

Culturally Specific Models

The Violence Interruption Process

The Kinship Journey

PROTOTYPES

Culturally Specific Models

The programs described in this section were presented by plenary session speakers at the Institute's forum, *Assembling the Pieces: Leadership in Addressing Domestic Violence in the African American Community*. These programs outline violence prevention and treatment strategies for use with African American perpetrators and victims of domestic violence.

Recommendations for Afrocentric Rehabilitation for Violent Men A Process of Multicultural Alliance Building

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Background

The Violence Interruption Process (VIP) is modeled after the work of the Oakland (CA) Men's Project, which seeks to change the attitudes and behaviors of violent men. The Oakland Men's Project began its work more than a decade ago by reaching out to difficult populations such as perpetrators of domestic violence and at-risk youth. With a successful model in hand, the Oakland Men's Project offered training and technical assistance to the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services in 1989. A modified version of this violence prevention model was later implemented at Illinois Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC). The VIP model was developed specifically for African American adult and juvenile offenders, as well as for the professionals who work with these populations.

Most people have perpetrated and/or been victimized by violence at one time or another. These personal experiences may involve physical, mental, or verbal abuse. The struggle to stop, reduce, or prevent violence in our homes, workplaces, and communities must start at the individual level. Each person must become aware of the role he or she plays in perpetuating the cycle of violence and make the necessary behavioral changes. VIP promotes this type of transformation for African American men. The model shifts the emphasis from negative sanctions and behavioral reinforcement to the cultural belief systems that support and sustain men's abusive behaviors.

Under the VIP model, change is a seven-step process. It takes place in the following stages or phases: (1) awareness, (2) investigation, (3) commitment, (4) skill building, (5) skill refinement, (6) internalization, and (7) change.

Liberation Theory and Practice: A Socialization Framework for Effecting Change

Liberation theory provides a framework or context within which VIP can be better understood. Liberation theory provides a guideline by which the problem of violence and abuse, racism, sexism, and other issues are defined in a manner that acknowledges the role of individuals, institutions, and society as a whole in creating and perpetuating these problems. Liberation theory represents a foundation of the model developed by the Oakland Men's Project and adapted by TASC.

The most basic assumption underlying VIP is that people are basically good, intelligent, curious about life, and instilled with a cooperative spirit. The phenomenon of violence, which is manifested in acts of antisocial or criminal behavior or other destructive acts, is not in any way inherent in individuals or communities. Instead, violence is a learned or conditioned behavior. VIP assumes there is no gene that predisposes some people as perpetrators or victims of violent, coercive, or oppressive behavior.

A second underlying assumption of Liberation theory is that violence has an institutional, as well as an interpersonal, dimension. The founders of the Oakland Men's Project describe this phenomenon as follows:

The primary root of violence in the United States is a systematic, institutionalized, and day-to-day imbalance of power. People belong to different groups; some groups are "haves," and others are "have-nots." The institutions of power are there already, in different treatments accorded to women, children, people of color, workers and the rest. They have less control over their lives and are the targets of physical and sexual violence; discrimination; harassment; and poverty at home, in the workplace, and in the wider community.

Where there are institutionalized imbalances of power, privilege and prestige, weighed in favor of one group and against another, regardless of the explanation given for such imbalances, we find there are also corresponding patterns of various forms of violence that adhere precisely to the contours of the power imbalances, with the less powerful groups as the targets.

A third assumption underlying Liberation theory is that individual acts of violence are the expression of personal choices that people make, and many of us can learn new, nonviolent modes of communication, needs-meeting behavior, and conflict resolution.

A fourth assumption of Liberation theory is that no contradictions of social or interpersonal power and violence are final and ultimate. Community is possible to the extent that people can come to grips with the interplay of all the forms of interpersonal, internal, and structural violence encountered.

VIP utilizes a broad range of activities, including didactic presentations, role-playing, group exercises, and a wide variety of discussion formats, all aimed at achieving the following general goals:

- To establish safety;
- To support a sense of empowerment in every person present;
- To encourage full, active involvement from all members; and
- To establish a climate of community that will facilitate support, dialogue, problemsolving, and belief systems change.

Each VIP training has its own life cycle. Experience has shown that every training intervention goes through four qualitative dimensions or touchstones that guide and determine the tone of a training: safety, healing, liberation, and justice-making.

The most important quality to have in a VIP training is a sense of safety. This simply means assuring all the participants that they can fully participate in the training and be completely respected for who they are. Once a sense of safety is established, the VIP training may take on a quality that spontaneously leads to deep levels of healing.

