# **Cycle of Abuse Wheel**

## **Tension Building Phase**

- Increasing tension, stress, and conflict in the relationship.
- Abuser starts to act out, becomes more agitated and edgy.
- · Victim feels the need to pacify the abuser.
- Communication begins to break down.
- · Victim feels like they are 'walking on eggshells'.

#### Calm Phase

- Period of calmness where no abuse is happening.
- Abuser acts like the abuse never happened.
- Victim might start to believe the abuser has really changed this time.
- Gradually, tension starts to build again, leading back to the tension-building phase, and the cycle continues.

POWER AND CONTROL

### **Reconciliation or 'Honeymoon' Phase**

- Abuser apologises for their behaviour, often promising it will never happen again.
- Abuser may show kindness and affection, and may make grand gestures of love.
- Victim might feel a sense of relief, hope, and may choose to stay in the relationship because of the abuser's seemingly sincere remorse.

## Incident or Acute Explosion Phase

- Occurrence of an abusive incident, which could be physical, emotional, psychological or sexual.
- Abuser may harm the victim or their property.
- The incident may involve an outburst of anger, blaming, arguing, threats, or intimidation.
- This is often the shortest phase but usually escalates over time.

The Cycle of Abuse Wheel serves as a simplified representation of the complex dynamics in abusive relationships. Not all abusive relationships follow this cycle strictly, and the time between each phase can vary widely. It's important to understand that the presence of such a cycle indicates an unhealthy, abusive relationship that requires intervention.

NOTES

