



Communities who care about domestic abuse

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DISCUSSION TIME

What is domestic abuse?
What kind of things would you put into a definition?



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Definition

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Psychological | Physical |
| Sexual | Financial |
| Emotional | (and Spiritual ...) |

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Statistics

1 in 4 women / 1 in 6 men in England and Wales experience it
 Women experience, on average, 35 episodes before reporting it
 Domestic violence is the crime with the highest risk of repeat
 Domestic abuse is one of the key causes of homelessness
 2 women are killed each week by their partner / ex-partner
 (Statistics from www.cps.gov.uk and www.refuge.org.uk)
 The church is not immune ...



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DISCUSSION TIME

What potential signs may there be of domestic abuse?

Physical

Relational

Spiritual



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How It Begins

Abuser:

Desire – Demand – Control – Coerce

Abused:

Please – Acquiesce – Comply – Fearfully obey



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Those Most At Risk

Those abused as children – those from cultures where acceptance in the norm – those who are less able to seek help – those who think it couldn't possibly happen to them – but no-one is immune.



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How It Feels

Worthless (John 4)

Helpless (Psalm 88)

Hopeless



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DISCUSSION TIME

What spiritual questions do you think might be raised by abuse?
(ie questions about God, faith and the church)



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Why People Stay

- Love
- Duty
- Fear
- External pressure

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Raising Awareness In The Church

In the building:
Notices – Books – Where to get help

In the processes:
Safeguarding – Training – Pastoral care

In the gatherings:
Illustrations – Testimonies - Prayer

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Responding To Disclosure

- Thank
- Believe
- Affirm
- Discern
- Plan
- Pray

A word on: Safeguarding – Separation – Divorce

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Facilitating Practical Planning

Safety first

Helpline (24 hour National Helpline: 0808 2000 247)

Victim Support / Police / Social Services / Court Orders

Money / ID / Housing / Social Media

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Overflowing with Biblical Perspectives

- God's identity (Ephesians 1 / Amos sets out his hatred of abuse)
- Human identity (Ephesians 1 / Psalm 139 / Genesis 1-2)
- Place of Christian community that promotes change (Ephesians 4)
- Certainty and hope (Philippians 1)

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Continuing To Love As The Legacy Lives On

- From captivity to freedom (Joseph)
- From distance to intimacy (Woman at the well)
- From uncertainty / control to following God (Ruth)
- From hypervigilance to trust (David)
- From controlled to a life worthy of the calling of Christ ...

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Further Reading



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Any Questions?

Please use the chat function to send questions directly to Helen



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