

PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK

STEPHANIE S. COVINGTON

# BEYOND VIOLENCE +

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A PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED  
WOMEN AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE

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SECOND EDITION

WILEY



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Second Edition

Stephanie S. Covington, PhD, LCSW

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*This book is dedicated to the women and gender-diverse people who are incarcerated for aggressive/violent crimes. Many have courageously shared their life stories with me. Listening to them gave me a greater understanding of the complexities of their lives. They are all survivors of abuse, and they are the inspiration for this work.*

## **Other Publications by Stephanie S. Covington**

*Awakening Your Sexuality: A Guide for Connection and Pleasure after Addiction and Trauma*

*Becoming Trauma Informed: A Training for Staff Development*

*Beyond Anger and Violence: A Program for Women*

*Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey for Women*

*Exploring Trauma+: A Brief Intervention for Men and Gender-Diverse People with Shane S. Pugh and Roberto A. Rodriguez*

*Healing Trauma+: A Brief Intervention for Women and Gender-Diverse People with Eileen M. Russo*

*Helping Men Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction with Dan Griffin and Rick Dauer*

*Helping Men Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction (criminal justice edition) with Dan Griffin and Rick Dauer*

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*Hidden Healers: The Unexpected Ways Women in Prison Help Each Other Survive*

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*Women and Addiction: A Gender-Responsive Approach*

*Women in Recovery: Understanding Addiction*

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## PUBLICACIONES EN ESPAÑOL

*Ayudar a las mujeres en recuperación: Un programa para tratar las adicciones, Diario de una mujer (Helping Women Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction, A Woman's Journal)*

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*Ayudar a los hombres en su recuperación: Un programa para tratar las adicciones, Cuaderno de trabajo (Helping Men Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction workbook)*

*Ayudar a los hombres en su recuperación: Un programa para tratar las adicciones, Cuaderno de trabajo, Edición especial para uso en el Sistema de justicia (Helping Men Recover: A Program for Treating Addiction workbook, special edition for use in the justice system)*

*Construyendo una capacidad de recuperación: Libro de ejercicios para hombres y personas con diversidad de género (Building Resilience: A Workbook for Men and Gender-Diverse People, part of the Exploring Trauma+ curriculum, on flash drive)*

*La mujer y su práctica de los Doce Pasos  
(A Woman's Way through the Twelve Steps)*

*La mujer y su práctica de los Doce Pasos, Libro de ejercicios  
(A Woman's Way through the Twelve Steps Workbook)*

*Mujeres en recuperación: Entendiendo la adicción  
(Women in Recovery: Understanding Addiction)*

*La sanación del trauma: Libro de ejercicios para mujeres y personas con diversidad de género (Healing Trauma+: A Workbook for Women and Gender-Diverse People, part of the Healing Trauma+ curriculum, on flash drive)*

*Voces: Un programa de autodescubrimiento y empoderamiento para chicas, Diario  
(Voices: A Program of Self-Discovery and Empowerment for Girls journal)*



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# Orientation Session

## Introduction to the Program

*Beyond Violence+*: A Prevention Program for Justice-Involved Women and Gender-Diverse People is designed to help you look at the effects of violence in your life and to create an opportunity for you to make changes to prevent violence in the future. The program is divided into four parts: Self, Relationships, Community, and Society. These four content areas will guide you in understanding important issues relating to violence in the lives of many women and gender-diverse people both inside and outside your program group.

During this program, you will attend this orientation session and 26 additional sessions with the members of your group. With them, you will have new experiences and learn new ways of looking at the world. The facilitator conducting the sessions has experience working with those who have reacted with force toward others and understands the issues.

Taking part in this group will allow you to explore how seeing and experiencing violence in your life has affected you and the decisions you have made. You will find support from others in your group. As you explore important issues together, you will learn new ways to cope and better ways to make decisions. You will experience a greater sense of power, inner strength, and peace.

Although this program is designed for use in a group, it is also possible to do the work individually if there is not a group available for you. As you begin this session,

take a minute or two to give yourself time to unwind, relax, and focus on where you are now. Just get settled in the way that feels best for you. Allow yourself to notice how you're breathing and then inhale gently and exhale fully. Repeat the breathing exercise two more times.

