

Traditional Latino Values and Domestic Violence

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Hispanic Values



- May prefer folk remedies and informal supports to more formal assistance
- The typical method of addressing domestic violence where the family is separated (husband to jail, wife to shelter) clashes with Hispanic cultural values
- Latinas fear that reporting their husbands to the police will reinforce negative stereotypes of their culture






Familismo


- **Familismo defined:**
 - Conflicts are supposed to be handled internally within the family
 - Problems are not to be shared outside of the family
- **Implications**
 - Reluctance to utilize outside service providers, such as shelters
 - Reluctance to call law enforcement
 - Especially problematic when family members blame the victim

Machismo


- **Machismo defined:**
 - Responsibility and obligation to the family is important, as is maintaining one's honor
 - Includes unspoken expectations that a man should be hyper-masculine, in control, domineering, a womanizer, and a heavy drinker
- **Implications**
 - “True men” are in control of their family
 - Hyper-masculine traits are associated with abuse, including a propensity to initiate violence





Marianismo

- ***Marianismo* defined:**
 - Uses the Virgin Mary's self-sacrificing and uncomplaining nature as a role model for how women should behave
 - Often includes unwavering support of the husband's decisions and an unquestioning acceptance of the husband's faults
- **Implications**
 - Self-sacrificing behavior is seen as drawing the woman closer to God
 - Promotes unquestioning acceptance of abusive behaviors
 - Can discourage women from leaving violent and abusive situations




Fatalism

- ***Fatalism* defined:**
 - Negative events are seen as God's will and suffering is one's destiny
- **Implications:**
 - Victims may not seek help because they believe it is God's will that they endure suffering



La Sufrida

- ***La Sufrida* defined:**

- Abuse (or other difficult circumstance) is seen as a trial or tribulation which must be endured for religious reasons (as payment for past sins).

- **Implications**

- Similar to fatalism, victims may not seek help as they believe the suffering is God's will and a penance that they must pay



Values as Protective Factors

- Latino values can also serve as a resource.
- These values can also serve as protective factors and build on cultural pride.



Protective Factors, cont.

- *Machismo* does not have to mean violent.
- *Machismo* can also refer to protecting the family from violence.



Protective Factors, cont.

- Emphasis on close family relationships (*familismo*) can also be a protective factor.
- The abuser can be encouraged to protect the family.
- *Familismo* does not give the abuser permission to be abusive to the victim and children.



Protective Factors, cont.

- *Marianismo* can be used to strengthen the role of the mother in the family.
 - An important component of *marianismo* is that the mother should be respected



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