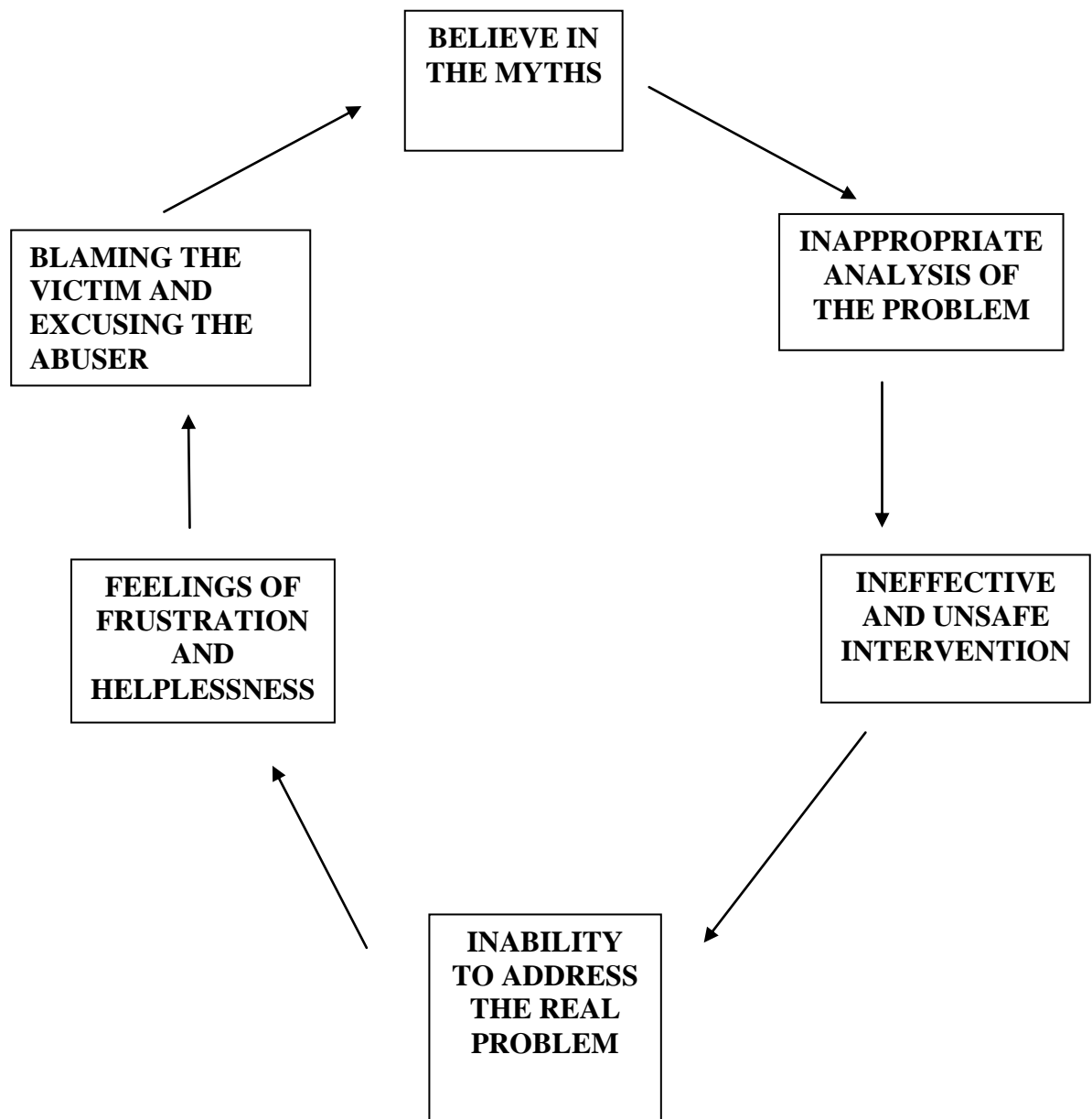


## WHEN YOU BELIEVE IN THE MYTHS



Adapted from "wife Assault" D. Sinclair

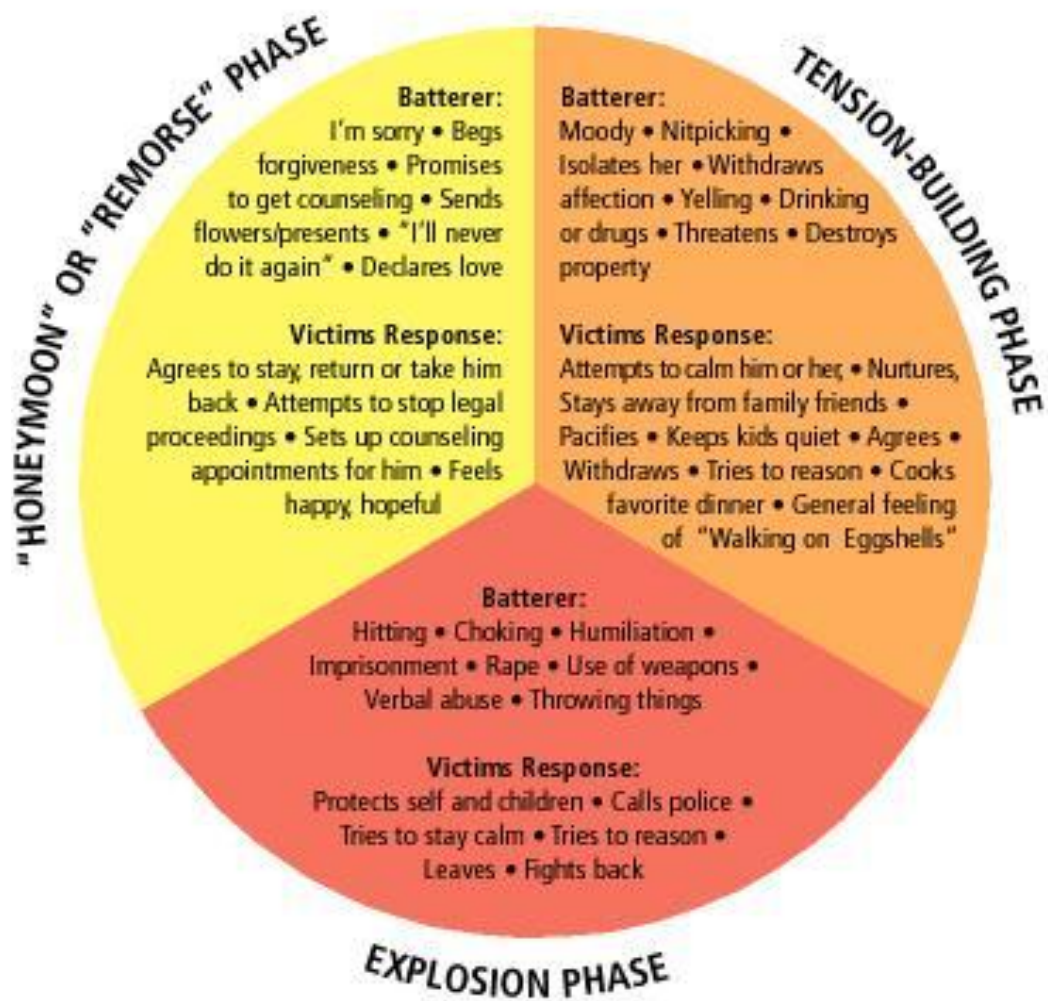
## **Why do women stay? They can always leave..**

It is very common to hear not only police officers, but many people ask “why do victims of domestic violence stay with the offender, why doesn’t she just leave?” or “why, after she has left does she go back to him?” Sometimes the fact that a woman does not leave a violent situation, or returns to live with the offender, might stop some police officers taking the matter seriously.

