

# WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is about more than just battering or physical assaults. It is when one person in an intimate relationship believes that they have the right to control their partner's feelings, behavior and actions by exercising *power* over the victim thru *patterns* of behavior, forcing the victim to change their behavior in response to the abuse. It's is a pattern of power and control, and something that happens more than just once.

Not all of the behaviors below alone equal abuse. To fully understand if someone is the victim of domestic violence you have to understand the *context*, *intent* and *effect* of specific behaviors. One person hitting another person is *assault* but may not be *abusive* depending on what was happening in the moment, what the individual meant to have happen, and what happened as a result of that action. Was the intent to control, dominate or create fear? Or was the person trying to regain control over their own life? Does the action have meaning because of things that happened in the past? Whose life is getting bigger or smaller as a result of the behavior?

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

---

- Ignores your feelings.
- Withholds approval, appreciation or affection as punishments.
- Humiliates you in private or public.
- Threatens to leave or tells you to leave.
- Constantly accuses you of having affairs.
- Blames you for or tells you about affairs.
- Emotional blackmail.
- Ridicules or insults your gender or gender history.
- Ridicules or insults your most valued beliefs, your religion, race, heritage, sexual orientation, or class.

### Crazy Making:

- Manipulates you with lies and contradictions.
- Maintains a good public image so other won't believe you.
- Getting you to feel sorry for them, or playing the victim.
- Minimizing or denying the obvious about what they are doing or feeling.
- Changing the subject in a fight.
- Telling you that you are the one overreacting, are crazy and need counseling.
- Twisting words – insisting that you are saying, thinking or feeling things you are not.

## Verbal Abuse

---

- Talks to you as if you were a child.
- Ridicules your appearance.
- Threatens to take children and leave.
- Tells you that you are stupid, ugly, crazy and dumb...
- Embarrasses you in public.
- Constant put-downs.
- Tells you that you are an unfit parent.
- Continually criticizes you, calls you names, shouts at you.
- Threatens to kill you, himself or others.
- Belittles important things you've accomplished
- Tells your children hurtful thing about you.

## Isolation

---

- Won't let you have or use phone or listens in on phone calls.
- Won't allow you to attend family functions or to invite people over.
- Gets others to turn against you.
- Moves you away from family and friends.
- Takes car keys or disables vehicles.
- Keeps you from working or going to school, or insists you come home immediately after.
- Expresses distrust, suspicion and dislike of family & friends.
- Creates conflict and drama with friends and family so you are embarrassed to be around them or avoid them so as to not cause trouble.
- Refuses to socialize with you.

## Financial Control

---

- Doesn't provide enough money to buy groceries or pay other bills.
- Puts all bills solely in your name so you bear liability.
- Puts all bills in their name so you have no ability to prove residency or credit, have no access to accounts, or have no authority or ability to make changes.
- Makes you account for every penny spent.
- Refuses to work or share responsibilities.
- Takes your money.
- Manipulates you into spending money, then blames you for debt.
- Controls the checkbook and/or all knowledge of assets/finances
- Doesn't provide adequate clothing, food or housing.
- Spends family funds on drugs or alcohol
- Expects you to do things in exchange for money.

## Intimidation / Threats of Violence

---

- Being physical without actually hurting you
  - Raises fist at you.
  - Punches walls or hits things near you.
  - Kicks in doors, forces them open, or opens or breaks locks to access you.
  - Destroys your personal things.
  - Blocking your path.
  - Towering over you.
  - Throws things at you or near you.
- Keeps you awake all night.
- Punishes or deprives the children if you leave him.
- Bullying (threatening to do or not do something to make you do what they wants)
  - Threatens to take the children and leave.
  - Threatens to kill you, self or other loved ones.
- Being on the offensive so you are constantly fearful of setting partner off.
- Cruelty to animals and/or children
- Breaking into house or car.
- Displaying weapons.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

---

- Pushes or shoves you.
- Holds you to keep you from leaving.
- Slaps or bites you.
- Hits or punches you.
- Throws objects at you.
- Locks you out of the house.
- Abandons you in dangerous places.
- Refuses to help when you were sick, injured or pregnant.
- Threatens or hurts you with weapons
- Assaulting the children.

## STALKING & USE OF TECHNOLOGY

---

- Follows you or shows up where you go (work, appointments, store, etc.).
- Leaves you gifts & messages.
- Get's others (including children) to report on what you do, where you go & who you see.
- Uses others to follow or harass you.
- Demands passwords to accounts.
- Goes through phones, e-mails or social network accounts to see who are your friends.
- Uses GPS or spyware to track you.
- Pretends to be someone else to harass or track you.
- Breaks into your accounts to see what you do & who you talk to.

## SEXUAL ASSUALT

---

*\*Sex includes any form of penetration of the vagina, mouth or anus by another person's body part or object.*

- Sex by coercion or threats of harm.
- Forced sex with a weapon involved.
- Inflicting injury and forcing sex.

- Causing injury resulting in unconsciousness and forcing sex.
- Breaking into building or vehicle and forcing sex.
- Sex when victim is incapable of consent due to mental incapacity or physical helplessness.

## SEXUAL ABUSE

---

- Criticizes you sexually.
- Insists on unwanted and uncomfortable touching.
- Withholds sex and affection.
- Demands you to strip or participate in sex acts that you are uncomfortable with.
- "Playful" use of force during sex.
- Non-consensual or unsafe use of force during sex
- Uses weapons during sex.

- Not respecting your safe word, or punishing you for using your safe word.
- Enjoys causing you pain during sex.
- Demands or pressures you to have sex after a beating or when you are sick.
- Prevents use from using or sabotages your birth-control method.
- Guilts or manipulates you into having sex.
- Gets you too drunk/high to resist sex.

## REPRODUCTIVE COERSION

---

- Destroying or getting rid of birth control
- Messing with birth control
- Intentionally using condom or birth control wrong
- Refusing to use condom or birth control
- Poking holes in condom
- Pulling out too late

- Pressure to get pregnant or have a child
- Threatening to hurt you if you use birth control.
- Threats of acts of violence if you do/don't get pregnant
- Threats of acts of violence if you do/don't get an abortion

## OTHER FORMS OF ABUSE

---

- Using your addiction or their addiction to manipulate you:
  - o Takes risks while intoxicated endangering you and/or the children.
  - o Tricks or forces you to assist in illegal behaviors.
  - o Threatens to return to alcohol or drug use if you do not met demands.
  - o Blames you for problems caused by their addiction.
  - o Pressures and manipulates you into becoming substance involved.
  - o Threatens to tell others about your addictions. (Especially to police, courts or CPS)

- Uses other systems to manipulate and intimidate you:
  - o Threatens to or takes you into court repeatedly.
  - o Threatens to call or repeatedly reports you to 911, ICE or CPS
  - o Threatens to report you to other authorities such as Housing.
  - o Harasses you at work.
  - o Sabotages your efforts in school.
  - o Accuses you of having addiction when you don't.