

"domestic violence" of chris brown

Sociology, Violence



There are countless celebrities that are tangled in violent and abusive affairs. These cases are no dissimilar than the average American resident. It is never tolerable for someone, whether a man or a woman, to physically, emotionally, or mentally manipulate their partner. I will debate Oprah's Next Chapter, a documentary show that evaluates celebrities in varying episodes. I will examine the episode on Rihanna and Chris Brown, and their domestic violence case. I will summarize the case of domestic violence, define the type of domestic violence that relates to the case, list and assess the indicators that Chris Brown exemplifies, describe this case from a systems perspective, illustrating learned theories, detect any points in which intervention made or might have made a difference for Chris Brown, identify a strategy for helping Chris Brown by creating a treatment plan, and identify resources that could help him.

In 2008, Chris Brown's music career took a turn for the worse. In the latter part of that year, calls to the Los Angeles Police Department were made in regards to a couple verbally arguing outside of a quiet neighborhood. The two were allegedly arguing about a female that was texting Chris Brown's cell phone. A Lamborghini was the vehicle that the two were in. Allegedly, Chris Brown slapped, punched, and bit Rihanna in several places on her body. A photo of Rihanna was leaked from the Los Angeles Police Department, and showed severe bruises to her face. On February 8, 2009, Chris Brown turned himself into the same police department, where he was booked for making criminal threats. He was also under investigation for domestic violence charges against an unidentified woman. The woman was later identified as Rihanna, Chris Brown's girlfriend at that time. Chris Brown

was charged with felony assault on March 5, 2009, along with being charged for making criminal threats. On April 6, 2009, he was arraigned, and pleaded not guilty to these counts. Then, on June 22, 2009, Chris Brown pleaded guilty to a felony. He accepted a plea deal that consisted of five years' formal probation, domestic violence counseling, and community labor. The judge also put into effect a restraining order that calls Chris Brown and Rihanna to remain 50 yards apart at all times, and 10 yards apart at celebrity events. He was sentenced on August 25, 2009.

Domestic violence has many different forms. These include physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and many others. In Chris Brown's domestic violence case, there are two types of domestic violence present. They are verbal abuse and physical abuse. Verbal abuse is defined as " a form of emotional abuse consisting of the use of abusive and demeaning language with a spouse, child, or elder, often by a caregiver or other person in a position of power" (Verbal, n. d.). This is a very common type of abuse, and is often overlooked. Many people believe that abuse has to be physical, when in reality, abuse comes in many forms. In this domestic violence case, Chris Brown was the abuser, and Rihanna was the victim. The two were in a romantic relationship for many months. As celebrities, many pictures and videos were taken of them holding hands, kissing, and on vacations together. Their love for each other was publicly shown, and no one had any idea that there was domestic violence happening in their relationship. In terms of the emotional, or verbal abuse, both Rihanna and Chris Brown both were abusers. They both said harsh, degrading things to each other, which means they were both at fault.

The second type of abuse is physical abuse. Physical abuse is what most people think of when they hear "domestic violence." Physical abuse can be defined as "one or more episodes of aggressive behavior, usually resulting in physical injury with possible damage to internal organs, sense organs, the central nervous system, or the musculoskeletal system of another person" (Physical, n. d.). This definition sounds very extreme, but it pertains to any physical contact of an abuser and a victim. It does not matter if the abuse leaves bruises, scratches, or marks; any inappropriate and unwanted physical contact is physical abuse. In Chris Brown's domestic violence case, it is alleged that Chris Brown was the only abuser, and Rihanna was clearly a victim. From the picture of Rihanna that came from the Los Angeles Police Department, we can see that she was definitely physically abused. She had swollen, black eyes, swollen, bruised lips, and bruised cheeks. Bruises are often a result from slapping, punching, and hitting. It is also alleged that Rihanna suffered from bite marks on her arms. This is another form of physical abuse.

Rihanna and Chris Brown both show several symptoms that make their relationship susceptible to domestic violence. This case evidently started because another female was texting Chris Brown's cell phone, and Rihanna wanted to know who it was and why she was texting her boyfriend's phone. Rihanna also allegedly tried to take Chris Brown's cell phone from him, to find out who the other female was. In this instance, Rihanna shows signs of jealousy, insecurity, and humiliation. Rihanna was jealous about the other female texting Chris Brown's cell phone, and wanted to find out who she was. This is a sign of jealousy, and insecurity, because she is not comfortable

confronting Chris Brown in an adult manner about the situation. Rihanna was also probably humiliated that she was supposed to be in a monogamous relationship with Chris Brown, and other females were trying to talk to him. Jealousy and insecurity are signs of an abuser in a relationship; however humiliation is a sign of a victim (Abbott et al., 2012). In turn, Chris Brown shows signs of anger, frustration, and compulsiveness. Instead of trying to talk to Rihanna, he becomes angry and physically abuses her. He took an irresponsible and immature approach to the situation. It is also apparent that he is frustrated with the situation. His compulsive behaviors show that he is an abuser in this relationship, and needs to seek different ways on responding to people.

