



SPOUSE ABUSE

Establishing Goals in Working with Battered Women

The following list is offered to assist you in establishing goals for treatment with battered women (Register, 1993):

- *Identification of the Impact of Violence on Functioning.* Clients adjust their entire life to avoid the violence of the spouse. Recognition of the specific alterations and accommodations of behavior are an important component of treatment.
- *Empowerment.* Helping clients shift from a self-perception as victims to individuals who are in charge of their own lives is a slow but important process.
- *Development of Problem-Solving Skills.* Clients need to develop and enhance their skills both in daily living and in interacting with the social agencies that will help improve their circumstances.
- *Interacting With Social Agencies.* Battering brings women into contact with the legal system and many social service agencies. Battered women often become single women and single parents when they separate from their abusive partner. The largest percentage of persons below the poverty level are female single parents, and a majority of women experience a major reduction in income following divorce. Battered women need to learn to obtain the public help that is available to them.
- *Providing Ongoing Support for Battered Women.* Battered women often benefit from support groups that occur concurrently with ongoing psychotherapy.