

Forms of Abuse

Domestic violence comprises a wide range of types of abuse. Incidents are not generally a one-time event. The perpetrator can be seen as forming part of a coercive pattern of controlling behavior. This list includes some of the ways in which a person experiencing violence might be abused. Not all behaviors would necessarily fall within the criminal law. Since statistics indicate that the greater percentage of abusers are male (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Highlights from 20 years of Surveying Crime Victims, Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1993, p. 25) abusers will be referred to as he/him and the victim as she/her. However, anyone can be abusive or abused.

Physical Abuse

- Slapping
- Smacking in the face
- Pushing
- Shoving
- Pushing downstairs
- Punching
- Kicking
- Hitting
- Hitting with objects
- Restraining her against her will
- Holding her down
- Banging her head against the floor
- Banging head against the wall
- Bruising
- Blacking eyes
- Biting
- Breaking bones
- Burning
- Burning with cigarettes
- Burning with acid
- Scalding
- Shaking
- Suffocating

- Throwing her
- Tying her hands/feet
- Throwing objects at her
- Attacking someone with a weapon
- Stabbing
- Stripping her clothing
- Forcing her to hurt herself
- Forcing her to drink alcohol
- Forcing her to take drugs
- Withholding medication
- Withholding care from the dis-abled
- Holding her head underwater
- Drowning
- Attempted murder
- Murder

Sexual Abuse

- Rape
- Having sex while she is sleeping
- Insisting on having sex anytime/anywhere
- Refusing to have sex
- Having affairs to humiliate her
- Having sex with others in front of her
- Denying and or criticizing her sexuality
- Expecting her to have sex after being abused
- Using objects during intercourse against her will
- Forcing sexual acts she does not like
- Forced oral sex
- Forced anal sex
- Forcing her to watch or engage in pornography
- Enforcing sadomasochistic activity
- Forcing her to perform sexual acts in front of children/other people
- Forcing her to perform sexual acts with other people
- Forcing her to perform sexual acts with animals
- Refusing her access to contraception
- Forcing abortion

- Assaulting her when she is pregnant
- Sexually abusing her children
- Sexual name calling

Intimidation

- Making her afraid by looks, actions, gestures
- Breaking objects
- Breaking valued possession
- Driving dangerously
- Driving car at children
- Driving car at someone
- Being violent to others to teach her a lesson
- Hurting children
- Telling her stories about how he has hurt others
- Keeping her locked in a room
- Keeping her locked in a cupboard or under stairs
- Taking away her possessions
- Destroying her possessions
- Throwing away her clothes
- Telling her how he would like to hurt her
- Locking her out
- Intimidating others so that they do not intervene to help

Threats

- Saying, "Next time it will be you!"
- Setting fire to her home
- Sending threatening letters
- Phoning her and making her feel afraid
- Not letting her use phone
- Cutting off the phone
- Mocking or humiliating her
- Mocking or humiliating her in front of others
- Abusing her in front of others
- Threats of physical violence
- Threats of future physical violence
- Threats of sexual violence

- Threats of future sexual violence
- Threats with weapons or objects
- Threats to kill her
- Threats to take her children away
- Threats to harm or kill another loved one
- Threats to harm or kill pets
- Threats to self-harm or commit suicide
- Threats to have her deported
- Threats to report her to the authorities
- Threats to destroy possessions
- Threats to burn down her home
- Threats to exclude her from her family or community
- Threats to make her lose her job
- Threats to expose things she is ashamed of to others
- Exposing things she is ashamed of to others

Isolation

- Restricting her movements
- Preventing her from keeping appointments
- Timing her movements
- Accompanying her everywhere
- Following her everywhere
- Making decisions for her
- Making her work long hours
- Preventing her from working
- Isolating her from her friends and family
- Making her family and friends too scared to contact her
- Turning her family and friends against her
- Getting his family or friends to intimidate her
- Isolating her from her community
- Telling her no one else cares about her or will love her
- Taking away her documents and papers
- Removing or hiding her passport
- Preventing her from learning the local language
- Having others believe him over her despite evidence to the contrary
- Telling her children lies about her

- Making her tell lies for him
- Manipulating her children
- Telling her children things she doesn't want them to know
- Turning her children against her
- Harassing her after separation
- Using child contact to harass her
- Having her children taken away from her
- Getting information about her from her children
- Sending her unwanted gifts
- Being obsessively possessive
- Being obsessively jealous
- Watching her at home or work
- Destroying her letters
- Allowing her no privacy
- Preventing her from leaving/escaping

Mental/Psychological Emotional Abuse

- Making her put things back in an exact order
- Finding endless trivial tasks for her to do
- Making her continually redo tasks after finding fault with what she has done
- Making her polish the soles of his shoes
- Enforcing a routine only to change it anytime
- Only letting her use the bathroom or toilet at certain times of day
- Preventing her from sleeping
- Making her sleep on the floor
- Preventing her from eating
- Making her eat inedible food or disgusting things
- Making her lick dinner plates clean
- Using racism against her
- Telling her that her reactions are irrational
- Telling her there is no escape
- Withdrawing affection
- Ignoring her
- Refusing to talk to her
- Repeatedly interrogating her
- Behaving unpredictably

- Keeping her constantly on edge
- Making her afraid to go to sleep
- Making her afraid to wake up
- Continually breaking promises
- Making her do things she doesn't want to do to prove her love

Economic Abuse

- Preventing her from getting or keeping a job
- Preventing her from studying
- Destroying her work
- Taking her money
- Refusing her money
- Refusing her economic independence
- Demanding receipts for all spending
- Making her ask or beg for money
- Keeping her misinformed about her entitlements
- Incurring debts and expecting her to pay them
- Incurring debts in her name
- Forcing her to commit acts of fraud
- Not providing modern conveniences to help lighten housework
- Making her give him her money
- Not having her name on bank accounts
- Not letting her be part owner of home/car, etc.
- Preventing her from writing checks
- Preventing her from learning how to balance checkbook

Verbal Abuse

- Shouting at her
- Screaming at her
- Insulting her
- Undermining her
- Telling her what to wear
- Criticizing her appearance
- Criticizing her abilities
- Criticizing her sexual performance
- Criticizing her work or housekeeping

- Telling her do housework in the middle of the night
- Criticizing her in front of others
- Telling her she is mad
- Telling her she is ugly
- Telling her she is stupid
- Telling her she is a disgrace
- Telling her she is a slut
- Telling her she is useless
- Telling her she is worthless
- Telling her she is a failure
- Telling her she is a bad mother
- Telling her nobody else would want her
- Telling her no one would believe her
- Telling her that his behavior is normal
- Making her accept that his behavior is normal
- Telling her he only abuses her because he loves her

Minimization/Denial

- Minimizing the harm that he has caused
- Denying that any abuse has taken place
- Telling her that it is her fault
- Making her believe that it is her fault.

Spiritual/Religious Abuse

- Making her feel that it is her Christian duty to stay in an abusive relationship to honor God
- Using texts out of context to support and condone abuse
- Twisting Scriptures to support and condone unconditional authority and superiority of men over women
- Lack of respect for female leadership in the church
- Expecting and requiring her to totally submit to male leadership under all circumstances
- Portraying God as Someone who is cruel and vindictive
- Using the Bible to perpetuate and justify abuse