

# Understanding Her Beliefs

## At first, she stays because ...

- She loves him
- She believes he'll grow up or change
- She can't admit how serious the problem is
- She believes she can control the beatings by doing as he says
- She believes she can convince him that she loves him (and end his jealousy)
- She believes it is her duty to make the relationship work
- She believes him when he says their problems are her fault
- She believes she can reason with him
- She believes him when he says he's sorry and he won't do it again
- She's embarrassed for him and herself, so she seldom seeks help
- She's afraid of what will happen if the police get involved

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## Later, she stays because ...

- She loves him, but less
- She hopes he will change or get help
- She's under pressure from family and friends to stay
- She believes he loves her and needs her
- She's afraid to be alone
- She believes she can't support herself and the children
- She believes his promise that he will change and that they'll start living the life she dreams of, that he will get counselling, that he will stop abusing drugs or alcohol, etc.
- She is confused
- She is increasingly afraid of her partner's violence; she knows he is capable of carrying out his threats

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## Finally, she stays because ...

- Fear: he has become tremendously powerful in her eyes
- He threatens to kill her, the children, her family or himself
- She has developed low self-esteem
- She believes no one can love her
- She believes she can't live alone
- She is very confused and feels guilty: "He cares, he beats me, I must be inadequate, I must deserve this, I don't know why"
- She becomes depressed and immobile; decisions are difficult, sometimes impossible for her to make
- She's tries unsuccessfully to stop the violence and now believes that handling the situation is impossible
- She believes she has no options
- She has developed serious emotional and physical problems
- She has become suicidal or homicidal

