Focus on a behaviour

"What did the children see?"

"What did getting physical look like for your partner?"

"When you say you lost your cool, can you tell me what happened?"

Use his words or descriptions of actions as a starting point, but modify if required to minimise collusion (e.g., use "got physical" if he says "got a bit physical")

Search for what he's striving to make better, that his behaviour is sabotaging (e.g., "You want Sally to respect you, but I wonder if your actions are harming her respect and trust?")

Find the hooks that matter to him, that relate to issues that matter to those experiencing his violence – connect with the part of him that cares

"I know that's not how you want to be in front of your kids"

"My guess is that this isn't the father you want to be?"

Use questions that shape his behaviour as a choice (e.g., if he says, "I just snapped!" you can reply with "What could you have done differently?... What's a safer thing to do when you feel really angry?")

Encouraging him to take a stand against the behaviour

"How important is it, on a scale of 0 to 10, for you to model to your children to stay calm when they are having big feelings"... "Wow, a 9 out of 10! Not a 6 or 7, I'd love to hear more about why you want to model calmness to your kids..."

"How important is it for your children to see you treat their mother with kindness and respect?"

"What might they be starting to learn from you, that you don't want them to?"

Elicit aspirations (e.g., "What are your hopes for your children?... What would you like them to remember about you when they are older?"

Safety plan focusing on the behaviour, and adjacent behaviours of concern

"You're saying that it is 9 out of 10 important that you stay calm around your children. Can I ask, what's your plan to stay calm?"

"What else would your partner/kids say should be added to your plan to stay safe and calm around them?... What's another step they would like you to take?... What do they most need you to do differently?"

"How confident are you that you'd be able to put that plan into practice?... "What would you need to work on to be more confident?"

Focus on upstream, midstream & downstream safety planning strategies.

Upstream: "What changes in your lifestyle might help you to work on being calm/kind..."

Midstream: "Is there someone you can call when you notice yourself starting to become angsty?"

Downstream: "Let's talk about how you can bring yourself back down when the anger/jealousy is becoming really loud..."

Expand the conversation over time, and follow-up on the application of the plan

Lay the groundwork to repeat this cycle focusing on other behaviours, as he expands his willingness to talk more about his behaviours

Invite other-centredness increasingly over time (e.g., "If you made this change, what would it mean to your kids...? "What's the next step that would help your partner to feel safe around you? ... How important would that be for your family? ... What could become possible in your life if you managed those situations in safer ways?")

Support his self-competence and engagement with ethics (e.g., "What did it take to talk about this with me today?... What does it say about how much your behaviour as a Dad matters to your family that you are staying with this conversation even though it's hard?... How might you feel differently in yourself if you took those [safety planning steps]?")

Acknowledge discomfort / shame (e.g., "What is it like to be talking about this?... What can help you to hang in with the conversation?")