

Wellness Bulletin

NOVEMBER 2020

Domestic & Family
Violence

November 25th 2020

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines domestic violence as any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours. The perpetrator uses violence to control and dominate the other person. This causes fear, physical harm and/or psychological harm. Domestic violence is a violation of human rights.

HOW MIGHT THESE BEHAVIOURS BE DESCRIBED?

Any behaviour that causes a person to feel;

- Undermined
- Attacked
- Unsupported
- Judged
- Criticised
- Negated

It may develop subtly at first and then increase. These behaviours may occur in cycles and intensify at times. Behaviours may involve controlling your finances, interfering or controlling your family or other social supports.

Domestic violence in Australia can include:

- emotional abuse
- physical assault
- sexual assault
- verbal abuse
- financial abuse
- psychological abuse
- isolating a someone from their friends and family
- stopping someone from practising their religion

CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Research and practice in counselling have shown that with domestic violence, these controlling behaviours are done with deliberate, conscious intent to oppress the other person and maintain control. The consequence of this is that the oppressed person is being systematically broken down psychologically, emotionally and sometimes physically.

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Protecting oneself in DV relationships can be psychologically, emotionally and physically very challenging, as is empowering oneself within, or out of an unhealthy relationship. It's important to be aware and acknowledge that this is an unhealthy relationship. Depressive symptoms such as low mood, poor concentration, self-absorption and loss of enthusiasm in things you are normally interested in are common. Stress, anxiety and panicky feelings are also typical, as is constant worrying thoughts about the situation.

SEEKING HELP

If you are experiencing domestic violence in any form, it is very important to speak to someone you trust or seek professional help from a psychologist. People in this situation often feel strong feelings of guilt and shame and find that the hardest thing is to talk to someone about the unhealthy relationship. Talking to someone can enable you to get the best support you need for developing practical coping strategies and assisting you in feeling more psychologically and physically safe.

Support services incl. Employee Assistance Programs

Talking to your G.P.

Specific Domestic Violence Confidential 24/7 counselling and support service 1800-RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Men experiencing domestic violence can contact Mensline on 1300 78 99 78 & 1800-RESPECT (1800 737 732)

It may be helpful if you are physically threatened to contact your local police station and speak to them about your situation. They will be able to help you find safety.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SPEAK IN TOTAL CONFIDENCE TO AN SMG HEALTH COUNSELLOR, CONTACT:

ph. 1800 273 865 (AU) 0800 377 990 (NZ) +61 3 8290 5951 (INT)

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