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## Questions for Expert on Victims of Domestic Violence

### I. Laying the Foundation for Expert's Testimony

#### A. Occupation

1. What is your occupation?
  - a. How long have you been employed in that capacity?
  - b. Describe the responsibilities of your position.
  - c. How long has the program been in existence?
  - d. What services does your program offer?
  - e. Do you supervise?
  - f. Do you train staff?
  - g. What is the total number of staff?
2. BIP [Batterer Intervention Program] employment
  - a. What training did you receive to be qualified to work for a BIP?
  - b. Was the BIP program for which you worked certified according to state guidelines?
  - c. How many clients do you serve yearly who identify themselves as having experienced domestic violence?
  - d. Describe your services.
  - e. Does your program offer any other services?
3. Do you have direct contact with victims of domestic violence?
  - a. Do you have any contact with victims?
  - b. How many do you directly come in contact with yearly?
  - c. How long have had you had direct contact?
  - d. What is the nature of your contact with victims?

#### B. Previous occupation (*if relevant*)

1. What was your previous occupation?
  - a. What were your responsibilities?
  - b. How long did you perform those duties?
  - c. Did you have direct contact with victims of domestic violence?
  - d. What was the nature of those contacts?
2. Have you had any other relevant job experience with domestic violence victims?

#### C. Education

1. What is the highest degree you have obtained?
2. What was your area of concentration?
3. Did you conduct any fieldwork related to domestic violence?
4. Have you conducted any research in this area?
5. Were the results of your study developed into a paper? Were they published?
6. Have you published on the topic of family violence? When? Where?

D. Professional affiliations

1. Do you belong to any professional organizations or groups affiliated with efforts to reduce the incidence of domestic violence?
2. What are the nature and purposes of those organizations?
3. Do you belong to any county, state, or national organizations that specifically address domestic violence issues?
4. What are the purposes of those organizations?
5. Are you involved with any committee work of those organizations? What are they?

E. Training

1. Have you conducted any training yourself?
2. For whom did you conduct these training sessions and programs?
3. What areas were covered in that training?
4. How many attended these training sessions?
5. How often do you conduct training sessions?

F. Conferences

1. Have you attended state or national domestic violence conferences?
2. Who sponsored the conference?
3. What was the purpose of the conference?
4. When and where was the conference?
5. Did you attend any workshops relevant to domestic violence issues?
6. Have you conducted any workshops or presentations at these conferences?

G. Previous expert testimony

1. Have you testified in court previously as an expert in the areas of domestic abuse and the common experiences of victims of domestic violence?
2. How many times?
3. For the defense or the prosecution?

*[Be prepared to address any objection to the subject matter of the expert testimony. See Predicate Manual "Rule 702 – Soft Science".]*

**II. Introductory Questions**

A. Myths of domestic violence held by the public

1. In your presentations at conferences, training programs, or speeches to various groups, have you found the public to be very well informed about domestic violence?
2. What are some of the most common misconceptions you have encountered?
3. What are some common myths about victims of domestic violence? Why do these myths exist?
4. What are some common myths about perpetrators of domestic violence? Why do these myths exist?
5. What does a perpetrator look like? How can a person tell that another person is a batterer?
6. Are there any other misconceptions about domestic violence that come to mind?
7. Based on your experience, how have most people developed these misconceptions?
8. In your experience, do you find that most people believe a victim of domestic violence when s/he discloses the violence s/he has suffered? Why is that?
9. From your experience, do most victims of domestic violence talk about their experience freely?
10. Are you familiar with common reactions to being told of a crime victim's experiences?
11. Are you familiar with the terms "distancing," "differentiating," and the "Just World Theory?"
12. Based on your experience and training, do these terms apply to the general public's reaction to domestic violence?

B. Statistics

1. Can you give us an idea of the number of incidents of relationship violence [*you can choose the term*] in the United States yearly?
2. Do you have statistics for [*your local area*]?
3. Can you describe the effect of culture, economic class, and race on the incidence of domestic violence?
4. Is domestic violence more prevalent in one culture, race, class or religion than another?
5. Do you have any opinions about the causes of domestic violence? Please explain your opinions.
6. Are domestic violence victims usually men or women?

