

What does abuse look like?

Below is a list of some traits that may help identify relationship patterns that are healthy or abusive.

A Healthy Relationship

- Support and encouragement
- Freedom to have your own opinions
- Freedom to have friends
- Trust and mutuality
- Honesty
- Shared decision-making
- Physical and emotional safety
- Kindness
- Mutual care and nurturing
- Acceptance for who you are
- Respect for privacy
- Calm discussion
- Healthy sexual intimacy

An Abusive Relationship

- Put-downs, name-calling
- Threatening gestures
- Driving dangerously
- Throwing things
- Yelling, screaming, swearing
- Verbal threats
- Damaging property or pets
- "Silent treatment"
- Jealousy, preventing friendships
- Controlling activities and money
- Unwanted physical or sexual contact
- Pushing, spitting, grabbing, choking
- Public or private humiliation

First Steps to Addressing Family Violence

Abuse is one person hurting, degrading or controlling another. It may be emotional, physical or even spiritual. Most abuse is repeated, regular, and occurs in a cycle or pattern. The abuser generally has more power in the relationship.

Abuse escalates. If the abuser does not acknowledge his/her abusiveness and actively seek help, the abuse will happen again and it will get worse.

For more information, please visit abuse.mcccanada.ca.



For MCC programs which address abuse dynamics, please contact one of the following MCC offices.

MCC British Columbia

End Abuse
33933 Gladys Ave, Box 2038
Abbotsford, BC V2T 3T8
(604) 850-6639
or toll free (888) 622-6337
endabuse@mccbc.com
<http://mcccanada.ca/learn/more/end-abuse>

MCC Manitoba Programs office

Voices for Non-Violence
159 Henderson Hwy.
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 1L4
(204) 925-1917
or toll free (866) 530-4450
vnv@mennonitecc.ca
<http://mcccanada.ca/learn/more/voices-non-violence>

Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Resource Response Team (SMARRT)

203-50 Kent Avenue
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 3R1
(519) 745-8458
or toll free (800) 313-6226
eileenh@mennonitecc.on.ca
<http://mcccanada.ca/learn/more/sexual-misconduct-abuse-resource-response-team-smarrt>

MCC Ontario, Circles of Care

203-50 Kent Avenue
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 3R1
(519) 745-8458
or toll free (800) 313-6226
chrisd@mennonitecc.on.ca
<http://mcccanada.ca/get-involved/serve/volunteer/circles-care-volunteer>

To order more brochures, please visit mcccanada.ca/resources.
In Canada, call your nearest MCC office toll-free (888) 622-6337.



What can you do?

If you are experiencing abuse:

You are not alone and you are not to blame. Look after your physical needs. Obtain any necessary medical assistance.

Talk about what is happening to someone who will believe you (e.g. Crisis line, a friend who will believe and support you).

Develop a safety plan. Know how to leave your home quickly. Memorize emergency phone numbers. Know where you can stay if you are in an emergency (e.g. a crisis shelter).

Emergency phone numbers such as transition houses and sexual assault crisis lines are generally listed under Emergency near the front of the phone book.

What can you do?

If you have behaved abusively:

You are not alone or hopeless. It is possible for you to change if you seek specialized assistance. You are responsible for your behaviour and choices.

Your abusive behaviour will increase if you do not take steps to change. You may destroy your relationship or seriously hurt someone you care about.

Your feelings of frustration and anger will also increase if you do not seek help.

You can get help by contacting a community agency offering treatment programs for abusers. Contact a local transition house, counselling agency and/or sexual assault centre for more information.

What can you do?

If you know of abuse:

Tactfully offer your support to the person experiencing abuse and trust their story. Listen without judging.

Assure the person experiencing abuse that the abuse is not their fault; they do not deserve to be hurt.

Ensure that physical needs are being met. Obtain any necessary medical or safety assistance. Be aware of the location of the local transition house, shelter or sexual assault centre.

Reassure the abused person you will remain supportive even if they do not do what you think is best. Do not ask the one who abused for their side of the story. Receive the abused person's permission before taking any action.

If the victim is a child, report the incident to the local child protection agency. *Do not* contact the alleged perpetrator to find out if the accusations are true.

If you know someone who behaves abusively, do not accept their rationalizations. Do not take the abuser's words as evidence that the abuse has stopped.

Become aware of treatment programs which address abusive behaviours in your community. Urge the abusive person to seek help.

Find support for yourself.

What can you do?

If you are a church leader:

Learn about abuse—the myths, dynamics and effects. Organize training for church caregivers and leaders.

Work to create understanding in your congregation for those who disclose abuse.

Refer those affected by abuse to appropriate community resources specializing in abuse dynamics.

Set up a special fund to assist with counselling costs for those affected by abuse.

Develop an awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationship patterns. Adopt protocols on how the church will respond effectively to violence and abuse.

Implement congregational abuse prevention policies.

Be alert to how sermons, songs, prayers and educational materials (especially about forgiveness, obedience and bearing the cross) may affect those who are suffering abuse.

Promote healthy relationships through example, education, inclusive language, sermons, and worship.

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