

Abusive Relationship Questionnaire

Abuse is about someone having power and control over another. This may be in an intimate relationship, like a marriage, or in a work/business/social relationship.

The following information and questions are relevant to ALL relationships.

Answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the following six questions.

1. Does this person ever:

- a. belittle you, or put you down?
- b. blame you for the abuse or arguments?
- c. deny that abuse is happening, or downplay it?
- d. isolate you from your family and friends?
- e. stop you going to college or work?
- f. make unreasonable demands for your attention?
- g. accuse you of flirting or having affairs?
- h. tell you what to wear, who to see, where to go, and what to think?
- i. control your money, or not give you enough to buy food or other essential things?
- j. monitor your social media profiles, share photos or videos of you without your consent or use GPS locators to know where you are?

2. Does this person ever:

- a. threaten to hurt or kill you?
- b. destroy things that belong to you?
- c. stand over you, invade your personal space?
- d. threaten to kill themselves or the children?
- e. read your emails, texts or letters?
- f. harass or follow you?

3. Does this person ever:

- a. slap, hit or punch you?
- b. push or shove you?
- c. bite or kick you?
- d. burn you?
- e. choke you or hold you down?
- f. throw things?

4. Does this person ever:

- a. touch you in a way you do not want to be touched?
- b. make unwanted sexual demands?
- c. hurt you during sex?
- d. pressure you to have unsafe sex – for example, not using a condom?
- e. pressure you to have sex?

If anyone has sex with you when you do not want to, this is rape. It is still rape if that person is your partner.

5. **Have you ever felt afraid of this person?**
6. **Have you ever changed your behaviour because you're afraid of what this person might do?**

(Abuse against women often starts during pregnancy. If the relationship is already abusive, it can get worse).

(Questionnaire extracted from: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/>)

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the above six questions, we advise you to make seek professional advice (e.g., your family doctor) about your situation. **Remember:** *The more times you have answered 'Yes', the higher the chance that your relationship is abusive.*

Finding Help & Support

- women can call [The Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge](#) on 0808 2000 247 for free at any time, day or night. The staff will offer confidential, non-judgemental information and support,
- talk to a doctor, health visitor or midwife,
- men can call Men's Advice Line on 0808 8010 327 (Monday to Friday 10am to 8pm) or visit the webchat at [Men's Advice Line](#) (Wednesday 10am to 11.30am and 2.30pm to 4pm) for non-judgemental information and support,
- men can also call [ManKind](#) on 0182 3334 244 (Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm)
- if you identify as LGBT+ you can call [Galop](#) on 0800 999 5428 for emotional and practical support,
- anyone can call [Karma Nirvana](#) on 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) for forced marriage and honour crimes. You can also call 020 7008 0151 to speak to the [GOV.UK Forced Marriage Unit](#),
- in an emergency, call 999.

You can also email for support. It is important that you specify when and if it is safe to respond and to which email address:

- women can email helpline@womensaid.org.uk. Staff will respond to your email within 5 working days.
- men can email info@mensadvice.org.uk.
- LGBT+ people can email help@galop.org.uk.

[The Survivor's Handbook from the charity Women's Aid](#) is free and provides information for women on a wide range of issues, such as housing, money, helping your children, and your legal rights. ***If you are worried that you are abusive***, you can contact the free Respect helpline on 0808 802 4040.

Specifically Narcissistic Behaviours

If you are interested in discovering more about narcissistic relationships, the following information will help.

Narcissism occurs in all of us. It is how we get what we want. HOWEVER, we balance our wants using empathy, the ability to consider how another person feels and what they want. **Narcissists lack empathy**, so their attitude towards life is that of a primary school child. It is all about them and their needs. Full Stop!

Narcissism presents as a 'spectrum' or range of intensities, from ignoring another's feelings to violent aggression. Typically, narcissists don't take responsibility for their behaviour and shift the blame onto others.

Narcissistic behaviour/abuse can be emotional, mental, physical, financial, spiritual, or sexual.