When people in training begin to feel really comfortable in saying what is truly on their minds and in their hearts, something inside of them rushes forward with a willingness to share, to be vulnerable, to be exposed to the healing support of the larger group. To get the most out of the process in natural community settings, it is important that participants process and become familiar with deep levels of emotional healing around issues of violence that have affected their lives. In the appropriate setting, this is surprisingly easy.

Once individuals feel comfortable and begin to disclose their insights and healing experiences, group members will make connections within and between various social groupings and reveal how they have each been taught to accept the roles of victim and persecutor in a way that often separates them. To begin to understand the nature of how this separation process takes place and to find the inner resources to dismantle the internal effects requires the resolve to address the external cause of these separations. This is liberation.

The culmination of each phase of the change model brings participants to a point of resolution and closure. Personal goals, enhanced by a sense of mission and initiative, motivate participants to build upon their personal growth and empowerment and to implement what they have learned in their communities.

Liberation Theory: Working Assumptions and Principles

There are a host of working assumptions and principles that help form the foundation of the experiential learning model developed by the Oakland Men's Project and adapted by Illinois TASC and its VIP. The following are some of these principles:

1. Liberation is both eliminating the causes of social oppression the undoing of the effects of it.
2. No one is inherently oppressive; no human being is born as an oppressor.
3. Biological, cultural, ethnic, sexual, religious, or age differences between human beings are never the cause of oppression.
