

Counseling Girl Dealing With Dating Violence : “How To End It”

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Abstract

Dating violence happened intentionally in dating relationship to sustain the power and control to the partner. Dating violence included verbal & emotional abusive, sexual abusive and physical abusive. Violence basically was the product of power imbalance between doer and victim, and girls usually were the victims. From the qualitative study of abusive relationship, the process of decision making to get out from the abusive relationship was not easy. The honeymoon phase in the violence cycle that occurs after the abusive behaviour made the victim could not end it easily. There were also internal and external factors from the victim that make difficulties to get out from the relationship.

Using Egan’s model, the counseling process started with the target to change the unrealistic optimism by giving information, and facts about the cycle of dating violence. Internal factors such as poor self-esteem, ineffective coping style, and specific anxiety should be handled by using challenging skills. External factors such as potential new dating relationship, social support, should be created with the client. If there was problem with the family background, client should be helped to manage.

Key-words: dating violence, counseling, girl, victim, decision making

INTRODUCTION

Abusive relationship in dating filled with unpleasant behavior, either physical-psychological-sexual-emotional-verbal, to control others and sustain power intentionally (Murray, 2007). Sometimes also include financial manipulation. Glass et al. (2003) defined dating violence as the “perpetration or threat of an act of violence by at least one member of an unmarried couple within the context of dating or courtship (same sex or opposite sex)” (p. 228).

Dating violence experienced by the girls included physical, psychological, sexual and economic (Devi, 2013). Acts of physical violence such as hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing, gripping hard on the partner’s body, as well as other physical actions, which have an impact on the physical such as significant pain, bruises, etc. Psychological violence was more influenced by verbal abuse such as threatening, calling badly, vilifying, yelling, swearing, etc. The victims felt stress, disappointed, anxiety, difficulties in concentration and sleep

In Indonesia, dating violence is like an iceberg phenomenon, the real cases were a lot, but the report covered only a few. Some cases reported only if very severe and had fatal

impact, such as the victim got serious physical injury, or death. Victims usually not report to their parents, and keep it secretly because of threatens by the offenders, embarrassed, and afraid. Victims usually used ineffective emotional coping by be patient, pray to God, and keep silent (Devi, 2013).

Victims usually had some wrong myths that make them keep it secretly, such as “If I tell people I was abused, they would think it was my fault”, so the victims tend to blame themselves as the causes of the violence (Herrman, J., 2009). When they try to tell others about the truth of their relationship, they feel ashamed : they look stupid, or others push them to cut the relationship immediately but they have not ready yet, or they feel others blame them because of choosing the wrong person, etc.

They also found difficulties to end the relationships because they believe that “If I try harder, my partner will treat me better” or “Even if I am hit, I am nothing without my partner” (Herrman, J., 2009). The victims need to be empowered to drop their myths and change it with the logic and rational ones. Therefore, the victims usually hide the truth, they will hide the scars/brushes or tell they got accident not because of their boy friend.

Sometimes they told their friend or teachers at school found it accidentally. But actually only the victim herself could stop this violence, by breaking their relationships with her lover. Unfortunately, this effort was not an easy one, many of the victims trapped in cycle of violence. Counselors faced many challenges when working with clients who had experienced dating violence in the past or were currently experiencing it. These challenges included using appropriate assessment strategies, helping clients examined the consequences of the violence, and treating comorbid presenting problems (Murray & Kardatzke, 2007). Therefore, effort to help them must be prepared and set effectively to empowering the victims. This article intent to give an alternative frame of work to empowering the victims using counseling.

CASE

This case illustrated the difficulties of a girl to end up her dating relationships with her lover. “My boy friend always hit me when we were in conflict....my body got brushes...after that he will ask, beg forgiveness to me,...he told me that he became like that because too much in love with me, could not lose me, and always want to kept/possessed me...I became to believe that he really sorry, he did like that because of the love he had for me...and I forgive him and ready to gave him another chance to change...”

What this girl had mentioned about her lover behavior represented many of other victims experienced after the violence happened. As a young individual, the problem in identity made them hard to thought rational, and still kept their hope that their lover would change his behavior after this. The girls usually trapped in “cycle of violence” because of their romantic wishes.

DISCUSSIONS

Lenore Walker (1979) described about the cycle of violence, which were often present in abusive relationships. The first phase named the tension-building stage. During this stage, the perpetrator became edgy, critical, possessive and volatile. Arguments occurred more frequent, and often result in minor battering, such as pushing or throwing objects. The second phase was marked by the acute battering incident. Severe verbal abuse often occurred in this stage, with more severe than in the first phase. During this stage, the perpetrator usually out of control of himself. Many of fatal cases happened because of the behavior in this phase. Third phase, contrastly full of the kindness and contrite loving behavior. This phase, also referred to as the honeymoon phase. This phase ultimately kept the adolescent girl from ending the relationship. In this phase, the perpetrator felt the most remorse and tries desperately to make the relationship work. He became the loving and affectionate partner.

