

# Emotional Wellness Checklist

## What to Do If You Are Being Emotionally Abused



Some relationships, whether they be parent-child, spouse, sibling or friendships, can be emotionally abusive in nature. An emotionally abusive relationship is more than just a collection of emotionally abusive behaviors. In an emotionally abusive relationship, one person consistently controls the other through fear, humiliation, manipulation, fear or shame. There is a predictable relational and communication pattern of tension building, incident, reconciliation, and calm.

### GET SUPPORT

Talk to a trusted friend or family member and share your concerns. Being in an emotionally abusive relationship has changed your perception of yourself and the situation and it is helpful to have a more realistic reflection of your self-worth and the damage the relationship has caused from someone you trust.

### SET GROUND RULES

Talk to the abuser and establish ground rules on what you will and will not tolerate. Be very clear that you are open to hearing their suggestions and advice but you will not accept any form of communication that directly or indirectly implies putting you down.

### REALIZE YOU CAN ONLY CONTROL YOU

You cannot control the abuser nor can you change who they are or what they do. You can only control your reaction to the abusive relationship including how long you engage in it and in what form.

### STOP MAKING SACRIFICES TO KEEP PEACE

By being fearful of upsetting the abuser you are enabling the cycle of abuse. A strong support network can also help mirror for you what reasonable expectations from a relationship are and can validate that your requests of the abuser are not unreasonable.

### WALK AWAY

Though many emotionally abusive relationships can be mended, some cannot. The change must occur on the part of the abuser. If you have tried your best to improve the relationship but the pattern continues, be prepared to pause or end the relationship.

### RECOGNIZE THE REALITY

Emotional abuse is more difficult to identify than physical abuse because there are no visible marks. However, emotional abuse can be more devastating than physical abuse in that it is often overlooked and can cause significant damage to a person's self-worth and self-esteem. Emotional abuse victims are more likely to blame themselves, especially because emotional abuse can feel more personal than physical abuse. Emotional abuse can also escalate to physical abuse.

### CHECK OUT THE FULL ARTICLE

<http://www.mysahana.org/tag/emotional-abuse/>