

Understanding Family and Domestic Violence

Domestic or family violence, is any violent, coercive or intimidating behaviour in a relationship. This can come in many forms – emotional, sexual, social, financial, spiritual and physical abuse.

Everyone has the right to feel free from harm and be respected and safe in their relationships. If you have been affected by domestic violence, it is important to recognise that it is never your fault and

Important Considerations

Domestic violence is prevalent in our society and has the potential to impact on all areas of life including families, communities and workplaces. People remain in abusive relationships for a multitude of reasons that may relate to cultural, religious beliefs, financial security and fear for one's safety.

Not only do we all need to be sensitive and aware of domestic violence, but we all have a role to play to prevent, stop and promote safety.

In the workplace violence contributes to stress, fear, absenteeism, poor performance and lessened safety.

Respect

As parents, family members, friends, teachers and employers we all have a responsibility to be positive role models for younger generations. Be mindful to reject disrespectful and aggressive behaviours and instead promote and model respect in everyday interactions and personal relationships.

Respect =

Accountability

Safety

Honesty

Support

Co-operation

Trust

Accountability

Accepting responsibility for one's own behaviour, thoughts and feelings.

Safety

Being mindful of other people's situation.

Honesty

Being open and truthful.

Support

Being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes.

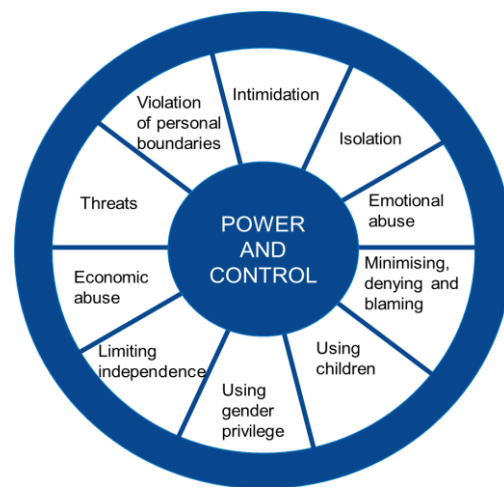
Co-operation

Compromise, be flexible, adapt and be a team player.

Trust

Believing in others.

Characteristics of Violence and Abuse in a Relationship



Intimidation – Gestures or threats that are made in order to make a person afraid, often in order to persuade a person into what to do. E.g. shouting and threats to harm family/animals.

Isolation – Controlling the relationship, jealousy, cutting a person off from family and friends.

Emotional Abuse – Put downs, name calling, inferring that a person is 'crazy'.

Minimising, denying and blaming – Making light of abusive behaviour, in denial or blaming the victim.

Using children – Threatening to harm or take children away. Using children to relay messages, spy or harass to control.

Limiting Independence – Controlling the day to day living such as clothing worn, access to finances, transport and outside activities.

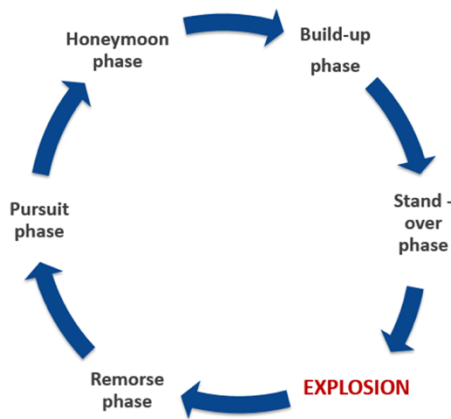
Economic Abuse – Preventing the person from working to earn their own income or controlling access to money.

Threat to harm – The victim, children, animals, family or remove financial support.

Violation of personal boundaries – Such as inappropriate touching, unwanted closeness, listening to phone conversations, checking internet and mobile phone.

The Cycle of Violence

Domestic or family violence generally fluctuates between relative calm and an explosion of abuse from the perpetrator. The abuse will go through various phases and intensities.



Phase	Victim Behaviour	Perpetrator Behaviour
Honeymoon	Sets up counselling sessions, stops legal proceedings, agrees to return, forgives, hopeful, relieved and happy.	Demonstrates caring, attentive and romantic attitude.
Build-up	Attempts to stay calm, tries to reason and satisfy.	Tension, harassment and arguments on the rise.
Stand-over	Agrees with avoidance, withdraws, is compliant and nurturing.	Control and threatens, instils fear in victims and children.

Explosion	Receiver of extreme abuse, aggression and violence.	Perpetrates extreme abuse, aggression and violence.
Remorse	Feels isolated, withdraws, support from others.	Attempts to justify/minimise actions, blames victim, may include threats of self-harm.
Pursuit	Justifies perpetrating behaviour.	Promises that it will not happen again, blames the victim, blames other factors (e.g. alcohol).

Supporting Employees

In Victoria about **48%** of individuals affected by domestic violence have disclosed being a victim to their managers.

Only **10%** of victims find managers responses helpful and supportive. (*Human Capital Resources Online, 2015*).



Look-Listen-Link

Look:

- Observe potential warning signs and create a safe and open environment to foster communication.

Listen:

- Build a culture of friendly, supportive and caring relationships.
- Actively listen and observe.
- Acknowledge boundaries.

- Ensure confidentiality.
- Ask open ended questions to explore impact on them/work.
- Be empathetic and non-judgmental.

Link:

- To internal support services (discuss options/leave entitlements).
- To external support services (provide contact details of support services, recommend their EAP provider.
- Provide/discuss checklist to create a safety plan.
- Follow up

Something for Managers and Teams to Practice

Concierge Model developed by Gino Carrafa – Consultant Psychologist and Managing Director of D’Accord OAS.

- Sit and listen to the persons story.
- Provide resources and make the call to either EAP or 1800RESPECT together with the person - if they are ready.
- Go to the appointment with them to support or be there to make the or be there to make the call.
- Follow up with the person and ask how they went in the call or meetings. Enquire what support you can provide for them to move forward.

Barriers for Disclosure

There are two categories to consider what may be stopping someone for reaching out for support.

Emotions – Shame, embarrassment, feeling of responsibility, guilt, mental health and lack of trust.

Thoughts – ‘No one will believe me’, ‘I will be blamed’, how will I survive financially’, ‘who will support me’.

Creating a Safety Plan

Leaving an abusive relationship is not as simple as getting up and going. It can be a difficult decision for a person and requires careful preparation and support from people around them.

Encourage a person to make a safety plan. This may include having important documents packed away, clothes/toiletries, medication and emergency numbers. This will prepare a person to be able to leave immediately if the situation becomes too dangerous.

If you or someone you know has been affected by domestic violence please call us today on 1300 130 130.

- You are in an abusive relationship
- You don’t know what to do about your abusive relationship.
- You are not sure where to get help.

D’Accord OAS has a range of clinicians that specialise in domestic and family violence. We are available 24/7 to connect a person to support and create a plan to keep them safe.

Helpful Links

1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732

24-hour national sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling.

Penda – App

A free, national app with legal, financial, and personal safety information for women who have experienced domestic and family violence.

White Ribbon -

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/find-help/support-services/>

Find local domestic violence support services in your local area.



To arrange an appointment or seek advice today please call us on

1300 130 130

E: enquiries@daccordoas.au

W: www.daccordoas.au