



HOW TO HELP SOMEONE WHO MAY BE LIVING WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Breaking the cycle of domestic violence one person at a time.

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE – TALK TO ADVOCATES & READ ABOUT IT.

Understand that nothing she has done warrants being abused. She is not being battered because there's something wrong with her, but rather because her partner is controlling. His coercive tactics are powerful and make her feel trapped.

The *threat* of physical violence is effective. Even if there is no physical violence, understand that emotional, verbal, financial and/or sexual abuse is extremely harmful. Do not minimize the impact of these tactics on her self-esteem and well-being.

2. DECIDE HOW HELPFUL YOU WANT TO BE AND ARE TRULY CAPABLE OF BEING.

It is important to assess the risk to your own safety and the safety of your family.

3. BELIEVE HER.

Withhold judgments, criticism, and the urge to impose a timeline or to make decisions for her.

Remember how long it can take any of us to decide to switch careers, lose weight, or go back to school. The choice to leave a relationship has life altering consequences, and we cannot make that choice for her.

4. LISTEN TO HER AND LET HER DO MOST OF THE TALKING.

An abuser creates a lot of noise in her head. She isn't allowed to feel or express herself at home, so she needs quiet time.

Find out how and where it is safe to contact her, and then ask if you can go for a walk together or invite her to have a cup of coffee.

5. TELL HER THAT SHE DOES NOT DESERVE TO BE ABUSED.

She may feel very isolated, and her abuser has blamed her for their problems. She often feels confused and ashamed. Tell her you think she is a good person, point out her talents and capabilities, and help her to remember herself.

6. BRAINSTORM WITH HER, PLAN RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE.

- Could she go to a relative's house?
- Does she need money for a hotel room so she can wait out a difficult time?
- Does she know about getting an order of protection?
- Encourage her to explore her options.
- Support her decisions, validate her concerns, and voice your concerns for her safety.

7. GIVE HER RESOURCES.

- Give her a list of helpful books to read (she may have to read them at the library, as bringing the books home would not be safe).
- Give her the name of a good lawyer, if she's ready for that step.
- Lend her money for a bus ticket or a hotel room.
- Phone the police if you witness or hear an attack happening.
- Give her a list of organizations to contact:

ALTERNATIVES FOR BATTERED WOMEN'S
24hr Hotline: 585-232-7353

SAFE JOURNEY
585-425-1580

NEW YORK STATE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE
1-800-942-6906