

Mental Health Matters

Plain Talk about Domestic Violence



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Domestic violence is a very serious matter simply because it can be fatal in some cases. It should not be tolerated at all since it has consequences and creates a long list of problems for both

the victim and for children.

Domestic violence can take many forms, including coercion, threats, intimidation, isolation, and emotional, sexual, and physical abuse.

Domestic violence can and does happen to women and men of all ages, races, socioeconomic status, and educational backgrounds. The causes of domestic violence can be traced back to the family history of the abuser. Most commonly the abuser comes from abusive parent(s). This can be caused by genetic defects in their chromosomes. It can be a result of post-traumatic stress disorder. So, when we are dealing with domestic violence we should look carefully into the history of the abuser. It may also be due to alcoholism or drug abuse. We should treat the abuser accordingly.

However, the responsibility for treatment rests on the abuser and the victim.

The abuser has to cooperate and admit that he or she has a problem with his or her temper, and a problem in controlling his or her anger and violence, and should seek help as soon as possible before it is too late and damage is done. The treatment should be combined with counseling, behavioral modification, and medication.

The victim also has the responsibility in stopping the violence. If the victim is passive or not assertive enough to seek help, the abuser will take advantage of that passivity and continue to be violent to a point where it could be very serious. Treatment for the victim is available at crisis

intervention centers, churches, counseling services, and medication may be necessary to handle depression, anxiety, and panic attacks associated with the violence.

You may be a victim of domestic violence if your partner:

- Acts extremely jealous of others who pay attention to you, or uses jealousy to justify his/her actions;
- Controls your finances, behavior and even whom you socialize with;
- Makes you afraid by using looks, actions, and gestures like smashing things, destroying your property or displaying weapons;
- Threatens to kill you or commit suicide;
- Makes all the decisions;
- Stops you from seeing or talking to friends, family or limits your outside involvement;
- Acts like the abuse is no big deal; it's your fault or even denies doing it;
- Threatens to kill your pets;
- Puts you down in front of other people, humiliates you, plays mind games and makes you feel as if you are crazy;
- Prevents you from getting or keeping a job;
- Takes your money or does not let you know about or have access to the family income;
- Threatens to take the children away.

In conclusion, domestic violence is a very serious matter. It should be handled and treated as quickly as possible. Otherwise, very serious complications can happen.

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