

Signs of Abuse

Every person has the right to live free from violence

This list may help you recognise if you, or someone you know, are in an abusive relationship. Most women in abusive relationships will experience a range of these behaviours from the abuser.

Experiencing any one of the following is very serious and you do not need to experience several, or all of them, for your relationship to be abusive.

Destructive criticism and verbal abuse: shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening you.

Pressure tactics: sulking; threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, take the children away, report you to welfare agencies unless you comply with his demands; lying to your friends and family about you; telling you that you have no choice in any decisions. Threaten suicide.

Disrespect: always putting you down in front of other people; not listening or responding when you talk; interrupting your telephone calls; taking money from you without asking; refusing to help with childcare or housework.

Breaking trust: lying to you; withholding information from you; being jealous; having other relationships; breaking promises and shared agreements.

Isolation: monitoring or blocking your telephone calls; telling you where you can and cannot go; stopping you from seeing friends and relatives.

Harassment: following you; checking up on you; opening your post and emails; embarrassing you in public.

Threats: making angry gestures; using physical size to intimidate; shouting you down; destroying your possessions; breaking things; punching walls; wielding a knife or a gun.

Sexual violence: using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts;

having sex with you when you don't want to have sex. Any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation.

Physical violence: punching; slapping; hitting; biting; pinching; kicking; pulling hair out; pushing; shoving; burning; strangling; raping.

Denial: saying the abuse doesn't happen; saying you caused the abusive behaviour; being publicly gentle and patient; crying and begging forgiveness; saying it will never happen again.