

## Strategy #5

### Consider Others

Preparing yourself for the next stage means **considering the impact of violence and abuse on others**. Sometimes we use defenses like blaming others or pretending it's no big deal. We do this to avoid thinking about how our behavior affects our partner or children, and to avoid feeling guilt and regret.

You've heard a hundred times that emotional scars can be as painful and lasting as physical ones. Just think about your own experiences. Years later you can still feel the sting of an insult or the ache that comes with loss, betrayal and disappointment in relationships. Researchers have found that there are many emotional consequences of abuse. Here are some of them:

Consequences for women who experience abuse	Consequences for children who witness abuse
fear and anxiety	fear and anxiety
depression	depression
suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts	withdrawing from friends and family
anger	anger
low self-esteem	low self-esteem
shame	aggression
sexual problems	immaturity
addictions	problems with the law
headaches	poor performance in school
nightmares	sleeplessness

Try to think of other consequences of abuse that women and children might experience, and write them here:

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If you have any questions, or would like to talk to someone about your partner or children, see your counselor, or talk about it in your domestic violence group.