



*“I thought this was
how relationships
were supposed
to be ...*

*...I thought this
was normal...”*

**Domestic abuse can also be
emotional / psychological**

Everyone has the right to
be *free* and *safe*, and to be
treated with *respect* in their
relationship...

Dumfries &

Galloway

Together is
Better



IT'S YOUR FAULT!

YOU'RE PATHETIC

I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN YOU WEAR THAT DRESS

I WANT TO KNOW HOW MUCH YOU'VE SPENT ON THAT

WHO WERE YOU TALKING TO?

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE MADE ME DO TO YOU...

I'LL PHONE SOCIAL WORK IF YOU DON'T DO WHAT I SAY...

YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE THAT JOB...YOUR PLACE IS IN THE HOME

YOU'RE USELESS

YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THAT COURSE...

THE KIDS NEED YOU AT HOME...

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND YOU...

YOU SHOULDN'T SEE YOUR FRIENDS SO OFTEN...IT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOU

YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING RIGHT

NO ONE WILL BELIEVE YOU!

I'M SO SORRY...YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU...I CAN CHANGE...

I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU

Domestic abuse is much more common than we think.

Every year nearly 60,000 domestic abuse cases are reported to Police Scotland but research tells us that many more women in Scotland (around 1 in 5) will experience domestic abuse from a man at some point in their lifetime.

Domestic abuse also affects men but in fewer numbers and with different consequences; for domestic abuse and men please refer to our leaflet "Domestic Abuse: Help for Men".

(Please note that the language used throughout this booklet reflects the fact that women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse and that the majority of the abusers are male)

Domestic Abuse can be carried out by partners, ex-partners and it may happen in any kind of relationship e.g. heterosexual (straight), same sex (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual), transgender, teenage, adult and senior relationships and it can affect anyone regardless of where they live, any disability they might have, their age, race, background, financial status, sex or gender identity, culture, faith or lack of faith, disability, social class, marital status, pregnancy, or nationality.

Domestic abuse can be more than physical assault; it can be emotional/psychological.

“During my marriage, I didn’t realise I was a victim of domestic abuse. I was under the assumption this included physical abuse and it wasn’t my experience, mine was emotional abuse. My husband appeared the perfect man from the outside, but he was controlling, I was completely isolated...”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

What is emotional/psychological abuse?

Emotional abuse involves a wide range of acts that emotionally hurt, frighten, and/or limit someone's ability to fulfil their dreams and live their life the way they want to.

It is a type of abuse that can increase in a subtle way throughout the relationship and can be difficult to spot by the victim, their family members and the rest of the community.

Often, domestic abuse starts or gets worse after an important event in the couple's life like pregnancy, moving in together, engagement, wedding, the birth of a child, etc.

Emotional abuse can include the presence or absence of some behaviours and it damages people even at those stages when they are not aware of it happening.

Sometimes the long term impact of emotional abuse may be worse than physical assault.

Emotional abuse is also known as psychological or mental abuse and the abusive behaviour can:

- **Target and damage your self-esteem**
- **Withhold emotional affection or support**
- **Involve threats**
- **Isolate you**
- **Interfere with your freedom**

Emotional/psychological abuse can be very obvious but sometimes also very subtle and it does not need to happen before, during or immediately after an argument. Emotional/psychological abuse can happen anytime and sometimes the abuse may just sound like a casual comment, may take the form of a joke or may just sound like teasing, but these can have meaning within the relationship and can damage the victim's self-esteem.

Emotional/psychological abuse can be a regular feature in an abusive relationship and may never get to physical abuse but it can also happen together with other forms of abuse like: physical, sexual or financial/economic abuse.

Very obvious emotional/psychological abuse (e.g. destroying things, yelling, threatening or name-calling or ridicule) may sometimes happen immediately before physical abuse. On the other hand, subtle or very subtle emotional abuse can go on 24/7 and after some time it may seem it is part of the couple's everyday life.



“
Shortly after our wedding, he started talking down to me, I was surprised by how his attitude towards me was changing and when I questioned this, he actually said that now he had me he didn't have to try anymore and I was stupid not to have realised that...