Counseling for the girl who became the victim of the dating violence should better be done in individual approach. The reason for this related with the shame and guilt commonly associated with victims of abuse. Individual therapy could be an effective means of treatment. In the privacy of individual counseling sessions, the victim could find a safe place to discuss the abusive relationship without fear of having judgment passed on her by peers or by authority figures (Smith & Donnelly, 2000)

Egan (2007) described the nine stages of counseling process. The first stage called the Telling the Stories. In the process of counseling for the victim, we should probe the evidence of the abusive, the intensity of victim's dependency to abuser, the victim's coping strategies when faces with conflict, abusive behavior, the family background (both), and the social support (friend, parents, etc.) It is important to have detail evidence, subjective perception, belief, evaluation from the victim's perspectives.

The next stage (second stage) was the Blind Spots stage. In this stage, counselor must try to made changes in the client's mindset. The client had to get the big picture of his/her problem in a comprehensive, realistic and logic perspectives. It was the time to challenge the awareness by giving information about the abusive relationship (information sharing), challenge the unrealistic optimism by data about the abusive cycles using advanced empathic highlights, confrontation technique. Challenging irrational believes such as wrong gender roles (man superior than woman), or violence was one expressions of love/affection should be done too.

The blind spots in the counseling for victim of dating violence could use the sharing information technique. Using the cycle of violence, the strategy to change the victim's mind about her lover's behavior could be done by giving information about the theory of cycle of violence. Victim must know that the honeymoon phase in violence cycle always came and only last temporary, not permanently. This information was the key to change the mindset of the violence victims so they could start making decision about their love relationships.

After victim got the blind spots, then the counseling process could go to the next stage which was possibilities and change agendas. In these stages, counselor help victim to develop possibilities that could rise the self esteem, using unuses resources. The counselor also facilitated victim to formulate the goals, short term and long term. It was important to restructure the self image or picture of self as a valuable individu and had freedom to live independently.

The last stage was making strategies and plan to reach the goals that already set. Counselor encouraged victim to make a clear plan how to avoid and ignore the terrors from the ex-lover. Sometimes it hard to do it by herself, therefore it was also important to help the victim to build social support. In order to strengthened her self-esteem, victim also motivate to do activities for her achievement, or involved in social activities. All these activities could rise up her confidence, independency, and self esteem.

As we already known that human behavior had three components which were :(1) attitude , belief about outcomes and evaluation of these outcomes), (2) subjective norms, belief about important other's attitude to the behavior and motivation to comply with important others, and (3) perceived behavioral control, belief about self competencies to do the action or to handle the effects/risks of the behavior (Ajzen, 1988). Helping the victim should concern about these three components of behavior. We should start to change the belief and subjective norms about lover's behavior and violence. After the belief and norms changed than we should help the victim to had confidence and competencies to handle the terror from ex-lover that usually came up after he knew that his lover/the victim start looking to ignore and avoid him.

Obstacles of the victims to ending the abusive relationships related to some characteristics suc as low self esteem, too easy to feel guilty, poor family background (having abusive experience in family, broken home), no affection in family, weak access to adult, poor information, and unrealistic optimism (Roberts & Roberts, 2003). If counselor found that victim had severe conditions of those obstacles, then psychotherapy was needed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Information Sharing should give to the clients to rise the awareness and realistic perspective about the relationship which not unhealthy, risky, and endless suffering. The changes of mind as the foundation of empowering must occurred in the stage IB (Blind Spots). Using the cycle of violence, the strategy to change the victim's mind about her lover behavior could use giving information about the theory of cycle of violence.

During the process, it is important that the client could develop a new perspectives about herself, rise the self esteem and have a picture of self as a freedom individual. Once the victim has regained some of her self-esteem, an adolescent support group can be a very effective supplement to individual counseling (Smith & Donnelly, 2000). For strengthening

self esteem and confidence, it was also important to facilitate client to build good social support (from peer, parents, family, etc.)

It recommended to the victim or anyone knew that dating violence happened in someone close to you, looked for professional help as fast as you could. For counselor or other helping professional, it better to help the victim individually, because of the shame and guilt of the victim. Helping process started to challenge the wrong belief and fault subjective norms of the victim first, than followed with restructuring the self esteem and building access to got healthy social support.

