • Handouts
   • Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   • Each of the participants is asked to think about times when they didn’t have positive thinking
   • Each participant is asked to think about how this impacted them
   • Ask each participant to fill out the handout, identifying times or situations that causes them to have negative thoughts and how they could turn this around

5. Processing the activity:
   • Ask the participants to share the ideas they have down
   • Have the participants role play some of the responses and practice using the positive responses
NO Whammies!

Negative thought

Positive thought

Barriers
WORK EDUCATION AND LEISURE SKILL DEVELOPMENT
On The Right Track

1. Purpose: To engage the participants in determining what they have already accomplished toward achieving their educational pursuits and if there is anything getting in their way of this destination. This activity could also be used for:
   - identifying goals
   - Employment pursuits
   - Home or housing attainment
   - Basic needs attainment

2. Rationale: domestic violence victims have had limited opportunity to develop and follow through with goals that they developed. This exercise begins the thought process of goals and assists with developing a plan to achieve the goals.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - ask participants to identify the things they have already accomplished toward achieving their goals and have them write this down
   - participants fill out the worksheet identifying the things they would like to achieve. Possible areas to identify are: work, home management, child rearing, health, housing, relationships

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what they have written and discuss with them the various goals they have achieved and accentuate this to build self-esteem and confidence
   - Ask each member what they still would like to achieve and have them identify the tools, social support, and resources available to accomplish this as well as the abilities of the group member to achieve their goals.
On The Right Track

Goals Already Achieved

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 

Goals Working Toward

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10.
To Dream a Dream

1. Purpose: To determine what the women would like to do if you could do anything and to develop strategies to achieve these goals. This activity was designed for educational pursuits. This activity could also be used for:
   - Housing attainment
   - Basic need attainment
   - Parenting
   - Money management.

2. Rationale: Women who have been in a domestic violence situation have to respond to life independently without the controlling nature of their abuser. Therefore, the women may lack the ability to determine their own goals and how to achieve these goals.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Provide each participant with a hand out
   - Ask them to fill it out
   - If participants are having difficulty with the activity, ask the other participants to give suggestions.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each of the participants to share their dreams. This may be personnel, so respect their wishes to not share
   - Group leader can also share a dream and how this was made a reality
   - Discuss how self-esteem and developing smaller goals or short term goals can assist with making your dreams a reality
   - Discuss skills needed to reach their dreams
   - Discuss steps to gain the skills necessary
   - Discuss whether or not the skills necessary are realistic and if not, how can they be realistic
   - Discuss potential barriers to reaching the dream (i.e., fears, decreased self-esteem, decreased self-confidence)
To Dream a Dream

If You Could Do Anything........
Wanted

1. Purpose: to engage the participants in:
   - Determining ways to find job openings
   - Scan classifieds
   - Narrow the job search by applying their own interests

2. Rationale: Domestic violence victims may require additional assistance determining which jobs reflect their own interests. This activity provides the women with job openings and allows them to take the first step in obtaining a job by narrowing the job search.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Classified Ads
   - Additional Want Ads

4. Activity:
   - Have the women brainstorm areas where they can find job openings and define ways they determine which jobs they are interested in
   - Pass out handouts and have the women find 4 jobs of interest and complete the handout
   - Explain that the handout will assist the women in obtaining all needed information from the classified ad

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what they have written and discuss why they selected the jobs they have
   - Ask the members to describe the qualifications they have for each job
   - Instruct each member to develop a plan of action to initiate contact with one job opportunity of choice
WANTED

Name of Company- __________________________
Job Opening- ____________________________
Contact Person- __________________________
Phone Number- __________________________
Company Address- _________________________
Resume Preparation

1. Purpose: to prepare the participants in:
   - Obtaining the correct information needed to write a resume
   - Provide them with additional sources for resume completion

2. Rationale: Having a professional resume is part of the process of obtaining a job. By providing the women with information needed to complete a resume, the process will be less difficult when they complete their resume.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Define the purpose of the resume to the participants
   - Define all components of the resume: Cover Letter, Resume, and References. Explain the components of each section
   - Pass out the handouts and have the participants complete as much information they currently have

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what they have written and discuss with them where they may be able to find additional information that is lacking
   - Have the participant’s brainstorm who their references may be and process how they will ask the individuals.
   - Ask the participants to develop three goals to have for completing their resume prior to the next meeting
   - Provide participants with additional resources for resume completion
Resume Preparation

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Summary:

Objective:

Education:

Employment History:

Interests:

What makes you unique:

References:

Additional Resources:
Send the Interview Jitters Packing

1. Purpose: to engage the participants in:
   • Gaining an understanding of all aspects of an interview
   • Identifying what aspects of an interview makes them nervous
   • Increase preparation for interviews by minimizing these aspects

2. Rationale: Domestic violence victims are used to living their lives on a day to day basis. This activity will help the participants to look ahead at the interview process. This will assist the participants to be more prepared for interviews which may contribute to greater success with the interview process.

