

## What Is Intimate Partner Violence?

Violence in a relationship takes many forms. Participation can range from mutual involvement of both partners to one partner always hurting the other. Frequency can vary from a single incident to repeated or consistent abuse. Intent can be the expression of distress or the intention to oppress and control.

Intimate partner violence (IPV, also known as domestic violence or DV) refers to one type of violence and it features one partner who uses a systemic pattern of harmful behaviors in order to exert power over or otherwise control the other partner. Harmful behaviors may include physical, emotional/psychological, sexual, and economic abuse. Ultimately, the repeated use of these behaviors creates a dynamic in which the abuser elicits fear or intimidation from the abused person.

### *What is physical abuse?*

Physical abuse includes any type of unwanted behavior that prevents, denies, or harms a person's body. Examples include:

- Blocking doors/exits
- Holding or restraining
- Grabbing
- Denying physical needs
- Forcing drug or alcohol use
- Threatening to use or using weapons
- Pushing
- Scratching
- Slapping
- Hitting
- Sleep deprivation
- Punching
- Kicking
- Strangulation/"Choking"
- Burning
- Throwing objects at

### *What is emotional/psychological abuse?*

Emotional and psychological abuse includes any behavior that degrades a person's actions, character, or esteem and results in shame, intimidation, or coercion. Examples include:

- Silent treatment
- Interrogation and jealousy
- Swearing and screaming
- Denying or minimizing impact of abuse
- Spitting
- Destroying property
- Monitoring
- Forced participation in demeaning behaviors (begging, kneeling, crawling, etc.)
- Insulting jokes or comments about the person, her family, or her beliefs/ideas
- Threatening homicide or suicide
- Ignoring or disparaging feelings
- Gaslighting and brainwashing
- Using children
- Blaming
- Rejecting
- Injuring/threatening to injure pets
- Blackmailing and leveraging disabilities
- Threatening legal action

### *What is sexual abuse?*

Sexual abuse includes any unwanted behavior that requires visual, verbal, and/or physical participation in conduct related to sex, sexuality, and/or sexual health. Examples include:

- Embarrassing comments or jokes
- Insulting sexual history or sexual preferences
- Pressuring or using guilt to attain sex
- Engaging in affairs after promised monogamy
- Distributing or online posting of sexual content featuring partner (e.g. "revenge porn")
- Forcing or denying contraceptive use or abortion/sterilization
- Criticizing sexual performance
- Withholding sex as punishment
- Using demeaning names
- Forced exposure to pornography

- Insisting that victim have sex with other people (with or without compensation)
- Any sexual contact without consent (due to unwillingness or inability to consent)

***What is economic abuse?***

Economic abuse includes any behavior that harms a person’s financial stability. Examples include:

- Denying access to financial accounts
- Controlling financial decision making
- Refusing to pay bills
- Excessive spending of shared funds
- Monitoring spending (i.e. tracking purchases, issuing strict allowance)
- Refusing to work/contribute to household
- Barring victim from working
- Interfering with victim’s job/workplace
- Excluding victim’s name from deeds/titles

***What are other common forms of abuse?***

- Social isolation
- Stalking
- Using gender stereotypes/myths
- Degrading family, culture, or religion
- Justifying abuse with culture or religion
- Forcing participation in behaviors contrary to religious beliefs
- Distributing private materials (e.g. journal entries)
- Denying access to work, education, or health care
- Public humiliation
- Harassment
- Taking car keys, cell phone, money, etc.
- Sabotaging vehicle
- Destroying property

***Has it happened to you?***

The tactics of violent partners don’t have to leave marks in order to hurt victims. Physical, emotional/psychological, sexual, and economic abuse all leave wounds and they are all cause for concern. Although every relationship is unique, it is not uncommon for violent relationships to become increasingly dangerous.

Review the examples again and circle or underline the types of abuse you are currently experiencing. Note if the frequency or severity of the violence is changing or has changed from how it was in the past. Discuss the types of violence you’ve identified with your counselor and determine your level of safety within the relationship.

***Have you experienced a form of IPV not listed on this worksheet?***

***List it/them below:***

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