



Domestic Violence Center

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585-236-4454 (call/text)

# Agenda

## Today we will:

- Learn about Willow and our services
- Discuss how abuse and trauma uniquely affect older adults with a focus on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
  - Trauma and abuse as an older adult
  - Trauma and abuse based in childhood
- Discuss the basic intersection of substance use/abuse and domestic violence
- Consider how to respond and what to do

## Please:

- Take care of yourself during and after this discussion. This can be heavy and triggering information.
- Feel free to put questions in the chat. Don't wait until the end!
- Note: Lisa is not a legal expert.
- Remember to always follow your protocol!



# This is Heart Work. This is Hard Work.

## **If you are struggling with this work, you are not alone.**

- Know that you will be triggered.
- Know that you will be emotionally impacted by this work.

## **We have to remember to take care of ourselves.**

- Get better at learning and knowing your own triggers.
- Have a self-care plan for while you are on the clock so you can cope with triggers on the job.
- Have a self-care plan for outside of work so you can leave your work at work.
- Use your EAP or your equivalent.
- Take your PTO time!

## **We have to remember to take care of our colleagues.**

- Give each other some space and grace.
- Ask your colleagues how you can support them.

# About Willow Domestic Violence Center of Rochester

We have operated for over 40 years in  
Rochester and Monroe County.  
For nearly all of those years we were  
called:

**ALTERNATIVES**  
for *Battered Women*

Licensed residential and non-residential  
provider by Office of Children and Family  
Services



Office of Children  
and Family Services



**SAFE  
ZONE**



En Español

# Willow Domestic Violence Center Programs & Services

- 24/7 Crisis Intervention:
  - Call: 585-222-SAFE (7233)
  - Text: 585-348-SAFE (7233)
  - Real time chat:  
WillowCenterNY.org  
Facebook messenger
- 49 Bed Emergency Shelter
  - Children's Programs
  - Pet Shelter
- Supportive Housing
- Counseling Center
  - Individual & Groups
- Court Advocacy Program
  - Legal Aid Attorneys
- Mobile Advocacy Program
- HEAL Collaborative Program
  - Advocates in the URMC system
- Human Trafficking
- Deaf IGNITE
- Prevention Education

**All services are free and confidential.**



# Elder Abuse Services & Support



**Monroe County Adult Protective Services: 585-753-6532, <https://www.monroecounty.gov/hs-adult>**

Lifespan offers a variety of services in regards to elder abuse, including:

- Advocacy
- Education and Training
- Elder Justice Advocate program (for professionals)
- Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Teams
- Intervention Services
- Scams/Consumer Protection
- Shelters

## **Contact Information:**

Main office: 585-244-8400

Toll-Free: 1-866-454-5110

Email: [info@lifespanrochester.org](mailto:info@lifespanrochester.org)

Facebook, Twitter:

