



AN URGENT REPORT FOR EVERY WOMAN

The 3 Most Dangerous Events in an Abusive Relationship

Life Strategies Network

Prepared by NonViolenceAlliance.org

This report was derived from several published research studies and years of study and observations of criminally charged domestic violence offenders in behavior modification classes held at Life Strategies Network and the Nonviolence Alliance. No information included in this report is attributed to any particular client due to confidentiality requirements under HEEPA. For that reason, the sources of any specific comments attributed to clients remain anonymous. Certainly not all men are abusive and there is no single reason for abusive behavior. This information is offered as an early warning to the danger you may encounter if you partner displays violent personality characteristics. For more details about early warning signs, order your copy of *If I Had Known* available on Amazon.

If you are in immediate danger of physical abuse contact your local 911 authority. For routine help contact local social services providers or the National Domestic Violence Abuse Hotline call 1-800-799-7233 or text: loveis to 1-866-331-9474 for support from a peer advocate 24/7/365.

The #1 Most Dangerous Event In An Abusive Relationship



Author Jane Brown, in her description of her book "*Gaslighting*" mentioned the following:

*"for example, the Gaslighter would say that something didn't happen when you clearly remember that it did. This doesn't sound like brutal abuse, but if done often, **it can really undermine your mental health. Gaslighting makes you feel confused and threatened when you're around your abuser, and you're often indecisive because you no longer trust your judgment.**"*

That quote explains precisely why I have endeavored to provide this critical information that can keep you safe, in fact keep you alive when confronted with the reality of an abusive partner and faced with your ultimate decision to leave a bad relationship with an abuser. My book "*If I Had Known*" describes the five

most predominant leading indicators of relationship abuse according to more than one thousand men criminally charged with domestic abuse who participated in our 26 week program to reduce family violence and relationship abuse.

From what was shared by those men in those classes along the supporting published data and research science it was determined that these are the three most dangerous events in an abusive relationship.

3-2-1-Let's Do A Countdown

Here is a countdown of those three most dangerous events in a relationship where abuse is present. Two events can be mitigated with the insights provided here in this report. With proper awareness and deliberate consideration you can avoid these dangerous events and make an informed choice about your level of involvement with an abusive personality. The first, the #1 most dangerous event, is ultimately the last resort.

Cohabitation and Pregnancy: The Incubators of Physical Violence Escalation



The third most dangerous event is COHABITATING OR MARRIAGE. Cohabiting concentrates the amount of time you will spend together and surfaces expectations which may not have been explicitly

discussed and negotiated during the courtship and later development of the relationship. The combination of these two elements increases the likelihood for conflicts. If you do not possess good conflict management skills most likely you will resort to reacting with your emotions. Anger will be met with anger; Shaming

with shaming. Unless you have the capacity to stand up for your feelings against your dominant, partner you may withdraw and feel like a small child relegated to your room for bad behavior even when you did nothing wrong.

Glennon Doyle, author of *Love Warrior*, in an interview with Lewis Howes's on *The School of Greatness* podcast, speaking about the social conditioning of women stated:

“We are supposed to be grateful for good enough. A good mother does not hurt her children” (by standing up for her boundaries). Glennon stated she found herself staying in her marriage for her daughter “modeling bad love and calling that good mothering” instead of asking “Would I want this for her?”

She described a woman's root beliefs as “staying quiet, pretty, submissive, accommodating and pleasing. As a wife: supportive and sacrificial. As a mother: a martyr. She slowly buries her emotions, ambitions, dreams and feelings.”

If this describes you, most likely you will not stand up to your abuser. He selected you because he recognized you would be subservient to him.

The obligations and responsibilities of cohabitation and exacerbated by the confines of marriage and living up to the expectations of another person do not conform well to the expectation of independence and self determination of the true narcissist. This was described as feeling “handcuffed” or “locked down” by several of our clients. You are window dressing for the world to see, but not permitted to define his independent life. He is in complete control even when he lets you feel you are.

Women have typically described that “He changed after we got married” or “He is not the man I fell in love with”. In actuality he is just peeling off his false persona and revealing his true self. If he is skilled at manipulation he will reveal himself slowly so as not to scare you away. After all, he needs you to take care of his immediate needs. He wants to keep you close because he has the lead. If he is not so suave, you may see more of him than you bargained for much sooner in the marriage.

