Purgatory Reaction Paper

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The short film was very informative and helped display an abusive relationship. The film can be an example of how intimate partner violence can look like among a couple. It helped

show how a partner's excess need of power and control over their partner can cause damage among the relationship.

The male character in the short film can be seen as an aggressor and a controlling partner. The man was very aggressive towards his female partner and displayed a lot of controlling behaviors towards her. He gaslighted his partner and wanted to control how she lives her life. The male character seems to be a very insecure person that needs to have some sort of power and control over others to make him feel good about himself. He was aggressive in the way he would speak to his female partner and would often yell and question her. The way he wanted to control the relationship is displayed by how he controls who he allows his partner to speak to and see, dress, and not attend doctor appointments when she is not feeling well. The male would also minimize the female's feelings and make her question herself as shown as not being able to see her mother and not attend the doctors. This male character is a controlling and damaging man that needs professional help.

The female character in the short film can be seen as more timid and afraid. She can be seen as the victim in this film. She is always trying to please her male partner even at the risk of endangering herself. She loves her partner but can be seen as confused and blindsided in the way he is manipulating her. She seems to be lying to herself and believes that her male partner will change.

There are many signs of abuse in the short film. The main one that sticks out is sexual violence and emotional abuse. The female character is shown bleeding multiple times after waking up next to her male partner. This makes one wonder if the male partner is sexually abusing her without her knowing. Another sign of abuse is how the male character is isolating and controlling who the couple sees. He wants his female partner to not see her mom and blames

others for their agreements instead of taking accountability for his actions. The way he questions her appearance and tells her how she should dress is a perfect example of the controlling behavior he displays.

Isolating can play a major role in abuse within the couple. The male character may not want his female partner to tell others about their relationship due to the fact that he wants to control her and not make anyone aware of the abuse that is occuring. If the female character is isolating from other loved ones, it can be more challenging for her to gain awareness of the abuse that is taking place and leave the relationship. The fear of not having anyone to turn to can create more resistance in leaving the relationship.

The whole relationship in this short film shows the dynamic of power and control. The male character wants to have power and control over his female companion. He wants to control her everyday activities and wants to have power over everything she does. IPV occurs when individuals in intimate relationships influence their partner's behavior by controlling them with violence or the use of power. Violence may include verbal taunts or threats, psychologically demeaning statements or actions, physical assaults, and sexual violence (Jackson-Cherry & Erford, 2017). The male character is a prime example of how abuse can occur within relationships. He is negatively influencing his partner's life and is controlling who she sees and does with her life such as not seeing her mother, not attending doctor appointments, and controlling the way she dresses.

There are many opinions on victims who may struggle to leave an abusive relationship. In the short film, the female character may not be aware of how her partner is abusing her which is why she may struggle to leave the relationship. She is also in love with this person and is isolated from the rest of her loved ones such as her mother. Isolation can cause her to think that

she may not have anyone else but her abusive partner which may be a reason she is staying with him. There is also the honeymoon phase to consider which is when the abuser in the cycle of violence is characterized by loving and repentant behavior from the abusive partner. The abuser may shower the IPV victim with gifts, beg for forgiveness, and promise never to be violent again, the abusive partner may also use guilt to attempt to persuade the victim into staying in the relationship (Jackson-Cherry & Erford, 2017). This may cause the female character to stay and attempt to make it work with her abuser.

As any therapist, the first step in helping the female character would be to ensure her safety. As a counselor responding to an IPV crisis, the overarching goal is the safety of the victim, regardless of whether he or she decides to stay in or leave the violent relationship. Simultaneously, and because in most instances the decision to stay in or leave a violent relationship is in the hands of the victim, counselors should also work to empower clients to solve problems effectively based on the client's unique situation and available resources (Jackson-Cherry & Erford, 2017). This can look like informing the police but also keeping in mind that the female character may not agree with it since she may not think it is abuse. It is important to help the female character gain awareness of the abuse taking place so she can build confidence to leave the relationship. It is crucial for the counselor to help build trust and rapport with the female character so she can make healthy changes in her life. Empowering the female character and building her self-esteem can help her see herself as worthy as a person to leave her abusive partner. Challenging irrational thoughts and providing resources can be an effective way in counseling her.

References

Jackson-Cherry, L.R. & Erford, B.T. (2017). Crisis Assessment, Intervention and Prevention (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Pearson