

## Popularizing MOVE

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Various government agencies like the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Department of National Defense (DND) along with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW renamed Philippine Commission on Women [PCW] under RA 9710, the Magna Carta of Women) in Manila launched the Movement called Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere (MOVE) last November 28, 2006. Atty. Wendel E. Avisado, Executive Director of the Davao Integrated Development Program (DIDP) and I were invited as speakers. Atty. Wendel was invited in his capacity as the Chair of the Gender and Development Fathers Advocating Total Health, Empowerment, and Responsible Parenthood (GADFathers). Among those who are with GADFathers are Councilor Leo Avila of the Davao City Council, Regional Director Maduh Damsani of the Commission on Population, Mr. Marcelino Escalada Acting City Administrator of Davao, among others.

The GADFathers in Davao City was organized primarily by fathers, or men with children who realized the importance of bonding together to find ways and means of improving relationships between fathers and their children.

Early on, it was pointed out by social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists working at the Davao City Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Drug Dependents (DCTRCDD), that all those who underwent rehabilitation in the center expressed "hating their fathers" for having seen and experienced how their fathers abused their mothers.

It is such a great blessing that "many hearts of men" have been deeply touched by such report. Many of them realized that

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being the other half of humanity, they cannot just relegate the parenting role to develop and rear children to the mothers.

In the past, many fathers play the "blaming game." Whenever a child in the family turns out deviant, they are heard saying, "*Ikaw man gud bilang inahan wala nimo tudlui maayo ang imong anak (you are to blame, because as a mother you did not teach your child very well.)*" From statements like these, many fathers have now realized that some Filipino men negate their roles as parents. There are also many instances when we hear some fathers say in jest "*ah, wala man ko anak... ang akong asawa hinuon adunay tulo kabuok (I have no child... but my wife has three children.)*" By trying to sound funny, some fathers are actually in effect negating their parenting role. Now, many fathers are trying to help check and correct whatever wrong or irresponsible acts or attitudes have occurred in the past. Indeed, some jokes or jests contribute to the confusion of children leading a lot of them to go astray.

So as to instill the right approach in family relationships, many advocates while helping popularize laws on children's rights, also include popularizing the teaching on Ephesians 6:4 from the Holy Bible. Depending on what version of the Bible you use, it still talks about parenting role. In the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, it states: "*Father, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*"<sup>2</sup> The Good News Bible with Deuterocanonicals in Today's English Version (TEV) states: "*Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, raise them with Christian discipline and instruction.*"<sup>3</sup>

It is such an added blessing when many men realize that apart from improving their parenting role, they really needed to be involved in eliminating violence against women and children (VAWC). Thus, after studying Republic Act 9262, the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004, and understanding the spirit of the law, many men initiated the movement called MOVE or Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere.

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<sup>2</sup> The Ephesians 6:4, Holy Bible (NIV).

<sup>3</sup> The Ephesians 6:4, Holy Bible (TEV).

Considering the Davao City experience, MOVE-Davao chaired by Atty. Wendel E. Avisado, which was launched on September 28, 2007, expanded its coverage.

MOVE-Davao stands for Men Opposed to Violence Against Women, Men and Children Everywhere. The principal conveners of MOVE-Davao include the Davao Integrated Development Program (DIDP), GADFathers, the Integrated Gender and Development Division (IGDD) under the Office of the Davao City Mayor, Boy Scouts of the Philippines - Davao City Council and the Transformative Justice Institute (TJI).

The head of the MOVE Secretariat is Atty. Arnold C. Abejaron, the Faculty President of Ateneo de Davao University and Prosecutor Oliver Sanieel of the Davao City Prosecution Office and formerly of the Legal Office of the University of the Philippines (UP) Mindanao.

During the National Congress of Men Opposed to VAW Everywhere (MOVE) on December 5, 2008, the other groups coming from Mindanao, indorsed the MOVE-Davao concept to now include, men and children's concerns.

