



**UU Women**  
*Celebrating 60 Years • 1963-2023*

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TOOLKIT**

OCTOBER 2023

@uuwomensfed  
[www.uuwf.org](http://www.uuwf.org)

“It doesn’t matter how rich or poor a person is, what gender or social class, or how much fame or education she possesses. Verbal, mental, and physical abuse can happen to anyone. It doesn’t matter what a woman’s ethnicity is because the only distinguishing color of abuse is black-and-blue.” — La Toya Jackson

“Don’t judge yourself by what others did to you.” — Cody Kennedy

“Abuse is the weakest expression of strength. It is weakness to destroy what you ought to protect, build, and make better.” — Kingsley Opuwari Manue

**DID YOU MISS IT?**



UUWF has been hosting a series about Addressing Gender-Based Violence. there is one more session left, and we’ll be posting each session recording for those who can’t make it.

Register [here](#)

Watch the recordings [here](#)

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Our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person means that we cannot stand silent in the face of physical, emotional, and psychological harm, especially in intimate relationships.

In order for us to live into justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, we must fight for a world in which no one is endangered by the people they most rely on for love and care.

Domestic violence is a fundamental violation of bodily autonomy that denies people the basic freedom of living in peace and safety. When our sisters suffer violence, the interdependent web of all existence suffers with them.

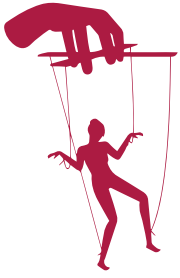
Misogyny lies at the heart of violence against women, and our faith calls us to eradicate violence in all its forms, in our communities, congregations, neighborhoods, families, and homes.

Unitarian Universalism is, at its core, about love. Love and violence cannot co-exist. It is our sacred duty to do what we can to address gender-based violence as an expression of our faith.

## DID YOU KNOW....

- An average of 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States—over 12 million people a year. This does not include psychological abuse or coercive control; almost half of all women and men in the United States have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner.
- Immigrant and non-immigrant communities experience domestic violence at similar rates, but individuals without citizenship status or other documentation face greater risk due to cultural contexts, language differences, lack of information about resources, lack of culturally competent resources, or fear of deportation.
- About 1 in 3 women report having suffered severe intimate partner violence in their lifetime.
- In the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, 54% of transgender people experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime, including physical violence and coercive control.
- Women with disabilities often face greater barriers to leaving an abuser, including reliance on their abuser for daily care, financial dependence on the abuser, communication challenges, and inaccessible services near their home.
- Up to 57% of mothers experiencing homelessness report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness.
- Sources: [DomesticShelters.org](http://DomesticShelters.org), [National Domestic Violence Hotline](http://NationalDomesticViolenceHotline.org), [National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org), [National Center for Injury Prevention and Control](http://NationalCenterforInjuryPreventionandControl.org)/Centers for Disease Prevention, [Wilder Research Center](http://WilderResearchCenter.org)

# WHAT IS COERCIVE CONTROL?



**Coercive control** is a pattern of behaviors used to dominate a person, strip them of their sense of self, distort their reality, and limit their freedom. Coercive control is nearly always present in cases of domestic violence and, even when it is not accompanied by physical abuse, coercive control causes tremendous harm. This often subtle and insidious form of abuse leaves no visible marks and can be hard to recognize and describe, but its impact is devastating.

Coercive control can include things like:

- **Sleep deprivation** (keeping you up all night arguing, for instance)
- **Monitoring** where you are and/or timing how long you are away
- **Interrogating you** about who you talk to or spend time with
- **Badmouthing** your close friends and family members and restricting your time with them (through guilt or by driving a wedge between you)
- **Accusing** you of flirting or cheating on you
- **Gaslighting** you—telling you that what you know happened did not happen
- **Calling you crazy**, hysterical, or manipulative
- **Turning innocuous events** or commonplace behaviors **into proof of wrongdoing** on your part
- **Demonstrating physically threatening behavior** in your presence, such as driving dangerously, punching walls and cupboards, or displaying weapons
- **Mistreating** or threatening to mistreat or kill pets
- **Violating your privacy**, such as reading your mail or going through your phone
- **Controlling your finances**, monitoring what you spend
- **Contacting your friends**, family, or co-workers and interrogating them about your behavior or whereabouts
- **Demanding** that you do not speak to or interact with other men
- **Giving you a curfew**, either explicitly or through guilt and accusations of betrayal when you are out longer than they would like
- **Following you**, filming you, or photographing you without your knowledge or consent



**STRONGHEARTS**  
Native Helpline

**StrongHearts Native Helpline** offers free, confidential support for Native American and Alaska Native survivors, family members, and friends. 1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483)



**Esperanza United** mobilizes Latinas and Latin@ communities to end gender-based violence. Esperanza United is a national leader in supporting Latin@ survivors, families, and communities.



