

# UNDERSTANDING DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

To determine if your relationship is abusive you need to look at what the other person is doing.

Think about:

- how the behaviour affects your life
- how it makes you feel
- where the balance of power lies in your relationship

Trust your intuition: If something does not feel right to you then it is not ok. Look at this wheel and see if you recognise any of these behaviours in your relationship.



## **Using intimidation**

- Makes you afraid by using looks, actions, gestures
- Smashes things
- Destroys your property
- Abuses pets
- Shows weapons
- Monitors you using technology such as GPS tracking devices or spyware
- Goes through personal information such as emails, text messages, social media accounts or call logs
- Breaks your phone or cut the phone line when you try to call for help

## **Using financial abuse**

- Prevents you from getting or keeping a job
- Makes you ask for money
- Gives you an allowance
- Takes your money
- Doesn't let you know about or have access to family income

## **Using emotional abuse**

- Puts you down
- Makes you feel bad about yourself
- Calls you names
- Makes you think you're crazy
- Humiliates you
- Makes you feel guilty

## **Using coercion and threats**

- Makes and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt you
- Threatens to leave or commit suicide or report you to welfare
- Makes you drop charges
- Makes you do illegal things
- Threatens to release intimate images or videos of you
- Threatens to withhold medication, things you need for your health or quality of life (eg, wheelchair)

## **Minimising, denying, and blaming**

- Makes light of the abuse and not taking your concerns seriously
- Says it didn't happen
- Shifts responsibility for abusive behaviour
- Says you caused it
- Blames tiredness, stress, alcohol or drugs

## **Using male privilege**

- Treats you like a servant
- Excludes you from making decisions
- Being the one to define men's and women's roles
- Threatens to share intimate images to prevent you leaving, or to humiliate you

## **Using isolation**

- Controls what you do, who you see and talk to, and where you go
- Limits your outside involvement and social contacts
- Uses jealousy to justify actions

## **Using children**

- Makes you feel guilty about the children
- Uses the children to relay messages
- Threatens to take the children
- Uses GPS tracking on children's devices to monitor your location

*Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Duluth, Minnesota.*

# UNDERSTANDING DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

## The circle of abuse wheel



Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Duluth, Minnesota.

### More information and help

In an emergency, call the police on 000 or 112 from mobiles.

For information, court advocacy and referral for women in domestic violence situations and assistance with getting an ADVO call the **Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service** on **1800 WDV CAS** or **1800 938 227**.

For legal advice, assistance, referral and representation as well as social work support and financial counselling for victims of domestic and family violence call the **Legal Aid NSW Domestic Violence Unit** on **1800 979 529**.

**Family Violence Law Help** is a website with easy-to-understand legal information about AVOs, family law and child protection. The information can be translated into different languages.

[www.familyviolencelaw.gov.au](http://www.familyviolencelaw.gov.au)

This factsheet is a general guide to the law. You should not rely on it for legal advice and we recommend that you talk to a lawyer about your situation. The information is correct at the time of publication, however it may change.

This factsheet is an excerpt from the booklet Charmed and Dangerous: A woman's guide to reclaiming a healthy relationship, an initiative of the Tweed Shire Women's Services Inc.

This factsheet is available in Arabic, Dari/Farsi, Korean, Simplified Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese. © Legal Aid NSW