



## 14 STEPS OF CHANGE FOR AN ABUSIVE/CONTROLLING PERSON

How do you know if there has been genuine change? There are 14 Steps to Change detailed by Lundy Bancroft in [\*“Why Does He Do That?”\*](#). Here is a summary of those in addition to our experiences:

1. Admit fully his/her history, with all partners, of all types of abuse, denial, minimization, manipulation and coverup to themselves and others of what they have done.
2. Acknowledge the abuse was wrong, unconditionally. Identify justifications used and ways he/she blamed their partner or victim. *Be able to talk about those chosen behaviors, without defending those behaviors or themselves.*
3. Acknowledge that his/her behaviors were their choice, not excusing or blaming others. Acknowledge that they chose to be abusive and controlling.
4. Recognize the short- and long-term effects the abuse had on you, any children or other victims, showing empathy for it.
5. Identify the patterns of controlling behavior and entitled attitudes.
6. Replace those with healthy attitudes and behaviors based on respect.
7. Replace his/her distorted image of partner/children with a more positive respectful view. Understand that their partner/children are “for them” and not “against them”.
8. Acknowledge and dismantle the thought processes that exaggerate their grievances against their partner or children. Encourage partner and children to work towards their own healing.
9. Make amends for the damage done. Develop a sense of debt owed.
10. Accept the consequences of his/her actions, they should stop blaming others for the problems that are a result of the abuse.
11. Commit to not repeating the abusive behaviors and honor that commitment, with no conditions.
12. Accept the need to give up his/her privileges and do so.
13. Accept that overcoming abusiveness is likely to be a lifelong process.
14. Be willing to be accountable for his/her actions, both past and future, and share what the accountability plan includes with his/her partner.

We highly encourage reading the full book [\*“Why Does He Do That?”\*](#) for much more detailed information on men or women who choose abuse and controlling behaviors.