

What Can I Do To Escape From Emotional Abuse?

If you have completed this checklist, you have already taken the first step. You have identified some behaviours that your partner is using which are abusive. Your next step is to plan for your safety.

You begin moving forward once you stop looking for the magic button that will change your partner and save the relationship. Once you do this you are on a path which will assist you and perhaps your children.

Leaving an emotionally abusive relationship is not easy. Remembering these important points may help you take this step:

- Abuse is a game of power and control. It is not love.
- Trust your instincts - if you feel that the relationship isn't good for you, plan to get out.
- Know that you cannot 'work it out' in an abusive relationship.
- Know that you can't save your partner at the expense of your own life, emotional well-being or happiness.
- Don't feel sorry for him anymore - no more excuses, no more lies.
- Get help for you, not your partner. Believe in yourself and focus on your needs.
- Gather support for yourself - tell people you can trust the truth about what is happening and consider joining a women's group or accessing counselling.
- Take one step at a time.

You may feel angry, hurt and disappointed, and it is natural to grieve. Keeping a diary or journal of events and writing about your feelings may help. Remind yourself of what you know is real.

Try not to talk to the abuser alone as this may be when you feel at your most vulnerable. It is much more difficult to escape an abusive relationship than it is to leave a normal relationship, but it is worth the effort!

**YOU HAVE STRENGTH
TO DO THIS**

NORTHERN SYDNEY WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE

Telephone: (02) 8425 8707

Facsimile: (02) 9438 4700

Monday - Friday
9am - 5pm

Email: nswdvcas@catholiccareddb.org.au

You can ring the Northern Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service to get information and seek support if you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence.

**In an emergency ring:
000**

**24 Hr Domestic Violence Line
1800 65 64 63**



For a further relationship check, scan this code.

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Emotional Abuse Is Real

Not all relationships make us feel good. Sometimes, one partner behaves in a way that is abusive. This may be physical. It can also be emotional.

What is Emotional Abuse?

Emotional abuse is when your partner torments your mind and emotions so constantly that you feel they have destroyed the core of who you are.

An abusive partner may use one or many ways to control you. For example, they may do things like accuse you of lying or being unfaithful, or keep track of you all the time, or take control of your money.

An abusive partner can have a charming side too. Sometimes they seem to have two personalities - their behaviour can change drastically from one moment to the next. This is not insanity it is manipulation.

The games an abusive partner plays with your emotions can make you feel crazy, inadequate, guilty or confused. It is often hard to pin down emotional abuse, and your partner may say they behave as they do because they love you.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE IS AS REAL AS PHYSICAL ABUSE

Is Emotional Abuse The Same As Physical Abuse?

Emotional abuse is as real as physical abuse. They are similar in almost every way except that physical abuse and bruises are visible, while emotional ones are not. Someone experiencing emotional abuse can feel just as fearful and trapped as someone experiencing physical abuse.

What Effect does Emotional Abuse Have?

When a woman is experiencing emotional abuse, she may be affected in many different ways. She may experience panic, depression or despair and feel that there is no way out. She may feel worthless or unattractive and lose or gain weight. Or she may become dependent on alcohol or other drugs.

Sometimes a woman may not realise that what she is feeling is caused by the abuse. Women often feel responsible for the emotional well-being of their partners or families. Sometimes this is at a cost to themselves.

Is My Relationship Emotionally Abusive?

People who are abusive to their partners often use a range of behaviours which we can recognise. Similarly, when someone abuses us emotionally, we often respond in particular ways. Consider the following behaviours and mark any that you recognise in your relationship.

Does the person you love:

- show jealousy and possessiveness?
- always keep track of you?
- accuse you of lying or being unfaithful, or blame you if he is unfaithful?
- call you names like 'crazy', 'stupid' or 'ugly'?
- put you down in front of other people?
- act nice and sweet and then become suddenly angry or sometimes violent?
- use promises to change and charm, gifts or affection if you say you want to leave the relationship?
- stop your relationships with family and friends?
- stop you from working or studying or going out?

- take your money or make you account for everything you spend?
- destroy your sentimental items or personal property?
- threaten to hurt you or the children, or to stop you seeing the children if you leave?
- make all the important decisions, or undermine your decisions?
- force you to have sex against your will or in ways you don't like?
- tell you all the problems in the relationship are your fault?
- Gaslight you? - this means to do and say things that make you doubt your own sanity.
- threaten to harm or kill themselves?

In your relationship, do you:

- feel guilty all the time?
- feel responsible for your partner's emotions?
- take the blame for all the problems?
- lie to family and friends and pretend that everything is fine?
- control and hide your true emotions to avoid your partner's outbursts or tantrums?

If you recognise any of these behaviours from your relationship, then your partner may be abusing you emotionally.