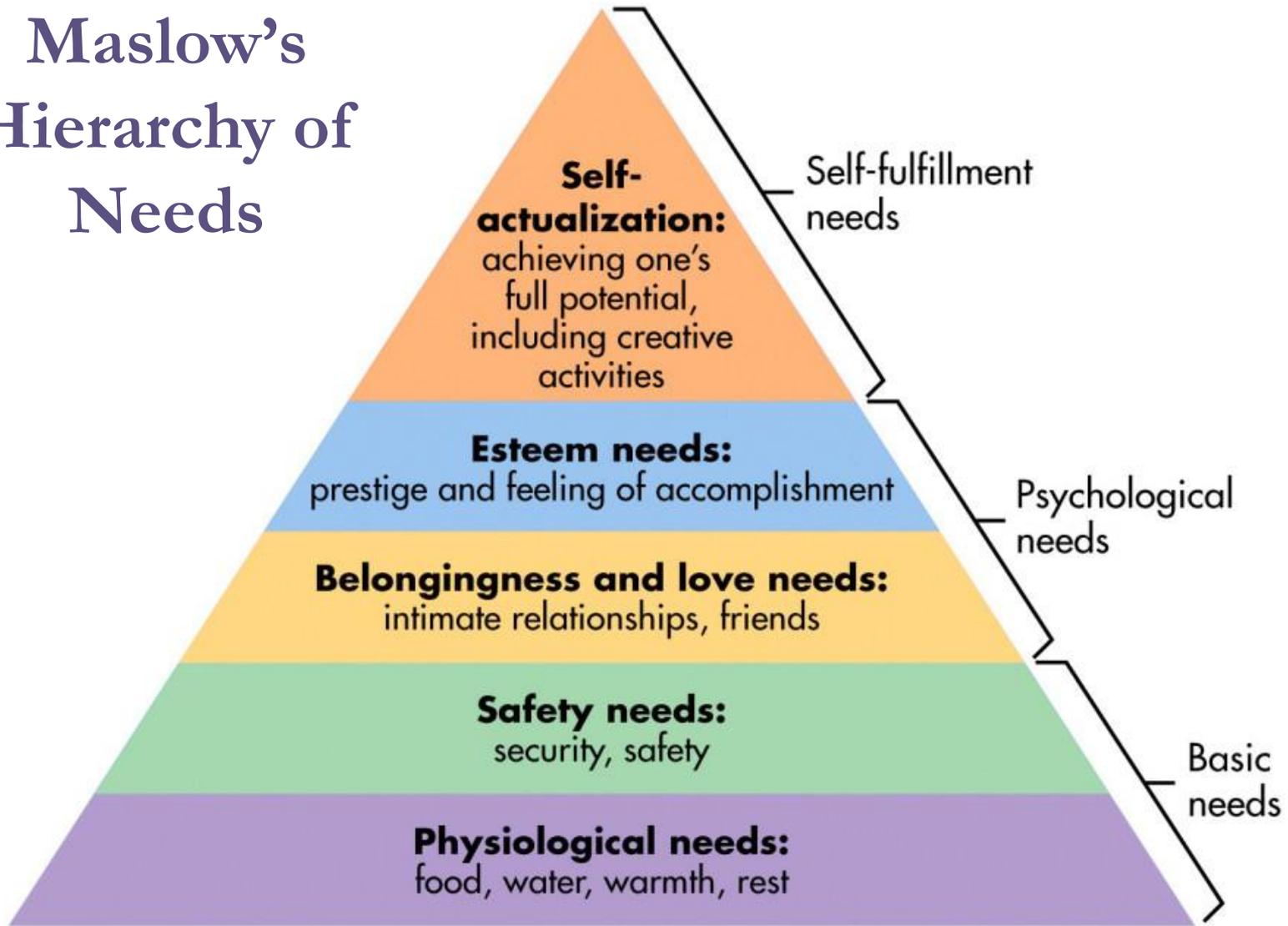
@LIFESPAN\_ROCHNY





# A Quick Refresh on Trauma

# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Remember that you have needs as a professional as well and that will impact your interaction with a patient.



# Trauma

## SAMHSA defines trauma as:

Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

- Trauma reactions are not a sign of emotional or psychological weakness or mental illness but are **normal** responses to an abnormal event(s).\*
- Individual personality characteristics count for little in the face of overwhelming events.\*

## Trauma Informed Care (TIC)

### Principles of TIC:

Safety, Trustworthiness & Transparency, Peer Support, Empowerment & Choice, Collaboration, Cultural/Historical/Gender Issues\*\*

### The basic idea of Trauma Informed Care:

What has happened to you?

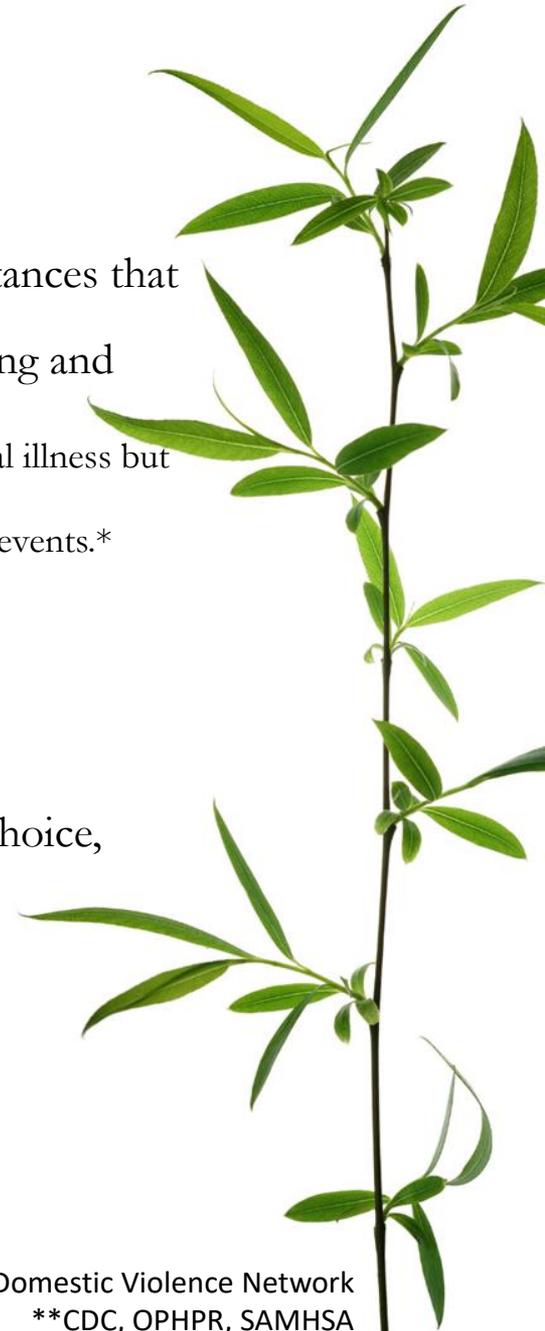
NOT

What is wrong with you?