Please note: There also are yoga poses that you can do on your own. See the pictures and instructions at the back of this workbook. These are very good tools for stress reduction and relaxation. Enjoy!

# Overview of the Program

The *Beyond Violence+* program aims:

- To provide a place for you to reflect and learn more about yourself
- To provide information to help you to better understand the relationships between your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
- To help you to understand the effects of your family, your relationships, your community, and the larger society on your life
- To help you understand more about the roles of anger and violence in your life
- To provide an opportunity for you to learn new skills, including skills in communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, and calming or self-soothing techniques
- To help you become part of a group of people working to create a less violent world

## Your Workbook

This workbook is a place for you to record your experiences during the journey that you are about to begin in the *Beyond Violence+* program. Using this workbook will help you to remember what you learn, think, and feel. The workbook contains:

- Some of the activities you will do during the group sessions
- Summaries of information that you will receive in the group sessions
- Questions and activities for you to do after each session

The activities will help you to examine many parts of your life. There are no right or wrong answers, and your responses will not be checked. You may be asked to share some of your responses in the group sessions, but this is voluntary, and other group members will be sharing as well. You do not need to worry about your handwriting or spelling. This workbook is a tool to help you with your growth and recovery.

You will keep your workbook to use between sessions. It is your responsibility to remember to bring your workbook to each group session.

If you are concerned about confidentiality by keeping your workbook with you, please discuss this with the group facilitator.

# Group Introductions

The following are questions you can answer as a way to introduce yourself to the group. This introduction allows you and the other group members to begin to get to know one another. This program is created for women and gender-diverse people.

We invite you to share your pronouns when you introduce yourselves.

If you are using this workbook on your own, read the questions and think about how you would introduce yourself to others.

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

When and where I was born: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How I identify myself (including culture, ethnicity, race, and your pronouns if you want to include them): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The people in my family (can include a spouse or partner, children, parent(s), sibling(s), or whomever you consider your immediate family): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you are currently living in prison and have been here for a very long time, you may want to identify which persons you consider your family or best friends in the facility to be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

One thing I like about myself or a special gift that I have: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Topics Covered in This Program

1. How our thoughts and feelings affect our behaviors
2. How to better manage our feelings, especially the powerful and painful ones
3. The effects of families and relationships on our lives
4. Information about abusive and healthy relationships
5. The role of anger in our lives
6. The effects of our communities on our lives, including support for violence in our communities
7. Making amends and restitution
8. Envisioning a more peaceful world

## Group Agreements

Your facilitator explained the purpose of group agreements. These describe behaviors that will help the group to be a safe, respectful, and supportive space for each group member. Please write down the agreements from your group on the next page. When doing this alone, you may want to think about the kind of agreements you would want in a group. You also can list the goals you have for yourself while working through this program. Or you can skip this section.

# Our Group Agreements




**There are three agreements that are important to any group:**

1. *Confidentiality.* Group members need to honor one another's confidentiality. What is said in this room stays in this room. No personal information revealed in this room may be repeated outside this room.
2. *Sobriety.* No one may attend a group session while under the influence of alcohol or another drug.
3. *Safety.* There will be no physical or emotional abuse. Part of safety is showing respect for one another and for the uniqueness of each person's thoughts, feelings, experiences, and responses. We will let people express themselves in their own ways. Being rude or abusive to another group member is *not* okay.

**Here are some other typical group agreements:**

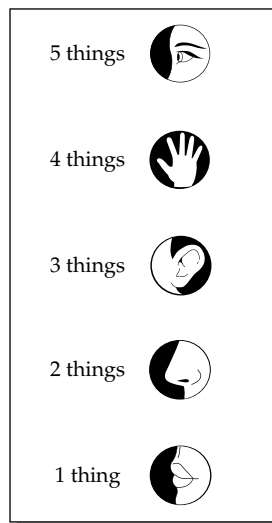
4. *Timing.* Our sessions will start on time and end on time.
5. *Attendance.* Regular group attendance is important. We all agree to show up at all the sessions.
6. *Eating or smoking.* There will be no eating or smoking during the group sessions. Drinking water may be permitted in some programs.
7. *Sharing.* Everyone in the group should have the time to contribute and share the experience. We will try to let everyone have a chance to talk. We will not interrupt other group members but will let them finish before we respond or add something.
8. *Participation.* We will try to assist one another in feeling safe enough to share and participate. We will ask questions to help us learn and grow. However, everyone is entitled to "pass" when asked a question or when asked to do an activity that requires participation.
9. *Socialization.* Contact with other group members outside the regular group session is permitted.