#### **MOVE-Davao**

Statistics would show that in Davao City 142 VAWC cases of violation of RA 9262 were filed from November 2007 to November 2008. Looking into the entire RICAVAW (rape, incest, child abuse and violence against women) statistics, the total reached a high of 336. With such number, so many other lives within those families are surely also troubled. Add that up with the statistics of previous years and you can imagine the number of troubled people in Filipino families.

The Transformative Justice Institute (TJI) has been helping the Research and Development (RD) of materials that can help strengthen family relationships. We work in partnership with Sr. Josephine Bacaltos, RGS, Executive Director of the Womyn Network Group (WOMYNET), its staff and member organizations. MOVE and its members are now helping us in trying to stop the highest form of human rights violations (HRV) which is Domestic Violence (DV) happening right in the very homes of many Filipino families.

#### **How Can We Have Love, Peace and Harmony in the Modern Homes?**

Researchers show that dysfunction in many Filipino families oftentimes happen due to Domestic Violence (DV). DV comprise of either physical, psychological, sexual or economic abuses or a combination of any or all such forms of violence. As a result of domestic violence there is a tremendous rise in the number of children in conflict with the law (CICL). Many young people have become drug dependents or are into alcohol abuse, so they can forget or escape from their problems.

Application, implementation, enforcement, observance and compliance of the various important and beautiful laws already existing in the Philippines are keys to the needed eradication of DV. All of us therefore, must take part in popularizing and enforcing the laws.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution, the fundamental law of the land provides in Article II Declaration of Principles and State Policies the following:

*Section 12. The state recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. The natural and primary right and duty of parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character shall receive the support of the Government.<sup>4</sup>*

Through this provision of the constitution it is very clear that it is the policy of our government to give the family great importance. Thus, our government is fully supportive of ensuring protection for all members of the family. It is very clear that our government will not support any form of abortion but will go for programs that will promote responsible parenting and family life.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 12 of Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

Article XV of the same constitution provides:

*Section 1. The state recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development.*<sup>5</sup>

Family solidarity is an important target of the various programs and policies of the Philippine government and so the other legislative measures or laws subsequently passed by Congress were designed to uphold the above provisions of the Philippine Constitution.

Along this line the Family Code of the Philippines which took effect on August 4, 1988 have 3 very important provisions that promote mutuality in relationships between husbands and wives; shared household management; and shared parenting. The specific provisions of the Family Code in this regard state the following:

*Article 68. The husband and wife are obliged to live together, observe mutual love, respect and fidelity, and render mutual help and support.*<sup>6</sup>

It is very important to note the desire of our government for both husbands and wives to live together, and observe mutuality of love, respect and fidelity. The word mutuality connotes reciprocity or a "give and take relationship." Both spouses, husband and wife, must show love, care, respect and faithfulness to each other. In other words, the man cannot impose or demand that he be loved or respected more by the wife or vice versa. Likewise, the husband especially those who claim to be Christians, cannot say that it is alright for him being a man to play around or have an extra marital relationship or engage in bigamy or polygamy which others say is the nature of a man.

Under the Family Code of the Philippines only monogamous relationship is considered as valid. Therefore, fidelity or faithfulness is applicable for both the husband and the wife. We should not go along some jests or joke that if the man is 4 meters away from the gate of their house, he is already a bachelor. We see a lot of Filipino men act that way because of the wrong

<sup>5</sup> Section 1 of Article XV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

<sup>6</sup> Article 68 of the Family Code of the Philippines.

belief that men by nature are polygamous. Many men refute the same. They say it is a fallacy. Thus, they are correcting such belief by other Filipino men so that they can help strengthen marital bonds.

Further, Article 68 provides the need for spouses to mutually help and support each other. The law itself mandates the couple to observe the good practice of helping and supporting one another.

