

### **Challenges to Escaping Violence**

Regardless of whether one resides in rural or urban Newfoundland and Labrador, it is important to understand that challenges exist for any individual thinking of leaving a violent relationship.

Instead of asking victims of violence, "Why do you stay?" we should always ask the perpetrators, "Why don't you stop committing violence?"

Challenges to leaving a violent relationship may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Victim-blaming attitudes ("What did *you* do to make them angry?")
- Belief that the violence is their fault
- Economic necessity
- Lack of awareness of available resources and supports
- Shelters may be full
- Feelings of isolation from friends, family and community supports
- Cultural, religious and/or family pressures to stay together
- Fear of retaliation from the violent perpetrator
- Threats of harm against children, other loved ones and pets
- Desire to provide children with a two-parent home
- Fear of separation from children
- Fear of being alone
- Fear of deportation without the violent perpetrator's support or sponsorship
- Hope and belief that the violent perpetrator will change
- Love and concern for the violent perpetrator's well-being
- Fear the violent perpetrator may commit suicide if they leave
- Fear the perpetrator may be imprisoned if violence is reported to police
- Feelings of shame and guilt
- Depression