The second most dangerous event in an abusive relationship is PREGNANCY, especially an unplanned and undesired pregnancy in an unmarried situation.



Pregnancy represents a level of increased connection with added responsibility that may not be something that he wanted for himself. He may see your pregnancy as interfering with his unrestrained life. This mindset is typically revealed in situations where men have tried to terminate the pregnancy by hitting or kicking the woman in the abdomen to induce termination of the pregnancy. His behavior communicates his true feeling about being tagged with a child. Whether he wants to be linked to you for the long term is another question, but clearly

even if he does desire the relationship he is displaying that he does not want it to be encumbered with the responsibility of a child.

The most common situation for violence results when birth control has not been discussed in advance and the responsibility for birth control determined between you. The highest risk of escalation of violence occurs when you become pregnant and it was not agreed to in advance. Certainly you will get the blame for getting pregnant when he did not want you to.

Some of ways the men in the group classes expressed the looming commitment of marriage or the responsibility of being a father to a child was **“terrifying”, “limiting”, “holding me back” “being tricked” and “feeling boxed in” in their words**. Fatherhood may be a situation he is trying to avoid yet still engaging in sex promiscuously. We can’t stress enough how important it is to discuss pregnancy prior to engaging in unprotected sex.

Look back at his level of commitment and the longevity of his past relationships. If he has been willing to discuss past relationship (some men won’t discuss his past relationships in any detail because sharing that information may reveal his compulsive behaviors), what has he shared as his explanation for why those relationships had failed. There may be legitimate reasons or there may be a lot of blaming his partner and deflecting accountability. List three ways he has described responsibility for the failure of his past relationships.

1

2

3

At the end of each identify if he has minimized, blamed or deflects responsibility for its failure. Put one point if he takes accountability for it failing or a zero if he deflects, blames, or minimizes. What's his score after only three examples? If you need more examples to form a conclusion, on a separate piece of paper write several more things you have heard him say about his past relationships and why they failed. In my book *"If I Had Known"* I include a complete worksheet for this exercise plus more exercises to help you identify ways he deflects accountability in his relationships. [Click here](#) to get your personal copy of the book.

Decision Point- The Ultimate Life or Death Event

If you choose to end the toxic relationship because he demonstrates he is unwilling to avoid violent behavior with you, begin to plan your exit strategy and organize your support network. The #1 most dangerous event in an abusive relationship is when you leave the relationship. If something life threatening is going to occur, it could happen at pregnancy but more likely this is when it is most likely to happen. Your decision to leave will be seen by him as the ultimate betrayal. The abuser does not want to be disempowered or opposed. The most common forms of the ultimate act of physical violence are strangulation or death by firearm. Physical mutilation or dismemberment sometimes occurs after death.



According to Wikipedia,

"Women who had been abused by an intimate partner reported higher rates of strangulation. Strangulation is sometimes fatal. According to a large U.S. case control study, prior (non-lethal) strangulation is a substantial and unique predictor of attempted and completed homicide of women by a male intimate partner."

As recently as May 26, 2020 the National Center for Biotechnology Information published that:

“Women in abusive relationships are at the greatest risk of this type of injury.”

Strangulation Injuries - StatPearls - NCBI Bookshelf www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov › books › NBK459192

Even a non-lethal attempt to strangle you can have a serious impact on your physical and mental health. An Oklahoma study published in 2019 found:

“Strangulation of women is a persistent and increasingly reported form of violence with hundreds of cases reported annually, criminal justice system officials say. It is not always fatal, but it is terrifying and can cause long-term injuries and trauma. It also has been shown by researchers to be a precursor to homicide, a signal that this type of domestic violence often leads to a lethal assault. 80% of women who were abused by their partner from 2009 to 2013 had been strangled during that relationship. Forty percent reported multiple strangulations. Strangulation victims are 750% more likely to be killed than victims who have never been strangled. In its most recent report, Oklahoma’s Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board found that in many of intimate-partner homicides reviewed by the group over the past decade, there was a history of non-fatal strangulation.”