\*Ohio Domestic Violence Network

\*\*CDC, OPHPR, SAMHSA

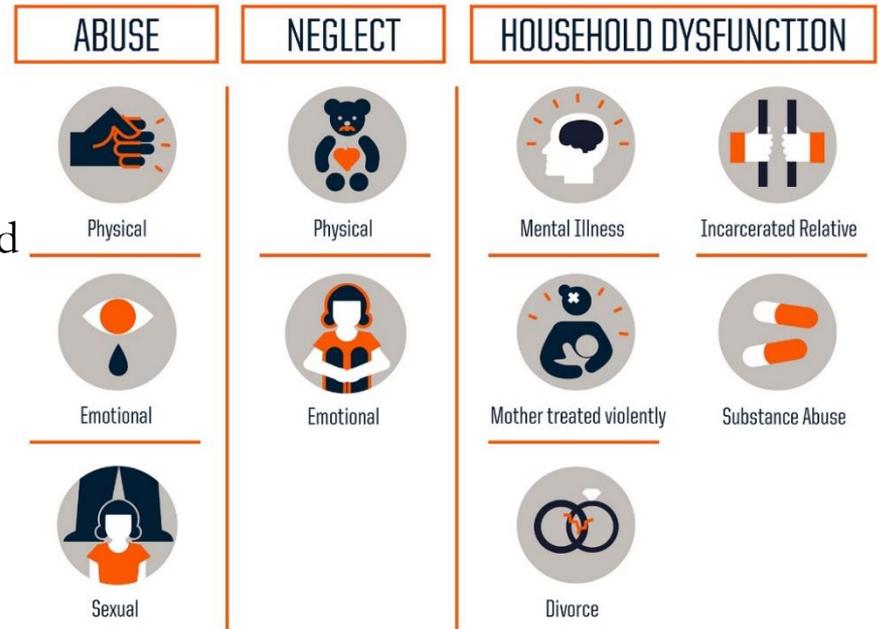


# Trauma Across the Life Span

## Adverse Childhood Experiences:

Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years)\*

- One of the most common ACEs in Monroe County is domestic violence (Monroe County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019)



## ACEs can impact and be a risk factor for issues in later life\*:

- Parenting and grandparenting abilities and the ability to form attachment/bonds
- Cognitive Health and Development – dementia, sleep
- Physical Health – lung/gum/heart disease, chronic fatigue, gastrointestinal/endocrine/reproductive disorders
- Mental Health – depression, anxiety, suicidal ideations, mood
- Substance use/abuse, overall risky behavior

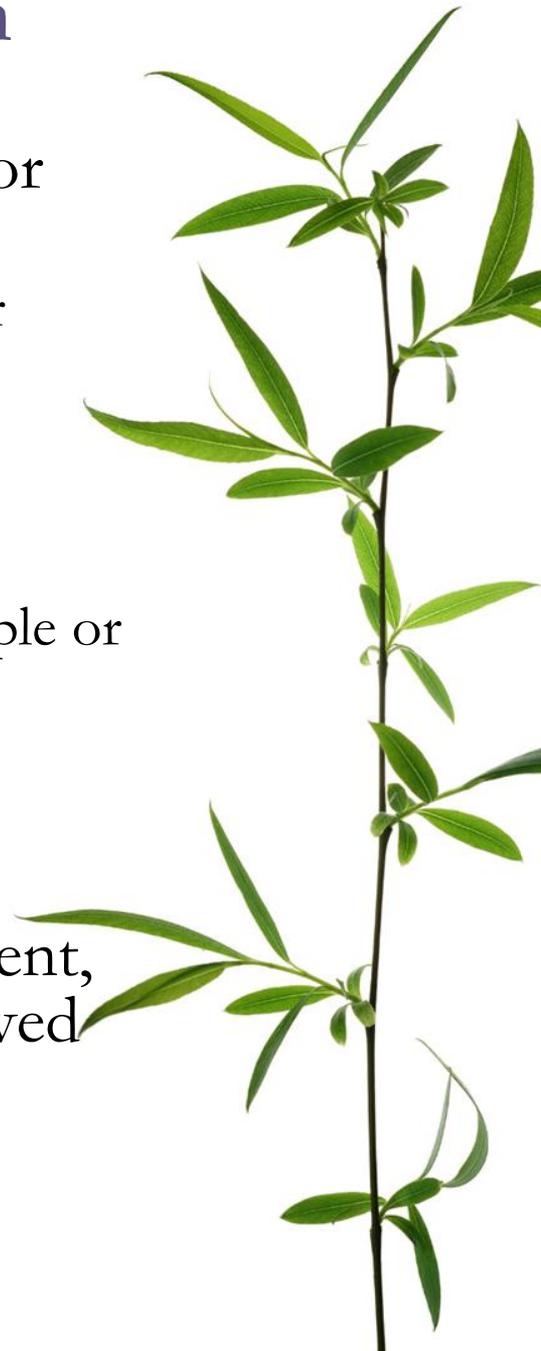
# Trauma Across the Life Span

As trauma survivors age, their trauma can evolve or resurface.

- It's not uncommon to see trauma symptoms emerge or evolve after long periods symptom-free time.
- Symptoms can emerge for the first time in adulthood.
- Symptoms can be more extreme than previously experienced.
- Symptoms can present differently than in younger people or be masked by other health issues.

Triggers:

Life changes, changes in family, beginning retirement, health problems, loss of independence, loss of loved ones, being in a long-term care facility.





