There are no absolute rules for understanding the emotional differences between men and women. There are principles and dynamics that allow interpretation of individual situations.  Domestic abuse and violence against men and women have some similarities and differences.  For men or women, domestic violence includes pushing, slapping, hitting, throwing objects, forcing or slamming a door or striking the other person with an object, or using a weapon.  Domestic abuse also can be mental or emotional.  However, what will hurt a man mentally and emotionally, can in some cases  be very different from what hurts a woman.  For some men, being called a coward, impotent or a failure can have a very different psychological impact than it would on women.  Unkind and cruel words hurt, but they can hurt in different ways and linger in different ways.  In most cases, men are more deeply affected by emotional abuse than physical abuse.

For example, the ability to tolerate and "brush off" a physical assault by women in front of other men can in some cases reassure a man that he is strong and communicate to other men that he can live up to the code of never hitting a woman.  A significant number of of men are overly sensitive to emotional and psychological abuse.  In some cases, humiliating a man emotionally in front of other men can be more devastating than physical abuse.  Some professionals have observed that mental and emotional abuse can be an area where women are often "brutal" than men.  Men on the other hand are quicker to resort to physical abuse and they are more capable of physical assaults that are more brutal - even deadly!.

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**What Are The Characteristics Of Women Who Are Abusive And Violent?**

Alcohol Abuse.  Alcohol abuse is a major cause and trigger in domestic violence.

Psychological Disorders.  There are certain psychological problems, primarily personality disorders, inwhich women are characteristically abusive and violent toward men.  Approximately 1 to 2 percent of all women have a borderline Personality disorder.  Some researchers believe that least 50% of all domestic abuse and violence against men is associated with women who have a borderline personality disorder. The disorder is also associated with suicidal behavior, severe mood swings, lying, sexual problems and alcohol abuse.

Unrealistic expectations, assumptions and conclusions.   Women who are abusive toward men usually have unrealistic expectations and make unrealistic demands of men.  These women will typically experience repeated episodes of depression, anxiety, frustration and irritability which they attribute to a man's behavior.  In fact, their mental and emotional state is the result of their own insecurities, emotional problems, trauma during childhood or even withdrawal from alcohol.   They blame men rather than admit their problems, take responsibility for how they live their lives or do something about how they make themselves miserable.  They refuse to enter treatment and may even insist the man needs treatment.   Instead of helping themselves, they blame a man for how they feel and believe that a man should do something to make them feel better. When men can't make them feel better, these women become frustrated and assume that men are doing this on purpose.

**Why Do Men Stay In Abusive And Violent Relationships?**

Men stay in abusive and violent relationships for many different reasons.

Protecting Their Children.  Abused men are afraid to leave their children alone with an abusive woman.  They are afraid that if they leave they will never be allowed to see their children again.  The man is afraid the woman will tell his children he is a bad person or that he doesn't love them.

Assuming Blame (Guilt Prone).  Many abused men believe it is their fault or feel they deserve the treatment they receive. They assume blame for events that other people would not.  They feel responsible and have an unrealistic belief that they can and should do something that will make things better.

Dependency (or Fear of Independence).  The abused man is mentally, emotionally or financially dependent on the abusive woman.  The idea of leaving the relationship creates significant feelings of depression or anxiety.  They are "addicted" to each other.

Further, many men who have been highly traumatized (former soldiers and others) can become the victims of abuse.

**Who Can Help If You Are In Abusive or Violent Relationship?**

Help for men who are victims of domestic abuse and violence is not as prevalent as it is for women.  There are virtually no shelters, programs or advocacy groups for men.

Most abused men will have to rely on private counseling services.  Community resources for breaking the cycle of violence aren’t not well developed.

If you are either a victim or an abuser, please feel free and contact us

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**Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace**

**Family Violence**

**ABUSED MEN**

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Very little in known about the actual number of men who are in a domestic relationship in which they are abused or treated violently by women. There are many reasons why we don't know more about domestic abuse and violence against men.  First of all, the incidence of domestic violence reported men appears to be so low that it is hard to get reliable estimates.  In addition, it has taken years of advocacy and support to encourage women to report domestic violence. Virtually nothing has been done to encourage men to report abuse.  The idea that men could be victims of domestic abuse and violence is so unthinkable that many men will not even attempt to report the situation.