Strangulation Of Women Is Common, Chilling – And Often A Grim Harbinger ...
www.kgou.org › post › strangulation-women-common-... May 30, 2019

“One in four women will experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetimes, and of women at high risk, up to 68 percent will experience near-fatal strangulation by their partner. Of the victims, 97 percent are strangled by hands; 38 percent reported losing consciousness; 35 percent are strangled during sexual assault/abuse; 9 percent are also pregnant, and 70 percent of strangled women believed they were going to die. As a history of strangulation is a high-risk factor for intimate partner homicide, be sure to provide your patients with resources for safety planning if they are ready to leave their abusive partner.”

Psychology Today: The Truth About Domestic Violence Murders Mar 29, 2017

“Non-lethal strangulation has become more common in domestic abuse cases in the United States over the last decade (2003-2013), experts say. But strangulation is ranked as more dangerous than other forms of physical abuse, and studies suggest that strangulation is often a predictor for homicide.” www.mobileodt.com › blog › taking-your-breath-away... Oct 16, 2019

“A 2008 study in the Journal of Emergency Medicine suggested that the risks of an attempted homicide increase about 7X for women who have been strangled by their partner. The study also found that 43 percent of women murdered in domestic assaults, and 45 percent of victims of attempted murder, had been strangled by a partner in the previous year. While most domestic violence murder victims are shot

or stabbed, strangulation has moved up to the third-most frequent cause of death”(in 2013) Life and Death in Your Hands: Strangulation more common in domestic abuse cases ...
www.strangulationtraininginstitute.com › *life-and-death...* Jul 22, 2013

Recently in 2019 in Connecticut a wife and mother of five children Jennifer Dulos



went missing in proximity to her filing for custody of her children during the divorce from her estranged husband Fotis Dulos. Her body is believed by authorities to have been dismembered but has not been located as of the time of this writing. Jennifer was living apart from her husband at the time of her disappearance. In 2019 after Jennifer’s disappearance local TV Fox 61 reported “Documents from the divorce proceedings reveal that Jennifer Dulos claimed her husband **was verbally**

abusive and she worried he would attempt to take their children from her. **“I am afraid of my husband,”** reads an affidavit tied to an order of custody filed in June 2017. **“I know that filing for divorce and filing this motion will enrage him. I know he will retaliate by trying to harm me in some way.”** In the affidavit, Jennifer Dulos claimed Fotis Dulos had exhibited “irrational, unsafe, **bullying, threatening and controlling behavior.**” Jennifer Dulos said she grew increasingly afraid of her husband after he **purchased a handgun** about two years ago. **“I am terrified for my family’s safety, especially since discovering the gun, since my husband has a history of controlling, volatile and delusional behavior,”** the affidavit says.

Fotis Dulos committed suicide prior to resolving their custody dispute and shortly after being charged with her disappearance.

If he strangles you, the act of strangulation cuts off blood circulation to your brain (this reduces oxygen to the brain inducing confusion and disorientation before you become unconscious, a more intense physical version of verbal gaslighting) and pressure to your throat restricts your breath. You cannot oppose him with your voice if you can’t breathe.

If he dismembers you, you cannot, under your own will, conclude the ultimate betrayal of leaving him. He controls your departure.

Your leaving is the antithesis of the control he sought to have over you. Women have described various promises their partners made and other forms of manipulation their partners employed to try to get her to stay. You can expect the same. Your leaving is the ultimate wound to his ego. First, he is losing control. Second, he is losing his the caretaker of his most immediate needs. Third and most importantly, he is losing his dominance over you.

Michael Jordan, world famous basketball icon of the Chicago Bulls, said in *Last Dance* (episode 2), a documentary about his basketball career with the Bulls,

“If you’re trying to maintain dominance over people, you don’t want to give them a chance to gain confidence.” (MJ Last Dance episode 2)

Obviously, he is speaking about basketball competition but the sentiment applies to a dominant domestic partner seeking to control you. It reveals the hyper-masculine mindset to win by domination.

Always have an exit strategy before you end the relationship when abusive patterns have been present.