Let's Talk DV

# The Scope of Domestic Violence

**There is no face to domestic violence.**

Domestic violence has no boundaries and can happen to anyone, regardless of:

**An abuser can also be anyone, regardless of:**

- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Socioeconomic status
- Religion/beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Ability
- Education level
- Zip code

**BUT**

There are groups and populations who experience this at higher rates.

There are factors that put groups and populations at higher risk for experiencing DV than others.

**Abusers are beautiful gorgeous people  
we all want to date or have in our families.**



# What is Domestic Violence?

A **pattern** of behavior aimed at gaining and maintaining **power and control** over a partner.

Abusive behavior is a choice, it is **NOT** caused by:

Anger Management

Mental health Issue

Poverty

Substance Use/Abuse

Abusive behavior is purposeful and strategic,  
it is not an accident.



Power & Control Wheel for Older Adults  
Adapted from the Duluth Model





# What is Domestic Violence?

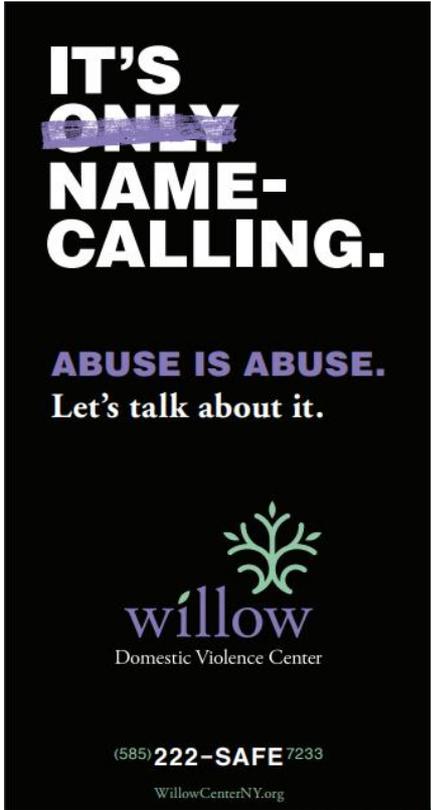
**There is no such thing as being “a little bit” abused.**

**Any abuse at any frequency or intensity is not ok.**



**IT WAS ~~JUST~~  
A ~~LITTLE~~ SHOVE.**

**ABUSE IS ABUSE.** Let's talk about it.



**IT'S ~~ONLY~~  
NAME-  
CALLING.**

**ABUSE IS ABUSE.**  
Let's talk about it.

Listen for words and phrases that are minimizing or excuse making:

- It's not that bad.
- It's not as bad as...
- It's not that big a deal.
- I can deal with it.
- Others have it worse.



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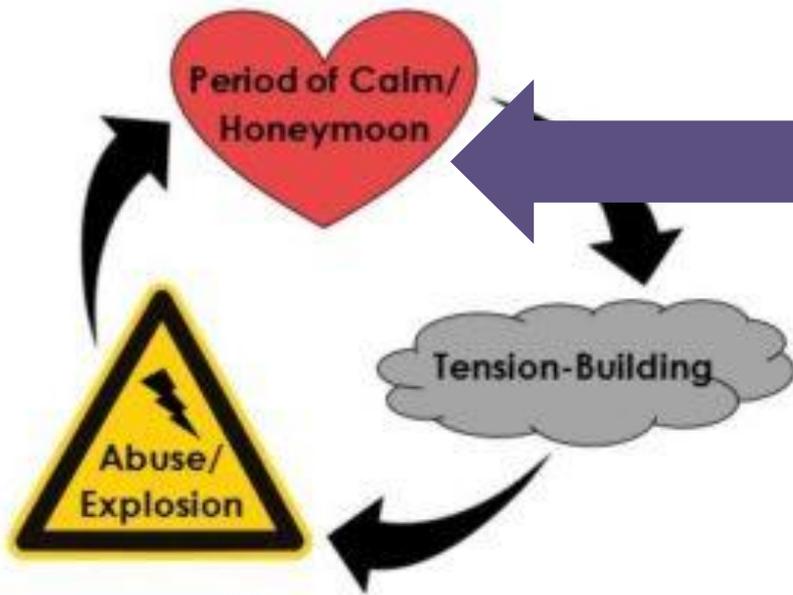
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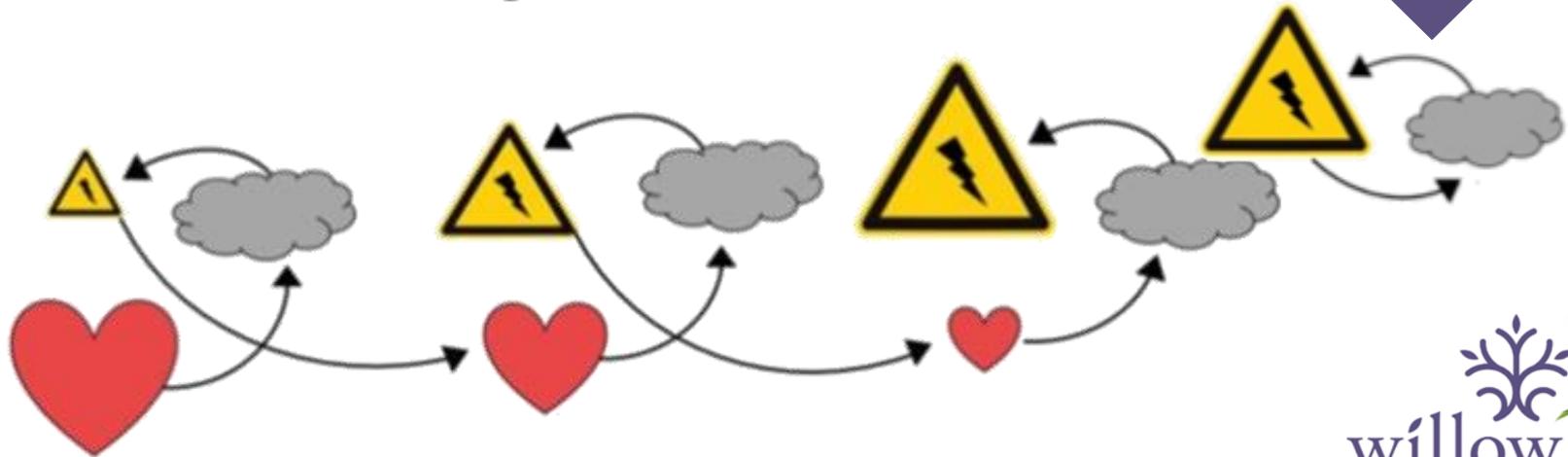
# Pattern of Abusive Relationships

