
Domestic Violence

In your quest to improve or fix a relationship, you may become blind to how you are being treated emotionally, physically, sexually, and economically. From your own desire to make things work, it is important that you not allow your mate, boss, parents, friend, etc, to take advantage of you through methods of power and control. You may not realize that how people treat you can be considered domestic violence. It may be hard for you to see domestic violence happening in your own home or work and mistakenly believe it is only limited to physical abuse. Domestic violence can exist in the following forms:

Emotional abuse: Criticisms, silent treatment, name-calling, belittling, hurtful statements, mind games, using the past against you, openly telling others about personal matters.

Intimidation: Instilling fear or control by using comments, actions, gestures, body language, a loud voice, throwing things, or destroying property.

Sexual abuse: Having sex against your will, treating you like a sex object, belittling or criticisms when you do not want sex.

Threats/Emotional blackmail: Verbalizing or carrying out threats to get what they want or making threatening statements toward you or a family member.

Physical abuse: Twisting arms, pushing, hitting, slapping, choking, pulling hair, or kicking.

Economic abuse: Keeping you from obtaining or quitting a job, controlling money, giving an "allowance", or limiting access to bank accounts.

Using superior attitude: Treating you like a servant, not involving you in family decisions, acting like the "master of the castle", or lording authority over you.

Religious abuse: Using God or scripture as a means to get you to do something against your will or as a form of judgment, punishment or criticism. Statements like, "And you call yourself a Christian," "God will get you for that," "God is not pleased with you," or "You're going to hell."

If there is domestic violence in your life, seek help to learn how to change your situation as soon as possible. You do not deserve this treatment and God does not want you to be subjected it. You do have a choice whether to put up with this.

If you do not feel safe, it will be harder to change yourself. You can read all the books about healing, go to the greatest counselor, and pray night and day, but until you feel physically and emotionally safe where you live, you may feel too uncomfortable (or afraid) to start making changes. For example, if your mate has a history of being critical, emotionally unsupportive, or physically hurtful, you would not feel safe to cry or say what you feel in front of your mate. You would be too afraid those feelings would be used against you. If you do not feel comfortable expressing your feelings or standing up for what you believe with the significant people in your life, seek counseling to learn what you can do about the situation.

Reference: By permission from Craig Miller, author of: When Your Mate Has Emotionally Checked Out © 2006