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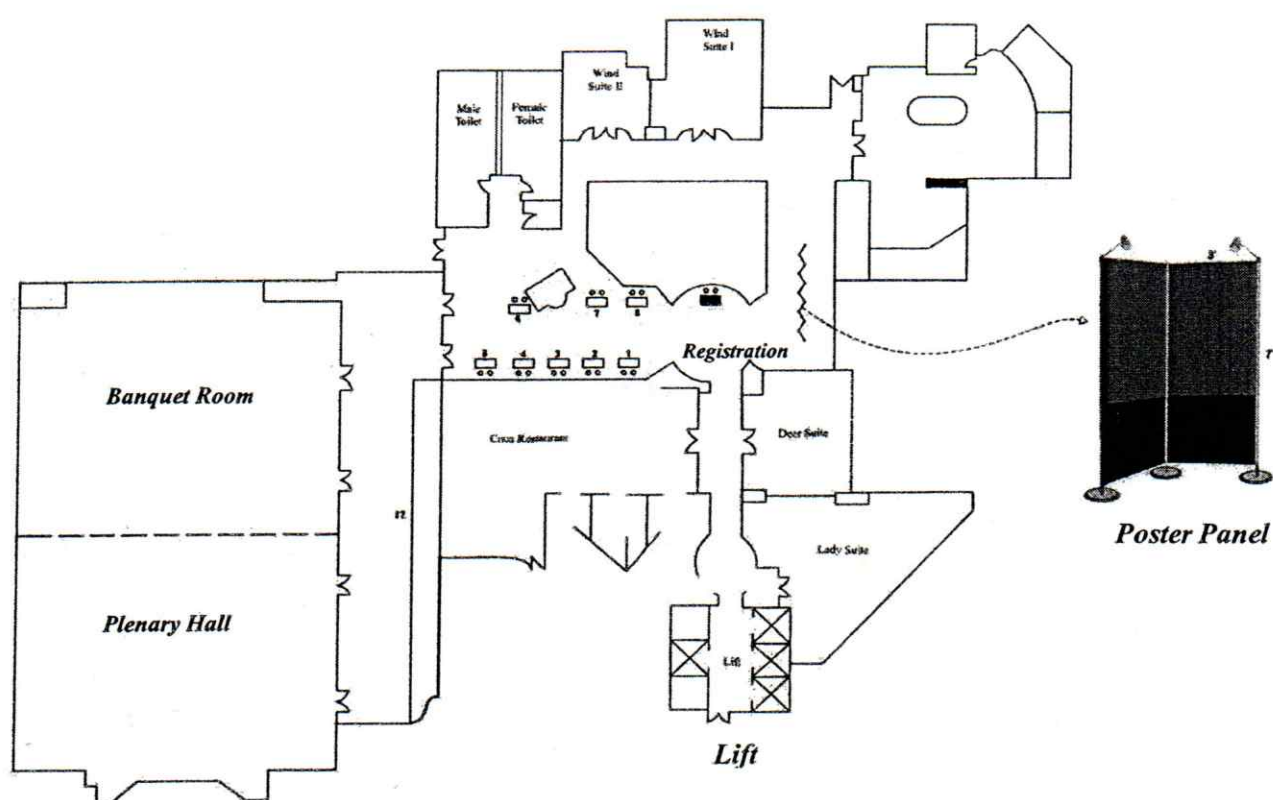
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16th August 2013(Day 1)

TIME	MORNING PROGRAM
0800-0900	REGISTRATION
0900-0915	Opening Speech by Chairman of APRICPC 2013- Dr.Edward Chan
0915-0930	Opening Speech by President of APRICPC - Prof. Catherine Sun
0930- 0945	Opening speech followed by Opening Ceremony by SCB managing director- Mr Mike Cannon
0945-1000	Tribal Dance Performance
1000-1005	Announcement by Secretary General APRICPC- Mr.Philip Armstrong
1005-1025	TEA BREAK
1025-1110	Prof. Allen Ivey (USA) Emotions And Developmental Counseling, The Default Brain, And Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes
1110-1155	Prof. K. K. Hwang (Taiwan) <i>Ms (Taiwan) Ph.D (Hawaii)</i> Pan-cultural Dimensions vs. Cultural System: Two Approaches to Studying Indigenous Psychology
1155-1240	Dr. Edward, FMAPsy (Malaysia) Psychotherapy & Counseling in the Post Modern Era in Asia
1240-1400	LUNCH

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Certificate for Oral Presentation

This is to certify that

SOERJANTINI RAHAJU

in

***3rd Asia Pacific Rim International Counselling
& Psychotherapy Conference 2013***

15th - 18th August 2013

Riverside Majestic Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

*"your great multitude of dedication and passion in this
conference plays a greater success for us in the future"*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr Edward Chan".

.....
Dr Edward Chan
Chair of APRICPC 2013