4. Oppression is the systematic and pervasive mistreatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in various groups that are disadvantaged by the institutionalized imbalances in social power.
5. Differences in class, social and economic power, educational opportunity and achievement, and health and physical well being are the result of institutionalized inequalities.
6. The perpetuation of oppression is made possible by the conditioning of new generations of human beings into the roles of being oppressed and oppressive.

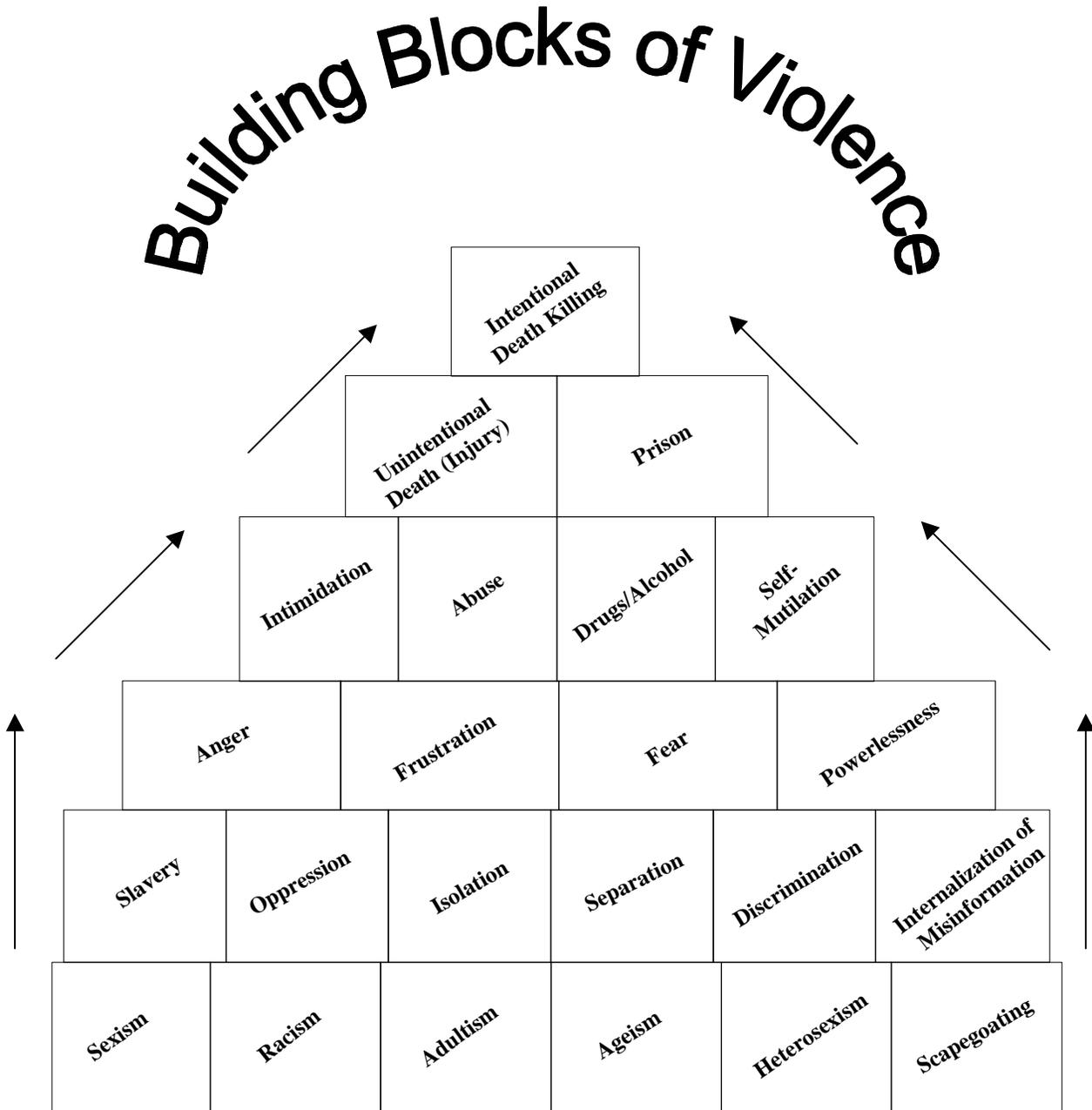
7. The oppression of young people conditions the target group and the nontarget group to participate in oppression.
8. In addition to force and the threat of force, oppression is perpetuated through the generation and recycling of systematic misinformation about the nature, history, and the abilities of the target group. (See Exhibit A)
9. Each group targeted by oppression inevitably internalizes the mistreatment and the misinformation about itself.
10. The positive reinforcement and social rewards that people in a nontarget group receive would not be sufficient to guarantee their acceptance of the social role as a perpetrator or oppressor.
11. People who are the targets of any particular form of oppression have resisted and attempted to resist their socialization into the oppressed role.
12. The failure to recognize the resistance of those being socialized in the oppressed role is a feature of the oppression.
13. Being socialized into the oppressed role is a painful experience for all people of the target group.
14. Part of the conditioning experience is the misinformation that socialization into these roles is harmless.
15. The perpetuation of any particular oppression requires that the pain of being socialized into the role be forgotten or discounted.
16. Liberation from violence is possible. Everyone must do his/her part.
17. Change is an intellectual and emotional process, not an event.

