

# Family Shelter Service

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## \* *COMPARING CHARACTERISTICS OF ADDICTION AND VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE* \*

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Substance Abuser</b>	<b>Victim of Domestic Violence</b>
Obsession	Obsessed with substance use	It is the batterer, not the victim who is obsessed with the relationship
Denial	Denies the extent of the problem	Denies the extent of the problem in the service of survival
Covering up	Covers up the amount of drugs / alcohol used	Minimizes or denies in service of survival (if abuse is disclosed, the abuse may escalate) and in an attempt to cope
Avoidance of others	Avoids those who do not share the level of substance use	The batterer isolates the victim to increase their dominance of the victim
Attempts at control	Repeated attempts to control the substance use	Victim will attempt to control their actions to stop the abuse
Mood swings	Unexplained mood swings as the result of chemical dependency	Mood swings are related to grieving the relationship and as a result of the abuse
Anger, depression, guilt and resentment	Anger, depression, guilt and resentment (result of chemical dependency)	Anger is generally suppressed because it is to dangerous – depression, guilt and resentment are the results of the situation
Irrational acts	Irrational acts	What appears as irrational is often a coping mechanism for survival
Self-hate, self-justification	Self-hate, self-justification	Self-hate, justifies batterer
Physical illness	Physical illness due to abuse of chemicals	Physical illnesses due to stress and/or injuries
<b>Characteristics of Recovery</b>		
Admitting helplessness	Admitting helplessness to control the disease	Victims must regain their power and control over their lives
Ceasing to blame others	Ceasing to blame others	Victims blame them-selves for the abuse
Focusing on self, taking responsibility for own actions	Focusing on self, taking responsibility for own actions	Victims must place the blame for the violence on the batterer NOT themselves
Support from others	Seeking help for recovery from peers	Victims need legal, financial, social intervention as well as support from peers
Beginning to deal with own feelings rather than avoid them	Beginning to deal with own feelings rather than avoid them	Victims need a safe environment to explore feelings, especially anger
Building a circle of well friends and healthy interests	Building a circle of well friends and healthy interests	Building a circle of well friends and healthy interests