## Triggers and Coping Tools

A "trigger" or "activator" is a reminder of a traumatic event. It can be something you see, hear, smell, or feel. It can be a person, a place, or anything that reminds you of a traumatic event. It is important to have coping or grounding tools to help you stay in the present. The following are two grounding tools introduced in the group session.

## Five Senses

1. Close your eyes or lower your eyelids.
2. Relax for a few moments. Take a few deep breaths and exhale slowly.
3. Open your eyes when you are ready.
4. Silently, identify five things you can see around you.
5. Now identify four things you could feel or touch.
6. Identify three things you can hear.
7. Identify two things you can smell.
8. Finally, identify what you can taste right now.



## Breathing and Exhaling

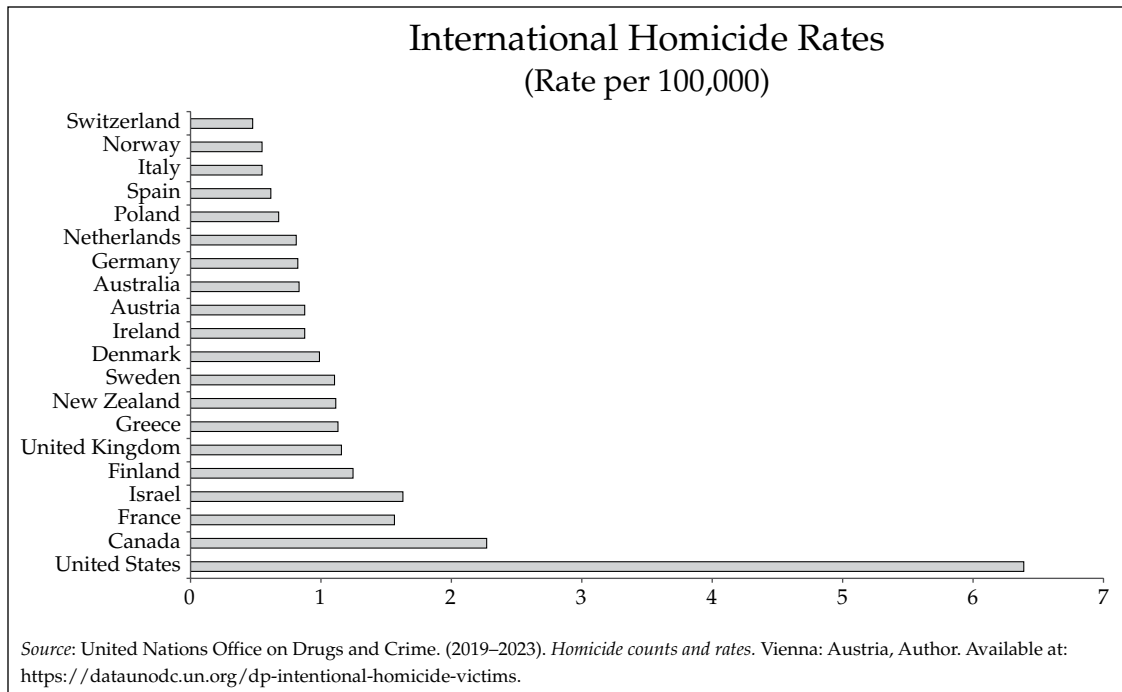
1. Stand up. Set your feet a little distance apart so that you feel stable.
2. Take a few deep breaths.
3. Relax your shoulders and just drop your hands to your sides. Let your arms and hands just dangle, relaxed. Relax your shoulders and arms.
4. Take in a long, deep breath through your nose and blow it out through your mouth like a big gust of wind.
5. Inhale again and then let the air out by blowing it out of your mouth.
6. Remember to relax your shoulders and arms.
7. Do the inhaling and exhaling three more times.

