



12 Reasons Women Stay

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What's Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence (DV), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and Domestic/Relationship Abuse are all terms used to describe an intimate relationship in which one partner uses a pattern of behaviors in order to maintain power and control over the other partner.

Behaviors

Physical, emotional, and psychological harm used to induce fear and either prevent or force unwanted actions onto a partner. Examples include, but are not limited to, threats, physical and/or sexual violence, financial control, and emotional abuse.

DNM Project

Learn more online at DauntedNoMore.com

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Leaving is Dangerous

The most dangerous time in a Domestic Violence Relationship is when the victim leaves and the first three months afterward.

There is no greater danger than the moment an abuser loses their power and control.

The danger may resurface at any future time when the abuser experiences a major life change.

2

Fear

All sorts of fears may flood in when considering whether or not to leave. Unsure of where to go. Afraid of the abuser's reaction and who will be hurt by it. What people will think or if anyone will believe the victim. Often the abuser has worked hard to appear charming to others, making the victim feel they are the crazy one. Afraid of losing the kids or raising them without the other parent.

Fear of the unknown.

3

It Feels Normal

Especially common when having grown up in an abusive or neglectful home. No one wants to be treated badly, but people are drawn to what they are used to and what feels normal. The unhealthy normal may have been learned at home or from society and various forms of entertainment, games, movies, television, and books.

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Responsibility & Commitment

Having made a commitment to the relationship, leaving may stir feelings of guilt and responsibility. Especially once children are involved, with a desire to raise them in an unbroken home.

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Love & Hope & Denial

The victim still feels love for their partner and hope that the abusive behavior will stop. There are apologetic periods of kindness that inspire hope for change and a belief that the abuse won't happen again. They may deny there's a pattern. Since it's not bad all the time, sometimes the victim believes they can change their partner.

6

Society & Religious Beliefs

Whether picked up from society or religion, many believe it's wrong to separate, especially when children are involved or marriage vows have been exchanged. The victim is bombarded with the message, internal or external, sometimes from the abuser, to forgive and forget. Abused women feel they are expected to submit with no clear definition of what that looks like or where the boundary should be.

7

Isolation

The victim has been isolated from their family and close friends, either geographically or relationally. Their relationships sabotaged.

With no support system, the victim is less likely to leave.

Military spouses are especially vulnerable to isolation since they move so often and are rarely stationed near family.

8

Damaged Self-Worth

Abusers need to deplete their victim's self-esteem in order to maintain their position of control. When a victim believes they are not worthy of being treated better or that the abuse is their own fault, they are less

likely to leave. Sometimes they are afraid of being alone and don't think anyone else will want them

9

Money

Monetary resources are often not mutually shared.

The victim may not have access to money, a vehicle, and in extreme cases, suitable clothing or shoes.

Many women are faced with homelessness if they choose to leave.

10

Misplaced Concern

The victim may worry about what will happen to the abuser if they leave. The abuser has convinced their victim that they will kill themselves or lose their job if the victim were to tell or leave. The abuser has made the victim falsely responsible for their feelings and the victim may have a hard time letting go of that misplaced concern.

11

Dependant

The victim may be an immigrant, have a language barrier, or a disability. If a victim feels dependant on their abuser for support, it's almost unthinkable to leave.

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Where To Turn

The victim feels alone.
They're sure they can't get out safely without help.
They don't know there is help or where to find it.

If you're in this situation, there is hope. Call the hotline and chat with someone about your situation.

1-800-799-7233