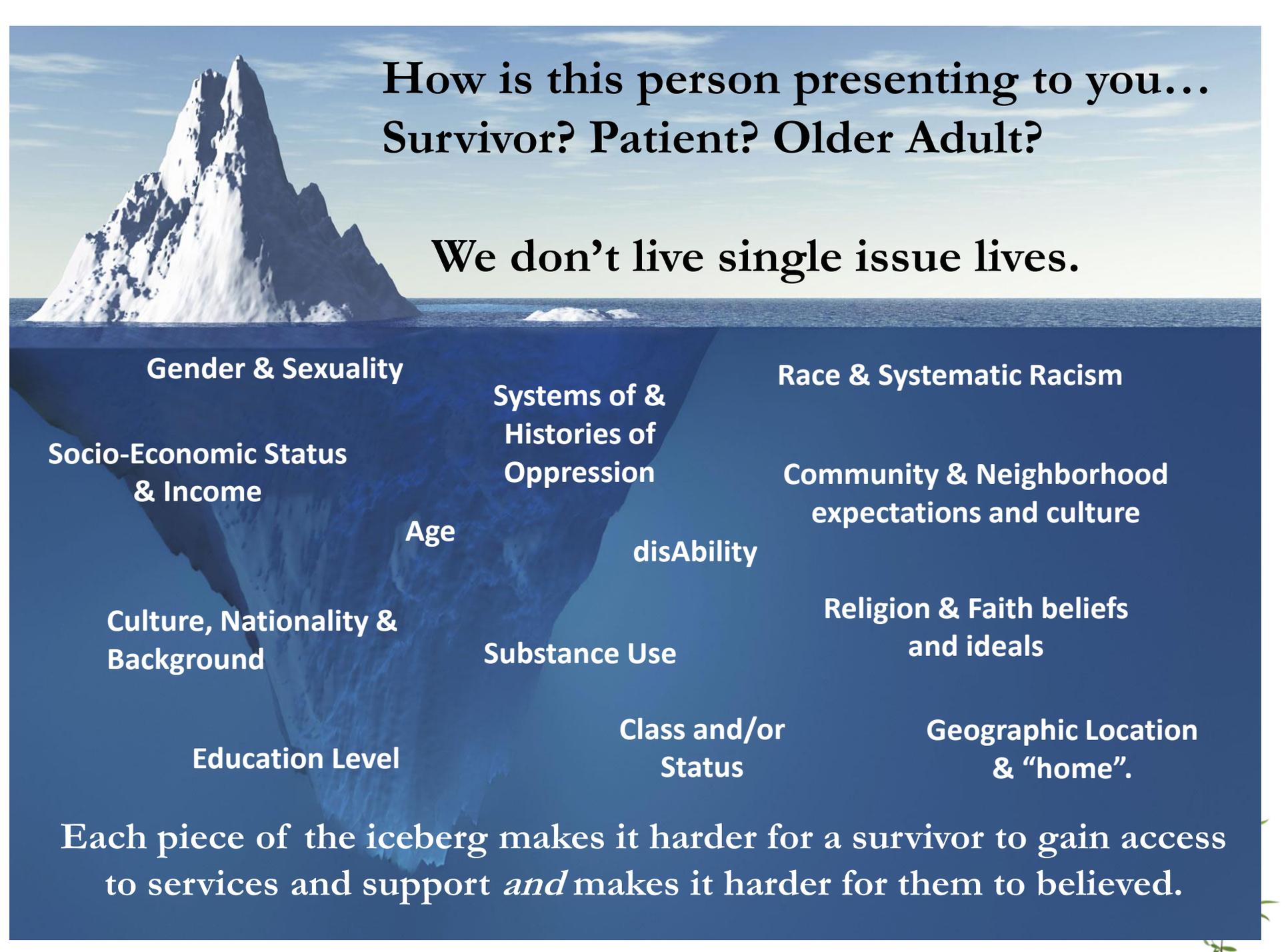


It's not always bad! There can be long periods of happiness. Abusers are often a main source of love and comfort.