The systems theory views continuing violence as a systemic product, instead of as a product of individual behavior. It " specifies the " positive feedback" processes which produce an upward spiral of violence, the " negative feedback" which serves to maintain the level of violence within tolerable limits, and the morphogenic processes which change the role structure of the family" (Straus, 1973). The family is supposed to be the social group that is committed to non-violence between its members, but statistics prove the opposite. Members of a family are actually more susceptible to violence than those who are not in a family. In Chris Brown's domestic violence case, it is clear that he and Rihanna were not all they appeared to be. Everyone thought they had the perfect relationship, but we were all proven incorrect. Though we do not know the extent of Rihanna and Chris Brown's romantic relationship, it is likely that this incident was not the first abusive incident the two had encountered. The family is supposed to be loving, caring, and

the place that we feel safe. Today, this is not always the case. It is interesting to understand why we are violent towards the ones we love. We know our loved ones better than anyone else. We know what makes them angry, and we know our limits with them. When we pass these limits, violence and abuse can occur.

One pivotal moment in Chris Brown's life where intervention might have helped him would be during his relationship with Rihanna. I am sure that Rihanna did not speak up about any verbal or physical abuse before this incident. If she had told Chris Brown that they needed to seek help about their abusive tendencies, this may have prevented this instance from occurring. Had the couple talked to a counselor about their problems, the issues might have been fixed, and Chris Brown and Rihanna might have still been a couple today. On the contrary, if Rihanna had left Chris Brown the first time that he was abusive towards her, he also would not have ended up in this situation. There are several "what if" scenarios that we could come up with, but it is most important to address the issue at hand. This situation did happen, and Chris Brown needs help with it.

There are several ways that Chris Brown would be able to receive help for his abusive behaviors. They include therapy, counseling, or even a "boot camp" type of treatment. For his situation, I believe the best type of treatment would be therapy. That being said, there are steps that Chris Brown would need to take before attending his therapy sessions. Dr. Jill Murray identifies six criteria that must be met in order for an abuser to change his or her ways. Chris Brown would need to meet the following criteria: 1) he

understands that his behavior is inappropriate and abusive; 2) he doesn't cast blame for his behavior onto his girlfriend, parents, teachers, or anyone else; 3) he takes full responsibility for his abusive behavior; 4) he has a desire to change. He's not just doing it to stay out of trouble at school or with the law or because his girlfriend nagged him to do so; 5) he follows up his stated desire to change with concrete actions; and 6) his new actions are continuous, not just for the moment. Most abusers apologize for their bad behavior and tell their girlfriend it will never happen again. Often, they are contrite for only a few days (Murray, n. d.).

Once Chris Brown meets these criteria, he can begin his healing treatment.

Without meeting these criteria, therapy will not be successful or helpful.

Meeting with a therapist every week for about an hour will help Chris Brown release his tension, anxiety, and anger. He can discuss with the therapist in a private setting what his issues in life are. He can explain his childhood, why he becomes abusive, amongst other things. Many times, there is an underlying reason as to why a person is abusive. The most common are: 1) they have been physically and/or psychologically abused as children; 2) they have seen their father beat and/or severely dominate their mother or sisters; or 3) one or both of their parents abused, or continue to abuse, alcohol, or use drugs (Murray, n. d.). If Chris Brown and Rihanna were interested in making their relationship work, the two would want to attend therapy sessions together. This is very beneficial, because the therapist gets a more accurate picture of what abuse took place, how severe it was, what each person in the relationship has to offer and has issues with, and the

relationship has a better chance of being mended. Without proper help, the relationship would not have a chance.

I would recommend attending therapy sessions every week for several months. The length truly depends on how well Chris Brown can adapt and learn. It might take several years, and it might take only several months to a year. It is truly up to the individual's growth. The therapist should give Chris Brown a task to complete (i. e., taking deep breaths to release tension and anger) after each session, and before the next session of the following week, Chris Brown should practice on that one task. When the therapist and Chris Brown meet again, he can discuss whether the task went well or if he struggled with it. This will allow the therapist to create a unique plan that fits perfectly to Chris Brown's needs. In addition to therapy sessions, Chris Brown should join a group session of men who abuse their girlfriends and wives. This way, he can understand that he is not alone, and that others are in his same situation.