

What Can I Do?

If someone is hurting you,

- ◆ It is not your fault.
- ◆ You are not alone.

Talk to someone you trust:

- ◆ A friend
- ◆ A caring health care worker
- ◆ A family member
- ◆ Someone from a domestic violence program
- ◆ Someone from the disability community

Talk to someone who will:

- ◆ Listen to you
- ◆ Believe you
- ◆ Not blame you
- ◆ Not discriminate against you
- ◆ Allow you your own decisions



Domestic Violence Initiative

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Disabilities & Abuse

**I am a WOMAN who has
DisABILITIES
I am both
strong and
weak,**

**I can make
decisions for myself,
be intimate,
and
have a family**

**I have dreams,
I do not suffer
and
I am credible**

**ABUSE should not be the
price I have to pay for**

CARE or LOVE.



Ways that “care” can be abuse:

1. Putting you down by calling you names, insulting you or making fun of your disability.
2. Keeping you from your friends and family and/or convincing your family that you are to blame for family problems.
3. Keeping information from you that would help you to live independently, and /or receive employment opportunities.
4. Threatening to take your children away or to report you as an unfit parent.
5. Making decisions for you and saying that you are not capable of making decisions on your own.
6. Denying you access to money or not allowing you to know how the money is managed.
7. Threatening and/or telling others you have a behavior problem, are crazy, or need to be put in an institution.
8. Blaming your disability or caregiving accidents for injuries caused by physical abuse.
9. Blaming you for the abuse and saying that no one will believe you because you have a disability.
10. Slapping, pushing, strangling, pulling your hair, holding you down, threatening you with weapons or using weapons to hurt you.
11. Threatening to put you in a care facility if you try to leave.
12. Reminding you, through words or a look, that harm may come if you don't obey.
13. Threatening to hurt your pets or service animal.

Some women become disabled because of the abuse.

Physical abuse can result in disabilities including spinal cord injuries, cognitive disabilities, sensory impairments, head injuries, etc. The traumatic experience of being victimized by a pattern of emotional and physical control can contribute to some forms of mental illness.

If you have someone in your life providing care for you, your relationship with your caregiver is harmful if that person:

- ◆ Provides care in a rough, hurtful manner.
- ◆ Blames you for making them feel stressed, overworked and/or angry.
- ◆ Denies you food, personal hygiene care, medicine or medical care or threatens to withhold care completely.
- ◆ Speaks for you when talking with other people and denies you opportunities to increase your independence.
- ◆ Denies you access to friends, other caregivers and spiritual leaders of your choice.
- ◆ Threatens to place or places you in a facility against your will.
- ◆ Steals from you.
- ◆ Controls you with threats of physical harm, actually hurts you or threatens to not let you do what you need or want to do.