Article 71 provides: "*The management of the household shall be the right and the duty of both spouses.*"<sup>7</sup>

This provision of the Family Code is meant to take away stereotyping of roles where only the women are expected to do the household chores such as laundry, cleaning the house, washing dishes, cooking, etc.

The law expects both men and women to share in the household management especially if both of them are also working outside of the home. One of the spouses should not be carrying the multiple burden of doing practically everything else while the other just takes time to relax.

By way of example, there are many families where both the husband and the wife work or pursue their career to generate the needed income for the family. Yet when they go home, the husband oftentimes, just sit down in front of the TV set, raises his feet and watches his favorite show while only the wife attends to the household chores and needs of the family. Sometimes the husband even asks the wife to serve him beer or whatever drink he cares to have. This is what is typically called as stereotyping of roles. That results in the multiple burden of the wife. Thus, the law expressly provides for both husbands and wives to share in managing the household. That way, both spouses can share in the workload and subsequently enjoy togetherness in watching the television show.

Article 211 on shared parenting provides: "*The father and the mother shall jointly exercise parental authority over the persons of their common children.*"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Article 71 of the Family Code of the Philippines.

As pointed out in the opening statement of this article, we oftentimes hear the mother being blamed for the deviant behavior of their children. *"Ikaw kasi bilang ina, hindi mo inaalagaan at tinuturuang mabuti ang iyong anak."* (You are to be blamed as a mother because you do not take good care and teach your children well.) But how about the father? The father is also a parent and therefore should take on the parenting role and make sure the child is nurtured, well cared for and well taught. Fathers should not just relegate to the mothers the role and the authority to raise a child.

If husbands and fathers would take seriously the provisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution regarding Family life as well as the provisions of Articles 68, 71, and 211 of the Family Code and follow God's admonition about their roles as husbands and fathers, surely, we will have no problems regarding domestic violence (DV) or any other form of abuses in the family. However, this is not case.

Due to the high incidence of violence against women and children (VAWC) in the Philippines, on March 8, 2004, Republic Act 9262 - the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children (AVAWCA), was passed into law. Such law was passed by Congress because it was noted that in situations where there is domestic violence, majority of women and their children have become the victims. On the other hand, when that law was passed, there were no reported incidents to the police or any other government agencies where the husbands or the men are the victims of violence. However as pointed out earlier, we know that in few instances the husbands or the men are also the victims of domestic violence. In this regard, victims are encouraged to report the same in order that appropriate action can be made. Our desire therefore is clear and unequivocal and that is to fully put a stop to all forms of Domestic Violence (DV).

In this regard, if a husband for example becomes a victim of physical abuse and would like to complain about the harm done to him, he has to use the provision of the Revised Penal Code (RPC) involving physical injuries or unjust vexation for any other form of abuse.

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<sup>8</sup> Article 211 of the Family Code of the Philippines.

RA 9262, the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act, explicitly provides the need for government to remedy incidence of VAWC cases. Some of the salient provisions of RA 9262 are as follows:

*Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared that the State values the dignity of women and children and guarantees full respect for human rights. The State also recognizes the need to protect the family and its members particularly women and children, from violence and threats to their personal safety and security.*

*Towards this end, the State shall exert efforts to address violence committed against women and children in keeping with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution and the Provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination Against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international human rights instruments of which the Philippines is a party.<sup>9</sup>*

It is very clear that because of failure of many men involved in intimate relationships to show mutual love, respect and fidelity which is and of itself are Biblical principles, to their spouses/partners and due to the inability of some men to control their emotions or anger, they resort to violence and inflict the same to their partners in life and/or the children of the women.

In order to correct this situation, RA 9262 defines "Violence against women and their children" under Section 3 of the law, as follows:

*"Violence against women and their children" refers to any act or a series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife, former wife, or against a woman with whom the person has or had a sexual or dating relationship, or with whom he has a common child, or against her child whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:*

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<sup>9</sup> Section 2 of the Republic Act 9262.

