

Abusive Relationships

Do you know the Church's current position on abuse? Many mistakenly assume that Catholics are supposed to stay and be abused. The Church finds no justification for any kind of intimidation, physical, verbal or sexual, not even the Biblical passage about wives being submissive. Abuse is a sin and a crime, and spouses need not stay. The Church encourages one to apply for an annulment in such situations.

*Read more in "**Why I Call for Help**"—an easy-to-read pamphlet from the U.S.

Bishops. It can be found online at www.usccb.org/laity/women.htm.

*You can also obtain a free copy, contact the Family Life Office.

BOOKS: (Can be borrowed from the Family Life Office)

Whose Face is in the Mirror? By Dianne Schwartz. The story of one woman's journey from the nightmare of domestic abuse to true healing.

You Don't Have to Take it Anymore by Steven Stosny. A new approach to turn your resentful, angry, or emotionally abusive relationship into a compassionate, loving one.

Are you in an abusive and potentially violent relationship? QUIZ

DOES YOUR PARTNER...

embarrass you in front of others?

belittle your accomplishments?

make you feel unworthy?

constantly contradict himself to confuse you?

isolate you from many of the people you care about most?

make you feel ashamed much of the time?

make you believe he/she is smarter than you and, therefore, more able to make decisions?

make you feel that it is you who is crazy?

make you perform acts that demean you?

use intimidation to make you do what he/she wants?

prevent you from going or doing commonplace activities such as shopping, visiting friends and family, talking to the opposite sex?

control the financial aspects of your life?

use money as a way of controlling you?

make believe you can not exist without him/her?

make you feel that there is no way out and that "you make your bed and you must lie in it?"

make you find ways of compromising your feelings for the sake of peace?

treat you roughly—grabbing, pinching, pushing or shoving you?

threaten you—verbally or with a weapon?

hold you to keep you from leaving after an argument?

lose control when he/she is drunk or using drugs?

gets extremely angry, frequently without an apparent cause?

escalate his/her anger into violence—slapping, kicking, etc.?

not believe that he/she hurt you nor feel sorry for what he/she has done?
 physically forced you to do what you do not want to do?

DO YOU...

believe that you can help your partner change the abusive behavior if you were only to change yourself in some way, if you only did something differently, if you really loved him/her?

find that not making him/her angry has become a major part of your life?

do what he/she wants you to do rather than what you want to do out of fear?

stay with him/her only because you're afraid he/she might hurt you if you tell?

If you said yes to many of the above questions, you have identified an abusive relationship and need to seek help and advice.

National Domestic Hotline: 800-799-SAFE: (TTY) 800-787-3224

E-mail assistance at ndvh@ndvh.org.