The reasons why women stay are many and varied. We list some of the possible reasons in the **12 F’s**

<b>FEAR</b>	Losing their children, of physical violence because they have left, of the bad effect on their children, of being alone without a husband, of helplessness, of him committing suicide if she leaves.
<b>FINANCES</b>	Lack of skills to get a job, “who will support me and the children?”
<b>FAMILY</b>	A desire to keep the family together, “you made your bed, now lie in it”.
<b>FATHER</b>	The boys need a father figure. He is often the type of father she had.
<b>FAITH</b>	It is the way things are meant to be. I got married “until death us do part”
<b>FORGIVENESS</b>	I really love him despite his violence. He is just weak. “Its what you do in a relationship”
<b>FANTASY</b>	“Things will get better. It’s not really that bad. I can help him get over his violence. He really has changed.”
<b>FAILURE</b>	She may think that her family, friends and the community will think that she has failed, that she is a bad wife. She may feel ashamed, and ask what she did wrong. She may think that it was her fault and feel guilty.
<b>FATIGUE</b>	She may be too tired to leave, and find it easier to stay. She may say that she has tried to leave before, but it was hopeless. She may feel confused and exhausted.
<b>FRIENDS</b>	She will want to keep her friends. They may not understand if she leaves her husband.
<b>FUTURE</b>	She will be uncertain and scared about the future, for her and her children. “Where will I go, what will I do, where will I live?”
<b>FUEL</b>	She may have problems with drug or substance abuse, or alcohol.

## CYCLE OF VIOLENCE THEORY



**CYCLE OF VIOLENCE DIAGRAM**

## **CYCLE OF VIOLENCE**

### **Tension-building Phase:**

Tension, stress and strain are normal parts in everyone's life and are present at different times in all relationships. However, for many reasons, some people react violently to tension and once violence takes place within a relationship it adds to the tension.

During this phase of the cycle, tension builds between the couple. Problems regarding jobs, finances, children, and other areas are stressors that increase the tension. There may be verbal, emotional, or physical abuse during this phase. He may say that she is stupid, unattractive, a 'bad mother', a bad wife, or crazy. In a violent relationship the women generally accept the blame and she will try hard not to make any 'mistakes' that may upset him in the future.

She may then take responsibility for making him feel better. She often feels guilty when he eventually explodes, in spite of her best efforts to calm and please him. During this increasing tension, the woman is rarely angry, even about the most unreasonable demands. She may suffer illnesses such as depression, stress, or worry and feel helpless. She may have other problems due to emotional stress such as headaches; upset stomach, difficulty sleeping or feelings of weakness and tiredness are common. These problems increase her woman's sense of worthlessness and make her more vulnerable to her partners' criticisms.

The woman may deny her fear. She may lessen the seriousness of the threat, believing she has some influence over the situation. Even if she thinks that she is scared and even in danger, she may be slow to seek help. She could feel ashamed of her failure to please her partner and she may believe, that if other people knew about the violence, they would blame her.

As the tension increases, minor episodes of violence increase, such as pinching, tripling, slapping or shoving. The violent partner knows this behaviour is wrong, but fears the woman will leave him, this fear of rejection and loss can increase his anger with the woman and his need to control her.

Over time, abuse and battering increase and escalate in frequency and severity. The woman attempts to control the abuse through various coping techniques such as avoidance, placating, or "giving in." These are "stop-gap" measures, however, and do not work for long, if at all. Once the tension reaches an unbearable level, the acute battering incident occurs.

## **Explosion or violent stage:**

During this stage, violence occurs, usually causing injury and sometimes resulting in death. This is usually the shortest phase lasting a few minutes to 24 hours.

The "trigger" for moving into this phase is rarely the woman's behaviour; rather it is usually an external stressor (problems at work, a flat tire, money problems, etc.) or the internal state of the abuser – the way he is feeling and thinking. The type of battering that occurs is usually much more serious and intense than in the tension building phase.

The victim may feel a complete loss of control and feel psychologically trapped. She may not seek medical treatment or wait sometime before seeking help, denying the seriousness of the incident.

She may not trust police officers and fear their involvement will further enrage the batterer and may defend her partner to the police, although this is the stage where victims most usually call the police, meaning there is a short window of opportunity for intervention and support.

Because the acute battering incident may be triggered by anything, there is a complete lack of predictability. Occasionally a woman may unconsciously provoke the acute battering incident. She knows from experience that it is coming and wants to get it over with, and she knows that there will be a "calm" or "honeymoon" phase following the abuse.