- A. **"Physical Violence"** refers to acts that include bodily or physical harm;
- B. **"Sexual violence"** refers to an act which is sexual in nature, committed against a woman or her child. It includes, but is not limited to:
- a) Rape, sexual harassment, acts of lasciviousness, treating a woman or her child as a sex object, making demeaning and sexually suggestive remarks, physically attacking the sexual parts of the victim's body, forcing her/him to watch obscene publications and indecent shows or forcing the woman or her child to do indecent acts and/or make films thereof, forcing the wife and mistress/lover to live in the conjugal home or sleep together in the same room with the abuser;
  - b) Acts causing or attempting to cause the victim to engage in any sexual activity by force, threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm or coercion;
  - c) Prostituting the woman or child.
- C. **"Psychological violence"** refers to acts or omissions causing or likely to cause mental or emotional suffering of the victim such as but not limited to intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to property, public ridicule or humiliation, repeated verbal abuse and mental infidelity. It includes causing or allowing the victim to witness the physical, sexual or psychological abuse of a member of the family to which the victim belongs, or to witness pornography in any form or to witness abusive injury to pets or to unlawful or unwanted deprivation of the right to custody and/or visitation of common children.
- D. **"Economic abuse"** refers to acts that make or attempt to make a woman financially dependent which includes, but is not limited to the following:
1. Withdrawal of financial support or preventing the victim from engaging in any legitimate profession, occupation, business or activity, except in cases wherein the other spouse/partner objects on valid, serious and moral grounds as defined in Article 73 of the Family Code;

2. Deprivation or threat of deprivation of financial resources and the right to the use and enjoyment of the conjugal, community or property owned in common;
3. Destroying household property;
4. Controlling the victims' own money or properties or solely controlling the conjugal money or properties.<sup>10</sup>

**Section 5. Acts of Violence Against Women and Their Children.** The crime of violence against women and their children is committed through any of the following acts:

- (a) Causing physical harm to the woman or her child;
- (b) Threatening to cause the woman or her child physical harm;
- (c) Attempting to cause the woman or her child physical harm;
- (d) Placing the woman or her child in fear of imminent physical harm;
- (e) Attempting to compel or compelling the woman or her child to engage in conduct which the woman or her child has the right to desist from or desist from conduct which the woman or her child has the right to engage in, or attempting to restrict or restricting the woman's or her child's freedom of movement or conduct by force or threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm, or intimidation directed against the woman or child. This shall include, but not limited to, the following acts committed with the purpose or effect of controlling or restricting the woman's or her child's movement or conduct:
  - (1) Threatening to deprive or actually depriving the woman or her child of custody to her/his family;
  - (2) Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her children of financial support legally due her or her family, or deliberately providing the woman's children insufficient financial support;
  - (3) Depriving or threatening to deprive the woman or her child of a legal right; and
  - (4) Preventing the woman in engaging in any legitimate profession, occupation, business or activity or controlling the victim's own money or properties, or solely controlling the conjugal or common money, or properties.

<sup>10</sup> Section 3 of the Republic Act 9262.

- (f) Inflicting or threatening to inflict physical harm on oneself for the purpose of controlling her actions or decisions;
- (g) Causing or attempting to cause the woman or her child to engage in any sexual activity which does not constitute rape, by force or threat of force, physical harm, or through intimidation directed against the woman or her child or her/his immediate family;
- (h) Engaging in purposeful, knowing, or reckless conduct, personally or through another, that alarms or causes substantial emotional or psychological distress to the woman or her child. This shall include, but not limited to, the following acts:
  - (1) Stalking or following the woman or her child in public or private places;
  - (2) Peering in the window or lingering outside the residence of the woman or her child;
  - (3) Entering or remaining in the dwelling or on the property of the woman or her child against her/his will;
  - (4) Destroying the property and personal belongings or inflicting harm to animals or pets of the woman or her child; and
  - (5) Engaging in any form of harassment or violence.
- (i) Causing mental or emotional anguish, public ridicule or humiliation to the woman or her child, including, but not limited to, repeated verbal and emotional abuse, and denial of financial support or custody of minor children of access to the woman's child/children.<sup>11</sup>

