

DOMESTIC PARTNER ABUSE

Sustained physical, verbal, mental and/or sexual abuse of a woman in a relationship often results in a severe stress disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD. This kind of disorder can be so severe physical and mental disorders may occur. Thus it can compare to post intense combat situations. The wounds can also be life-threatening or cause death.

Domestic violence or abuse can be physical, emotional and/or sexual between members of a family who may or may not be biologically related. This can include a married couple, children, a live-in couple, a boyfriend-girlfriend type of relationship, and any companion animals in the household.

Most often the male partner is physically stronger and wealthier than the wife or girlfriend. The abuser thus knows this, feels this and takes advantage of the situation.

Many abusive partners and victims have witnessed some kind of abuse during childhood or somehow have been desensitized to it later on in adulthood.

General characteristics of abusive persons and situations include but are certainly not limited to the following:

- Overly envious
- Possessive
- Jealous
- Controlling

-Suffers from an inferiority complex (I'm better, smarter and more important than you; you are below me). This feeling may be relieved by trying to appear superior to the partner in strength (emotional and physical), independence and intelligence.

-The abuser must be the center of focus. He must be the most important person in his partner's life (often times without exception even regarding offspring and in-laws). Pregnancy may bring out bitter feelings. Everything must revolve around him.

-Power famished (looks and talks down at you).

-His mood, feelings, aspirations, likes, dislikes, etc., are important, not yours.

-The abused partner must be dependent on him and fearful of him.

-The abusive partner cuts her down often mercilessly, usually in private (because he knows that he's doing wrong and maybe someone will try to defend her if done in front of others, but there are cases of this kind of abuse happening in front of others. Each case is unique.

-He plays mind games with you. When it gets real bad it becomes evident that the abuser is mentally unstable.

-Your opinions and aspirations are worth nothing (I don't want to hear it), you're his personal property (you belong to him), and often-times you're a sex object (a whore in a sense).

-He does not 'grant' you the right to fight back or defend yourself.

-He calls you the most wicked and horrible names.

-At times he may deny that he abuses you. However, during the make-up phase he may cry like a baby, apologize with incredible intensity and 'promise' to be good to you thereafter.

-He has incredible fears; you'll leave him, make it on your own and find a good man (a better man than him).

-He'll try to control your finances and who you see and actions that will aid in your independence and self-esteem. Depending on the case, he may absolutely forbid you to go to school or get a job.

-Your abuser may try to isolate you from your social network.

-Your abuser has a self-righteous attitude; he's always right you're wrong, especially when you disagree with him.

-Belittle and/or degrade you and your suffering.

-Emotional or verbal abuse is only one step away from outright physical and/or sexual abuse. He may become so enraged and frustrated at 'your behaviour' or your 'misbehaviour' hostile words may not be enough for him to inflict upon you. Be alert and careful at all times. Chronic abusers can have explosive and unpredictable tempers. If your partner threatens to harm or kill you, take it seriously!

-Abusive partners will often start a problem even if none exists. You'll be blamed if you stay silent or if you try to politely defend yourself

-Physical and sexual violence almost always contains some form of verbal abuse; curse and bitch you out while they're hitting you.

-If you have children, he may use them as a weapon against you; I'll take them away from you. However, if it appears that you're getting out of the relationship and you have children, he'll most certainly assume that you'll take what belongs to him away. This is another potentially dangerous period. Be careful!

-He may threaten to harm himself or commit suicide. If you fear for your health, safety and life, leave anyway. If he commits suicide it's not your fault.

-Your property belongs to you. He shouldn't destroy or steal it. Neither should he try to sell it off without your permission.

-If he keeps calling you at work or school, or if he keeps checking up on your matters, it's abuse. Certainly you don't like it.

-Chronic abusers can become extremely suspicious, to the point of imagining 'secret affairs' between you and someone else. This is another danger sign. Be careful!

-If you decide to take self-defence for women and you're still in the relationship, DO NOT TELL HIM! He may feel that he must put you back in your place. Be careful, if you take the classes in secret and he find out, he may explode with anger.

-If you think it is abuse it probably is. If you're in a dangerous marriage or other kind of relationship, you have a right to call the police.

-Save money for a rainy day. The abuse probably won't stop therefore, you may have to leave. Either you leave or you call the police and throw the abuser out. The disadvantage of the latter is that the abuser knows exactly where you live.

Furthermore, he may have a house or apartment key. He may be granted a temporary right to remove his furniture.

