



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAITH LEADERS

Domestic abuse is a part of society that faith communities and particularly faith leaders can do something about.

7.1% OF WOMEN AND
4.4% OF MEN...

reported having experienced any type of domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated **1.2 million female victims** of domestic abuse and **700,000 male victims**

(Office for National Statistics, Feb 2014, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_352362.pdf)

Overall, **30% of women** and **16.3% of men** had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated **4.9 million female victims of domestic abuse** and **2.7 million male victims**

(Office for National Statistics, Feb 2014, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_352362.pdf)

In one study of south Asian women who had accessed specialist BAMER domestic violence services,

21% OF WOMEN HAD EXPERIENCED FORCED MARRIAGE

– though only one of these had applied for a Forced Marriage Protection Order under the Act.

(Thiara, R.K. & Roy, S. (2010) Vital Statistics: the experiences of BAMER women & children facing violence & abuse. [Online]. Available at: [www.better-housing.org.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/responses/Vital%20Statistics%20Imkaan%20Summary%20Report%202010%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.better-housing.org.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/responses/Vital%20Statistics%20Imkaan%20Summary%20Report%202010%20(2).pdf))

REPEAT VICTIMISATION IS COMMON.
44% ARE VICTIMISED MORE THAN ONCE -

and almost one in five (18%) are victimised three or more times

(Dodd, Tricia et al., (2004) Crime in England and Wales 2003-2004. London: Home Office.)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HAS A HIGHER RATE OF REPEAT VICTIMISATION THAN ANY OTHER CRIME

(Home Office (2002) *Crime in England and Wales 2001/2002* [Online]. Available at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110220105210/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb702.pdf>)

2 WOMEN ARE KILLED EVERY WEEK IN ENGLAND AND WALES BY A CURRENT OR FORMER PARTNER

(Homicide Statistics, 1998)

1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse over their lifetimes and **6 - 10% of women suffer domestic abuse in a given year**

(Council of Europe (2002). Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the protection of women against violence. Adopted on 30 April 2002 ; and Explanatory Memorandum. (Strasbourg, France Council of Europe). <http://www.refuge.org.uk/gethelpnow/what-is-domestic-violence/domestic-violence-the-facts/>)

WOMEN WERE MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO HAVE EXPERIENCED INTIMATE VIOLENCE ACROSS ALL HEADLINE TYPES OF ABUSE ASKED ABOUT

(Office of National Statistics, Feb 2014, www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_352362.pdf)

AN ESTIMATED 103,000 WOMEN AGED 15-49 WITH FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, BORN IN COUNTRIES IN WHICH IT IS PRACTISED WERE LIVING IN ENGLAND AND WALES IN 2011, COMPARED WITH THE ESTIMATED 66,000 IN 2001.

(MacFarlane A and Dorkenoo E (2014) Female Genital Mutilation in England and Wales: Updated statistical estimates of the numbers of affected women living in England and Wales and girls at risk. Interim report on provisional estimates. City University London [Online]. Available at: www.equalitynow.org/sites/default/files/FGM%20EN%20City%20Estimates.pdf)

POLICE IN THE UK RECEIVE A DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE CALL ONCE EVERY MINUTE

which amounts to over

570,000 CALLS PER YEAR

(89% from women) – yet only 23% - 35% of domestic violence incidents are reported to the police

(Walby, Sylvia and Allen, Jonathan (2004) Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey (London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate) (Stanko, E. (2000) The Day to Count: A snapshot of the Impact of Domestic Violence in the UK. Criminal Justice 1:2.) Home Office (2002) *Crime in England and Wales 2001/2002* [Online]. Available at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110220105210/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb702.pdf>)

A study of 200 women's experiences of domestic violence commissioned by Women's Aid, found that -

60% OF THE WOMEN HAD LEFT BECAUSE THEY FEARED THAT THEY OR THEIR CHILDREN WOULD BE KILLED BY THE PERPETRATOR

(Humphreys, C. and Thiara, R. (2002). Routes to Safety: Protection issues facing abused women and children and the role of outreach services. Women's Aid Federation of England: Bristol.)



Domestic abuse is part of our society and one of the most unattractive parts. It's not necessarily the easiest conversation topic, or something that we would like to read about – however, it is a part of society that faith communities and particularly faith leaders can do something about.