Section 8 provides for the various types of protection orders:

**Section 8. Protection Orders.** A protection order is an order issued under this act for the purpose of preventing further acts of violence against a woman or her child specified in Sec. 5 of this Act and granting other necessary relief. The relief granted under a protection order serve the purpose of safeguarding the victim from further harm, minimizing any disruption in the victim's daily life, and facilitating the opportunity and ability of the victim to independently regain control over her life. The provisions of the protection order shall be enforced by law enforcement agencies. The protection

<sup>11</sup> Section 5 of the Republic Act 9262.

orders that may be issued under this Act are the barangay protection order (BPO), temporary protection order (TPO) and permanent protection order (PPO). The protection orders that may be issued under this Act shall include any, some or all of the following reliefs:

- (a) Prohibition of the respondent from threatening to commit or committing, personally or through another, any of the acts mentioned in Sec. 5 of this Act;
- (b) Prohibition of the respondent from harassing, annoying, telephoning, contacting or otherwise communicating with the petitioner, directly or indirectly;
- (c) Removal and exclusion of the respondent from the residence of the petitioner, regardless of ownership of the residence, either temporarily for the purpose of protecting the petitioner, or permanently where no property rights are violated, and if respondent must remove personal effects from the residence, the court shall direct a law enforcement agent to accompany the respondent [until he] has gathered his things and escort respondent from the residence;
- (d) Directing the respondent to stay away from petitioner and designated family or household member at a distance specified by the court, and to stay away from the residence, school, place of employment, or any specified place frequented by the petitioner and any designated family or household member;
- (e) Directing lawful possession and use by petitioner of an automobile and other essential personal effects, regardless of ownership, and directing the appropriate law enforcement officer to accompany the petitioner to the residence of the parties to ensure that the petitioner is safely restored to the possession of the automobile and other essential personal effects, or to supervise the petitioner's or respondent's removal of personal belongings;
- (f) Granting a temporary or permanent custody of a child/children to the petitioner;
- (g) Directing the respondent to provide support to the woman and/or her child if entitled to legal support. Notwithstanding other laws to the contrary, the court shall order an appropriate percentage of the income or salary of the respondent to be withheld regularly by the respondent's employer for the same to be automatically remitted directly to the woman. Failure to remit and/or withhold or any delay in the remittance of support to the woman and/or her child without justifiable cause shall

- render the respondent or his employer liable for indirect contempt of court;
- (h) Prohibition of the respondent from any use or possession of any firearm or deadly weapon and order him to surrender the same to the court for appropriate disposition by the court, including revocation of license and disqualification to apply for any license to use or possess a firearm. If the offender is a law enforcement agent, the court shall order the offender to surrender his firearm and shall direct the appropriate authority to investigate on the offender and take appropriate action on matter;
  - (i) Restitution for actual damages caused by the violence inflicted, including, but not limited to, property damage, medical expenses, childcare expenses and loss of income;
  - (j) Directing the DSWD or any appropriate agency to provide petitioner [what the petitioner] may need; and
  - (k) Provision of such other forms of relief as the court deems necessary to protect and provide for the safety of the petitioner and any designated family or household member, provided petitioner and any designated family or household member consents to such relief.

Any of the reliefs provided under this Sec. shall be granted even in the absence of a decree of legal separation or annulment or declaration of absolute nullity of marriage.

The issuance of a BPO or the pendency of an application for BPO shall not preclude a petitioner from applying for, or the court from granting a TPO or PPO.<sup>12</sup>

The following may file a petition for protection order under Section 9.

