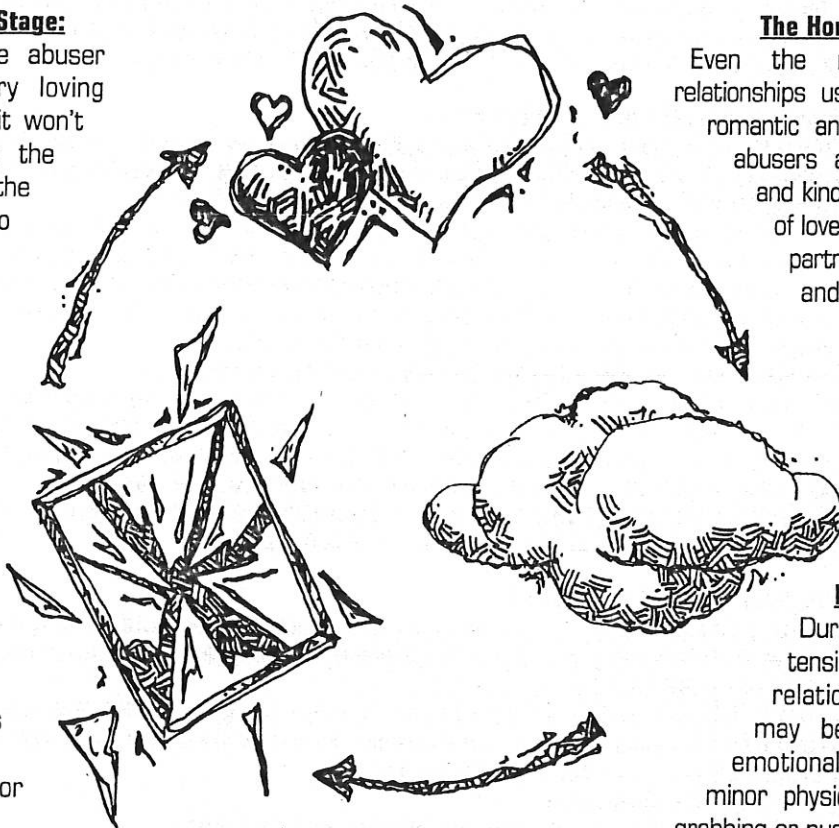


The Cycle of Abuse

Although not all abusive relationships follow the same pattern, there is a cycle that is similar in many abusive relationships. It looks something like this.

Back to The Honeymoon Stage:

After the 'blow up' the abuser may apologize, be very loving and kind, and promise it won't happen again. Because the abuser is so convincing, the partner will often try to 'forgive and forget.' Unfortunately, the cycle usually repeats itself and the abuse gets worse.



The Honeymoon Stage:

Even the most abusive relationships usually start out romantic and loving. Many abusers act very sweet and kind, express a lot of love and make their partners feel special and cared for.

The Tension Building Stage:

During this phase, tension builds in the relationship. There may be arguments, emotional abuse or minor physical abuse like grabbing or pushing.

The Blow Up Stage:

This is when the abuse is at its worst, and it may include extreme physical or sexual violence.

Have you experienced this cycle in your relationship? If so, briefly write down the behaviors you saw during each of the phases. Or think of a relationship from a movie, book or TV, and write down examples of behaviors you saw at each stage of the relationship.

1 The Honeymoon Stage (beginning of the relationship): _____

2 The Tension Building Stage: _____

3 The Blow Up Stage: _____

4 The Honeymoon Stage (after the blow up): _____