Eventually the honeymoon is gone.

## The Cycle Over Time





How is this person presenting to you...  
Survivor? Patient? Older Adult?

We don't live single issue lives.

Gender & Sexuality

Systems of &  
Histories of  
Oppression

Race & Systematic Racism

Socio-Economic Status  
& Income

Community & Neighborhood  
expectations and culture

Age

disAbility

Culture, Nationality &  
Background

Religion & Faith beliefs  
and ideals

Substance Use

Education Level

Class and/or  
Status

Geographic Location  
& "home".

Each piece of the iceberg makes it harder for a survivor to gain access to services and support *and* makes it harder for them to be believed.

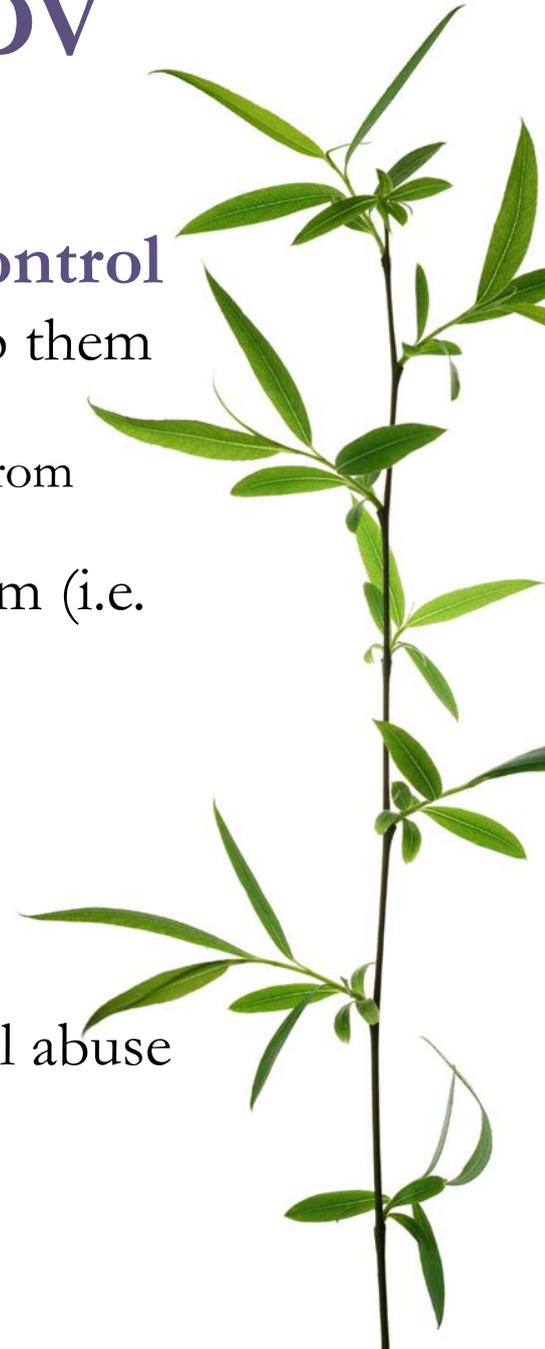
# The Intersection of DV & Substance Use

## Substance use is a tactic for power and control

- Help someone become addicted and then keep them addicted
  - Controlling access, inducing withdrawal, isolating from recovery
- Use the substance use as a threat for other harm (i.e. I'll call CPS/Law Enforcement, Overdose)
- “Justification/Excuse” for the abuse

## Substance use is coping mechanism

- Self-medicate the effects of abuse
- Escape the verbal, emotional and psychological abuse
- Prevent an abuser from causing physical harm



