

Appendix 1: Types of Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse – is not just about physical abuse – it also includes emotional and psychological, coercive control and isolating people.

Most victim-survivors do not believe or feel they are a victim until sometime after they no longer have control of their life and have become isolated. Remember though you are not to blame, you are not weak, and you are not alone. There is help available and you (and your children) can escape.

The list below highlights examples of the type of abuse that victims-survivors suffer.

NB: We acknowledge that Domestic Abuse can encompass but is not limited to the different types of abuse listed below.

The Government definition of domestic abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- economic/financial
- emotional

Controlling Behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive Behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

Psychological/Emotional: Psychological abuse involves the regular and deliberate use of a range of words and non-physical actions used with the purpose to manipulate, hurt, weaken or frighten a person mentally and emotionally; and/or distort, confuse or influence a person’s thoughts and actions within their everyday lives, changing their sense. (from [SafeLives](#))

Economic/Financial: Controlling finances, stealing money, coercing someone into debt, restricting/ exploit/sabotaging their partner’s access to money and other resources, such as food, clothing, transportation, and a place to live. (from [Surviving Economic Abuse](#))

It can happen to any person, no matter what background, age, job, race, or sexuality.

Examples of Physical Abuse include:

- Being kicked, punched, pinched, slapped, dragged, scratched, choked, bitten, pushed, stabbed
- Use or threats of use of 'weapons' including knives and irons
- Being scalded, burnt or poisoned
- Objects being thrown including food, drinks, cutlery
- Violence against family members or pets
- Causing you physical harm by denying access to medical aids or equipment
- Harming you whilst performing 'care' duties (especially relevant for disabled victims) including force feeding, withdrawal of medicine or over-medication

Examples of Isolation:

- Limiting outside involvement such as family, friends and work colleagues
- Not allowing any activity outside the home that does not include her or him
- Constant checking up on your whereabouts

Examples of Verbal Abuse:

- Constant yelling and shouting
- Verbal humiliation either in private or in company
- Constantly being laughed at and being made fun of
- Blaming you for their own failures;
- Insults and threats; and
- Mocking someone about their disability, gender, sexual orientation, physical appearance etc.
- Mocking your "sexual performance" including in front of friends, work colleagues and on social media

Examples of Threatening Behaviour:

- The threat of violence
- The threat of use of 'weapons' including knives and irons
- The threat of use of violence against family members or pets
- Threatening to use extended family members to attack you
- Destroying your personal and treasured items
- Threatening to tell the police that you are the person committing the domestic abuse, committing sexual abuse including against your children
- Threatening to remove your children, that you will never see them again or that they will take them abroad without your permission

Examples of Emotional and Psychological Abuse:

- Intimidation
- Withholding affection and giving you the silent treatment
- Turning your children and friends against you
- Being stopped from seeing friends or relatives
- Constantly being insulted, including in front of others
- Repeatedly being belittled
- Keeping you awake/stopping you sleeping – sleep deprivation
- Excessive contact, for example stalking
- Using social media sites to intimidate you (such as Facebook and Twitter)
- Wilfully stopping fathers from seeing their children by breaching court orders (Child Arrangement Orders)
- Manipulating your anxieties or beliefs
- Telling you that you are to blame for the abuse and injuries
- Persuading you to doubt your own sanity or mind (including “Gaslighting” – read more [here](#))
- Denying the abuse committed against you ever happened or trying to minimise it
- Telling you, your bruises, cuts and injuries are not serious
- Accusing you falsely of having affairs and/or constantly looking at other women
- Mocking your “sexual performance” including in front of friends, work colleagues and on social media

Examples of Coercive and Controlling Behaviour:

Such behaviours might include:

- isolating you from your friends and family.
- depriving you of your basic needs.
- monitoring your time.
- monitoring your online communication tools or using spyware.
- taking control over aspects of your everyday life, such as where you can go, who you can see, what to wear and when you can sleep.
- depriving you access to support services, such as specialist support or medical services.
- repeatedly putting you down such as telling you that you are worthless.
- enforcing rules and activity which humiliate, degrade, or dehumanise you
- forcing you to take part in criminal activity such as shoplifting, neglect or abuse of children to encourage self-blame and prevent disclosure to authorities.
- financial abuse including control of finances, such as only allowing you a punitive allowance.
- threats to hurt or kill.
- threats to a child.