Domestic Abuse Survivor

“I thought my relationship was normal; that’s what I really struggled with...”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

No one who has been abused should feel that they are to blame for any reason; **the only person responsible for the abuse is the abuser.**

Examples of Emotional (Mental / Psychological) Abuse can include:

Actions aiming to dominate you:

- Scaring you / making you feel frightened or intimidated e.g. by smashing things or destroying your belongings, glaring or yelling at you
- Showing rage
- Dangerous driving with you or your children in the car
- Using your children and/or child contact to abuse you
- Jealous behaviour
- Damage to property
- Abusing pets
- Abusing your children
- Making you follow a religion/ cult or stopping you practising your faith

- “Branding you” putting a tattoo on you
- Making you change your behaviour

Actions aiming to discredit you:

- Telling people you are crazy
- Telling people things that can make you look bad
- Attacking your reputation
- Making negative comments on your on-line posts or updates
- Spreading rumours about you or your family
- Playing the “perfect guy” role in public

“My friends and family were 300 miles away and he didn’t let me ring them and, because he didn’t like me going out in the evenings or at weekends, I couldn’t make friends locally. I was isolated. He was all I had.”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

“He was incredibly charming, romantic, and came across as very caring... This persona stayed in front of other people which made it so difficult as sadly it was the opposite when it was the two of us...”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

Actions aiming to isolate you:

- Cutting your social links
- Creating barriers / restricting your activities
- Making it difficult for you to go out / socialise
- Making it difficult for you to see / talk to family or friends
- Making it difficult for you / not allowing you to do the things you want
- Making it difficult for you / not allowing you to get an education or to learn English
- Making it difficult for you to access information
- Taking away your choices
- Hiding the car keys or disabling the car when you need it
- Cutting the phone wires

Actions aiming to show indifference:

- Giving you the silent treatment
- Acting like you don't matter
- Not speaking to you much
- Avoiding you
- Ignoring what you've got to say
- Ignoring you altogether

Actions aiming to persuade you:

- Talking you into doing things you don't want to do
- Asking you to lie about what he has done to you
- Suggesting you should do what he says

“...it feels like suddenly you are in a relationship where, for example you’re even scared to hang a picture on the wall because of the repercussions...”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

Threats:

- Threatening to take the children away or stopping you seeing them
- Threatening to harm your pet or family members
- Threatening to kill you / your children / or himself
- Threatening to use ‘revenge porn’ against you
- Threatening to leave you
- Threatening to get you deported
- Threatening to find you if you decide to leave
- Keeping weapons on view

Actions aiming to monitor you:

- Checking your e-mails or social media
- Checking who your friends are

- Showing up at your work (or wherever you are) unexpectedly
- Stalking you – physically or on line by using CCTV or spyware
- Getting your online passwords

Actions aiming to undermine you:

- Putting you down
- Calling you names
- Criticising you or your opinions
- Making you feel bad about yourself
- Making you feel guilty
- Blaming you for the abuse
- Embarrassing you
- Using your past against you
- Humiliating / ridiculing you
- Telling you you’re unattractive
- Telling you no-one will ever want you

- Insulting your family or community
- Making light of the abuse or pretending the abuse never happened
- Making you think the abuse you get is by your own fault
- Making you think you deserve to be abused
- Making false allegations against you
- Dictating what you should wear, watch on TV, read, how you should drive, how you should shower, how often you should go to the toilet, etc.
- Having an affair and making sure you know about it
- Flirting with other people
- Questioning your love

Actions aiming to wear you out:

- Making arguments longer
- Interrupting your sleeping routine or depriving you from sleep altogether
- Depriving you from food or medical attention
- Making you home-school the children
- Making you follow strict rules like having dinner ready by a specific time in the evening or setting impossible standards of tidiness/cleanliness
- "Gaslighting": playing mind games to make you think you're crazy (hiding things, claiming that you lost them and then making them reappear where they originally were; reparking your car during the night so it appears in a different place in the morning, etc.)

Some of this behaviour is straightforwardly abusive but some of the more subtle abusive behaviour on its own or in certain situations may not seem serious or abusive at all. **HOWEVER**, when it keeps happening, it can damage the abused person's self-esteem, and make it hard for her to feel good about herself or her life.

Emotional/psychological abuse builds up over time, and as time goes by the abuse starts wearing the victim down. Emotional/psychological abuse is also part of a wider pattern of abusive behaviour (including physical, sexual and/or financial abuse) put in place by one partner to control the other; this is also known as **'Coercive Control'**.

Under Coercive Control, the person living with abuse may feel that they have no control over their life or over part of their life because they have to constantly follow the abuser's rules.

Because of the controlling behaviour the person who is being abused starts losing their freedom or at least part of it.

The wider range of abusive behaviour (Coercive Control), also includes physical, financial/economic, and/or sexual abuse as tactics of domination/manipulation.