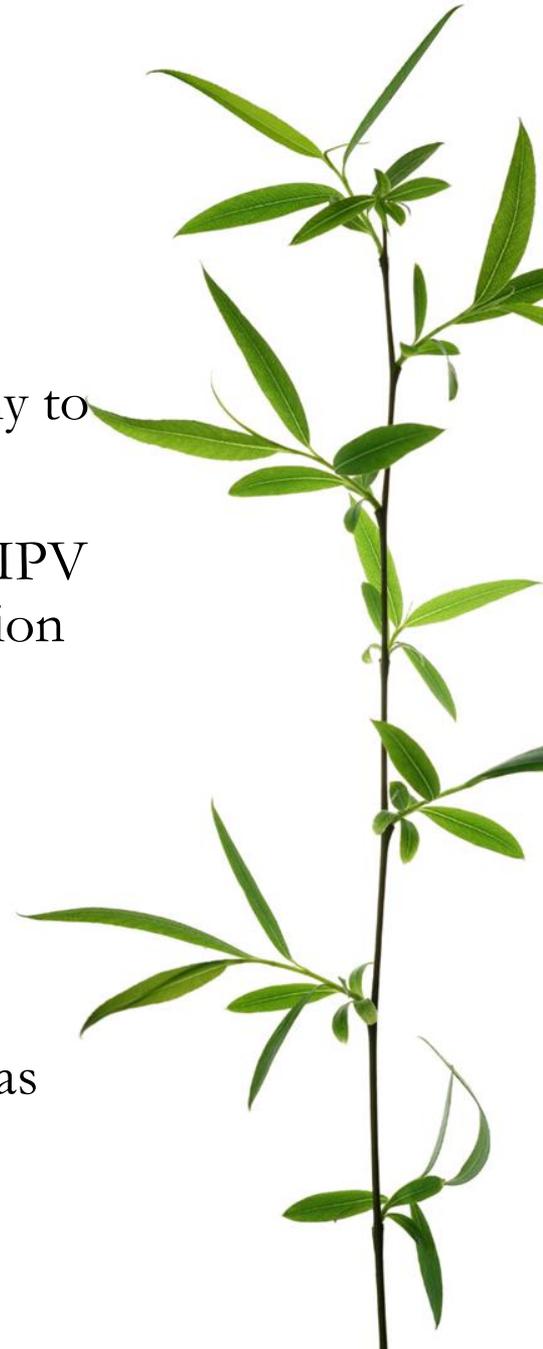
# The Intersection of DV & Substance Use

## For women, the intersection is significant:

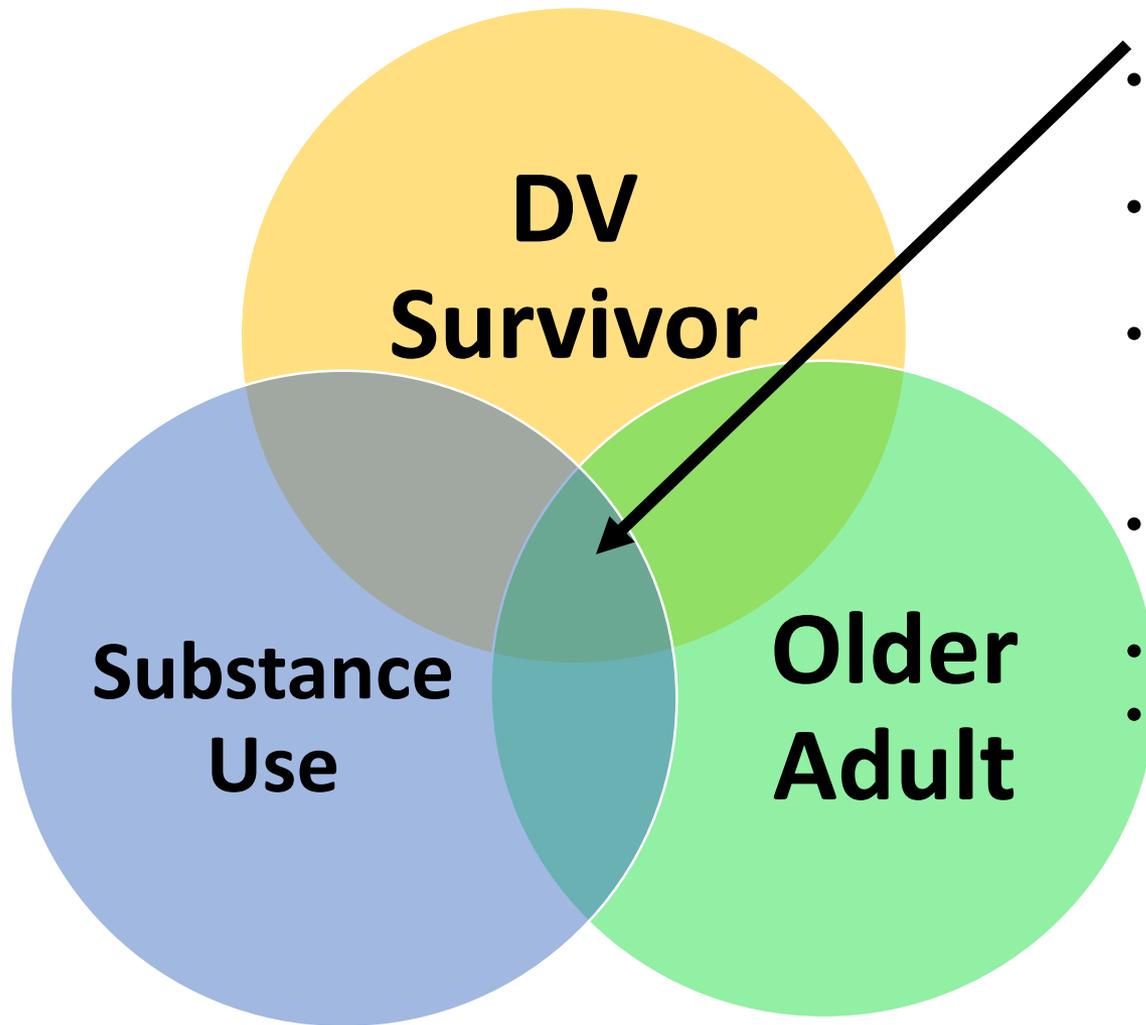
- Women who have been abused are 15x more likely to abuse alcohol and 9x more likely to abuse drugs (Shipway, 2004)
- 67-80% of women in treatment are survivors of IPV
- Stigma for women can be greater in this intersection when we consider motherhood

## Barriers in this intersection:

- Resources are often one dimensional
- Resources can be gender specific and non-family focused
- **Stigma** and guilt/shame are huge, even more so as these issues are layered



# A small scope of the iceberg



**If this is who is in front of us:**

- What services are actually available to this person?
- What are the barriers to those services?
- What have they already been through in life to get to this point?
- Who has already turned them away?
- What is the stigma?
- What does their support system look like?



