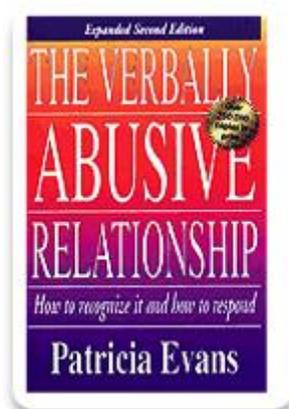


HPN EAP Newsletter for Employees



<http://www.patriciaevans.com/page2/page2.html>

Verbally Abusive Relationships

The staff of Health Promotion Northwest EAP has been referring people to read a book by Patricia Evans, “The Verbally Abusive Relationship.” There are many excellent resources on this topic, but we like this book so much that we decided to profile it in our newsletter. If any of this rings bells, we recommend you read the book and call us.

From the book’s Introduction: “Verbal abuse is a kind of battering which doesn’t leave evidence comparable to the bruises of physical battering. It can be just as painful, and recovery can take much longer. The victim of abuse lives in a gradually more confusing realm. In public, she is with one man, in private he may become another. Subtle diminishing or angry outbursts, cool indifference or one-upmanship, witty sarcasm or silent withholding, manipulative coercion or unreasonable demands are common occurrences. They are however, cloaked in a “what’s wrong with you, making a big thing out of nothing?” attitude, and many other forms of denial. Often, for the verbally abused woman, there is no other witness to her reality, and no one who can understand her experience. Friends and family may see the abuser as a really nice guy and, certainly, he sees himself as one.”

In a verbally abusive relationship there is: inequity, competition, manipulation, hostility, control and negation – as opposed to a non-abusive relationship where there is: equity, partnership, mutuality, goodwill, intimacy and validation.

“Many partners, who are constantly blamed and confused by verbal abuse, are surprised to realize that they have never said, nor would they think of saying, what is frequently said to them.” Does he/she say things that you would never say?

Verbal abuse “...is especially hurtful when it is denied. When the partner’s perception of the abuse is discounted and there is no validation of her reality, part of her hurt is her confusion.”

“When the partners of verbal abusers first begin to suspect that something is really wrong in their relationship, they usually describe some interaction with their mate to a counselor or confidante. They ask, “Is that normal?” This first stage of recognition is the beginning of the partner’s change from doubting herself to doubting her mate.”

Upon reflection on her past verbally/psychologically abusive relationship, one woman said, “Now it seems like everything is real. Before, it was like I was in the wrong world ...”



Call Health Promotion Northwest at 360-788-6565 for more information and services.