POWER
+ CONTROL

DOMESTIC ABUSE/LESS FREEDOM

“He used to say things like: ‘What age do you think you are 14? You’re 40, you can’t wear that!’. It would have been easier if this was done in private, but when he did it in front of others it made me feel 2 inches tall and really wore away at my self-confidence.”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

Financial (Economic) Abuse can include:

- Taking control of finances
- Excluding you from important financial decisions
- Stopping you from getting or keeping a job e.g. hiding the car keys or switching the alarm off so you are late for work
- Taking money from you
- Not giving you money or giving you an allowance
- Making it difficult for you to /not allowing you to have a bank account or to keep savings
- Removing you from a joint bank account
- Making you pay his bills or cancel his debts, credit cards or loans
- Taking loans in your name
- Making it difficult for you to access money
- Blaming you if there is not enough money
- Selling your possessions when you don't want to
- Putting in place a power of attorney that allows the abuser or other people to control your money or property

This makes it more difficult for the victim to leave as she has fewer resources



Physical Abuse can include:

- Pushing
- kicking
- punching
- slapping
- hitting
- burning
- strangling you
- pulling your hair

Or any other form of harm to your body

**This way the abuser shows his authority
and tries to make the victim feel scared**



Sexual Abuse can include:

- Demanding / expecting sex
e.g. putting pressure on you to have sex when you might not want it
- Suggesting he "will get it somewhere else"
- Withholding sex
- Dictating how you should make love
- Sex against your will (rape)
- Making you have sex with other people
- Him having affairs with other people
- Making you engage in types of sex or sex acts that make you uncomfortable
- Making you watch or re-enact pornography
- Threatening to end the relationship if there is no sex
- Refusing to or not allowing you to use contraception / protection
- Sabotaging contraception
- Keeping you pregnant
- Making you have an abortion or not allowing you to have one
- 'Sexting' you when you don't want to or making you 'sext' him
- Making you sign a "sexual contract"
- Inspecting your underwear after you've been on a night out with friends
- Using 'revenge porn' against you

**This way the abuser tries to humiliate
and dominate the victim**

These examples are not exhaustive.

Someone living with domestic abuse can experience it in any or in several of these forms combined.

If you are experiencing abuse or know someone who is, there are a number of local and national organisations that are willing to help and that will believe you:

Police (Domestic Abuse Unit)

101

In an emergency phone 999

www.scotland.police.uk/righttoask

(To enquire about the background of your partner, potential partner or someone who is in a relationship with someone you know, and there is a concern that the individual may be abusive.)



Dumfriesshire & Stewartry Women's Aid

01387 263 052 or 07710 152 772 (24hrs)

Wigtownshire Women's Aid

01776 703 104 (24hrs)

Dumfries and Galloway Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Support Centre

01387 253 113

“...Women's Aid were absolutely wonderful and they helped build my confidence back and to be my own person again...”

Domestic Abuse Survivor

Social Work Services

030 33 33 3001

Homeless Services

General Enquiries 030 33 33 3000

Out of Hours 01387 273660

Health

Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary

01387 246 246

The Galloway Community Hospital, Stranraer

01776 707 707

Maternity

01387 246 246

NHS Specialist Drug & Alcohol Services

01387 244 555

Sexual Health D&G

0345 702 3687

www.sexualhealthdg.co.uk

Alcohol & Drugs Support South West Scotland

01556 503 550 / 01387 259 999 / 01776 702 626

Victim Support Dumfries and Galloway

Dumfries 01387 250 883

Stranraer 01776 707 229 (includes Witness Service Stranraer)

Witness Service Dumfries 01387 264 804

National Helpline 0800 160 1985

Citizens Advice Service

Annan/Castle Douglas/Dumfries/ Stranraer
0300 303 4321

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 027 1234 (24hrs)

Amina - MWRC (Muslim Women's Resource Centre)

0808 801 0301

Karma Nirvana - Honour Network

Helpline 0800 5999 247

Shakti Women's Aid

0131 475 2399 (Office Hours)
info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

0141 353 0859 (24hrs)

Rape Crisis Scotland National Helpline

Freephone 0808 801 0302
(6pm - midnight)

LGBT Youth Scotland

For people 13-25 years
01387 255 058

LGBT Plus (+25)

0800 020 9653

National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline (UK)

Emotional and practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse.

0800 999 5428

Opening Times:

10am – 8pm Monday

10am – 5pm Tuesday

10am – 5pm Wednesday

10am – 8pm Thursday

1pm – 5pm Friday

1pm – 5pm Tuesday is trans specific service.

Respect Phonenumber

(for people worried about their abusive behaviour)

0808 802 4040 (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm)

info@respectphonenumber.org.uk

Scotland CrimeStoppers

(to report crime, including domestic abuse anonymously)

0800 555 111

The help described in this booklet is available to you regardless of your age, nationality, disability, race, gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and whether or not you are married or in a civil partnership, or whether you are pregnant or have children. You also have equal access to all these services if you do not speak English. A telephone translation service is available from each of the agencies listed in this booklet. If you have difficulties with English, you will be put on hold whilst you are connected to an interpreter.

For more information, please visit
www.dgppp.org.uk



With special thanks to the Domestic Abuse Survivors who provided the quotes to illustrate this leaflet.