Leaving is the ULTIMATE decision. The impact of leaving will reverberate through your life and your children’s lives for a long, long time. Don’t take that choice lightly. Here are some things to consider if and when you decide you have to get away from your abusive partner:

- 1) Educate yourself regarding the various forms of abuse. In a training offered



by author Robert Allen he displayed a group of 100 cubic zirconium diamonds spread out on a tabletop. Among the group of cubits he placed one real diamond. He asked for someone to come up and select the real diamond. If you

selected the real diamond he would give the winner \$100. The purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate that unless you had the know-how to identify the real diamond there was no justification for accepting the challenge. It was simply a gamble. For our purposes here, the challenge is similar. Know what you are getting yourself into when you decide to leave.

The book *The Art of War* suggests it is most important to “Know your adversary”. It is not my intention to suggest that all men are your adversary but in this case he will be and the lesson is similar. BE PREPARED for who and what you have invited into your life.

- 2) Inquire of friends and family, people who will be honest with you, how he speaks about you to them and how they have heard him speak about you



to others. They also will have an objective opinion of your partner and see things you may not notice from up close. In the TV series *The Bachelor* the participant gets a chance to bring his

selections home so his family and friends can weigh in with their

observations of the women or men the participant has selected in their final four. The saying “love is blind” means we sometimes will not see what may be obvious to others who are not involved in the emotional vortex.

- 3) Have a safety plan which includes emergency notifications to family or friends. I have included a detailed safety plan below. Dr. Phil’s wife Robin has created an app with an inconspicuous icon for a cell phone which forwards a pre-recorded message to friends or authorities if you are in immediate danger. Your location is



tracked by GPS in your phone. You can visit her website <https://www.whengeorgiasmiled.org> to install the app on your phone.



- 4) If you feel the relationship is deteriorating to where you have decided to leave or pursue divorce, let people you trust know have decided to leave the relationship. The art of leaving safely is preparing in advance to avoid the disruption of the sudden departure. If you have children or real property the process will be more complicated.

- 5) Pay attention to your gut. If you’re feeling like something isn’t right you are probably correct. Proceed with caution and be informed. You can find additional support and information from women who have left abusive

partners to help you prepare in our exclusive LSN Confidential Support Group for Survivors of Domestic Abuse. Join the group [HERE](#).

- 6) If you identify that YOU have a habitual PATTERN of inviting abusive partners into your life seek professional help to examine your choices and change your own pattern. Your life may ultimately depend on it.

What If He'll Change?

“Psychoanalytic and psychodynamic writings, in contrast, understand denial, minimization, and blaming as forms of largely unconscious defense against threats to the self. According to these theories, such defenses are most necessary when individuals have an inner sense of themselves as shameful, powerless, and unlovable.”

(Clulow, 2001; Papps & O'Carroll, 1998)



This sentiment was verified by my personal observations in my experiences with the men in our classes that has led me to conclude that not all abusers are narcissists. Some men just don't know how to appropriately interact with women in a healthy and respectful relationship. Instead they are acting out based on their socialization or influencers. They have been indoctrinated into a false concept of being masculine.

In 1998 and updated in 2013, Jackson Katz published a documentary video “Tough Guise” illustrating how boys are influenced by media and socialized to represent this false sense of masculinity that perpetuates violent behavior.

It is for those abusive partners willing to learn, committed to change their behavior and reconstruct new ways of expressing themselves and meeting their needs in relationship that I have created the ***Red Flags to Road Maps***[™] program. The engaging 26 session program teaches strategies to avoid abuse and increases self-awareness and self-moderation, including a revolutionary 10-second method to create the mind shift necessary to communicate with respect and appreciation in a relationship. You can click [HERE](#) to learn more about the program and be placed on the waiting list for the next session.

A Safety Plan Created Just For You

If you would like to receive a free copy of the complete Safe Escape safety Plan please contact us directly by email at LSN Confidential Support Network on Facebook and we will forward it to a safe email or text location of your preference. The safety plan uses the acronym for PREPARE to help you remember what you will need to do if leaving is the choice you make.

If you need additional guidance you can reach out to the Life Strategies Network Confidential Support Group for Victims of Domestic Abuse for consultation.

Above all, trust your instinct, surround yourself with people you can rely on, and safety first.

Always safety first.

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