

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence is a pattern of on-going abuse between individuals who are currently or have previously been in an intimate relationship. It involves a person seeking to control and dominate another person in that relationship. It can come in the form of:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Family violence/child abuse

Signs of Domestic Violence

It is not always easy to identify if you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, but here are a few signs to keep an eye out for:

- Threatening behaviour i.e threatens people close to you
- Makes you feel inferior and yells at you
- Possessive & controlling behaviour, i.e decides what you wear, eat, how you spend your money, etc
- Criticism i.e of intelligence, mental health, appearance
- Physical assault i.e hitting, biting, slapping, kicking, pushing
- Unfair and regular accusations i.e of cheating, flirting, etc
- Constant comparisons with other people
- Throws things or punches walls when angry
- Blames you for abusive behaviour
- Discourages or prevents you from seeing friends & family
- Monitors what you do i.e reading text messages, emails.

What to do if you are a victim?

If you are a victim of domestic violence, it may be easier said than done to obtain help but here are a few tips on how to go about doing so:

- Recognise that you are not to blame for the abuse and you are not the cause of your partner's abusive behavior.
- Do not excuse the abuse or think that is it a normal experience - because its not.
- Tell anyone you trust about the abuse, this will break you out of suffering in silence.
- Document the abuse - i.e videos/pictures of it
- Create safety plans, i.e have a survival bag, safe areas in the house, code word with neighbours or children.
- It is important to understand that If you're hoping that your abuser will change or believe you can change them, the abuse is likely to keep happening.
- If your abuser has promised to stop the violence - most of the time this is to stop you from leaving, where it is most likely they will return to their abusive behavior once they're no longer worried that you'll leave.
- Make and memorize a list of emergency contacts.
- Whenever possible, get involved with people and activities outside your home to build a strong support system and encourage your children to do so.
- Seek professional help or ask someone you trust to help you seek this i.e social services, lawyers, support groups, counsellors etc - New View Psychology are here to support you.

What to do if you know someone it is happening to?

Many victims find it difficult to speak about the abuse, therefore it is important to provide your support through the following ways:

- Only try to start a conversation if the person is alone in a place where it is safe to speak with you.
- If the victim is willing to speak about the abuse, listen and be empathetic about what they are saying.
- Avoid giving pressure or advice to the victim on leaving, instead help them to explore options that are available.
- Take what they are saying seriously without judgement or criticism.
- Focus on how they are feeling and coping with the domestic violence.
- Offer to help and let the person know you're always there to talk.
- Re assure them that it is not their fault.
- If you think it's important to seek professional assistance, encourage the person to do this on their own behalf.

Support/Resources

For more information about specialised mental health support you can access your EAP program on 1300 830 687.

- **1800RESPECT:** 1800 737 732
- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14
- **Mensline Australia:** 1300 789 978
- **Kids Help Line:** 1800 551 800
- **Men's Referral Service:** 1300 766 491

For immediate support please contact us on 1300 830 687

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