

## Why Don't They Just Leave?

*As someone outside of an abusive relationship, it can be hard to understand an abused person's perspective. In reality, for any number of reasons may stand in the way of someone getting out of an abusive relationship.*

### SAFETY FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN

- They fear the abuser will follow through with the threats being made -- that the abuser will harm or kill them or loved if they try to leave.
- They have seen the media reports about others who have left and were then killed by their abuser.
- They have left before, been found and have "paid for it".

### LACK OF OUTSIDE SUPPORT

- They have been isolated from everyone they know or love and now have no one to trust or rely on for help.
- They are embarrassed and don't want anyone to find out.

### LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- They are financially dependent and cannot support themselves or their children without the abuser's income.
- They are dependent on the abuser for transportation, health care and/or housing and risk homelessness if they leave.
- They have never worked before because the abuser would not let them, so their job skills and ability to get hired are limited.

### DISTRUST OF THE SYSTEM

- They fear the legal system and law enforcement and believe they will not help or be able to protect them.
- They are fearful of losing custody of the children to the abuser.

### PERSONAL REASONS

- Religious beliefs.
- There was a mix of good and bad times and they really love this person and hope they will change like they always says they will.

The decision to leave the abusive relationship must be made by the individual. That doesn't mean that you can't help. **Here's how:**

- Listen, believe, and don't judge.
- Tell them the abuse is not their fault.
- Let them know where they can access services and/or resources.
- Maintain regular contact and let them know you are available if they need help.

*For help or more information, contact Alexandra House at 763-780-2330 or visit our website at [www.alexandrahouse.org](http://www.alexandrahouse.org).*