There is no escape once the battering has begun; only the batterer can end the incident. After the severe battering has occurred, the couple moves into Phase Three or the "honeymoon" phase.

## **Honeymoon Phase (apologies, excuses, promises of reform)**

The abuser realises he has gone too far. He typically exhibits loving, kind behaviour while apologising and promising that it will never happen again. Both the abuser and the victim want to believe that it won't happen again. He believes that she has learned her "lesson" and she becomes "hooked" back into the relationship by his sincere apology and loving behaviour, sometimes gifts such as flowers, or a new dress, etc are given. During this stage is when the victims will want to 'drop charges'.

The tension has been dissipated by the abuse and both members of the couple are relieved. During this "honeymoon" phase, the couple becomes very close emotionally; the effect of the abuser's generosity, helpfulness and genuine interest during this phase cannot be minimised.

Ironically, it is during phase three that victimisation becomes complete. The emotional and cooperative bonding that occurs between the couple strengthens the commitment that each has to the relationship. The victim is finally experiencing the relationship in a positive way and thus it becomes increasingly difficult for her to leave it. After the victim has been through the cycle of number of times, her self-esteem begins to wither. She understands that she's trading physical and psychological safety for brief periods of "peace and happiness."

The duration of each phase varies between and within couples. Slowly, the honeymoon phase fades and the couple moves once again into the tension building phase. Over time this honeymoon phase often becomes shorter and shorter. The calm environment may become quite brief with the tension phase beginning again almost immediately.

**The cycle is then repeated.**

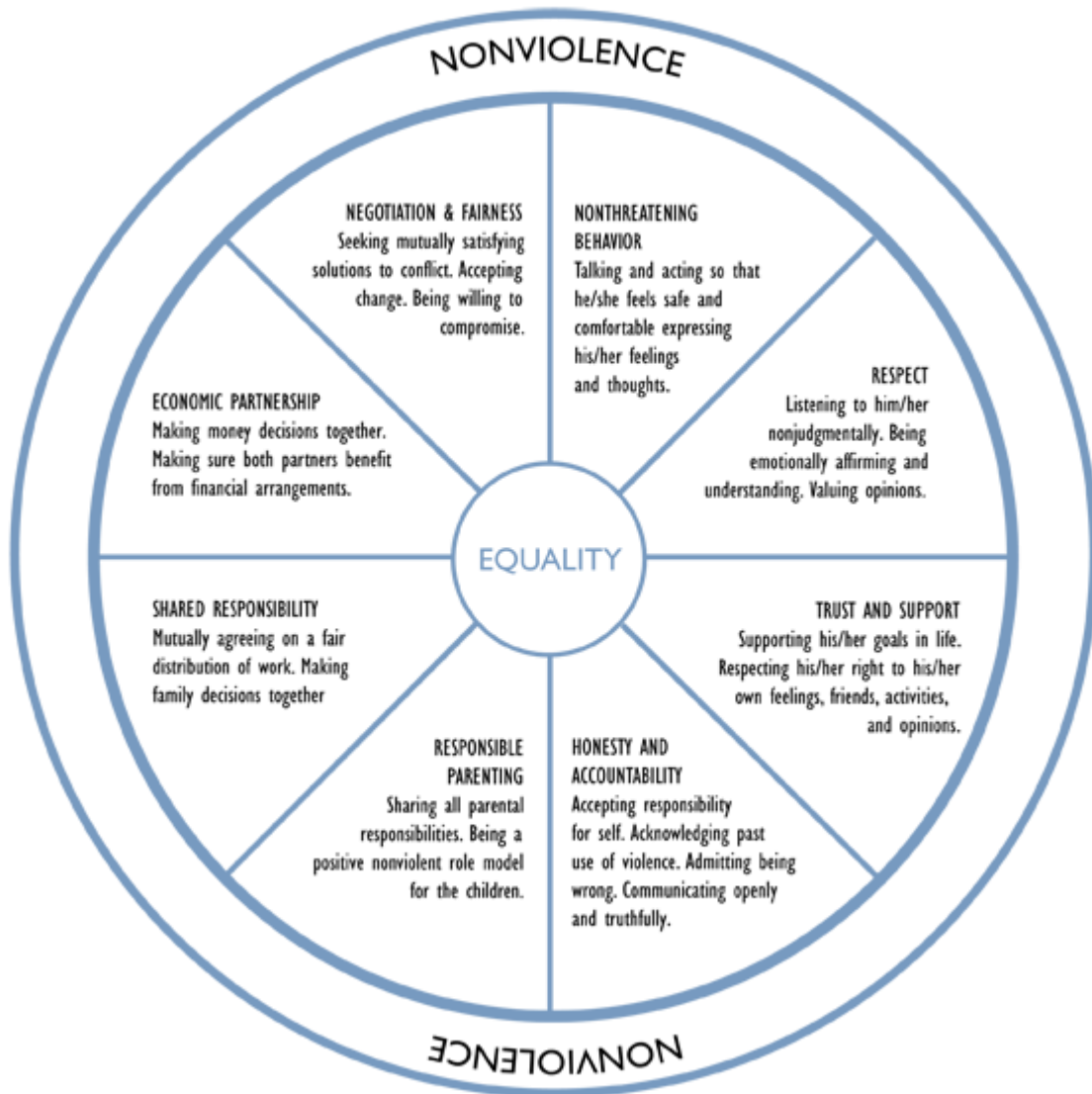
## **The cycle of violence can happen many times in an abusive relationship.**

