



Motivation and indicators regarding victim empathy, based on Sturge and Glaser

It is important when considering whether *any* version of time spent with a parent is safe, to continue to refer to the Sturge and Glaser criteria and to use the indicators as reference points to establish how the perpetrator views their accountability for the abuse. It should not be used as a checklist or standalone tool but as a supplemental guide to explore motivation and victim empathy within a holistic assessment alongside the static and dynamic risk factors. The criteria are written in gender specific language relating to male to female abuse, however the principles would apply across all relational dynamics. The Sturge and Glaser expert report stated that there should be evidence within the assessment of an awareness of each point in order that contact could be considered beneficial for the child.

The assessor may also wish to consider the Transtheoretical Model of Change - Prochaska and Di Clemente. Further information can be found here

<http://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com/the-cycle-of-change/>

<i>Sturge and Glaser criteria</i>	<i>Examples of themes to explore</i>
<i>Some (preferably full) acknowledgment of the violence;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do they accept that domestic abuse took place?</i> • <i>If there has been a FFH do they accept any findings made by a court about their abusive behaviour and, if not, why not?</i> • <i>If there has been a criminal trial, do they accept a conviction for a relevant offence and, if not, why not?</i> • <i>How would they describe the nature of the abusive behaviour, when do they think it started and how long did it continue?</i> • <i>What understanding do they have regarding why the abuse happened?</i> • <i>What is their role in the abuse and do they recognise triggers or catalysts?</i>
<i>Some acceptance (preferably full if appropriate, ie the sole instigator of violence) of responsibility for that violence;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is there denial of responsibility or some acceptance of their role as primary perpetrator (FCA to challenge this using supporting evidence)?</i> • <i>Who are they blaming?</i> • <i>What is the nature of the abuse? Do they recognise any controlling behaviours or, where relevant, can they describe their</i>



	<p>role in any mutually abusive behaviours (coercive controlling abusers may minimise, deny, transfer blame, attribute mental health issues to the victim or place themselves in the role of victim)?</p>
<p><i>Full acceptance of the inappropriateness of the violence particularly in respect of the domestic and parenting context and of the likely ill-effects on the child;</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do they accept the abuse as a failure of parenting?</i> • <i>Do they recognise harm to the child of living with domestic abuse?</i> • <i>Can they describe being in the child's shoes during an abusive incident, can they describe the child's experience?</i> • <i>Do they have any childhood history of abuse to frame the experience?</i>
<p><i>A genuine interest in the child's welfare and full commitment to the child, ie a wish for contact in which he is not making the conditions;</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why is the application being made now?</i> • <i>Can they empathise with the child's wishes and feelings?</i> • <i>Can they empathise with the adult parent victim?</i> • <i>Are there any adult focussed conditions they would set around contact?</i> • <i>Does motivation appear genuine and not part of a continuing pattern of control?</i>
<p><i>A wish to make reparation to the child and work towards the child recognising the inappropriateness of the violence and the attitude to and treatment of the mother and helping the child to develop appropriate values and attitudes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How could reparation be made to the child regarding the impact of the harm they have experienced?</i> • <i>What do they see as being of most importance to the child?</i>
<p><i>An expression of regret and the showing of some understanding of the impact of their behaviour on their ex-partner in the past and currently;</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can they describe what damage has been done to the child's sense of safety and security?</i> • <i>Can they articulate remorse?</i> • <i>What impact has the abuse had on their own sense of self and role as a parent?</i> • <i>What do they think the impact of the abuse has been on the adult victim and on their parenting capacity?</i>
<p><i>Indications that the parent seeking contact can reliably sustain contact in all senses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Will they be emotionally and physically available to the child on the child's terms?</i> • <i>Can they agree to a safety plan which prioritises the child?</i> • <i>Will they work towards supporting the child arrangements at the child's pace?</i>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do they accept that the adult victim should have input into the contact arrangements?• Do they have family who can support them or are they willing to have contact alongside anyone with whom the child feels safe?
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A reminder re Sect 37 in Practice Direction 12J

'In every case where a finding or admission of domestic abuse is made, or where domestic abuse is otherwise established, the court should consider the conduct of both parents towards each other and towards the child and the impact of the same. In particular, the court should consider '–

(a) the effect of the domestic abuse on the child and on the arrangements for where the child is living;

(b) the effect of the domestic abuse on the child and its effect on the child's relationship with the parents;

(c) whether the parent is motivated by a desire to promote the best interests of the child, or is using the process to continue a form of domestic abuse against the other parent;

(d) the likely behaviour during contact of the parent against whom findings are made and its effect on the child; and

(e) the capacity of the parents to appreciate the effect of past domestic abuse and the potential for future domestic abuse