Verbal Abuse

Probably the most frequently used type of abuse, which includes:

- criticising, belittling, undermining and opposing,
- accusing, blaming, bullying and shaming,
- ordering, demanding, threatening and raging,
- interrupting and blocking,
- sarcasm, and name-calling.

Gaslighting

A sinister, psychological technique where the narcissist continually changes their story to intentionally make the focus of their activities ('victim') distrust their own perceptions of reality. When used consistently, victims believe that they are either mentally incompetent or 'going crazy.'

Lack of Empathy

Narcissists cannot appreciate how others feel, so are highly selfish and demanding without considering the effect they have on another person. In a relationship, 'fair division' of goods or money means total control or ownership by the narcissist.

Envy

Narcissists think of themselves as highly important, special people who deserve the best. They often stress how envious other people are of them and their situation. However, it is the narcissist who is highly envious of others.

Manipulation

This indirectly influencing another person to behave in a way that furthers the goals of the manipulator. It expresses covert aggression. Whilst on the surface, words seem harmless or even complimentary, underneath the target feels demeaned or senses hostility. People who experience manipulation whilst growing up may not recognize it as such.

Emotional Blackmail (Coercion)

This may include threats, anger, warnings, intimidation, or punishment. It is designed to make a target doubt themselves. They feel fear, obligation and/or guilt, sometimes referred to as “FOG”.

Competition

The narcissist must always be on top or win, so they compete with others, often unethically to stay there. Cheating, lying and breaking the law are normal.

Comparison

Narcissists make themselves look better by pulling others down using remarks, actions or attitudes. By making others seem worse, the narcissist feels better about himself.

Sabotage

Narcissists hate it when others are happy, so they disrupt the source of joy, which may be relationships, possessions or activities. It is an act of revenge to gain personal advantage.

Exploitation and Objectification

Using or taking advantage of another’s situation, condition or attributes for the narcissist’s own gain, without regard for their feelings or needs.

Lying

Narcissists are compulsive liars, even when they do not need to be. Lies are used to deceive others into thinking how the narcissist wants them to think and to avoid responsibility. They are a means to achieving the narcissist’s goals, even if evidence exists that they are untrue.

Withholding

Withholding money, sex, communication or affection from others is used by the narcissist as a weapon, or lever, to get what they want.

Neglect and Risk

Narcissists ignore the needs of others, especially children, putting them at risk through neglect or danger, such as, driving without regard for others. Narcissists will also ignore laws in order to do their own thing.

Privacy Invasion

Narcissists ignore another person's boundaries, feeling entitled to look through personal belongings, phone or mail. They may also deny someone else physical privacy, stalking or following them to see what they are doing. Only the narcissist is entitled to privacy, which they are obsessive, even paranoid, about.

Character Assassination and Slander

Narcissists use malicious gossip or lies about other people to create division, mistrust and isolation of their target from friends, family, or access to outside services and support.

Violence

Narcissists will not hesitate to block movement, pull hair, throw things, or destroy property. They also twist the story so that the target is made out to be the abuser. Narcissists love drama and are keen to report fictitious incidents to the authorities and to litigate.

Financial Abuse

Narcissists need to be in control and one the most powerful way to control others is through finance. All significant or 'joint' finances will be stored in accounts bearing only their name, they will drain a partner's finances through extortion, theft, manipulation, or gambling, they will accrue debt in another's name or sell another person's property. This is exaggerated in intimate relationships.

Sadism

Some narcissists enjoy seeing others in pain or struggling. These individuals behave in a malicious, hostile manner and may adopt antisocial behaviours to get what they want.

Finding Help

If you are in a relationship with a narcissist, it is important to get outside support to understand clearly what is happening, to rebuild your self-esteem and confidence and to learn to communicate effectively and set boundaries. A family doctor is a good first option. They may be able to refer you to expert help according to your needs.

(Adapted from Darlene Lancer's article: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/toxic-relationships/201709/how-spot-narcissistic-abuse>).