=If there's no hope, seek a restraining order. If you do, DO NOT give into the abuser's pouting (violating the restraining order). If he harms you thereafter it'll be more difficult to make a case; she gave me permission to enter our home. Imagine what a defence attorney can do with that.

-In extreme cases the abuser may try to limit or severely restrict your food and water intake. Call the police as soon as possible!

-Although the pain and scars of mental abuse aren't manifested as a black eye or bloody nose or broken bone/s, the pain can equal or exceed that of physical abuse.

-A person in an abusive relationship is in a state of fear and apprehension much of the time. Your mood and behaviour is not the precipitator of a violent episode, it's his. Therefore, you (the victim) feel like you're walking a tightrope. The wind is controlled by the abuser, not you. If you fall, you get a bitching out and/or a physical punishment.

Sometimes it gets so bad you don't know what to say or do. Even if you cook a superb meal or do something that usually appeases your abuser, if he comes home in a horrid mood, watch out! What happens to the abuser outside of the home is out of your control; always remember that. So, if for instance your abuser's boss or some other person angers or worse yet, enrages your partner, he'll come home pissed off. And if he can't retaliate against his tormentor, he'll likely displace his aggression onto his personal 'living punching bag'.

You don't deserve to be abused, however, if you listen to your abuser over and over, at times you may feel that you deserve it. You may even begin to feel numb. Never use excuses or justify your abuser's behaviour. It's his behaviour that's causing the problem, not yours.

The longer you stay in an abusive relationship the more likely you are to be hurt, both physically and mentally, and perhaps sexually. You may come out of a long-term abusive relationship with one or more mental disorders. It's not your fault, it's expected.

Spousal or partner abuse tends to occur in a cycle. Just think of a bell curve, to simplify this matter. But understand that the rise or spike (tension-building phase) is unique for each case. In the tension-building phase aggression builds up. The apex or the top of the bell curve is where the maximum aggression occurs. Thereafter, if both partners are still together there usually occurs a drop in aggression. Be mindful that a sudden/unexpected fit of rage can occur at any time.

Additional characteristics and actions of abusers:

- Offers intense apologies repeatedly
- Swear that he'll never ever do it again
- Says that he loves you, and if you have kids he'll say the same about them
- Cry while he's promising and sweet talking you
- Promises to seek professional help
- Drugs and alcohol bring out the abusive behaviour that's already within the abuser. Many people abuse alcohol and drugs but don't abuse their spouses. If applicable, he may promise 'to quit' using.
- Your abuser may or may not have a criminal record; all abusers don't have criminal records. On the contrary, many abusers are clever, able to hide their abusive behaviour from family, friends, and the general public.
- The abuser may present and portray himself as the absolute king of the household
- Give you the 'I can't live without you' line
- Make other promises that he could never keep in the past
- He may use excuses for his 'previous behaviour'
- Some abusive partners have a remarkable ability to present themselves as sweet fellows in public or to the criminal justice system. The abuser may be perceived by other family members, co-workers, friends and acquaintances as a sweet and likeable fellow. The abuser may trivialize or belittle your complaints. Worse yet, your abuser may blame you, claiming that you provoked or aggravated matters.

Documenting abuse is very important especially if you want to file a criminal complaint and/or if you're seeking a divorce and are absolutely certain that you no longer want to be in the relationship. Proof is very important in a court of law.

When the abuse first begins you can end the relationship immediately and leave your abuser forever or you can tell your abuser that his behaviour is hurting you and it must stop immediately. The easiest time to 'immediately leave' an abusive relationship is in the very beginning; when you first meet. If there are any signs, leaving should be an easy option. You don't love him yet, you've made no commitment, you aren't engaged or married and have no children. Furthermore, you don't live with him and chances are he doesn't know where you live. As the old saying goes, better to be safe than sorry.

Never mind the fact that he's so cute. Mountain lions are incredibly cute; if you get too close to one he'll kill you.

If you play it safe and decide to leave at this stage, it should be permanent. Otherwise, you're getting back into a

potentially hostile and abusive relationship. Use your mind, common sense and logic. Do what is absolutely best for you and don't care about hurting the feelings of a potential abuser.

If he somehow finds out where you live or work and makes persistent attempts to 'get you', this is harassment and chances are he's probably stalking you too. Get your facts straight and then call the police.

I'm giving you the worst case scenario just in case. Someone out there may need this valuable advice.

A Bangladeshi man admitted to brutally cutting off most of his wife's right hand because she, Hawa Akther Jui, had pursued higher education without his permission. The attack occurred in December of 2011.