Each stage lasts a different amount of time in the relationship, with the total cycle taking from a few hours to a year or more to complete. Emotional abuse is present in all three stages. A person does not need to have experienced the following behaviors to be in an abusive relationship. These are some examples of abusive behaviors. There are many more not listed.

	<b>Batterer may:</b>	<b>Partner may:</b>
<b>Phase 1: Tension Building Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pick fights</li><li>• Act jealous &amp; possessive</li><li>• Criticise, threaten</li><li>• Drink, use drugs</li><li>• Be moody, unpredictable</li><li>• Be crazy-making</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feel like she's walking on eggshells</li><li>• Try to reason with the batterer</li><li>• Try to calm the batterer</li><li>• Try to appease the batterer</li><li>• Keep silent, try to keep children quiet</li><li>• Feel afraid or anxious</li></ul>
<b>Phase 2: Crisis Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verbal Abuse</li><li>• Sexual Assault</li><li>• Physical Abuse</li><li>• Increase control over money</li><li>• Restrain partner</li><li>• Destroy property, phone</li><li>• Emotionally Assault</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience fear, shock</li><li>• Protects self &amp; children</li><li>• Use self-defence</li><li>• Call for help</li><li>• Try to flee, leave</li><li>• Pray for it to stop</li><li>• Do what is necessary to survive</li></ul>
<b>Phase 3: Calmer Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask for forgiveness</li><li>• Promise it won't happen again</li><li>• Stop drinking, using drugs</li><li>• Go to counselling</li><li>• Be affectionate</li><li>• Initiate intimacy</li><li>• Minimise or deny abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forgive</li><li>• Return home</li><li>• Arrange for counselling</li><li>• Feel hopeful</li><li>• Feel manipulated</li><li>• Blame self</li><li>• Minimise or deny abuse</li></ul>