3. Materials Needed:
   • Handouts
   • Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   • Define all aspects of the interview process: what to wear, questions to be prepared for, and having additional resumes to distribute.
   • Have the participants brainstorm additional aspects or details to consider with the interview process.
   • Distribute the handouts and have the participants complete them.

5. Processing the activity:
   • Ask each participant to share what they have written.
   • Ask others to provide feedback regarding their ideas for overcoming their jitters, and to develop additional ideas for overcoming the jitters.
### Potential Jitters

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### Send the Interview Jitters Packing

### Overcoming the Jitters

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95
In the Hot Seat!

1. Purpose: to prepare participants for the interview process:
   - Introduce the participants to commonly asked interview questions
   - Increase the participant’s understanding of how to answer interview questions

2. Rationale: Domestic violence victims are used to focusing on survival skills for that minute. In order to be prepared for an interview, the participants must be able to anticipate interview questions and have answers prepared. This activity will also teach the participants to obtain information about the company prior to the job interview.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Scissors
   - Hat/Bucket

4. Activity:
   - Explain that the interview is an important part to obtaining a job because it allows the person to set themselves apart from others who have applied for the job.
   - Explain there are many common questions employers ask, and introduce the three examples
   - Distribute squares on handouts and ask the participants to record additional questions that may be asked in the interview process.
   - Place the questions in a hat/bucket and have each participant draw a question.
   - One by one have the participants read the question they drew out loud and answer it.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask participants to respond to the answers providing positives and things to work on.
   - If an interview question is something that cannot be legally asked. Stop the process immediately and explain why the question can’t be asked. This will increase the participant’s awareness of information that they don’t have to disclose.
   - Encourage the participants to complete this activity at home the night before an interview. Explain they can do the same activity with a friend or in front of a mirror.
   - Encourage participants to write down questions that they need to work on answering.
   - Finally, educate the participants on the importance of finding out information about the company to show that they are truly interested in the job and invested in the company.
### In the Hot Seat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tell me a little bit about yourself</th>
<th>Why did you leave your last job?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What's your biggest weakness?</td>
<td>What are your Strengths?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding a Way Home

1. Purpose: for the participants to map a way to employment. This activity could also be used for:
   • relationship with children
   • relationship with another
   • a job
   • an education
   • etc.
   (This activity can be a follow up activity to goal writing or after participants have received feedback from children regarding parenting issues to assist with growth of the individual and the family unit)

2. Rationale: Women who have been in a domestic violence situation have been told what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. This activity allows the women to be empowered to explore and achieve their own destiny.

3. Materials Needed:
   • Handouts (have multiple handouts available in the event that they recognize more than one idea)
   • pencils and/or pens

4. Activity:
   • Discuss with participants what things they would like to make a path to or achieve use the above examples to provide an idea
   • Discuss the importance of having a plan and being proactive in achieving their desired outcomes
   • Each participant fills out the handout

5. Processing the activity:
   • Ask each participant to share what they are trying to achieve
   • Ask them to share how they are planning to get there
   • Discuss other options and ask the group for input as to how each of them can achieve their goals
   • Ask each participant to try implementing their plan before the next meeting for an update on progress
Finding a Way Home

What I want to get to
Sample Job Application

1. Purpose: for the participants to practice completing a job application. This will assist the participant to:
   - Have all required information needed for completion
   - Develop an understanding of the essential components of an application

2. Rationale: When in an abusive relationship, many women are not “allowed” to work as a result of the control that the abuser has over them. As a result, these women may not be experienced with completing job applications. Completing a practice application can help reinforce to the women that they are correctly completing the application.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with participants the purpose of the activity
   - Distribute the sample application and have the women begin filling them out
   - When writing begins to stop, begin to process the activity

