

Domestic Violence

Do you wonder . . .

- **Why is violence against another human being labeled "domestic" or "dating" violence?**
- **Why is there still a debate over how to deal with domestic violence?**
- **Why is "getting away with murder" so much the reality in cases of intimate violence?**
- **Why aren't perpetrators of intimate violence treated the same as those committing other acts of violence?**

The fact that the questions above are still pondered is an appalling testament to how far we have not come on the subject of intimate violence. What is even more appalling is that children are still being raised in homes plagued by violence directed toward a parent or even toward the children themselves. So, you ask yourself, *"How can we raise children to respect and value human life and the wellbeing of others if they witness, personally and frequently, behavior to the contrary in their own homes?"*

It is true that perpetrators of domestic violence can be either male or female. However, the incidence of male on female violence is so overwhelmingly more significant than female on male violence that the discussion usually addresses women who are victimized. Regardless, what is included on this document is appropriate for anyone in an unhealthy relationship. For more information, refer to an article by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence titled "Domestic Violence Facts" located at the end of this document. This article gives startling facts about the following as related to domestic violence:

- **Children Who Witness**
- **Sexual Assault and Stalking**
- **Homicide and Injury**
- **Economic Impact**
- **Reporting Rates**
- **Protection Orders**

Important phone numbers and websites:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline - 800-799-SAFE (7233), 1-800-787-3224 TTY, or www.ndvh.org
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence - www.ncadv.org
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center - www.nsvrc.org

Pre-Incident Indicators**

The Gift of Fear, Survival Signals, by Gavin de Becker, pp. 174-175

This terrific book describes very clearly the "gut" or intuitive feeling we all possess. Following is list of pre-incident indicators which if present within a relationship may result in intimate violence.

1. The woman has intuitive feelings that she is at risk.
2. At the inception of the relationship, the man accelerated the pace, prematurely placing on the agenda such things as commitment, living together, and marriage.
3. He resolves conflict with intimidation, bullying, and violence.
4. He is verbally abusive.
5. He uses threats and intimidation as instruments of control or abuse. This includes threats to harm

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- physically, to defame, to embarrass, to restrict freedom, to disclose secrets, to cut off support, to abandon, and to commit suicide.
6. He breaks or strikes things in anger. He uses symbolic violence (tearing a wedding photo, marring a face in a photo, etc.).
 7. He has battered in prior relationships.
 8. He uses alcohol or drugs with adverse affects (memory loss, hostility, cruelty).
 9. He cites alcohol or drugs as an excuse or explanation for hostile or violent conduct (“That was the booze talking, not me”; “I got so drunk I was crazy”).
 10. His history includes police encounters for behavioral offenses (threats, stalking, assault, battery).
 11. There has been more than one incident of violent behavior (including vandalism, breaking things, throwing things).
 12. He uses money to control the activities, purchases, and behavior of his wife/partner.
 13. He becomes jealous of anyone or anything that takes her time away from the relationship; he keeps her on a “*tight leash*,” requires her to account for her time.
 14. He refuses to accept rejection.
 15. He expects the relationship to go on forever, perhaps using phrases like “*together for life*,” “*always*,” “*no matter what*.”
 16. He projects extreme emotions onto others (hate, love, jealousy, commitment) even when there is no evidence that would lead a reasonable person of abuse.
 17. He minimizes incidents of abuse.
 18. He spends a disproportionate amount of time talking about his wife/partner and derives much of his identity from being her husband, lover, etc.
 19. He tries to enlist his wife’s friends or relatives in a campaign to keep or recover the relationship.
 20. He has inappropriately surveilled or followed his wife/partner.
 21. He believes others are out to get him. He believes that those around his wife/partner dislike him and encourage her to leave.
 22. He resists change and is described as inflexible, unwilling to compromise.
 23. He identifies with or compares himself to violent people in films, news stories, fiction, or history. He characterizes the violence of others as justified.
 24. He suffers mood swings or is sullen, angry, or depressed.
 25. He consistently blames others for problems of his own making; he refuses to take responsibility for the results of his actions.
 26. He refers to weapons as instruments of power, control, or revenge.
 27. Weapons are a substantial part of his persona; he has a gun or he talks about, jokes about, reads about or collects weapons.
 28. He uses “*male privilege*” as a justification for his conduct (treats her like a servant, makes all the big decisions, acts like the “*master of the house*”).
 29. He experienced or witnessed violence as a child.
 30. His wife/partner fears he will injure or kill her. She has discussed this with others or has made plans to be carried out in the event of her death (e.g. designating someone to care for the children).

The Gift of Fear and *Protecting the Gift* are must reads for anyone interested in developing your own healthy and, possibly, life saving internal intuitive radar.

The best advice to anyone suffering from an unhealthy relationship is to tell him or her to call the domestic violence hotline in the county or state in which they live. Through this contact, information should be available which could lead the victim to a safe house for victims of domestic violence. For additional information, contact the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** - 800-799-SAFE (7233), 1-800-787-3224 TTY,

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or www.ndvh.org. For additional information on Power & Control in relationships as well as The Power & Control Wheel, see “*Domestic Violence Facts,*” at the end of this document, an article by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the “*Relationships - Healthy or Abusive*” and “*Relationship - Power and Control*” pages in this document.