



THE DAY AFTER PRISON

REENTRY SERVICES

Courses & Learning

"DV [Domestic Violence] Crimes make up 49.7% of crimes that occurred against a person in Washington State in 2020."

—NCADV

The purpose of this 5-minute course is to help you spot if you resonate with any of the relationship dynamics illustrated in this scenario. If any part of this scenario hits home with you, you are encouraged to seek help before a stressful situation becomes more complicated or out of control.

Content Warning: The following course describes a detailed, fictional scenario involving domestic violence.

Disclaimer: This course is written from my experience speaking to individuals charged with DV related offenses and their victims. This course is not intended to professionally assess the need for domestic violence treatment. -Edrid Tirado

Life's hardships and adversities can strain even the strongest relationships, revealing underlying tensions. Without effective communication and support, any couple can find themselves spiraling into conflict and even crisis.

BREAKING POINT



Carlos: "You never listen to me, Tonya! It feels like I'm talking to a wall."

Tonya: "I do listen, Carlos. We both need to work on truly hearing each other."

Carlos: "I'm tired of your excuses, Tonya! Apologies won't pay the rent."

Tonya: "I know, Carlos. Blaming each other won't solve anything. We need a solution. And I'm hurt; you hurt my arm."

Carlos: "I didn't mean to hurt you. I feel like we're trapped, and nothing's changing."

Tonya: "Maybe we could see a counselor? Talk to someone who can help us?"

Carlos: "We don't need anyone meddling. You need to change. We need more work."

Tonya: "I can't do this alone, Carlos. I feel so alone and isolated. We need help, or..."

Carlos: "Or what, Tonya?"

Tonya: "Or... I don't know if I can stay."



Overwhelmed by his emotions and financial stress, Carlos broke the coffee table, scattering unpaid bills all over the living room.

Carlos: "See?! You're driving me to this!"

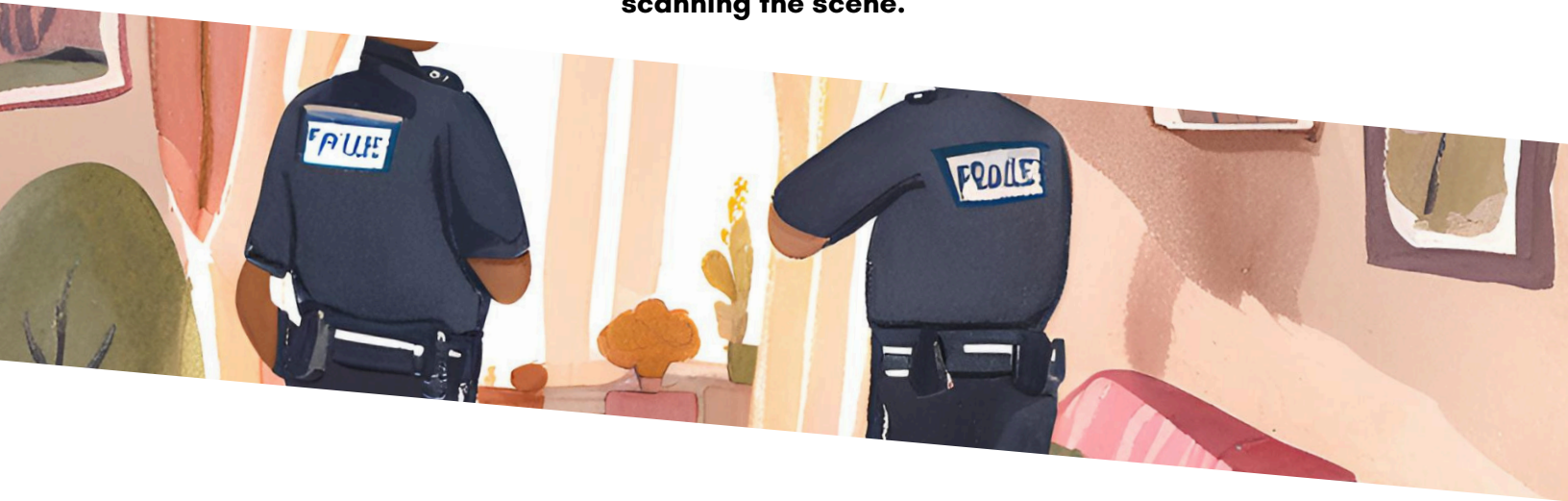
Tonya: "Please, Carlos. Just stop. Let's talk. We can figure something out."



A loud knock shattered the tense silence in the room. Both Carlos and Tonya froze at the sound. From outside, they heard, "Police! Open the door!"

Tonya: "I didn't call them, I swear."

Carlos hesitated before opening the door. Two officers stepped into the apartment, scanning the scene.



Officer Jacobsen: "We got a noise complaint. Everything okay here?"

Tonya nodded "yes" quickly, but her tearful eyes and the bruise told a different story. The broken table and scattered bills spoke volumes about their struggles.

Noticing her distress, officer Stark said gently, "Ma'am, can I speak with you privately?"

Tonya: "Yes, please."

Carlos realized the situation's gravity and lowered his head in surrender as an officer approached him.

Officer Jacobsen: "Sir, I'm going to need you to step outside with me."

Carlos complied, his anger shifting to remorse.

With Carlos escorted outside, the second officer spoke quietly with Tonya. Tonya finally allowed herself to cry, revealing the cracks in their relationship.

Outside, Carlos was placed in the back of a police car. He glanced up at the window where Tonya stood watching, both of them silently reflecting on the broken pieces of their lives.



In "Breaking Point", the cycle of violence is depicted through a tense interaction between Tonya and Carlos, whose relationship is strained by financial pressures and emotional turmoil.

The cycle begins with mounting tension as Carlos' frustration over financial issues surfaces, leading to verbal and physical aggression towards Tonya. Despite her attempts to calm the situation and suggest seeking counseling, Carlos' anger escalates, culminating in a physically intimidating action when he flips a coffee table in anger, and having caused injury to Tonya's arm.

Tonya, visibly shaken and already showing signs of physical harm, suggests the need for external help, highlighting her growing fear and desperation. The cycle is interrupted by the arrival of the police, responding to a noise complaint.

Carlos, confronted with the reality of the situation through the officers presence and his own actions, shows signs of remorse and resignation. The scenario ends with both parties facing the consequences of their situation, setting the stage for potential change. Tonya's encounter with the police offers her a chance to seek support and safety, suggesting a possible break from the cycle and a move towards a more positive resolution.