

Domestic Violence

TYPES AND SIGNS

DEFINITION:

Abuse occurs as a person in a position of greater influence uses his personal capacities to diminish the personal capacities of those under his influence in order to control them.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Definition: Deliberately physically aggressive or violent behavior by one person toward another.

Signs to Watch For:

Threatening posture	Blocking the door	Stalking	Stabbing
Slamming doors	Grabbing	Forced confinement	Biting
Clenched fists	Pushing	Destroying objects	Punching walls

SEXUAL ABUSE:

Definition: Any nonconsensual or exploitive sexual behavior or activity imposed on an individual without their consent.

Signs to Watch For:

Sexual teasing intended to harm	Sexual coercion	Forced sex after assault
Forcing unwanted sexual behavior	Criticizing sexual performance	Refusing sex to punish or manipulate
Coercing or forcing use or viewing of pornography	Unwanted touch	Purposeful injury to sexual organs

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE:

Definition: A pattern of behavior in which one person deliberately and repeatedly subjects another to nonphysical acts that are detrimental to behavioral and affective functioning and overall mental well-being.

Signs to Watch For:

Cold shoulder	Blame-shifting	Denying	Humiliation
Silent treatment	Isolating from friends	Manipulation through threats	Instinctive defensiveness
Habitual dishonesty	Minimizing	Withholding aid and support	Playing mind games

VERBAL ABUSE:

Definition: Extremely critical, threatening, or insulting words delivered in oral or written form and intended to demean, belittle, or frighten the recipient.

Signs to Watch For:

Criticizing	Accusing	Threatening	Guilt-tripping
Biting sarcasm	Berating	Name-calling	Questioning your beliefs
Demeaning	Mocking	Badgering	Patronizing

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ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL ABUSE:

Definition: Making or attempting to make an individual financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources.

Signs to Watch For:

Preventing or prohibiting job training	Incurring excessive debt	Forbidding work
Withholding money or giving an allowance	Refusing to contribute to family income	Sabotaging employment opportunities
Excluding from financial decisions	Preventing access to accounts	Hiding assets

SPIRITUAL ABUSE:

Definition: A pattern of using one's spiritual position and/or knowledge to control or dominate another person.

Signs to Watch For:

Misusing Scripture for selfish ends	Over-spiritualizing	Trust demanded
Lack of teachability with Scripture	Hyper-headship mentality	Excessive legalism
Lack of mutual honor and respect	Preoccupation with authority	Lack of vulnerability/accountability

DIGITAL ABUSE:

Definition: The use of technologies such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner.

Signs to Watch For:

Hacking phones	Tracking GPS location	Creating false profiles	Stealing or insisting on passwords
Hacking email	Prohibiting social media	Prohibiting online activity	Pressuring to use explicit materials
Stalking online	Monitoring social media	Excessive calling/texting	Checking your devices

Resources:

APA Dictionary of Psychology: <https://dictionary.apa.org/psychological-abuse>

Moles, C. (2023). Caring for families caught in domestic abuse: A Guide toward protection, refuge, and hope. New Growth Press

Pierre, J. & Wilson, G. (2021). When home hurts: A Guide for responding wisely to domestic abuse in your church. Christian Focus.

FURTHER QUESTIONS TO ASK IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED:

- ✓ When were the first, most recent, and worst times you have experienced this kind of behavior from him/her?
- ✓ Are there children in your home? Does he treat them with harshness? In what ways?
- ✓ Do you ever feel afraid for your safety or the safety of your children?
- ✓ Do you lack access to basic needs without his/her consent? Which needs are you lacking?
- ✓ Does s/he know you are sharing these things with me? What do you think might happen if/when he finds out?

FOR HELP WITH PLANNING FOR SAFETY:

<https://www.thehotline.org/plan-for-safety/create-your-personal-safety-plan/>