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what areas were easy to fill out
   - Ask the women to share where they are having problems
   - Process methods to make completing the application easier
   - Recommend that women keep this sample application as a resource regarding detail of dates, previous employment, etc.
Sample Job Application

PERSONAL INFORMATION:
Name (Last, First, Middle initial) ___________________________ Social Security Number __________
Street Address __________________ City, State, Zip Code __________ Phone __________
Number (____) ______ Are you eligible to work in the United States? Yes _ No _ If you are under age 18, do you have an employment/age certificates? Yes _ No _ Have you been convicted of or pleaded no contest to a felony within the last five years? Yes _ No _ If yes, please explain:

POSITION/APPLICABILITY:
Position Applied For __________________ Expected start date _______ Expected salary ______
Days/Hours Available
Monday from ___ to ___ Tuesday from ___ to ___ Wednesday from ___ to ___
Thursday from ___ to ___ Friday from ___ to ___ Saturday from ___ to ___
Sunday from ___ to ___

EDUCATION:
Name and Address of School attended Degree/Diploma - Graduation Date
Skills and Qualifications: Licenses, Skills, Training, Awards

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: (begin with most recent)
Present Or Last Position: _________________ from ___ to ___ salary __ Employer: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________ Supervisor: __________________ Phone: __________________
Responsibilities: ____________________________ May we contact this employer yes _ no __
Reason for Leaving: ____________________________ Present Or Last
Previous Position: _________________ from ___ to ___ salary __ Employer: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________ Supervisor: __________________ Phone: __________________
Responsibilities: ____________________________
Reason for Leaving: ____________________________ May we contact this employer yes _ no __

References:
Name/Address/Phone/Years of acquaintance

I certify that information contained in this application is true and complete.

I understand that false information may be grounds for not hiring me or for immediate termination of employment at any point in the future if I am hired. I authorize the verification of any or all information listed above.
Signature ____________________________
Date ____________________________
Where, Oh Where

1. Purpose: to identify resources to achieve basic needs and housing. This activity could also address:
   - Education
   - Employment

2. Rationale: Women who have experienced domestic violence have been isolated by their abuser so that they will remain dependent. This dependency is a part of the cycle of abuse. This activity assists the women in identifying agencies or places to go for assistance to break the cycle.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Local telephone directory

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of community resources to:
     - Achieve housing
     - Find employment
     - Continue education
     - Find items of basic need
   - Discuss that there are a variety of agencies that provide their services free in the community
     - Social Services
     - Churches
     - Urban Development
     - Job Service
     - Etc..

   - Ask the participants to think about things that they are currently needing
   - Ask the participants to think about where they might get their needs met
   - Ask each of the participants to fill out the handout by identifying items of need and places they could go to fill the need
   - Participants are encouraged to use the phone book to fill in the information of the agency or service, address, and telephone number for reference

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share the information they found with the group
   - Discuss with the group other ideas that they could use for community resources
Where, Oh Where

For Education
1. 
2. 
3. 

For Employment
1. 
2. 
3. 

For Housing
1. 
2. 
3. 

For Basic Needs
1. 
2. 
3. 

Please fill in the name of the agency or service to include the address and phone number for reference.
Debt Time Bombs

1. Purpose: To educate women regarding what contributes to the development of debt.
   - Develop a method for recording ATM transactions
   - Develop method for recording checking account activity
   - Develop method for tracking receipts
   - Develop understanding of the risks with credit card use

2. Rationale: When in an abusive relationship, the abuser may restrict the victim from managing expenses as a method for maintaining control over the victim. When a domestic violence victim leaves the relationship, they may not have been exposed to strategies on how to stay out of debt. As a result, they are at risk for spending beyond their means.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens
   - Calculators

Activity:
   - Define what debt is to the participants and provide an overview regarding the difference between good debt (mortgage) and bad debt, such as credit card debt.
   - Have the participants list where they can accumulate debt. This list should include: ATM cards (not recording withdrawals), credit cards, checks, and losing receipts.
   - Distribute the handouts and have the participants fill in the areas that they could potentially develop debt in their own lives from the list they have made.
   - Have the women then list ideas of how to stay out of debt in these areas. Ideas may include: using carbon copy checks to record spending later, having an envelope in their purse to keep all receipts including ATM receipts to record at the end of the day, and scheduling in a time each week to balance their checkbook and track their credit card spending.

Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what their potential areas of debt and have them share how their strategy to avoid accumulating debt in this area.
   - Have the women write out 3 goals they will work on regarding staying out of debt, and ask them to record their progress over the next month. Recommend that progress towards meeting their goals be brought up during the introduction of the next group.
Debt Time Bombs

Potential Areas Where I can Develop Debt

Methods to Extinguish the Debt Risk

Goals for Staying Debt Free
Making Ends Meet

1. Purpose: To engage the participants in determining what fixed monthly expenses the individual has and planning for unexpected monthly expenses. This activity may facilitate conversation to develop ideas regarding what to do with additional funds.

2. Rationale: Domestic violence victims have had decreased access to maintaining household finances. As a result, they have decreased ability to adequately budget their monthly finances.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Calculator

4. Activity:
   - Define fixed expenditures and ask each participant to verbalize what their fixed expenditures are and then write down all that apply to their lives.
   - Have participants collectively list fixed expenditures to ensure that all expenditures that apply are recorded on their budget.
   - Define variable expenditures and process potential monthly variable expenditures they will encounter each month. Have the participants list all that apply to their lives.
   - Have the participants complete their budget based on their income and subtracting all monthly expenditures.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each participant to share what they have found out after completing their budget. Do they have extra money? Is there not enough money?
   - If there isn’t enough money, have the participants process areas to take money from.
   - If there is extra money, have the participants process what they can do with the extra money that would be beneficial.
### Making Ends Meet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item</strong></td>
<td><strong>Amount</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td><strong>Remainder of income after Fixed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Expenses</td>
<td><strong>Variable Expenses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Currently in Savings</td>
<td><strong>Amount Currently in Savings</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hunt for Fun

1. Purpose: to identify things that you could do to relieve stress

2. Rationale: Women who have experienced domestic violence have had limited opportunities for leisure exploration. This activity allows the women to do some fun things to reduce stress, meet new people, and have fun.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Local newspaper
   - City event paper
   - Information from the parks and recreations department or the school system with activities

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the benefits of doing
     - Relieves stress
     - Meet new people
     - Expand knowledge
   - Discuss that there are a variety of things that you can do that are free in the community
     - Library
     - Park
     - Shopping mall
   - Ask the participants to think about things that they have enjoyed doing in the past
   - Ask the participants to think about their interests and likes as well as areas that they would be interested in exploring
   - Ask each of the participants to fill out the handout by identifying four things they could do this weekend for fun
   - Place the newspaper and other information on the table for the participants to use for information on activities and community events

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share the information they found with the group
   - Discuss with the group other ideas that they could use for fun time
Hunt for Fun

Things I am Interested in:

- 
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Things I like to do:

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Things I would like to learn about:

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- 
- 
- 

Places I could go:

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- 
- 
- 
-
Just for Fun

1. Purpose: to identify things that you could do to relieve stress as a family

2. Rationale: Women who have experienced domestic violence and who have children are in need of activities that can assist them with becoming a new family. The children may have also been victims of the violence or they may have been the witness to the violence. This activity allows the family to do some fun things together to rebuild the family unit.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils
   - Local newspaper
   - City event paper
   - Information from the parks and recreations department or the school system with activities

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the importance of doing this as a family
     - Build family unity
     - Relieves stress
     - Assists with boredom of children and gives them an outlet for energy
   - Discuss that there are a variety of things that you can do that are free in the community
     - Library
     - Park
     - Shopping mall
   - Ask the participants to think about things that they enjoyed doing with their families when they were younger
   - Ask the participants to think about their children’s interests and likes as well as areas that they would be interested in exploring
   - Ask each of the participants to fill out the handout by identifying four things they could do with their family this weekend for fun
   - Place the newspaper and other information on the table for the participants to use for information on activities and community events

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share the information they found with the group
   - Discuss with the group other ideas that they could use for family fun time
Just For Fun
FAMILY

SKILL

DEVELOPMENT
Burst the Bubble

1. Purpose: An activity for the participants to use with their children to deal with feelings about the situation at home, school, or at the shelter. They can put their feelings in the balloon and pop it or let it go.