At FaithAction, we believe that faith is often the first place people turn to when in need. This could be because they are new to the area, have existing relationships or they simply cannot get an appointment with their local public service. Therefore, the role for faith leaders in addressing domestic abuse is often invaluable. This publication of recommendations is to help in those instances.

This publication has been written with input from a number of individuals from different faith communities with different perspectives on how to deal with

domestic abuse. The consensus was clear, however: faith leaders could and should do something to address domestic abuse in their communities.

We would like to especially thank Restored, Jewish Women's Aid, Nour Domestic Violence and colleagues at Public Health England for their support in writing and producing this publication.

If you have any ongoing questions about domestic abuse in faith communities, do contact us or any of the partners we have mentioned above.

Produced with support from



QUESTION: A MAN IS YELLING AT HIS DAUGHTER IN THE CAR PARK BECAUSE SHE IS NOT FOLLOWING THE RULES HE SETS DOWN IN THE HOUSE.

The daughter looks visibly shaken. Would you:

- 1 Think this is a family matter and leave them be
- 2 Think that this might be domestic abuse and arrange to have a conversation with the daughter without the father present
- 3 Talk to the father – tell him that the behaviour is not acceptable
- 4 Stand by and encourage the father as he is right in what he is saying
- 5 Call the police immediately – this is definitely domestic abuse and the father should be put in jail



TO GET YOU THINKING ABOUT THE ISSUE:



DOMESTIC ABUSE IS AN IMPORTANT HEALTH ISSUE FOR FAITH LEADERS TO ENGAGE WITH.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Select one option from the answers below:

- 1:** Strongly disagree **2:** Moderately disagree **3:** Neither agree nor disagree
4: Moderately agree **5:** Strongly agree



How often do you talk about domestic violence and abuse in your faith setting?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Often
- 4 On every occasion

Have you ever discussed domestic violence as an issue with your faith leadership team or with other faith leaders in your faith community?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

How confident do you feel about being able to ask safely about domestic violence and abuse?

- 1 Not at all confident
- 2 Slightly confident
- 3 Moderately confident
- 4 Very confident

How knowledgeable do you feel about discussing support options and safety with someone who discloses domestic abuse, either that they are abused or are abusing someone else?

- 1 Not at all confident
- 2 Slightly confident
- 3 Moderately confident
- 4 Very confident

Do you know what support is available locally for people enduring violence or perpetrating violence?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Do you have anything in your faith setting which promotes access to the support available for those enduring or perpetrating domestic abuse? This can include posters, counselling etc.

- 1 No
- 2 Yes

WHAT IS PHYSICAL ABUSE? WHAT IS EMOTIONAL ABUSE?

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:
psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

Domestic abuse can involve physical, psychological, sexual, financial and emotional abuse or a combination of those. Many have said that domestic violence starts when one partner deems it necessary or acceptable to control the other. This feeling may occur for a number of reasons – e.g. low self-esteem, recent job loss, financial stress, need to prove oneself as a ‘real man’, growing up seeing abusive behaviour as normal, approval or rewards from peers for being ‘in control’ or feelings of inferiority. Some men with traditional beliefs and cultures consider it within their rights to control women as they please. Other abusers may have taken, or have addictions to, alcohol or drugs which can increase aggression, reduce self-control and conflict-resolution skills or be used as an excuse for violence.

Physical abuse can include anything such as biting, kicking, punching, hitting, strangling, or holding a body part tight until it bruises. It is important to note that this

is still domestic abuse even if it does not leave a mark or injury on the victim.

Emotional abuse is harder in some respects to identify. It covers any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased. It can also include acts like withholding finance from the victim, or making all decisions for the whole family. It also includes destructive criticism, name calling, sulking, lying to the victim, or to their friends and family about them, persistently putting them down in front of other people, never listening or responding when they talk, isolating them from friends and family, monitoring their phone calls, emails, texts and letters, or checking up on them, following them or not letting them go out alone.

QUESTION: A WOMAN DISCLOSES TO YOU THAT SHE DOES NOT HAVE ANY MONEY FOR VITAL THINGS HER FAMILY NEEDS.

You know the family, and you are aware that the husband is well off and is often buying things for the family and others.

Could this be a case of domestic abuse?



HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES TO HELP YOU BE AWARE OF WHAT DOMESTIC ABUSE CAN LOOK LIKE:¹

Destructive criticism and verbal abuse: shouting; mocking; accusing; name-calling; verbal threatening

Pressure tactics: sulking; threatening to withhold money; disconnecting the telephone; taking the car away; taking the children away, or reporting you to welfare agencies unless you comply with the abuser's demands; threatening or attempting suicide; withholding or pressuring you to use substances; lying to your friends and family about you; telling you that you have no choice in any decisions

Belittling you: persistently putting you down in front of other people; not listening or responding when you talk; interrupting your telephone calls; taking money without asking; refusing to help with childcare or housework

Isolation: monitoring or blocking your telephone calls; telling you where you can and cannot go; preventing you from seeing friends and relatives; shutting you in the house

Harassment: following you; checking up on you; not allowing you any privacy (for example, opening your mail); repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you; embarrassing you in public; accompanying you everywhere you go

Threats: making angry gestures; using physical size to intimidate; shouting you down; destroying your possessions; breaking things; punching walls; wielding a knife or a gun; threatening to kill or harm you and the children; threatening to kill or harm family pets; threats of suicide

Sexual violence: using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts; having sex with you when you don't want it; forcing you to look at pornographic material; forcing you to have sex with other people; any degrading treatment related to your sexuality

Physical violence: punching; slapping; hitting; biting; pinching; kicking; pulling hair out; pushing; shoving; burning; strangling

Denial: saying the abuse doesn't happen; saying the victim caused the abusive behaviour; being publicly gentle and patient; crying and begging for forgiveness; saying it will never happen again

Honour based violence, forced marriage, elder abuse and female genital mutilation count as domestic abuse. Further information on these specific domestic abuse issues can be found near the end of this publication.



¹ <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-survivors-handbook.asp?section=000100010008000100310003>

Domestic Abuse outside of marriage

Domestic abuse is not just between married couples. Domestic abuse covers the whole family: those in relationships who are not yet married as well as in the wider family context.

Anyone can be a victim of abuse, and with the latest law change, anyone 16 and over who has suffered one or more incidents of controlling or threatening behaviour or assault by a boy/girlfriend or a family member is a victim of domestic abuse.

For further information, particularly for teenagers in relationships, visit:

<http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

Alcohol and Domestic Abuse

Alcohol can have an effect on not just the perpetrator of domestic abuse but also the victim. It is common in many incidents of domestic abuse for both parties to be drunk, or alcohol to be seen as a way for victims or perpetrators to deal with abuse. Public Health England has been undertaking work around drinkers and domestic abuse and has found that alcohol has played a significant contributory role in a number of domestic abuse incidences. Therefore this is another area that we would recommend faith leaders be aware of.

Who can be an abuser?

An abuser can be anyone that lives or has close family contact with the victim. Often, there is a misconception that domestic abuse or violence can only be caused by a partner or spouse; but domestic abuse can also be caused by any family member. The perpetrators may or may not live in the family home.

The majority of abuse is by men against women. Women experience more repeated physical violence, more severe violence, much more sexual violence, more coercive control, more injuries and more fear of their partner². Violence by women against their male partners is also seen in our society. Fear, severity of

physical injury and frequency of attack is usually less in partnerships where the woman is the perpetrator. However, there may be different concerns about emotional abuse, isolation and stigma.

Is domestic abuse a crime?

Domestic abuse includes a wide variety of different behaviours, and some of these behaviours such as forcing someone to have sex when they don't want to, and using physical violence, threats and harassment are illegal under current laws. These laws include abuse within families, married couples, cohabiting and non-cohabiting couples and same-sex couples. Not all forms of domestic abuse, such as controlling behaviour, are currently considered illegal, although new laws are being planned to change this. Further information is available near the end of this booklet.

'We all know how to deal with domestic abuse don't we...?'

During the course of forming this publication, FaithAction has heard stories from faith communities that demonstrate that faith leaders are sometimes not fully equipped to deal with the issue, or that they feel that it's 'a family matter' and are therefore not willing to get involved. The purpose of this publication is to educate faith leaders so that they are able to deal with domestic abuse situations if they arise and, most importantly, be prepared for them.

What is your responsibility?

It is everyone in society's role to not comply with, condone or overlook any instances of domestic abuse that are presented to us. When speaking to different individuals when forming this publication, it was suggested that faith leaders have a duty of care to those in their communities and beyond. For instances like female genital mutilation and if children are being abused or witnessing abuse, there is a duty to report this and we will cover this later in the publication.

² NICE Public health guidance (2014) Domestic violence and abuse: how health services, social care and organisations they work with can respond effectively

Am I a professional?