- (a) The offended party;
- (b) Parents or guardians of the offended party;
- (c) Ascendants, descendants or collateral relatives within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity;
- (d) Officers or social workers of the DSWD or social workers of local government units (LGUs);
- (e) Police officers, preferably those in charge of women and children's desks;
- (f) Punong Barangay or Barangay Kagawad;
- (g) Lawyer, counselor, therapist or healthcare provider of the petitioner;

<sup>12</sup> Section 8 of the Republic Act 9262.

- (h) At least two (2) concerned responsible citizens of the city or municipality where the violence against women and their children occurred and who has personal knowledge of the offense committed.<sup>13</sup>

Section 10 states where petition for protection orders may be filed.

Applications for BPOs shall follow the rules on venue under Sec. 409 of the Local Government Code of 1991 and its implementing rules and regulations. An application for a TPO or PPO may be filed in the regional trial court, metropolitan trial court, municipal trial court, municipal circuit trial court with territorial jurisdiction over the place of residence of the petitioner: Provided, however, That if a family court exists in the place of residence of the petitioner, the application shall be filed with that court.<sup>14</sup>

A BPO may be filed in the barangay where the husband/partner is causing physical harm or threatening to cause physical harm to the women or her child. A BPO is only good for 15 days and is non-renewable. After filing the BPO, the victim should apply for a TPO in court. A TPO may also be filed in court when a husband/partner is causing the woman or her child psychological, sexual or economic abuses. It is good for 30 days and is renewable for another 30 days. A PPO refers to permanent protection order issued by the court after notice and hearing.

RA 9262 considers DV as a public crime. Section 25 states:

*Violence against women and their children shall be considered a public offense which may be prosecuted upon the filing of a complaint by any citizen having personal knowledge of the circumstances involving the commission of the crime.*<sup>15</sup>

This provision of the law makes it clear that DV is not only a family or private matter. As a matter of fact, anybody who will intervene to help the victims will not be liable.

<sup>13</sup> Section 9 of the Republic Act 9262.

<sup>14</sup> Section 10 of the Republic Act 9262.

<sup>15</sup> Section 25 of the Republic Act 9262.

Section 34 states:

*In every case of violence against women and their children as herein defined, any person, private individual or police authority or barangay official who, acting in accordance with law, responds or intervenes without using violence or restraint greater than necessary to ensure the safety of the victim, shall not be liable for any criminal, civil or administrative liability resulting therefrom.<sup>16</sup>*

We are encouraged to help both the victims and the doers of violence. The victims must be protected from further harm. They must be helped to undergo counseling in order for them to be healed from the trauma they have experienced. On the other hand, the doers of violence must also be helped to undergo counseling or psychiatric treatment if there need be for them to be rehabilitated or corrected as provided for under Section 41 of the law.

Section 33 prohibits compromise agreement due to the cycle of violence as well as continuum of violence. It provides:

*A Punong Barangay, Barangay Kagawad or the court hearing an application for a protection order shall not order, direct, force or in any way unduly influence he applicant for a protection order to compromise or abandon any of the reliefs sought in the application for protection under this Act. Sec. 7 of the Family Courts Act of 1997 and Sec.s 410, 411, 412 and 413 of the Local Government Code of 1991 shall not apply in proceedings where relief is sought under this Act.*

*Failure to comply with this Sec. shall render the official or judge administratively liable.<sup>17</sup>*