Summary

The real work of violence interruption, reduction, and prevention begins with each person acting individually to grow in the knowledge and practice of behaviors and attitudes that demonstrate personal commitment to positive change and interactions. While self-improvement represents a cornerstone, there is a need for support from persons trained to promote safety, healing, liberation, and justice.

Exhibit A

The root of all violence lies at the foundation of the blocks—the “isms.”
The higher the blocks go up, the more justifiable the violence becomes.
If we knock down the foundation, the rest of the blocks begin to fall.



Recommendations for Afrocentric Rehabilitation for Violent Men

Some of the maladaptive psychological predispositions that may motivate Black males to engage in criminality and violence are anchored in the misrepresentation of cultural beliefs. Examining these belief systems as they relate to attitudes, actions, and values, can result in changed ideas that have been fundamental to violent ways of thinking and acting. Thus, re-educating African American men will bring about the most comprehensive change in men who are violent.

The larger social, political, and systemic problem in American society, which gives rise to much of the violence that is prevalent in inner-city communities, must be addressed at the levels where they occur. This will ensure the full remediation of psychological, socioeconomic, sociopolitical, and other ills that currently characterize too many African American individuals, families, and communities.

Maladaptive Psychological Predisposition	Suggested Method for Remediation
<i>Alienation</i>	The reclamation of an African-centered identity and consciousness; learning how to love oneself and others; develop pro-social, cooperative, and communal skills and orientations.
<i>Crimogenic Society</i>	Develop a keen working knowledge of the ways and means by which American society attempts to create in African Americans psychological attitudes, behaviors, and relations that are self-defeating, self-destructive, and supportive of oppression. Develop the intellectual, personal, and social skills necessary to defeat the purposes of the crimogenic society.
<i>Internalization of White Racist Attitudes Towards the Self</i>	Construct an efficient perception of reality; develop the analytical ability to critically examine racist distortions of facts and racist myths, and discern malevolent racist intentions; develop a deep working knowledge of the psychology of racism and oppressive strategies.
<i>Imitation of the Racist Aggressor</i>	Learn the true nature and intent of role models and reference groups that will lead to self-defeat and self-destruction if unwittingly and indiscriminately imitated. Learn of African heroes and heroines who provide excellent and realistic role models; develop an appreciation of African high culture, art, and cultural models; inculcate a strong African-centered consciousness, identity, ethos, and ideology.
<i>Negative Self-concepts and Self-esteem</i>	Develop an adequate knowledge of the achievements and contributions of African civilizations, cultures, and heroes/heroines. Develop programs that emphasize Afrocentricity, cooperation, and supportive social relations; that utilize techniques for affirmation of self and the development of intellectual, social, personal, and occupational competencies; that help to raise self-esteem and self-acceptance; and that promote a desire for multicultural alliance building.
<i>Tendency Toward Interpersonal Violence</i>	Develop conflict-resolution skills; develop empathetic skills, the ability to take various perspectives on problems and issues; learn alternative means of dealing with problems; understand that behavior always reflects a choice. Increase awareness of alternative choices.

<i>Sense of Powerlessness</i>	Learn that the powerlessness of African Americans is an illusion. Develop the means of discerning the tremendous power within the grasp of African American males. Learn what power is and how it is achieved, developed, and controlled. Learn the strategies and means by which African Americans can become truly empowered and influential and by which they must wrest power from the hands of oppression and the misdirected. Train youth to develop personal powers, competencies, and skills and to realize the power inherent in ethnic unity and multicultural alliance building and gender alliance building.
<i>Displacement of Aggression</i>	Learn the sociopolitical means by which African American males are made to perceive each other and their women as primary enemies and conditioned to challenge those enemies. Explore how economic and political means are chosen and utilized to overcome genuine roadblocks. Develop recognition of the vulnerability of these roadblocks—how they can be countered, neutralized, and conquered. Learn how the displacement of anger and aggressive hostility flowing from race-based frustration and reactionary self-hatred and self-alienation onto fellow African Americans makes matters worse and is ultimately self-destructive.
<i>Egregious Self-defeating, Self-destructive Desires</i>	Learn a new set of African-centered values. Instill deep abiding and long-term cultural and personal goals. Learn how desires are “manufactured” and produced by the business-commercial industrial complex and are stimulated and directed by advertising, publicity, and public relations. Develop the ability to discern when one’s desires are being artificially created, manipulated, and exploited and the ability to parry these thrusts. Learn of the nature of advertising, mass hypnosis, subliminal suggestion, social conditioning, lies, deceptions, and propaganda. Learn how the incompetent coping with the effects of racism and frustration may motivate one to seek self-defeating, self-destructive, and addictive palliative instead of real solutions. Learn to be productive. Develop the personal, social, and business skills necessary to attain ownership and satisfy needs and desires. Develop self-control and self-discipline, and delay gratification. Learn the nature and consequences of drug and alcohol abuse.

<i>Racist Projections</i>	Develop extensive knowledge of truth and of African history and culture; know the psychology of projection, its purpose, and function; learn the criminal and immoral origins of oppression, as well as the evils of imperialism. Develop deep self-knowledge, positive self-concept, and a high level of self-control.
<i>Frustration</i>	Develop ability to clearly discern the personal and social sources of frustration. Develop problemsolving and task orientation (i.e., approaches to solving causes of frustration and frustration prevention). Learn how to positively and constructively use anger and aggressive feelings stemming from frustration. Develop creativity, mental and behavioral flexibility, and resourcefulness. Develop social intelligence skills and competence. Enhance coping strategies for dealing with stress.
<i>Self as Central and Separate; Self as Superior; Self as Deserving</i>	High regard of wife/partner; pro-social accountability of consequences of own behavior; partner/wife is regarded as equal; abuse unjustified for any reason; caring as a two-way interaction; not responsible for needs being met.

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Assume, that in spite of the ways we have been divided, it is possible to reach through those divisions, to listen to each other well and to change habitual ways of acting which have kept us separated.

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse

**The Kinship Journey:
A Journey of Black Male Culture and Community Empowerment
A Facilitation/Training Guide for Changing Violence in the Lives of Black Men**

From The Empowerment Project, Inc.

