

Benefits of Violence

The following list was generated by men participating in a court mandated batterers intervention program. The facilitator asked the men what benefits they gained from the violence. Initially, participants denied any benefits. When the facilitators suggested they must be getting some benefit from the behavior, otherwise what would be the purpose of continuing, they generated a list. The list ended when there was no space left on a 4 by 8 foot black board. The follow up question to men then becomes, “why give it up?” This is a portion of their list.

- She’s scared & won’t go out & spend money
- Get your way: go out
- Respect
- She won’t argue
- Feeling superior: she’s accountable to me in terms of being somewhere on time: I decide
- Keeps relationship going – she’s too scared to leave
- Get the money
- Get sex
- Total control in decision making
- Use money for drugs
- Don’t have to change for her
- Power
- Decide where to go (as a couple)
- Who to see
- What to wear
- Control the children
- If she’s late, she won’t be again
- Intimidation
- She’s scared & can’t confront me
- Can convince her she’s screwin’ up
- She feels less worthy so defers to my needs and wants
- She will look up to me and accept my decisions without an argument
- Decide her social life – what she wears so you can keep your image by how she acts
- She’s to blame for the battering
- She’s an object
- (I get) a robot babysitter, maid, sex, food
- Ego booster
- She tells me I’m great
- Braggin’ rights
- If she works – get her money
- Get her to quit job so she can take care of house
- Isolate her so friends can’t confront me
- Decide how money is spent
- “I’m breadwinner”
- Buy the toys I want
- Take time for myself
- She has to depend on me if I break her stuff
- I get to know everything
- She’s a nurse-maid
- She comforts me
- Supper on the table
- Invite friends over w/o her knowin’ = more work for her
- No compromise = more freedom
- Don’t have to listen to her complaints for not letting her know stuff
- She works for me
- I don’t have to help out
- I don’t have to hang out with her or kids
- Determine what values kids have – who they play with, what school they go to or getting to ignore the process – dictating what they “need” food, clothes, recreation, etc.

- So she won't get help against you for past beatings because she has no friends to support her and she is confused by my lies
- Convince her she's nuts
- Convince her she's unattractive
- Convince her she's to blame
- Convince her she's the problem
- I can dump on her
- Can use kids to "spy" on mom
- Kids won't tell mom what I did
- Kids won't disagree with me
- Don't have to talk to her
- I'm king of the castle
- Can make yourself scarce
- Have someone to unload on
- Have someone to bitch at
- She won't call police
- Tell kids don't have to listen to mom
- Get her to drop charges
- Get her to support me to her family, my family, cops, judge, SCIP, prosecutors, etc.
- Get her to admit it's her fault
- Kids on my side against her
- Kids do what I say
- Mold kids/her so that they will help do what I should do
- Keeps kids quiet about abuse
- Don't have to get up, take out garbage, watch kids, do dishes, get up at night with kids, do laundry, change diapers, clean house, bring kids to appointments or activities, mop floors, clean refrigerator, etc.
- Answer to nobody
- Do what you want, when you want to
- Get to ignore/deny your history of violence and other irresponsible behavior
- Get to write history
- Get to determine future
- Choose battles & what it will cost her
- Proves you superiority
- Win all the arguments
- Dictate reality, etc
- Don't have to listen to her wishes, complaints, anger, fears, etc...
- Make the rules then break them when you want