

# Dealing with Domestic Violence

*Have you been physically or psychologically abused?*



## What is it?

The United States Department of Justice describes domestic as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone. People who are exposed to domestic violence often experience physical, mental or spiritual shifts that can endure and worsen if they are not addressed.

## Does the person you love....

- Threaten to hurt you or your children?
- Say it's your fault if he or she hits you, then promises it won't happen again (but it does happen again)?
- Put you down in public or keep you from contacting family or friends?
- Throw you down, push, hit, choke, kick, or slap you?
- Force you to have sex when you don't want to?

## What to do?

### Find a support group.

Women experiencing domestic violence or formerly battered women may want to contact. A Woman's Place (AWP) hotline 800.220.8116 to receive counseling and participate in support groups that meet on a weekly basis in four different locations across the county. Clients can gain access to these support groups by calling the hotline, 800.220.8116. <http://www.awomansplace.org>

### Have a safe place to go

Being battered by the person who professes to love you is a traumatic and isolating experience.

### A safe place provides:

- Exploration and validation of feelings
- Understanding the cycle of abuse
- Realization that the victim is not to blame for the battering
- Planning for safety
- Learning options

### Keep a journal

Record thoughts, feelings, events that precede the attack. Record perceptions during the event. Record thoughts, feelings, events following the situation. Protect journal from being discovered.

Call Network of Victim Abuse (NOVA) Get help 24 hours a day. Call 1-800-675-6900 [www.novabucks.org](http://www.novabucks.org)

### References

Department of Justice: <http://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>

Joyful heart Foundation: <http://www.joyfulheartfoundation.org/learn/domestic-violence/effects-domestic-violence>

**To talk with a Bucks Counselor, call 215.968.8189 or email [counseling@bucks.edu](mailto:counseling@bucks.edu) to schedule an appointment.**

**It's FREE and confidential.**