Presenter:

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Abstract

It is important to examine intervention measures for domestic violence from a personal, socio-cultural, and institutional framework. Much of the emphasis is placed on challenging belief systems that support one's personal choice to be violent. The work of The Empowerment Project, Inc. focuses on violence against women and the historic and contemporary features that should be addressed when working with abusive and controlling Black men. The *Kinship Journey* is a guide of relevant discussion topics that explores Black male definitions of oppression, abuse, violence, control, masculinity, women, and community. The *Kinship Journey* guide includes a seven-theme unity circle related to those aspects that help to facilitate a healthy challenge toward change for Black men who batter, while using a power and control framework to analyze the culture of violence and oppression.

Contextualizing the Violence

There is no guarantee that counseling/rehabilitation/discussion groups for men who batter will change them or the safety conditions of the women they abuse. At best, groups can be social and physical reminders of the level of consciousness in the community that is watchful of the way that some men use violence in intimate relationships with women.

Challenging Black men about issues confronting their masculinity and "rights" under patriarchy is difficult. Working with Black men who are violent, abusive, and who batter is even more challenging. In *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*, bell hooks succinctly defines patriarchy as the institutionalized structure of male dominance, and she notes that it encourages domination and abuse. A great challenge, indeed, is confronting the layers of patriarchal privilege that support and reinforce an abusive man's attitude and behaviors toward women. A traditional response regarding a Black man's violence has its roots in oppression, race, and class. Many associate their use of violence with their own historical and current status in society. Oftentimes, erroneously so, society at large and Black communities in particular condone and collude with Black male violence toward women. They do this by continuing to reinforce the notion that Black men have very little power outside of the home or that certain culture-specific stressors make them violent, i.e. racism, joblessness, alcohol/drug use, etc.

While all of these issues have a place in the discussion about one's personal behavior, they don't provide an analysis that would account for the many men who abuse their partners and yet don't experience these overwhelming conditions. Moreover, there are many Black men who experience these conditions and don't abuse their partners. There is a crucial need for this kind of dialogue to occur within Black communities on all levels.

There are varying degrees of violence and a variety of ways one can abuse another. Black men, like other men who are violent towards women, usually do so as an attempt to maintain their power as ascribed by culture, religion, traditions, manhood, and institutions. It is important, therefore, to respond with interventions that critically examine and confront these basic constructs.

Violence against an intimate partner opposes African cultural values. The *Kinship Journey* concept is designed to challenge and change attitudes and beliefs that contribute to men's violence in Black families. The *Kinship Journey* is partly based on the Duluth experience and curriculum *Power and Control—Tactics of Men Who Batter*. Information about African (American) culture, which is critical for practitioners working to end violence in the Black community, is also included. The *Kinship Journey* examines cultural values that connect the individual to spirituality, extended family, and community. This training may be of interest to counselors, battered women's advocates, law enforcement personnel, judges, probation officers, and domestic violence program staff. The trainers use videos, role-play, interaction, and discussion as part of a process to begin to look at the various complexities involved in domestic violence and to educate about stopping violence in the lives of Black families and communities. The training guide addresses institutional, socio-cultural, and personal oppression in Black lives.

What is the *Kinship Journey*?

The *Kinship Journey* guide is a manual intended for use in groups for abusive Black men. It should be used in conjunction with visual materials, role-play, and group dialogue, as well as other creative teaching techniques. The *Kinship Journey* symbolizes the circle of life and its many phases and processes. Themes of the *Kinship Journey* emerged after informal and formal conversations, as well as through interviews with hundreds of Black men from diverse backgrounds. The seven themes are purposely interconnected to draw from life experiences of the men in the group. The connections of the past, present, and future relate to the many phases of each man's life individually and collectively.

The *Kinship Journey* is:

- A guide to working with men of African descent who use violence in intimate relationships with women;
- A bond of seven integrated themes developed to expand the thought of Black men as it relates to themselves, other men, children, women, and community;
- An education tool designed to use within a group format along with other teaching tools;
- A guide that promotes reclaiming, naming, and discovery, while placing an emphasis on accepting responsibility for violence;
- A tool for change and healing; and
- An evolving tool created to promote critical thought and analysis.

The *Kinship Journey* provides:

- A narrative of the evolution of the trainers' work with Black men in groups for men who batter;
- An understanding about using the guide as a teaching tool;
- A discussion on how to facilitate a group using the guide; and
- A clinical, socio-cultural, and reality-based discussion about the individual and collective beliefs of violence and Black men.