- threats to reveal or publish private information (e.g., threatening to ‘out’ someone).
- assault.
- criminal damage (such as destruction of household goods);
- rape.
- preventing you from having access to transport or from working
- controlling or monitoring your daily activities, including making you account for your time, dictating what you can wear, when you can eat.
- isolating you from family and friends, intercepting messages or phone calls or refusing to interpret
- intentional undermining your role as a partner, spouse, or parent
- preventing you from taking medication or over-medicating you, or preventing you from accessing health or social care (especially relevant for victims with disabilities or long-term health conditions)
- using substances to control you through dependency.
- using children to control you – threatening to take the children away or manipulating professionals to increase the risk of children being removed into care.
- parental alienation, including preventing children from spending time with your or their grandparents, from visiting friends’ houses and from participating in extracurricular activities.
- threats to expose sensitive information (e.g., sexual activity) or make false allegations to family members, religious or local community including via photos or the internet.
- preventing you from learning a language or making friends outside of their ethnic/ or cultural background.
- threatening precarious immigration status against you, withholding documents, and giving false information to a victim about your visa or visa application.
- threats of institutionalisation

Examples of economic abuse and financial abuse:

- Totally controlling the family income
- Not allowing you to spend any money unless ‘permitted’
- Making you account for every pound you spend
- Running up huge bills such as credit/store cards in your name – including without you know.
- Purposely defaulting on payments
- Setting up false companies, accounts or credit cards
- Deliberately forcing you to go back to the family courts as a means of costing you additional legal fees
- Refusing to contribute to household income;
- Interfering with or preventing you from regularising your immigration status so you are economically dependent on the perpetrator;

- Preventing you from claiming welfare benefits, force someone to commit benefit fraud or misappropriating such benefits;
- Interfering with your education, training, or employment;
- Not allowing you access to mobile phone/car/utilities;
- Damaging your property.
- Denying you food or only allowing you to eat a particular type of food

Further information on the types of economic and financial abuse can be found in this [leaflet](#).

Examples of sexual abuse:

- Sexual harassment/pressure, or sexual acts, including with other people
- Forcing sex after physical assaults
- Sexually degrading language
- Rape
- Forcing you to have sex (or commit a sexual act) against your will
- Unwanted sexual contact and demands
- Forced involvement into making or watching pornography
- Deliberately being hurt during sex
- Being pressurised or being tricked into having unsafe sex
- Your partner telling you they are taking contraception (The Pill) when they are deliberately not

Examples of false allegations:

- Telling the police (or threatening to) that you are the one committing the domestic abuse when it is the other way around
- Telling friends, families, your employer and others (or threatening to) such as sports clubs that you are the one committing the domestic abuse
- False allegations of another 'crime' such as abusing children

Examples of being stalked:

Stalkers will often use multiple and differing methods to harass their victims. Stalking can consist of any type of behaviour such as:

- following you to and from work
- checking your email and phone calls
- regularly sending gifts
- making unwanted or malicious communication
- damaging property or clothes
- physical or sexual assault

Examples of digital and social media abuse (*often this can be with former partners*):

- stalking you
- placing false and malicious information about you on your or others' social media
- being trolled
- having no control on your content or not allowed to have access
- revenge porn
- monitoring or controlling your email and phone calls (including work email and calls)
- Image-based abuse – for example the non-consensual distribution of private sexual photographs and films with the intent to cause you distress
- Hacking into, monitoring, or controlling email accounts, social media profiles and phone calls
- Blocking you from using online accounts, responding in the victim's place or creating false online accounts.
- Use of spyware or GPS locators on items such as phones, computers, wearable technology, cars, motorbikes, and pets
- Hacking internet enabled devices such as PlayStations or iPads to gain access to accounts or trace information such as your location
- Using personal devices such as smart watches or smart home devices (such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home Hubs, etc) to monitor, control or frighten you
- Use of hidden cameras.

Although predominantly experienced within an intimate partner relationship, Domestic Abuse can also be experienced in the following additional scenarios:

Child-to-Parent Abuse:

- Child to Parent Abuse is complex and misunderstood – partly because it has historically been largely ignored in favour of a focus on intimate partner abuse, partly because it is drastically under-reported, and because there are lots of misconceptions around the subject.
- This could be experienced by parents of younger or teenage children or elderly parents whose children may have taken on a caring capacity where abuse can also take place. Some parents may not recognise what is happening to them as abuse – but the behaviours they are experiencing are abuse, and they are not okay.