**Ujima** is a national, culturally-specific resource center to provide support to and be a voice for the Black Community in response to domestic, sexual and community violence.

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## HOW TO HELP WHEN YOU FEEL HELPLESS

*If someone you know is in an abusive relationship, they may not be ready to leave the relationship at the moment, but being prepared and thinking through worst case scenarios can help them get themselves, their kids, and their pets away quickly.*

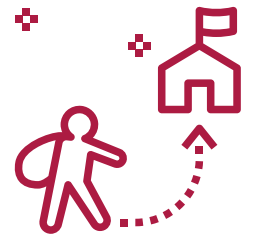
*Safety planning is a getaway plan. Women are often in the most danger when they are leaving a relationship, so it's important to plan for the worst even if they don't think the worst is likely. If someone you know is in a dangerous relationship, helping them think these things through and put measures in place is a concrete way to help.*



The most basic safety measure is to **have a getaway bag packed and hidden** somewhere safe. It should include changes of clothes, cash, checks, prepaid credit card, ID and/or passport, medications and prescription information, a burner phone, child's school records, and health and car insurance documentation.

Another basic measure a person should take is to **think about and arrange for where they'll go if they have to leave in a hurry.**

This can be a domestic violence shelter, a friend's or family member's home, or a hotel. Ideally, this should be a place the abuser has limited access to.



**Consider a code word** to share with kids (if age appropriate) to signal that they should run to the neighbor's house and have them call 911. A code word can also be used with friends and family members to let them know you are in danger and need help.

## SAFETY PLANNING, continued



The Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence provides culturally-specific resources for AAPI survivors and communities.



Futures Without Violence strives to reach new audiences and transform social norms, training professionals such as doctors, nurses, judges, and athletic coaches on improving responses to violence and abuse.



Love Is Respect is the national resource to disrupt and prevent unhealthy relationships and intimate partner violence among young people.

**Technological safety** is an important consideration for women in abusive relationships. They should:



- **Clear their browser history** or, better yet, use computers at a library, workplace, or other safe place. If possible, **consider purchasing a tablet or less expensive laptop** to put in your getaway bag.



- **Open an email account that their abuser does not know about** on a safe computer. Use this email address for any sensitive communications, and share it with trusted friends or family members who can help. Keep known email accounts current and maintain appearances to avoid suspicion.



- **Consider purchasing a prepaid “burner” phone** and hide it well.

**Pet safety** can help a victim of domestic violence leave their abuser more easily. Some domestic violence shelters are pet-friendly, and some animal shelters have programs for taking care of pets until a family can get established in a new, safe living situation. **The Safe Havens Mapping Project** is a searchable database of sheltering services for the pets of domestic violence victims.



For a detailed, comprehensive interactive tool for safety planning, visit <https://www.thehotline.org/plan-for-safety/create-your-personal-safety-plan/>

## GET INVOLVED

“If we are to fight discrimination and injustice against women we must start from the home, for if a woman cannot be safe in her own house then she cannot be expected to feel safe anywhere.” — Aysa Taryam



The Northwest Network for Trans and Queer Survivors supports queer & trans survivors through advocacy-based counseling and community education.



Workplaces Respond provides resources, training, and technical assistance to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, and stalking impacting the workplace.



Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services empowers Deaf and DeafBlind survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment.



The National Domestic Violence Hotline Action Center provides advocates with the information and tools to effectively advocate for policies that protect women from domestic violence.

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence leads, mobilizes, and raises voices to support efforts that demand a change of conditions that lead to domestic violence such as patriarchy, racism, sexism, and classism.



The National Network to End Domestic Violence is dedicated to creating a social, political, and economic environment in which violence against women no longer exists.