*Adapted from L. Walker, The Battered Woman, Harper and Row, New York, 1980.*

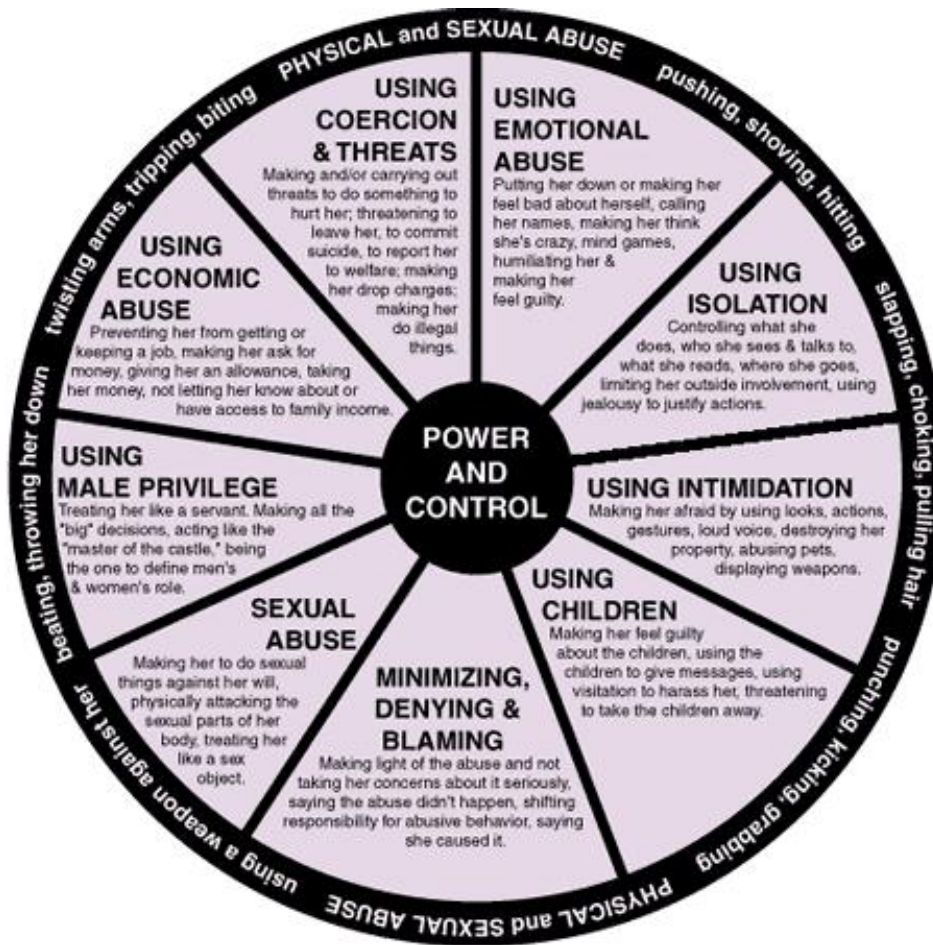
# Equality wheel



Domestic abuse intervention project.  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802



# Power and Control wheel



Domestic abuse intervention project.  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

## Implications for investigators

### Overview

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#### Introduction

When investigating a family violence crime you need to consider the cycle of violence and other family violence theories.

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#### The violence is not an isolated event

Investigators should be aware that family violence is not an isolated event. It exists in a context with a past and a present.

Police are often called during or shortly after the explosion but the incident is often part of a cycle of violence.

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#### The victim may have prompted the explosion

Some victims will prompt the explosion phase because they know it is coming and the sooner it occurs the sooner the cycle moves into the honeymoon phase.

Questions such as “who started this?” or “what happened?” might not provide the complete picture.

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#### Obtain the history of violence for context

Put the incident in context by obtaining the full history from the Communications Centre. Comms will access the Family Violence Database for this information.

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#### Investigate thoroughly

A thorough investigation is vital.

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#### Advise the court of the offence's context

Where an arrest is made provide information relating to previous incidents to the court.

Often each offence is reported as an isolated incident when it is not.

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Communications Skills Checklist – Peer Assessment

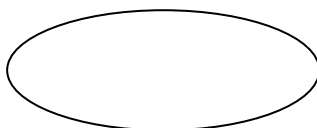
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessors Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Communication Skills</b>	Tick them off as you see or hear the interviewer doing them
Body posture – relaxed but attentive (if appropriate)	
Eye contact – relaxed	
Personal habits – no fiddling	
Minimal encouragers – “aha”, “mmm” “OK” etc	
Asks <u>relevant</u> open questions – requiring detailed answers	
Other – paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, confidence etc	

1. **Had difficulty** Tried but found this activity difficult.
2. **Achieved** Most things done OK. They did listen and communicate with the speaker. Perhaps one or two things not done that well, but generally pretty good.
3. **Merit** Very good communicator. Definitely listening and using communication skills. Everything done really well. A very good effort
4. **Excellence** Excellent communication skills. Communication skills wonderful, everything done perfectly. Outstanding! 😊

**Grade awarded**



Comments from Assessor:

Personal reflection (how do you think you did?):

Where could you improve?