C. Effects of domestic violence

1. Have you observed a pattern to domestic violence? Would you describe that pattern?
2. Are you familiar with the phrases "the Cycle of Violence" or "Continuum of Power and Control"? [*Use a diagram of the Cycle of Violence*]
  - a. Would you explain the Cycle of Violence?
  - b. Who identified the Cycle of Violence?
  - c. Please describe the Cycle of Violence.
  - d. Have you personally observed the Cycle of Violence and its effects on victims of abuse?

- e. How do victims commonly react at each step of the cycle?
  - f. Does the violence always repeat? Does it always escalate?
3. Describe what methods perpetrators use to control their partner's behavior? Are some of these methods non-violent?
  4. What is the purpose of using violence as a method of power and control?
  5. Are you familiar with the "Power and Control Wheel"? (*Use a diagram of the Power and Control Wheel*)
    - a. Who identified the Power and Control Wheel?
    - b. How was the power and control wheel developed?
    - c. Please diagram the Power and Control Wheel.
    - d. Have you personally observed the effects described by this theory?
    - e. What is the effect on the victim?
    - f. Based on your own work with victims of domestic violence, have you been able to confirm or dispute the accuracy of the behavioral patterns and dynamics identified and described in those studies?

### III. Relevant Information on Specific Topics

#### A. Specific types of victims

1. In your experience, do the Cycle of Violence and other theories apply only to persons who are married?
2. Do they apply to gay relationships? (*if relevant*)
3. Do they apply to people who are dating, formerly married, or living together?
4. In your experience, do the Cycle of Violence and other theories apply to persons of all religions, racial backgrounds, and cultures?

#### B. One reported incident of violence

1. From your experience, have you encountered women who have experienced many instances of physical abuse, but reported only one?
2. Based on your training and experience, what conclusions can you draw from the fact that previous incidents were not reported?
3. Do the behavior patterns of victims of domestic violence depend on whether one or all of those incidents were reported to the police?
4. From your experience, have you encountered women who have experienced only one incident of physical abuse?
5. From your experience, is it possible for one violent incident to have an emotional impact on the victim?
6. Please describe the possible effects only one violent incident can have in a relationship.
7. Must the violence be ongoing to have an emotional impact on the victim?
8. Please relate your answer to the Power and Control Wheel.
9. Would the victim also be likely to minimize the level of the violence, be reluctant to testify, or deny the incident? Please explain.

#### C. Demeanor of victim

1. What are some common reactions of victims of domestic violence?
2. Please describe the range of emotional responses of victims of domestic violence over time.
3. Do all victims react and behave in the same ways?
4. Behavior of domestic violence victims has been described as "counter-intuitive." Please explain.

#### D. Minimizing or self-blaming

1. In your experience, is it common for victims to minimize the violence they have experienced?
2. Describe some ways victims minimize the violence they have experienced.
3. In your experience, is it common for victims to blame themselves for the violence they have experienced?
4. Describe ways in which victims blame themselves.

#### E. Refusal or reluctance to testify

1. Is it common for a victim of domestic violence to deny that violence occurred? *Why?*
2. Is it common for a victim of domestic violence to be reluctant to testify that violence occurred? *Why?*
3. How does this relate to the Cycle of Violence or the Continuum of Power and Control?
4. Is it common for victims to protect the perpetrator? *Why?*

#### F. Continued relationship with perpetrator

1. Is it common for victims of domestic violence to continue to have a relationship with the perpetrator?
2. What are some reasons victims remain with perpetrators?
3. How do these relate to the Cycle of Violence or Continuum of Power and Control?

### IV. Knowledge of Present Case

- A. Have you interviewed the defendant in this case?
- B. Have you interviewed the victim in this case?
- C. Have you read the police report in this case?

## V. Hypothetical Questions

Please assume the following facts...*[describe the facts in evidence from the testimony of the police officer, the victim, and witnesses.]*

- In your opinion, are these facts consistent with someone who has experienced domestic violence?
- Now, assume the circumstances that I have just described are related to the Cycle of Violence or Continuum of Power and Control.
- Would such behavior be consistent with the documented behavior of victims caught in that identified Cycle of Violence or Continuum of Power and Control?
- Where would you place the hypothetically described victim in the Cycle of Violence or Continuum of Power and Control?