

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, is a pattern of abusive behaviors, characterized by one partner's need to control the other by using a range of tactics. While the frequency and severity of physical or sexual violence may vary, coercion, intimidation and emotional manipulation occur on a routine basis throughout the relationship.

### Psychological Abuse:

Abuse which deliberately destroys your self confidence; it makes you feel you are useless, stupid or going crazy. It can be described as a type of brainwashing where you believe that everything that goes wrong is your fault.

### Verbal Abuse:

Constantly putting you down, calling you names, making you feel worthless, or making comments about your competence. Humiliating you or insulting you in public. Can also include threats of physical abuse.

### Financial Abuse:

When you are not allowed to have a say in how the money is spent, or being refused money for family needs, being made to get into debt for the other person.

### Sexual Abuse:

Being forced to have unwanted sexual contact or drugging you to have unwanted sexual contact.

### Physical Abuse:

Physical assault can take many forms from pushing, poking, biting, burning, slapping, hair pulling, strangulation, using a weapon, smashing things or hurting children or pets.

*"In spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace."*



# Don't turn your back on domestic violence



If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, call the helplines:

**Social Services (242) 376-3538**

**Bahamas Crisis Centre (242) 328-0922**

[www.bahamaslotus.com](http://www.bahamaslotus.com)

242-603-0446

46 Bernard Road

Nassau, The Bahamas



SCAN ME



# Bahamas Lotus

Non-Profit Organization



## Domestic Violence

*"Trauma may happen to you, but it can never define you."*

Melinda Longtin



## WHO EXPERIENCES DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse can happen to ANYONE, regardless of race, religion, marital status, age, gender, education, income, etc. Abusers can be ANYONE, even well-respected community or church members.

### Knowing the facts.

- Domestic violence is a social problem. It is rooted in social values that place importance on people having power over others, and allow violence against women and other groups to occur with minimal and/or inconsistent punishment.
- Domestic violence is not caused by drugs or alcohol, mental illness, being “provoked,” stress, or poor anger management. Abuse is a purposeful and deliberate behavior aimed at gaining power and control over another person.
- Victims seeking help with abuse face many barriers, including fear of injury, shame and self-blame, lack of money, resources and support, social pressures to keep their family together and other cultural taboos.
- Racism, homophobia, ageism and discrimination based on physical ability, nationality or other factors help to perpetuate domestic violence and make finding safety even more difficult for some victims.
- Domestic violence can have many negative impacts on victims such as lowered self-confidence, physical illness and disability, difficulty trusting self/others, and poverty. Despite these impacts, victims find many creative and courageous ways to survive and protect themselves and their children.

Domestic violence is a serious problem that can happen to anyone.

Without help, domestic violence often gets worse over time. It can sometimes become deadly.

If you feel you are a victim of domestic violence you have options!

### Does Your Partner Ever...

- Hit, kick, shove, or injure you?
- Use weapons/objects against you or threaten you?
- Force or coerce you to engage in unwanted sexual acts?
- Threaten to hurt you or others, have you deported, disclose your sexual orientation, or other personal information?
- Steal or destroy your belongings?
- Constantly criticize you, call you names, or put you down?
- Deny your basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, or medical and physical assistance?
- Control what you do and who you want to see?
- Make you feel afraid?
- If you answered “yes” to any of the questions, you may be a victim of domestic violence.



No one deserves to be battered.  
You have the right to be safe.

Things you can do to increase your safety:

- Tell others you trust
- Memorize emergency numbers
- Identify escape routes and places to go
- Talk with your children about what they should do if a violent incident occurs or if they are afraid
- Put together an emergency bag
- Trust your instincts

### What if I Am the One Behaving Abusively?

- Take responsibility for your actions and their consequences on those around you.
- Know that change is possible, but you must take action immediately, or your behavior will continue to worsen.
- Seek help from those around you and resources in your community (numbers provided on back of pamphlet)

