



Turning Points: A Nonviolence Curriculum for Women is an educational program for women who use both legal and illegal violence against their partners. Its focus is on helping women understand the connections between the violence they experience and the violence they use. Its overall goal is to help them end both.

The curriculum is divided into three parts, which can be delivered in the sequence that best suits the needs of the group.

1. Part one has nine distinct segments that each provides a focus for a group session. The segments educate women about domestic violence, clarify its different forms, and make visible the impacts of domestic violence on the relationships and well-being of family members. The segments also describe the difference between legal and illegal violence. The segments make a case that a woman's change process is tied to the kind and severity of violence she is using and frequently the kind of violence she is experiencing. Segments ask women to fully examine their use of violence, their motivations, and what their violence is actually doing. Each segment begins with a short lecture and then takes women through an exercise to explore the ideas for the week.

2. Part two introduces the stories of 11 women who have used violence in their own lives. Each woman's story is filmed and provided in 4-6 minute video clips, these stories act like fire starters. The honesty of the women in the stories helps generate discussion about many aspects of violence, especially about the use of violence against an abusive partner. The women in the clips speak about feeling justified, not caring about what they did, feeling guilty, coping with their children's experience, struggling to detach from the abuser, their sense of feeling trapped, and the feeling that using violence is their only option.

Part two also includes 15 video vignettes that re-enact actual stories in order to illustrate dynamics that can be unpacked and logged. Logging has been used in the domestic violence field for many years to break specific instances of violence down into key ingredients. The Turning Points Curriculum customizes this process to focus the group's attention on the problems associated with the members use of violence, its impact on people, its sources, and most importantly, what must be changed in the short- and long-term to bring the violence to an end.

3. Part three is a series of group exercises to generate discussion and learning about themes that come up again and again in groups of women who use violence. These exercises are meant as a starting point for the facilitator, who is encouraged to adapt the exercises specifically for the women using their groups. Included in part three are two exercises on living with anger, an exercise on talking to children about the violence, and an exercise that sheds light on the experience of group members' partners.

For more information go to: www.dvturningpoints.com or contact Melissa Scaia at dvturningpoints@gmail.com or by phone at 218-969-3498.