The attacker, Rafiqul Islam is a migrant worker who works in the Gulf. He apparently tied Hawa up, taped her mouth and then told her that he was going to give her a present.

Hawa's husband had warned her through phone calls from the Gulf that there would be horrific consequences if she tried to pursue higher education without his permission; as though he was ever going to give her permission.

After the horrific attack, it had still been possible to surgically re-attach Hawa's fingers back. However, there is a six-hour window. Once it passes the possibility vanishes.

One of Hawa's husband's relatives apparently tossed her fingers into a garbage bin.

Naturally, human rights groups in Bangladesh are demanding a severe punishment for this heinous crime.

Rafiqul Islam, like many other abusers, especially in Third World Countries ruled by brutal regimes that persecute their citizens and degrade women, most likely didn't believe there would be justice for his actions. Otherwise, he may have thought a hundred times before performing his sadistic acts. Imagine 'an eye for an eye' punishment.

Being a migrant worker he likely felt intimidated, envy, jealousy and insecure at the thought of his wife receiving a degree from a university.

Understandably, Hawa doesn't want to live with her husband anymore and is trying to learn how to write with her left hand. Although it's not impossible to learn how to write with your non-dominant hand, it's quite difficult and takes a long-term sustained effort. Typing is will be a 'Mount Everest type' of challenge.

Another case in point is that of a University of British Columbia (UBC) graduate student who was blinded and maimed by her husband. Both of her eyes were brutally gouged out and her nose was also severely bitten. She was visiting her family in Bangladesh.

The attack of Rumana Manzur occurred on June 5, 2011. Rumana was on break from her studies. Her husband Hasan Sayeed Sumon reportedly confessed to the crime and was arrested by local police.

As stated by Rumana, "he (my husband) has made my world dark. I can't see my (five year-old) daughter".

Prior to the attack Rumana held the post of Assistant Professor at Dhaka University's International Relations Department. She was completing her Master's Degree studies at the University of British Columbia. It's believed that Rumana's pursuing of a higher education may have played a part in the attack.

Rumana's husband mysteriously died while in prison. He was facing attempted murder charges.

Another case in point is that of Mahalakshmi, formerly a beautiful dark haired brown eyed Indian woman.

The attacker was Mahalakshmi's former landlord. After repeatedly making unwarranted passes at her and being rejected each time, he sought vengeance upon Mahalakshmi.

Mahalakshmi found the continued unwanted passes unbearable, therefore, she and her daughter moved out of their home, then moved in with her parents.

Her former landlord didn't relent. Just a day before the attack she had filed a restraining order against him. The end result was a six week stay in a hospital bed, the loss of her left eye and her left ear and a horribly disfigured body.

According to Mahalakshmi's daughter, her mother's clothing was melting like plastic. It was an acid attack.

The vast majority of victims of acid attack victims are women. Hotspots include but are not limited to Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Cambodia. At least hundreds of women are maimed every single year. There's no way to know exactly how many women suffer this fate annually; we can only make educational estimates. There are many poor villages in the affected countries where world news may not reach. Besides, this isn't the only method used to destroy a woman. In India, widow burning still occurs.

Laws in the affected areas pertaining to this matter must change. Very stiff penalties; I recommend life without parole in a tiny cell. The offender/s must understand that there are severe consequences to this kind of monstrous behaviour.

Another acid throwing incident involves a former 26 year-old British model named Katie Piper. A short-lived relationship with a 33 year-old boyfriend named David Lynch who paid a man named Stefan Sylvestre to commit the act, ended in a lifelong struggle, nearly 30 reconstructive surgeries (as of the writing

of this eBook), a horribly disfigured face and an immediate end to a promising modeling career resulted.

Initially, Katie endured numerous frequent trips to the hospital, a mask that she had to wear 23 hours a day and much mental agony. Her mother was forced to quit her job to care for her.

In an unusual case, an Iranian woman named Ameneh Bahrami who was blinded in both eyes by Majid Movahedi, 30 whom the victim repeatedly rejected offers of marriage has pardoned him hours before surgeons were to blind him with acid.

Horribly, wives can brutally harm themselves to the point of committing suicide even after their husband has died.

In the East Indian practice of Sati a widow is burned (widow burning) on the funeral pyres of her husband. The practice has been around for many centuries. The first Europeans to have recorded Sati were the Greeks.

The first outlawing of Sati occurred in 1829. Later, it was officially banned by the British Colonialist occupiers. This practice made a return roughly around the time of Indian independence (1947). Earlier, the Mughals (Muslim rulers of India) tried to ban the practice of Sati.