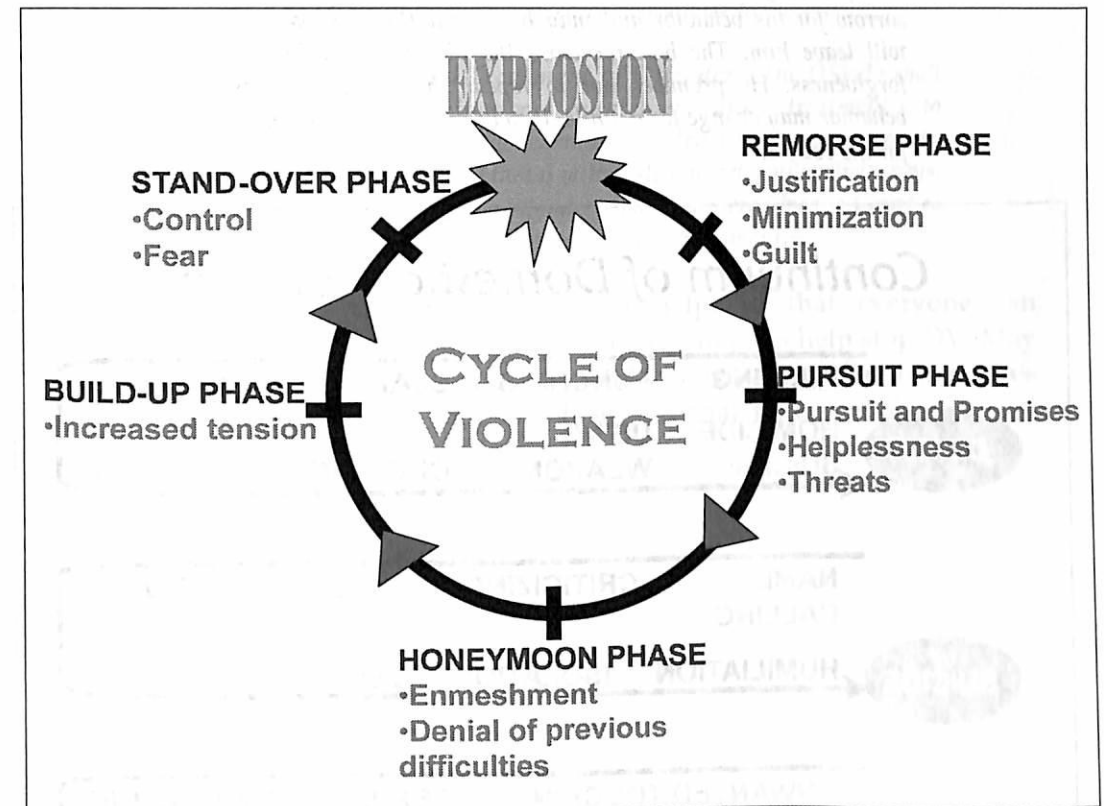
It is unfortunate that we hear so many complaints from lawyers all over the country that some Family Court judges seem not to realize the importance of applying Section 33 in treating cases under RA 9262. They report that even if the complainant has been physically abused, some Family Court Judges insist for the complainant and respondent to be reconciled once there is an admission on the part the woman that after all "she still loves her spouse/partner." According to many lawyers some judges even

<sup>16</sup> Section 34 of the Republic Act 9262.

<sup>17</sup> Section 33 of Republic Act 9262.

berate or scold them for breaking up families. Since they do not like to jeopardize their other cases before the judge, they no longer question the judge for non-compliance of Section 33. It is in this regard that understanding the Cycle of Violence (COV) and the Continuum of Violence by Family Court Judges is vital.

Cycle of Violence<sup>18</sup> illustrates the experience of the victim. It has three (3) recurring phase: a. Tension or Build-Up Phase; b. Violent Outburst or Crisis Phase; and, c. Honeymoon Phase. In some instances, the cycle no longer goes through the honeymoon phase, rather it goes directly from the violent outburst to the built-up phase. The repeated cycle of violence eventually ends up either in the death of the victim or the spouse/partner unless they break up from the relationship.



