

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR FRIEND IS BEING ABUSED?

1. When the victim and their partner are together, the abuser acts very controlling and puts the victim down in front of other people.
2. The abuser blames the victim for the way the abuser acts or the things the abuser says?
3. You see the abuser violently lose their temper, striking or breaking objects.
4. The abuser acts extremely jealous of others who pay attention to the victim.
5. The victim becomes quiet when the abuser is around and seems afraid of making them angry.
6. The victim stops seeing their friends and family members, becoming more and more isolated.
7. The victim often has unexplained injuries, or the explanations the victim offers don't quite add up. (Sometimes you won't see any bruises, as abusers target their blows to areas that can be covered with clothing.)
8. The victim has casually mentioned the abuser's violent behaviour but dismissed what happened as "not a big deal."
9. The victim often cancels plans at the last minute.
10. The abuser controls the victim's finances, behaviour and even who they socializes with.
11. The abuser's child(ren) is/are frequently upset or very quiet and withdrawn and won't say why.

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND WHO IS BEING ABUSED.

1. Believe the victim and listen, without judging.
2. Tell the victim the abuse is not their fault. There is no excuse for the abuse - not alcohol or drugs, financial pressure, depression, jealousy or the victim's behaviour.
3. Make sure the victim knows they are not alone and that help is available. Domestic violence tends to get worse and become more frequent with time and that it rarely goes away on its own.
4. Explain that relationship abuse is a crime, and that they can seek protection from the police or courts.
5. Suggest that the victim develop a safety plan in case of emergency, including keeping money, important documents, a change of clothes, and an extra set of keys in a safe place eg a friend's house.
6. Think about ways you might feel comfortable helping the victim. If they decide to leave her relationship, they may need money, assistance finding a place to live, a place to store belongings etc.
7. Get advice. If you want to talk with someone yourself to get advice about a particular situation, contact a local domestic violence program.

HOW TO HELP IF THE VICTIM DECIDES TO STAY IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

1. Encourage the victim to keep a log of what is happening to them.
2. Help the victim identify resources to help them take care of themselves.
3. Suggest that they tell her doctor or nurse about the violence.
4. Many victims stay because of their children. It is important to have a safety plan for the children as well as to discuss possible dangers if the child remains in the home.

HOW TO HELP A PERPETRATOR

Never confront an abusive partner without thoroughly discussing with the spouse both the benefits and the potential risks that such confrontation could bring. Get the spouse's full permission before confronting the abuser.

1. Challenge the perpetrator to take responsibility for his/her abuse and to encourage him/her to get treatment. That will require you to bring up regularly and gently with the perpetrator how he/she plans to get better:
2. Be wary of the "I'm a changed man/woman" claim, if change occurs over a short period of time. Repenting and being sorry is part of the Cycle of Violence. Lasting change, both spiritual and psychological, takes time and hard work.
3. Redirect his/her Scripture reading to passages that teach equal value and dignity of husband and wife eg Genesis 1:26-28, 1 Corinthians 7:3-4 and 11:11-12, Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 5:21 and 5:25-33, and Philippians 2:3
4. Hold out hope - if the abuser wants to change and will do the hard work, with God anything is possible. Through prayer, Scripture reading, spiritual counselling, and psychological treatment, he/she can become whole.
5. Do not try to bring the wife and husband together to "get at the truth" can be dangerous for the victim.