

All Abuse Hurts!

Most people think “abuse” is just **physical attacks** such as hitting, punching, kicking, pulling hair, twisting limbs, pinching, slapping, biting, etc.

There are many other type of abusive behavior which hurt just as much or more than physical abuse. *Just because an abuser stops hitting his spouse doesn't mean he has stopped being abusive.* Here are other varieties of abuse which are just as destructive as physical abuse:

- **Emotional Abuse**—Name-calling, mind games, “crazy-making,” belittling, shaming, extreme manipulation, coercion.
- **Economic Abuse**—Withholding money as punishment and making partner beg for necessities, demanding partner to relinquish rights to her own paycheck, requiring partner to account for all money spent (down to the exact penny).
- **Isolation**—Limits phone calls or visits to or from friends or family; listens in or “bugs” phone calls; restricts access to telephone, mail, car, or people; monitors all incoming and outgoing mail; forbids partner to leave the house unless given permission or accompanied by abuser.
- **Sexual Abuse**—Forces partner to have sex at any time, any place abuser desires; demands sexual acts that are uncomfortable or distasteful to partner; physical abuse to sexual organs; subjects partner to pornography or bizarre sexual activities; degrades partner's body.
- **Threats**—To leave or end the relationship, to commit suicide or harm someone else, to take the children, to spread lies about their partner, to hurt or kill their partner or partner's family/friends, to ruin partner financially, to destroy personal property or kill pets, to reveal secrets or confidential conversations.

- **Intimidation**—Suggesting that partner is inferior or “less than;” cruel remarks about partner's looks; ridiculing partner's ideas; using gestures, angry looks, loud voice, or cursing to control or cause fear, yelling and screaming.
- **Humiliation**—(much like intimidation) Inappropriate humor designed to put down partner; public criticism of appearance, parenting skills, housekeeping or cooking skills; pushing someone's face into a bowl of food (or worse); forcing food or other objects into someone's mouth; public showing of embarrassing photos or video clips.
- **Violence to pets or property**—Throwing things, punching holes in walls, stomping on things which he has thrown to the floor, pounding fists on doors or tables to generate fear, breaking doors or windows to get to partner, destroying partner's personal property or keepsakes, injuring or killing pets.
- **Silent Treatment**—Refusing to communicate, using silence as a weapon to manipulate.
- **Using Children**—Manipulating children to get information or give information, misuse or disrespect of visitation time, withholding child support, bribing children with gifts or activities, undermining the other parent's authority, blaming or putting down the other parent in front of the children, using subtle manipulation to brainwash the child into believing one parent is trying to prevent the child from seeing the other, competing to be the most caring parent in the child's eyes.
- **Irrational Blaming**—Holding the other partner responsible for everything that goes wrong, for problems with children, financial difficulties, car breakdowns, holiday stress, loss of promotion, loss of job, weight loss or gain, losing his temper, violent behavior, etc., etc., etc.
- **Spiritual Abuse**—Misuses scripture to keep partner “in line,” unbiblical interpretation of “submission” and lack of understanding about husband's role in the home (servant leader), using scripture to justify abusive and oppressive behavior.
- **Macho Male Privilege**—Treats children and spouse like property to use or dispose of at his whim, punishes spouse when she disobeys or disappoints, dictates orders and makes all decisions, expects everyone in home to cater to his needs, threatens anyone who defies or questions his authority.
- **Power and Control**—Will not allow anyone to make any decisions without his approval; monitors food consumed, money spent, utilities used (heat, air, water), phone calls, mail, time spent outside the home; governs activities inside the home; rules TV choices and volume; restricts right to decorate or organize home without his permission, refuses to allow repairs or replace broken appliances; controls clothing choices and hairstyles; will not allow spouse to express opinions or develop friendships; denies spouse any free time to relax or recover from illness; leaves daily list of demands with a warning attached if they are not accomplished.
- **Stalking**—Following to work, church, appointments, etc.; calling multiple times a day to check up on things; spying, leaving messages on car or under door to let you know they have access to you when they want it; finding about appointments with doctors, lawyers, or counselors and contacting them before you arrive with an intimidating message.

All of the above abuse is not illegal, but all is sinful and destructive.

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