

# SIGNS OF ABUSE

There are two main categories of domestic or relationship violence. There is physical violence and emotional violence. Emotional violence is usually called domestic abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse and mental abuse. [Dr. Sam Vaknin](http://samvak.tripod.com/abuse10.html) writes about "[Ambient Abuse](http://samvak.tripod.com/abuse10.html)" (<http://samvak.tripod.com/abuse10.html>) which is emotional violence at its most subtle level. Often it goes on as an evil undercurrent in a relationship and is next to impossible for the spouse to understand until they are neatly entrapped.

Emotional violence is not physical but it is a form of violence against the well being, self-esteem, and emotional health of the target. Here are some common symptoms of *emotional* violence in a partner:

Does your partner

- abuse or threaten to abuse pets?
- become jealous without reason or make unwarranted accusations?
- constantly criticizes or devalues your looks, morals, dreams, faith, close friendships, calling your mother, choice of television, your choice of clothes, politics, ect.
- control all finances and force you to account for what you spend or conversely force you to handle the finances then berate you for mishandling it?
- crazy-making, like conveniently "forgets" what he demanded last week so that this week you are wrong for doing it --constantly changing the rules so you are always off-balance
- deny you access to family assets, such as bank accounts, credit cards, or even the car?
- destroy personal property or sentimental items?
- force you to engage in sexual acts that make you uncomfortable?
- force you to have sex against your will?
- have unpredictable outbursts of anger or rage?
- humiliate you in front of your children?
- insult you or call you derogatory names?
- is never much interested in what you think, what your opinions are, your attitudes and beliefs and if you do voice them, they are discounted or ridiculed?
- prevent or discourage you from seeing family or friends?
- prevent you from going where you want, when you want often with references to duty or 'if you loved me' statements?
- prevent you from working or attending school or make you work at something you hate and then accuse you of shirking your duties at home?
- shove, push, block your way, or stand over you in a threatening manner?
- threaten to hurt you, your children, friends or family?
- turn minor incidents into major arguments and then say you started it?
- use intimidation or manipulation to control you or your children?
- misplace things, forget appointments, forget to pay bills and immediately blame you seldom taking responsibility for his/her own actions?
- uses the family resources on his wants and needs seldom considering yours
- withhold conversation, sex, or affection from you? Gives the silent treatment?