2. Rationale: The victims of domestic violence extend beyond the women who were abused. The children in these households have also experienced the violence and need to be able to express themselves as well as develop a stronger relationship with their mother.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handout
   - Scissors
   - Pencil, pen, or crayons
   - Balloons

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with the participants the feelings that they have experienced and process the feelings that they feel that their children have experienced
   - Discuss that they can complete this activity with their children and encourage them to discuss the feelings with their children
   - Discuss that honesty is the best answer, yet keeping it at their child’s developmental level
   - The participants either have their children fill out the cards or they fill them out for the child (if the children are small, have the participant fill out cards with faces on them to depict the emotions to assist the children with expression of feelings)
   - They cut out the cards and place them into balloons
   - The balloons are then blown up and tied
   - The children can decide if they would like to pop the balloon and burst the problem, or let it be carried away in the wind
   - Then allow the children to complete letting the feelings go.

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask each of the participants to discuss the feelings their children are having
   - Encourage the open communication and know that their may be feelings toward them
   - Encourage the participants to validate the children’s feelings and realize that they have things they need to let go
   - Have the participants discuss with the children how it feels to get something out in the open and then let it go
Cards to fill out for the Balloon
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cards to fill out for the Balloon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>Angry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>Lonely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Confused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
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<td>Worried</td>
<td>Safe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>Hopeful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
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Plant a Seed, Grow a Family

1. Purpose: to work with the participants on how they can rebuild or strengthen their family.

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have had a negative experience with relationships and the positive role model for a nurturing relationship. This activity allows the women to look at the components that encompass a nurturing relationship through a purposeful activity.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Seeds (large enough to write on, i.e., pumpkin seeds)
   - Permanent fine tipped markers
   - Potting soil
   - Containers for planting
   - Water
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Ask the participants to think of some things that they would like to nurture and have them write their ideas on the handout
   - Discuss with the participants the variety of things that they could nurture
   - Ask them what else is necessary for nurturing (i.e., communication, respect, sharing, love, etc...)
   - Discuss the ways that this activity is similar to nurturing a relationship
   - Discuss the meaning of a metaphor and how this activity is a metaphor for the things they would like to nurture
   - Put an idea on a seed
   - Place potting soil in the containers
   - Plant the seed according to package directions
   - Provide water to the new planting
   - Place in an area with appropriate sunlight
   - Nurture the seed
   - Watch it grow
   - Tend to it often
   - Meet the seeds needs

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share what they placed on their seeds
   - Ask the participants how long they think it would take to nurture the seed and what types of things are involved in nurturing (i.e., time, space, sunlight, etc..)
Thoughts for Placing on Seeds
Family Mission Statement

1. Purpose: for the participant and the family to work together as a team to reach common goals through total family participation.

2. Rationale: Women who have been in a domestic violence situation have experienced difficulty with deciding their direction in life and have been forced into dependency on another. This activity allows the women to write statements to live by and to assist with guiding their actions.

3. Materials Needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens
   - Scratch paper for ideas
   - Extra handouts (for taking home to do as a family)

4. Activity:
   - Discuss with participants the meaning of a mission statement
   - Discuss with the participants things that they would like to accomplish in their families or as a family
   - Ask participants to share ideas that they would like to address
   - Keep the statement’s positive
   - Identify key concepts
   - Write them out in sentence format
   - Involve older children (ages 8-18).

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the participants to share what they have placed on their mission
   - Ask the participants to share why they put that particular information
   - Discuss with the participants how this can help them when making decisions
Family Mission Statement
Contract

1. Purpose: Designing a contract that assists with developing an individual plan to follow for the future. This brings it into I will accomplish versus I want to accomplish or would like to accomplish. This activity is to be used with the participants and their children to design household rules. This activity could also be used:
   - Educational pursuits
   - Vocational pursuits
   - Home attainment

2. Rationale: Women who have been victims of domestic violence have not had the opportunity to develop their own identity and discover what they would like to accomplish. This activity assists them with developing the ideas in a format that they can use to remind themselves of the long term picture.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens or pencils

4. Activity:
   - Discuss how contracts work and the meaning of contracts
   - Ask participants to identify things that they would like to continue working on
   - Ask participants to identify things that others could work on
   - Have the participants make a contract of what they want to do or will do

5. Processing activity:
   - Ask the participants to share their contract
   - Ask the participants where they would keep this to remind themselves of their goals
   - Discuss how they could make sure that they were sticking to their contract and how they might develop accountability for the information on the contract
Post It!

1. Purpose: to identify responsibilities for children to assist with around the home and to assist with providing structure within the home.