# Statistics on Violence in the United States

Here are the statistics presented in the group session, for you to think about:

1. Over 11 million children in the United States are living in poverty (*Shrider, Kollar, Chen, & Semega, 2021; United Way, 2022*).
2. Up to 10 million children are exposed to or witness domestic violence each year (*American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2023*).
3. Economic disadvantage and stressful living conditions can “overwhelm a child’s stress response systems,” leading to toxic stress. Trauma and toxic stress increase the risk of mental health issues and can lead to chronic illness, substance abuse, and depression (*Francis, DePriest, Wilson, & Gross, 2018*).
4. Child maltreatment is prevalent in 30% to 60% of homes in which domestic violence occurs (*Developmental Services Group, Inc. & Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015*).
5. At least 1 in 7 children experienced child abuse and/or neglect in 2019, and this is likely an underestimate (*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2023*).
6. In 2021, Child Protective Services received referrals for roughly 7.1 million children (*Child Welfare League of America, 2023*).
7. One in 9 girls and 1 in 53 boys are sexually victimized by adults, and children who live in households with domestic violence and drug abuse are at the greatest risk (*Child Welfare League of America, 2023; Finkelhor, Shattuck, Turner, & Hamby, 2014*).
8. Children from violent homes may develop serious emotional and behavioral problems and have a higher tendency to commit suicide, abuse drugs or alcohol, and commit violence against their partners or children (*American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2023*).
9. Four out of every 5 victims of intimate partner violence are women (*Catalano, 2015; Reaves, 2017*).

10. Approximately 18.3% of women in the U.S. experience sexual violence, 30.6% experience physical violence, 10.4% experience stalking, and 36.4% experience psychological aggression by an intimate partner (*Smith, Zhang, Basile, & Merrick et al., 2018*).
11. Approximately 1 in 5 women (a total of 25.5 million) has reported experiencing a completed or attempted rape (*Smith, Zhang, Basile, & Merrick et al., 2018*).
12. Victims of domestic violence have a greater risk of depression, substance use, and other chronic health conditions (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022*).
13. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender-nonconforming teenagers experience higher rates of bullying, physical and sexual violence, and drug use than do their cisgender, heterosexual peers (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015*).
14. Nearly half of all transgender individuals have been sexually assaulted (*James, Herman, Rankin, & Keisling et al., 2016*). As of 2022, transgender individuals were victimized at 2.5 times the rate of cisgender individuals (*Truman & Morgan, 2022*).



# Definition of Violence

Violence is “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation” (*World Health Organization, 2023*). There are three types of violence, depending on how it is committed:

- *Self-directed violence* is violence in which the perpetrator and the victim are the same person. It includes self-harm and suicide.
- *Interpersonal violence* is violence between individuals. It includes family and intimate partner violence and community violence. *Family and intimate partner violence* includes child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse. *Community violence* includes violence to an acquaintance and violence to a stranger. It can be gang violence, assault, violence related to property crimes, and violence in workplaces and other institutions.
- *Collective violence* is violence committed by larger groups. It includes social, political, and economic violence. Examples are war and genocide.

Within each type, violence can be inflicted in four ways: by physical, sexual, or psychological attack, and by deprivation. Deprivation means taking away something that is a basic necessity, such as sleep, food, shelter, and even love.

Here are some definitions of abusive behaviors that can happen in a relationship:

- “Use of force” refers to physically, verbally, and emotionally damaging behaviors used by one person toward another to gain short-term control of relationship dynamics.
- “Violence” refers to any force used with the intention of causing injury.
- “Abuse” refers to cruel or harmful behavior used by one person to acquire and maintain control of another. There are many types of abuse, including emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and discriminatory.
- “Battering” refers to a specific pattern of violence, the threat of violence, and/or coercively controlling behaviors used with the intention of exerting power, creating fear, and/or controlling another person over a relationship’s long term. Coercive control is the basis of battering, so battering does not need to include physical violence to be harmful.