

Domestic



From Fear
To Freedom

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO STOP ABUSE

The profile of a batterer may not be what you think. 90-95 percent of all abusers are male and could possibly be an acquaintance you know or think you know well. To the outside world many abusers are friendly, outgoing, and quite charming, often “the life of the party.” They often appear to be good providers and even good fathers.

Unfortunately, this socially acceptable “good guy” has another side...almost the Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde syndrome. One of the most common characteristics is that he has a low opinion of women. A high percentage of abusers were either abused as a child or saw their fathers abuse their mothers.

In order to control, he treats his mate like a possession. He may be jealous, demanding, critical, and difficult to please. He may sometimes use alcohol or drugs excessively, and use aggressive sex to demonstrate his superiority. This cycle of violence has three phases. The first phase begins with increased tension, growing into anger, blaming and arguing. The second phase is battering – hitting, slapping, kicking, choking, sexual abuse, verbal threats, or use of weapons. Phase three is often called the “honeymoon stage.” In this stage he is sorry for his actions and promises it will never happen again. He may even deny the violence took place or blame it on alcohol or drugs.

So why does he do this and how does he get away with it? Because he can. Until a few years ago domestic violence was considered a “private family matter” that should be settled within the home. What would be considered a crime on the street against a stranger was overlooked if committed against a spouse. Fortunately today our court systems and law enforcement agencies are changing.

WARNING SIGN OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

- Excessive jealousy/possessiveness: Checks up on you, monitors friendships, keeps you isolated.
- Need to control most situations: Intimidates or manipulates most people; uses threats against themselves or others to get what they want; talks you into or out of your feelings or opinions.
- Constant criticism: Embarrassing or degrading comments about your appearance, ability, intelligence, etc. Seems to enjoy putting down others.
- Makes you feel uncomfortable, or scared: Threatening gestures, cruelty to other people or animals.
- Does not respect boundaries: Rarely takes “no” for an answer. Pressure to do things you don’t want to do – alcohol, drugs, sex, etc.
- Does not take personal responsibility: Nothing is ever their fault.
- History of violence: In other relationships, or within their families. Domestic violence is learned behavior.
- Repeats a “Cycle of Violence:” In phase one, tension builds and the abuser becomes increasingly annoyed or irritated. A battering incident occurs in phase two, and in phase three, the abuser is calm, loving, and sorry – says it will never happen again. In an abusive relationship, this cycle often repeats itself – usually with more frequency, in smaller time periods, and with the battering incidents becoming more severe.
- Someone who insists on moving too quickly into a relationship
- Someone who does not honor your boundaries
- A partner who is excessively jealous or possessive
- Someone who criticizes your appearance or makes frequent put-downs
- Someone whose words and actions do not go together
- Someone who does not take responsibility for their behavior and blames others for their failures or difficulties
- Anyone who has a history of battering
- Someone who blames the entire failure of an earlier relationship on their partner. Example: “My ex-partner is a total bitch.”
- Someone who grew up in an abusive, violent home
- Someone who has very stereotypical views of sex roles
- A partner who insists that you stop participating in leisure interests of spending time with your family or friends
- Someone who tells you how you should feel or tries to talk you out of your feelings
- Someone who sees that they are too good to be true
- Anyone who makes frequent and harsh derogatory remarks about others
- Anyone who is very impulsive and shows signs of raging out of control

Any one of these signs in and of themselves may not indicate potential abusive behavior. It is important, however, not to dismiss red flags, but to take time to explore them further. One should always take the time to get to know a potential partner and watch for patterns of behavior in a variety of situations.

Probably the greatest risk factor for being in an abusive relationship is being somehow vulnerable. Identifying this and participating in good self-care can lower the risk of involvement in an abusive relationship.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Tell someone you can trust – relative, friend, counselor, etc.
- Avoid being alone with your abuser if at all possible.
- Tell others where you are going and when you plan to be back.
- Always have a safety plan.
- Call a domestic violence hotline. They can provide support and offer assistance /guidance with regard to legal options, and shelter if needed.

HOW YOU CAN HELP A FRIEND

- Don't ignore the problem. Talk to your friend about the abuse.
- Let your friend know your concerns.
- Support, don't judge your friend.
- Don't try to resolve the problem. Encourage them to seek help from a professional or trusted adult.
- Call police if you witness the violence.
- Contact a domestic violence agency for assistance.

**Synergy SafeHaven
Kansas City Area
Outside Kansas City**

**816.452.8535
816.HOTLINE
800.491.1114**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONTINUUM

Violence

Violence is an action or behavior, which attempts to dominate or control another person's emotions, thoughts or behaviors, and cause fear, emotional harm, or physical injury.

Characteristics of Violent Behavior

- It is part of a broad range of controlling behaviors
- It ranges from mild to severe
- It can escalate or progress
- It is psychological or physical
- Its purpose is to dominate or control
- It includes sexual abuse
- It is a choice, not a random action

Violent behavior does not change unless it is recognized, the need for change is acknowledged, and actions to change are taken.

