

# What is Domestic Violence?

Notes

**D**omestic violence is “any behavior that is intended to control another human being through the use of fear, humiliation, and verbal or physical assaults”, according to Susan Forward, Ph.D. *Men Who Hate Women and the Women Who Love Them*.

Domestic violence includes:

- ◆ **Physical violence:** slapping, hitting, kicking, burning, punching, choking, shoving, beating, throwing things, locking out, restraining, etc.
- ◆ **Emotional abuse:** shaming, ridiculing, insulting, demeaning, name calling, threatening, withholding, manipulating, insulting, financial control, withholding emotional support, undermining, deprivation of sleep, isolating from friends and family, driving recklessly, causing confusion, mind games and control, etc.
- ◆ **Sexual abuse:** rape, forcing reproductive decisions, forcing someone to engage in sexual acts she finds unpleasant or frightening, etc.
- ◆ **Spiritual abuse:** scripture that has been taken out of context, twisting and perverting the meaning of scripture, especially in the area of submission and headship, putting down the victim’s faith, isolating from church and Christian community support, etc

EMERGE—a Boston counseling program for abusive men—describes domestic violence as “any act that causes the victim to do something she does not want to do, prevents her from doing something she does want to do, or causes her to be afraid.”

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