

Domestic violence is more common than you think

Did you know name calling is considered domestic violence? Most people limit domestic violence to only the occurrence of physical abuse. However, you may not realize the way people treat you can be considered domestic violence. This especially true if you grew up with domestic violence or have been living or working in an environment where you experience hurtful words or behaviors. Over time you become blind to how you are being treated emotionally, physically, sexually, and economically. It is important that you not allow people such as a spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, boss, parent, friend, professional, authority or religious figure, and workmates take advantage of you through the misuse of power, control, hurtful words or behaviors. The longer you have been with someone the more difficult it may be to recognize the words and actions as abuse. Domestic violence exists in many forms such as the following:

- Emotional abuse: Criticisms, silent treatment, name-calling, belittling, hurtful statements, mind games, using the past against you, openly telling others about personal matters that have been entrusted to you.
- 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, forcing or expecting to perform undesirable acts against your will or when you do not want sex.
- Threats/emotional blackmail: Verbalizing or carrying out threats to get what you want or making threatening statements toward you or a family member.
- Physical abuse: Twisting arms, pushing, hitting, slapping, choking, pulling hair, grabbing, or kicking.
- Economic abuse: Keeping you from obtaining or quitting a job, controlling money, giving an “allowance,” or limiting access to bank accounts with your married partner.
- Using superior attitude: Treating you like a servant, not involving a spouse in family decisions, acting like the “master of the castle,” or lording authority over others.
- 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 you don’t....”

Domestic violence, for example, can show up subtly through sarcastic humor or “playful” shoving and over time move into verbal or physical abuse. Most people that regularly use hurtful words or behaviors are acting out of their hurt and anger from the abuse in their own past. Unfortunately, most abusers do not see this trait in their life but will be quick to point out faults in everyone else. Usually the more insecure the receiver is the more likely the abuse will be

allowed. The longer the abuser is allowed to be hurtful, the more the abuse will become expected, until the time the receiver decides to set boundaries to stop the abuse.

If there is domestic violence in your life, seek professional help to learn why you have become involved in this type of relationship and what to do with your situation. You do not deserve this treatment and no one should be subjected to it. You do have a choice whether to put up with disrespect from others.

Copyright © 2014 Craig Miller Craig Miller is Co-owner/counselor at Masterpeace Counseling @ www.mpccd.com and a speaker, author @ www.feelingsbook.com