Emotional Violence Continuum

Anger about women
Jokes that belittle women
Teasing
Rigid gender roles
Withholding affection/approval
Ignoring spouse's feelings
Ignoring/refusing to respond
Yelling
Swearing
Put downs about abilities as: mother, home-maker, worker, lover
Name calling/labeling: bitch, whore, crazy
Private humiliation
Telling you about affairs
Targeted repetitious criticism
Blaming
Putting fist through a wall
Destroying property
Threatening a custody fight
Predicting economic disaster
Destroying pets
Threatening friends
Threatening violence

Physical Violence Continuum

Pinching
Rap on shoulder
Restraint which hurts or threatens
Pushing/shoving
Shaking
Grabbing
Biting
Spanking
Hitting/punching
Injuring face/black eye
Kicking
Throwing person
Choking
Targeted hitting
Use of objects as weapons
Forced abortion
Lacerations
Broken bones
Internal injury
Back injury
Disabling or permanently paralyzing
Using knives or guns
Death

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical

- Hitting, punching or pushing
- Kicking
- Restraining and holding
- Biting
- Choking
- Threatening with weapons
- Hair pulling
- Grabbing
- Destroying property
- Threatening with fist
- Throwing things at you
- Practicing martial arts to intimidate
- Scratching
- Slapping
- Reckless driving
- Pushing you out of the car
- Poking
- Taking car keys
- Touching with control
- Banging against a wall

Sexual

- Forcing sex
- Withholding sex
- Rude stories/gestures
- Double standards
- Using sex as a weapon
- Punishment for not complying
- Making sexual threats with objects
- Talking dirty
- Laughing at you
- Shaming
- Intimidation to do unwanted acts outside of comfort level
- Sex as a form of control
- Sexualizing in public
- Rape
- Possessiveness
- Mocking of body parts
- Accusations
- Sex for favors
- Pornography

Verbal

- Name calling
- Swearing
- Yelling
- Degrading comments
- Mimicking
- Threatening to take children away
- Put-downs
- Lying/deceitfulness
- Brainwashing
- Sarcasm
- Outright cruelty
- Using information you have revealed against you
- Blaming
- Guilt-producing statements
- "You are not okay" statements
- Demanding, threatening tone of voice
- Contradicting
- Irrational questioning
- Interrogating
- Twisting your words
- Calling you "crazy"

Emotional

- Double standards or crazy-making behaviors
- Accusations and twisting things
- Telling you how you feel and think
- "His" agenda
- Avoiding issues and tension in home
- Immature behavior
- Sabotaging
- Bringing up past or mind games
- Withholding or controlling money
- Inequity in the partnership
- Harming pets
- Questioning paternity
- Selective memory
- Stalking or harassing
- Degrading in public
- Not okay to be sick
- Intimidation
- Discounting behaviors
- Isolation from family/friends
- Silent treatment

ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

Yes-if your spouse, ex-spouse, lover, or partner has:

- Ridiculed or insulted women as a group
- Committed sadistic sexual acts
- Threatened to hurt you
- Forced sex for the purpose of hurting you with objects or weapons
- Held you or locked you in a room to keep you from leaving
- Forced sex after beating you
- Forced particular unwanted sexual acts
- Abandoned you in dangerous places
- Forced sex with him or others or forced you to watch others
- Forced you off the road while driving or kept you from driving
- Called you sexual names like “Whore” and “Frigid”
- Threatened to hurt you with a weapon
- Minimized the importance of your feelings about sex
- Withheld approval, appreciation, or affection as punishment
- Treated women as sex objects
- Continually criticized you, called you names, shouted at you
- Insisted you dress in a more provocative or sexual way than you wanted to
- Ignored your feelings
- Ridiculed or insulted your most valued beliefs, your religion, race, class or sexual preferences
- Told anti-women jokes or made demeaning remarks about women
- Been very jealous; harasses you about imagined affairs
- Insisted you dress the way he wants
- Humiliated you in private or public
- Insulted or driven away your friends or family
- Taken car keys or money away from you
- Subjected you to reckless driving
- Locked you out of the house
- Thrown objects at you
- Abused pets to hurt you
- Punched, shoved, slapped, bit, kicked, choked, hit, or otherwise hurt you physically
- Threatened to kidnap the children if you leave
- Threatened to commit suicide if you leave

EMOTIONAL ABUSE CHECKLIST:

Check the most appropriate answer.	Often	Some	Rarely	Never
1. Do you have to get permission to socialize with your friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are you accused of cheating on him when you leave the house to do errands, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are you afraid to talk about certain topics unless he's in a good mood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does he have control over the money and monitor your spending?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Does he tell you no one else would ever want you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does he threaten to harm himself if you leave him?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Does he go through your purse or open your mail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does he make disparaging remarks about the way you look or dress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does he use things against you that you've confided to him in the past?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Does he sabotage your efforts to be involved in pleasant social or family events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Does he compare you negatively to other women?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are you nervous about being on the phone when he is around?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Is it okay to return home later than scheduled without being fearful?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Does it feel more like you have a dad than a partner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Does he give you the "silent treatment" when you want to talk of work things out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Does he try to turn the children against you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Do you feel manipulated by his kindness or gifts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Do you feel obligated to be sexual with your partner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Are your activities and interests looked upon as unimportant and trivial?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Does he sabotage your schedule and outside commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes:

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