

Domestic Violence Survivor Assessment
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Domestic Violence Survivor Assessment (DVSA) was developed beginning in 1995 in collaboration with three community based Domestic Violence service agencies. Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell was a consultant. We now hold the copyright and must give permission for its use.

The researchers and clinicians shared the observation that "just leaving" was not the best outcome measure for resolution of experiencing domestic violence. Change is a process, not an event and often many occur before a woman obtains a violence-free life.

We created a grid of 12 issues across a continuum of five states based on Landenberger's Theory of Recovery and the Transtheoretical Theory of Change. The five states are: Committed to continuing, committed but questioning, considers change: abuse and options, breaks away or partner curtails abusiveness, establishes a new life—apart or together. The relationship issues include: Triggers of abuse, managing the abuse, seeking legal sanctions for abuse, attachment to the relationship, her view of options to this relationship, and managing personal loyalty to norms and beliefs. The personal issues include: accessing help, self identity, self efficacy to be on her own, feelings, mental health, and control of money.

There is a clinician version that is a one page grid and second page summarizing factors influencing the rate of change. There is a 12 question women's version for self report.

The tool was piloted with 16 counselors and 6 survivors and revised to both simplify and clarify it. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (1999-2001) funded a test of the validity and reliability of the tool. Five hospitals and community based agencies participated that used Nurse and Social Worker Counselors. Results supported its validity and are summarized in the first article below.

Development and application of the DVSA continues. Montgomery County Maryland DV Counseling program has used the DVSA as an outcome measure since 2001. Statistical support for validity and reliability of clinician version was reported in article 2 below. Women's and clinician's version was tested, revised, and tested again in Mecklenburg County NC, DV Counseling program, results are in article 3. Clinician version was adopted for program evaluation in 2004.

Reference:

Dienemann, J, Campbell, J, Curry, M, Landenburger, K (2002) Domestic Violence Survivor Assessment: A tool for counseling women in violent intimate partner relationships. *Patient Education and Counseling Journal* 46(3)221-228.

Dienemann, J, Glass, N, Hanson, G. & Lunsford, K. (2007) Domestic Violence Survivor Assessment (DVSA): A tool for individual counseling with women experiencing intimate partner violence. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 28(8)913-925.

Dienemann, J., Neese, J & Lowry, S., (2009) Psychometrics of the Domestic Violence Survivor Assessment. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* 23(2)111-118.