What do I do?

# Build Rapport

Start expecting disclosures all the time.

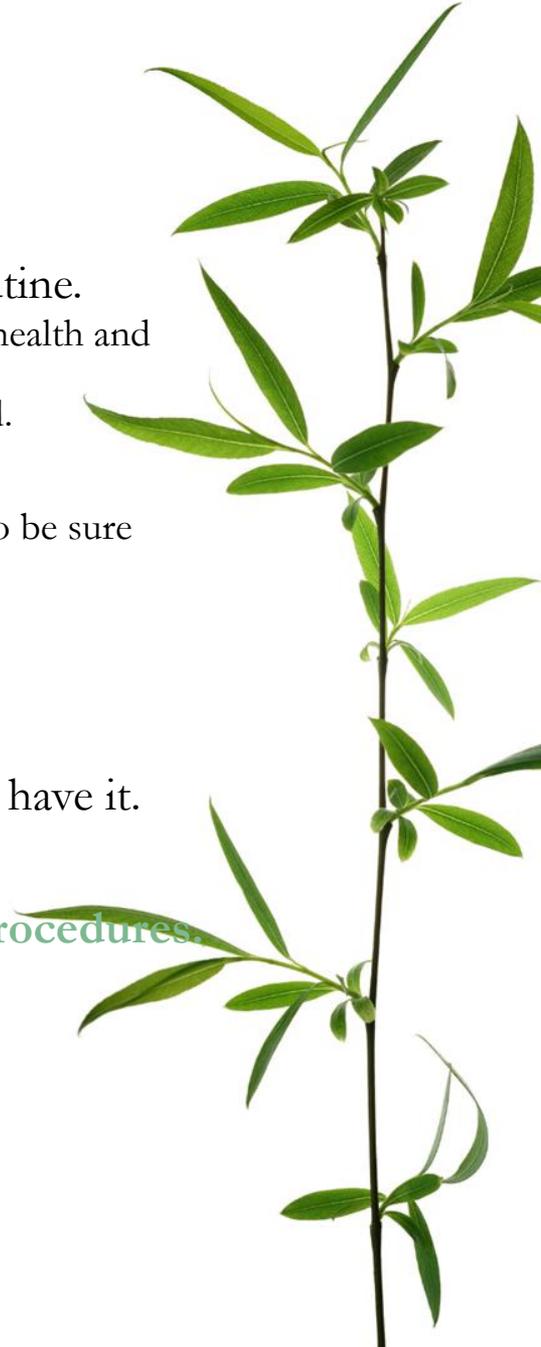
## Make asking about relationships part of your routine.

- Tell your clients it's part of the routine and why it's part of the routine.
  - Your relationships have a significant impact on your physical and mental health and your overall well-being.
  - I care about you and want to make sure you have all the support you need.
- Ask every single time.
  - Things change and they can change fast. So I'm going to ask every time to be sure you're ok and so you know I'm here for you.

## Preface your question.

- Tell clients why you're asking the question.
- Tell clients what you're going to do with the information once you have it.
- Working with you shouldn't feel like an inquisition.
- **Be clear and transparent about your policies and reporting procedures.**

Own the awkward moment.





# It's about **HOW** we do the work!

Believe and listen.

Believing seems very simple, but this is truly the most important thing you can do for a survivor.

- “I’m sorry this is happening to you.”
- “How can I support you?”

Try not to judge and do not give advice.

- Do not pressure, bully, or frighten someone into doing or not doing something.
- Do not make decisions on their behalf and/or without permission (i.e. call the police, schedule an appointment).
- Try to avoid telling someone what you think they should do or what you want them to do.

**Remember, everyone needs to get to make decisions about a dangerous relationship in their own time.**



# It's about **HOW** we do the work!

Support and provide resources, options and choices:

- Give choices whenever possible.
- Connect with resources
- Follow up! Maintaining communication and support consistently is important.

**Do not adopt the mindset of trying to “save” people.**

**REFER, REFER, REFER**

“I’m not an expert in this type of situation, but I know who is...”

# You are welcome at Willow.

Reach our advocates 24/7 to get the support you deserve.  
Free and confidential. No judgement.

**24/7 Hotline:**

(585) **222-SAFE** (7233)

**24/7 Texting:**

(585) **348-SAFE** (7233)

Secure online messaging through Facebook  
Secure webchat at [WillowCenterNY.org](http://WillowCenterNY.org)



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