The Government of India banned Sati in the mid-1950s and in the late 1980s a prevention ordinance was passed.

The number of women performing, or having Sati imposed upon them is a trickle compared to the past.

Technically, the widow killed herself to follow her husband. However, there are always cases of women fighting and screaming not wanting to be burnt. Unable to successfully defend themselves, they were promptly burned alive.

It's unimaginable how family members and bystanders can just stand there and watch a woman being burned alive; even on her own free will, let alone by force and without her consent.

In Sati philosophy a woman's worth was in relation to her husband. Upon the husband's death the wife would commit Sati in order to cleanse herself. In effect, the act was a form of purification. Without Sati the wife was filthy, impure, not a complete person.

Today, Sati occurs in rural villages. Spectacular cases that make the news may result in action. Enforcement is a must otherwise the resurgence may intensify resulting in a catastrophe.

Knowing what we know about the world, women living in Third World countries are not high on the scale of priorities for prominent world leaders or the United Nations. It's a shame, but it's true.

Native American women who are victims of physical, mental and/or sexual abuse and violence are the most neglected of all ethnic groups.

Native American women suffer from the highest rates of violence (all forms); according to the U.S. Department of Justice their rate is 3.5 times higher than the national average. Obviously, statistics don't tell the whole story.

Native American women tend not to report violent crimes against their person. The system is racist at the core, and if there's one group that's discriminated more than black females it's the Native American females. Their numbers are far fewer; they have considerably less political clout; many of them are hidden from the public eye, more so than the ghettos.

Native American women complain of a callous, uncaring and unbelieving justice system, which begins with the local police. Police often belittle the victims, behaving like they don't want to take the time to investigate the problem.

Reservation victims probably fare the worst. Police dispatched to a particular location have been known to call the victim by cell phone, deciding whether to 'show up' or not.

Many victims feel re-victimized by the justice system. In their eyes, a cold-blooded system that's uncaring and untrustworthy. Compound this with the cultural barriers and you end up with an even grander set of problems.

The National Organization for Women is calling for more action on this matter, but many politicians have 'dead ears' when it comes to issues that won't get them re-elected. The men and women running for high political office DO NOT consider this subject a high priority. When they do it'll be apparent that major headway is being made.

Escaping, leaving or fleeing an abusive relationship is often a choice that a woman must make. Below is a list of factors that are essential in understanding this process. Please note that the list below may not be complete; if it applies to you, you may need to perform some, most or additional actions. Each case has similarities with others, but also has peculiarities and uniqueness:

-Abuse is sometimes addicting for both the abuser and the abused. This does not justify the abuse however some women may become used to being pounced upon on a regular basis

-Leave if you must; you can't change him whether by force, through love and flattery and/or by giving him more and better sex

-You must be sure that you want to leave, are ready to leave and have a game plan to leave. It may be a one way trip

-You're not alone. Many other women have left abusive spouses or partners

-If you have the time, take whatever you can from the following:

-Children (if applicable, they should know the 911 number for emergencies)

-Money (if your abuser has deliberately withheld money from you try to borrow money from a relative or friend but do this before your great escape)

=Check book and credit cards

-Driver's license and all other identification cards.

-Birth certificate/s (including children's if applicable)

-Marriage certificate

-Clothing

=Medication, medical and dental insurance policies.

-Pet/s if applicable (check to see if pets are permitted in your intended new home. Your abuser may try to harm your pet/s as an act of vengeance)

-Articles of hygiene

-Keys

-Laptop/s and books

-Cell phone

If your abuser is thrown out of your domicile understand that he knows where you live. Change the locks as soon as possible. Inform your neighbours. If you live in an apartment building inform your neighbours, the management, cleaner/s and maintenance worker/s of what has ensued. If a restraining order is granted to you, inform the aforementioned persons.

The aforementioned list is vast. And certainly there are few women if any who can take along every single article that they need. However, if you're in an abusive relationship you can read through the list very carefully and determine what you can take along with you. Remember, you're in a potentially dangerous situation; depending on the particular case in question, even severe bodily harm, mutilation, and/or murder can occur.

If it's an emergency situation you should remember not to tell your children (if applicable). Try to think the situation through, if possible. There'll be instances where you can tell absolutely no one until it's time to leave.

Try to make the call when your abuser isn't around. If he realizes what you're doing matters may explode. In addition, if you to send emails regarding your situation and you're still in the household, assume that your abuser is a snoop; erase the recent memory on your computer often so he can't see what you've recently done on it. This applies to your cell phone. Keep your diary well-hidden (if applicable).

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