Summary

Power and control is a framework out of which battering exists. The *Kinship Journey* guide uses personal, socio-cultural, and institutional factors to convey an analysis of that framework. The *Kinship Journey* is a concept that is applicable to Black men who batter. Culture-specific realities, truths, ideas, issues, themes, and discussions are integrated elements of the guide, giving men of African descent a communication forum that also addresses their violence. It is also a tool that can be used in providing training for those working in the field of domestic violence, and it is an evolving concept that will change as the awareness about partnership violence expands. This guide is intended to be a catalyst for discussion and change. The *Kinship Journey* was created as a gauge by which to measure awareness of domestic violence issues and accountability for such violence.

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A Model Approach to Working with Low-Income, Substance-Using African American Women

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Goals and Objectives:

The overall goals of PROTOTYPES are to:

- 1) enhance outreach efforts to African American women who are low-income substance users;
- 2) develop and maintain effective HIV and related diseases prevention programs and demonstrate the replicability and cost effectiveness of community-based strategies in collaboration with local chemical dependency programs, health departments, and other community agencies; and
- 3) effect and evaluate the initiation and maintenance of behavior change in women whose behavior places them at risk of HIV infection and related diseases and motivate substance abusers to seek treatment for substance abuse, HIV, TB, STDs, and other infectious diseases.

The principal objective is to plan, develop, and maintain two comprehensive drop-in centers—one in the downtown area and one in Venice. The drop-in centers will be designed around the woman—her needs, her barriers, her family, and her relationships. Women will be recruited by culturally sensitive and competent outreach workers and will receive support counseling from two prevention case managers, two community health outreach workers, and a provider with a masters degree in Social Work.

Approaches and Methods

The overall model for this project is illustrated in Figure 1. The PROTOTYPES community intervention model for working with low-income, substance-using African American women includes appropriate outreach efforts to women with high levels of need, an intake interview, individual counseling sessions for treatment readiness, group intervention sessions, and a follow-up interview. Individual counseling and group intervention sessions may lead to appropriate referrals for women to a variety of linked ancillary services provided both by PROTOTYPES and by cooperating agencies throughout and contiguous to the catchment areas.

The special needs of women are determined by such issues as their histories of sexual and physical abuse, current battering relationships, sexual partners who are intravenous drug users, high levels of depression, low self-esteem, need to care for children, and sense of helplessness. Each of these needs creates a complex environment in which change is to occur. PROTOTYPES

proposes to incorporate Prochaska and DiClemente's Stages-of-Change Model (Transtheoretical Model) as applied to the field of addictive behaviors (1986, 1992) into its Outreach Model for Women. The model describes the process of change from the initial stage of precontemplation through contemplation and action to maintenance. A key feature of the model is that it introduces the possibility of using different intervention strategies with clients at different stages of change. In the PROTOTYPES model, outreach is seen as essential to raising an individual's motivation level to change and to assisting in the movement through treatment stages.

As can be seen in Figure 1, there is a complex environment in which change may occur. In determining the woman's readiness to change behavior, it is important to consider not only her current levels of substance abuse, the prevalence of domestic violence, and her willingness to obtain treatment for these issues, but also her overall patterns of high-risk sexual behaviors, emotional problems, and the violence in her immediate environments (e.g. neighborhood). Willingness to change sexual behaviors, obtain treatment for emotional problems, and deal with violence also impact willingness to lower her risk for HIV.

Prochaska and DiClemente's Stages-of-Change Model helps to specify the level of commitment that the woman has to changing her behavior. Additionally, the model implies different strategies for intervening to obtain and reinforce behavioral change. In the first stage of the PROTOTYPES model, the stages of change for the areas of substance abuse, high-risk sexual behaviors, violence, and emotional problems are assessed. Appropriate interventions are then offered according to the woman's level of commitment to behavior change. After the interventions are provided, the woman's stages of change are reassessed, and additional appropriate interventions may be offered.

In the precontemplation stage, the woman is not even considering change. Told she has a problem, the woman may be more surprised than defensive. Contemplation, by contrast, describes a situation in which the woman is at least somewhat ambivalent or questioning. When the woman reaches a point where she says, "Something has got to change. I can't go on like this," then she has determined she needs to do something about the problem, and she can move to an action stage. However, the complexity of the model increases when working with a woman with more than one behavior/problem that needs to change. The average low-income, substance-abusing African American woman has at least four areas of behavior to change: 1) drug use 2) sex partner(s) and their sexual behaviors, 3) possible violence, and 4) depression and other emotional problems. The woman may be at different stages of change for each of these areas. The model PROTOTYPES proposes addresses each of these areas of concern through the methods to be utilized.

Figure 1. PROTOTYPES Outreach Model for Women