2. Rationale: Women who have been involved in a domestic violence situation may not have been the primary disciplinarian and may struggle with dealing with their children’s behavior. Furthermore, the women may be feeling guilt regarding the situation; therefore, have difficulties with handling their children’s behavior. Because children do well when they are aware of the expectations in an environment with consistency and routine, this activity allows for the women to identify the structure necessary to deal with behaviors in their children.

3. Materials needed:
   - Handouts
   - Pens, pencils, or markers

4. Activity:
   - Ask the women to identify things that their children do that causes problems in the home
   - Ask the women if they notice this occurring at a specific time (ie.. children are bored, children don’t realize the expectations)
   - Ask the women to identify how they feel when they are unaware of the rules and what is expected of them or how they feel when things are not dealt with consistently
   - Have the women discuss things that their children could participate in around the home

5. Processing the activity:
   - Ask the women to share their responses
   - Encourage the women to give feedback
   - Ask the women if they are going to give any sort of reward for the positive behaviors
   - Discuss what types of rewards could be given if this was a choice (ie. Money, extra time with mom, special choice for dinner, get to choose weekend fun activity, etc…)
   - Ask the women where they could put the chart in their home and how they could encourage their children’s involvement
**Post It!**

Child’s Name:

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<td>Chore</td>
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<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

*The Wings of Change* manual was created with two uses in mind. The primary use of the activity manual is to provide Occupational Therapists with activities to be used in the field with female victims of domestic violence. The secondary use of the activity manual is utilization by Occupational Therapy students in an aftercare women’s group at the Community Violence Intervention Center. The focus of the manual is to guide occupational therapists, based upon the Occupational Adaptation (OA) Model, to assist victims of domestic violence to gain independence.

*The Wings of Change* is designed to prepare the women to assume the roles and occupations that have been slowly and involuntarily removed from them, through the cycle of abuse. This preparation follows the developmental process beginning with the provision of foundational activities (occupational readiness) to help ground her knowledge of who she is via personal, social and family skill development. The foundational activities are designed to develop or strengthen her readiness skills. These readiness skills set the stage to prepare her to more successfully adapt to the challenges she is and will be experiencing in the environmental contexts of: work, play and leisure. The next step, in the process, is to then provide her the opportunity to ‘try on’ these skills in the various roles occupations she needs to reassume. This ‘trying on’ occurs in an environmental context that is safe and supportive while still challenging her to move to
the next level. This entire process culminates with the woman gaining a feeling of competence as she regains her personal control and masters her roles and occupational functioning. This entire model and process is based on the belief that engagement in occupation drives the adaptive process through which changes in occupational functioning occur (UND OT).

Limitations

1. The main limitation of this project is the information in the literature is sparse. The Occupational Therapy students were unable to locate a product similar or designed to meet the target daily living skill areas identified prior.

2. While the literature suggests that women would benefit from long-term services, the documentation regarding the efficacy of such a program has not been established.

3. Time was another limitation for this project. With more time, additional activities could have been developed to provide for more variety.

Proposed Implementation

The proposed program is to be used in a group setting with women who have been victims of domestic violence in a long-term aftercare program. It is designed for monthly meetings focusing on the development and strengthening of skill areas with the primary goal of decreasing the risk of re-victimization.

A second proposal is that CVIC and the University of North Dakota Occupational Therapy (UND OT) Program develop a collaborative relationship to implement an aftercare women’s group titled: The Wings of Change: Occupational Therapy Activities for Women of Domestic Violence.
The UND OT faculty will be responsible for preparing the occupational therapy (OT) students to understand the complexity of domestic violence issues. The students will apply their knowledge through facilitation of the aftercare women’s group under the supervision of UND OT Department faculty and CVIC staff.

Conclusion

It is felt that this project will have an impact on the lives of women who have been victims of domestic violence. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this project be implemented with CVIC and the UND OT department. It is further recommended that outcome studies are conducted to assist with the development of future programs. It is understood that future students will continue the development of additional programs to determine the needs of the UND OT department, and develop the curriculum and student training materials. This will assist with the success of the initially developed program.

Recommendations

1. Further studies measuring the efficacy of this long-term program for women of domestic violence is necessary. With research supporting this program, community-based facilities could gain the financial support they desperately need to keep their organization running in a time of extreme budget cuts.

2. It is recommended to provide services in a collaborative model with health care professionals, to maximize the opportunities for the women to access the services that current literature is calling for within the current budget constraints.

3. It is also recommended that grant options be explored to support this program to ensure its longevity.