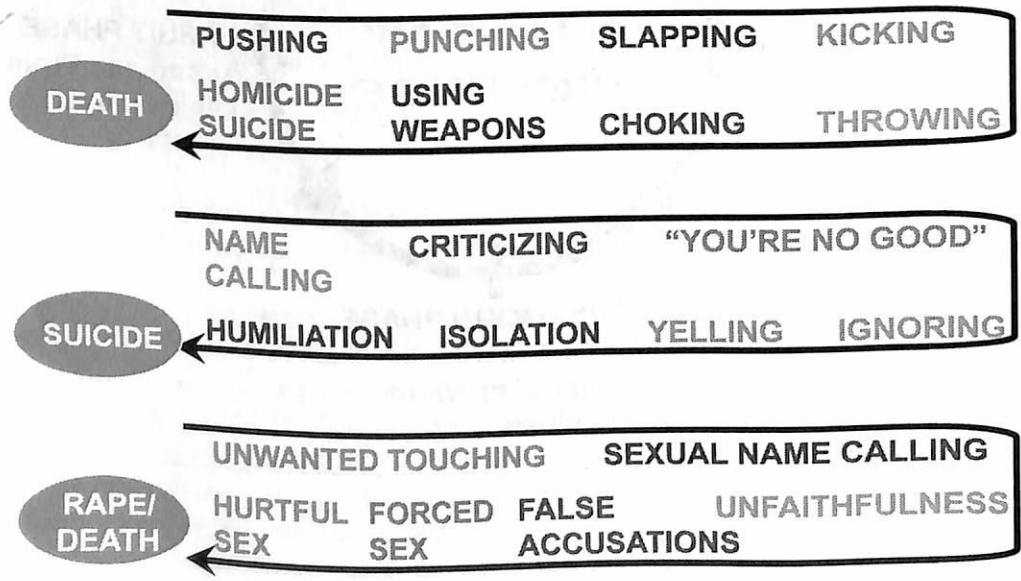
<sup>18</sup> Materials from the Womyn Network Group.

*Tension Phase* is characterized by the increasing stress in the relationship and the couple cannot overcome by talking it out as the abuser wields control over his partner and dominates the situations. Usually, threats, jealousy, and humiliation of the woman by the partner grow more serious while the former makes every effort to please the latter. The woman is filled with fear and may try to deliberately ignore the problem.

In the *Violent Outburst Phase*, extreme physical violence or sexual or emotional harm occurs. The batterer justifies his behavior as a way of teaching the woman a lesson. The victim, on the other hand, usually has no control of the outburst. Her only recourse is a safe hiding place. She may even deny the seriousness of the abuse and try to appease the batterer.

In the *Honeymoon Phase* the batterer may feel remorse and sorrow for his behavior and may be fearful that his partner will leave him. The batterer woos the victim and asks her forgiveness. He promises not to repeat the abuse and his behavior may change for a while. It may be a time of closeness for the couple.

### Continuum of Domestic Violence



These graphs show that settling cases and forcing the reconciliation of the couple can lead to death or disaster in the family unless proper counseling has been done. In this regard, the law prohibits the usual compromise agreement or amicable settlement where the parties are further exposed to harm considering their psychological state.

The heart and soul of RA 9262 are in Sections 40 and 41 of the law which state following:

*Mandatory Programs and Services for Victims.* The DSWD, and LGU's shall provide the victims temporary shelters, provide counseling, psycho-social services and /or, recovery, rehabilitation programs and livelihood assistance.

The DOH shall provide medical assistance to victims.<sup>19</sup>

*Counseling and Treatment of Offenders.* The DSWD shall provide rehabilitative counseling and treatment to perpetrators towards learning constructive ways of coping with anger and emotional outbursts and reforming their ways. When necessary, the offender shall be ordered by the Court to submit to psychiatric treatment or confinement.<sup>20</sup>

May this material be of help, so that everyone can understand better the spirit of the law that can help stop DV. May the readers find the same as a vital tool in helping families resolve their problems so they can heal and that more people can lead wholesome and joyful lives.

<sup>19</sup> Section 40 of Republic Act 9262.

<sup>20</sup> Section 41 of Republic Act 9262.