As a faith leader, you may know a lot about the person talking to you and feel like you are able to deal with the situation. However, as with any case involving a vulnerable adult, there may be situations that you find uncomfortable or times when you may not know the way forward. There are a number of domestic abuse professionals, from different faith backgrounds, across the country that you can refer people to and get assistance from yourself. We would advise you to be aware of the local support services and professionals whom you can access if required.

National contacts are listed at the end of this document, although we would recommend you do your own research locally and build up contacts. You can also discuss referring victims and abusers to services and places to go to for further training, with the local authority Adult Safeguarding lead or with the local police, who will also be able to help connect you with the local support officer.

Faith organisations as employers

If you are a faith group that employs people to help your organisation flourish, chances are there are a great many things you need to consider in addition to their pay and national insurance. Many people who are affected by domestic abuse are in work; 75% of people who endure violence are targeted at work. Faith based employers are no exception. Employers have a duty of care to maintain and promote the physical and

emotional wellbeing of their employees, as well as to adhere to various other legal requirements in relation to employment. Being an employer brings an additional dynamic into domestic abuse cases as well as issues of lost productivity and absenteeism. Employers can be part of creating a safe, simple and effective response and support for people who endure and witness violence. For further information and advice as an employer, see:

The Corporate Alliance

<http://www.caadv.org.uk>

Domestic Homicide Review

The Domestic Homicide Review process takes place when a domestic homicide occurs in a community. The process pulls together different agencies to ensure that they are responding appropriately to victims of domestic abuse by offering and putting in place sufficient procedures and protocols. As key leaders in the community, faith leaders may have a role to play in the review, and for further information you could visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/conducting-a-domestic-homicide-review-online-learning>

QUESTION:

A WOMAN IN YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY IS AWARE THAT HER DAUGHTER IS REBELLING.

She frequently hits her daughter for swearing and misbehaving.

Could this be domestic abuse?

DOs AND DON'Ts (RECOMMENDED)



DO...

When an incident is reported:

- Make sure the individual and any affected children are safe: ensure you are not leaving traces or information which may put the victim (and their children) at risk.
- Assess whether police or emergency services are required and if needed call them.
- Listen.
- Offer support and reassurance.
- Remain non-judgemental: every situation of domestic violence is different and there are cases where perpetrators present as the person enduring violence.
- Provide information on the support services available.

These are the most important things you can do for anyone disclosing domestic violence either as a perpetrator or a person enduring violence. Young people may also come to you because they witness violence in the household and need help and support.

As a faith leader, you are not expected to be a domestic violence expert, but you can offer a safe and secure space to listen, and support individuals reaching out for help to get it. Offering simple things like using the office phone to call a helpline or the office computer to look at a domestic abuse advice website can be life-savers for someone experiencing violence and provide a safe space for perpetrators to reach out for the help they need.

Record keeping is a difficult issue: unlike health professionals, you are not required to record conversations with members of your congregation, but you may wish to do so in an anonymous way to keep a record for yourself. If you do intend to keep a record then you should inform the person talking to you, and get their agreement. You should also ensure

that any safeguarding paperwork is kept in a secure location. It is important to do this to make sure you do not inadvertently endanger someone by having personal information available.

Many people enduring violence may not be ready to go to the police, and it may take several conversations to support them to actively contact help services, including the police. It can be frustrating to see individuals returning to situations of violence but as faith leaders you know that people often take time to find the right path, and your role is to support them to find it in the best way for them. Also, some people may not want to leave right away. It is best never to encourage someone to leave – as when someone leaves an abusive situation that is when they are at the highest risk of being killed.

In your more general work:

- Think about how you can discuss domestic abuse in your faith setting. This may be through a message during prayers or a topic for discussion in small groups.
- Think about getting some professional training for your leadership team.
- Make sure you have not only a vulnerable adults policy, but also procedures in place to respond to issues being declared.
- Think about whether you need to have 'chaplains' or supporting people within your faith community from both genders.
- Know what organisations nationally and locally you can refer people to (there are some national organisations listed at the end of this publication).
- Remember that domestic abuse does not just involve married couples and it is not just from a man to a woman.

DON'T...

- Talk about domestic abuse as a family matter: every week domestic homicides happen because people weren't able to get help.
- If someone discloses to you, do not tell everyone. Think about who needs to know, but also who it is safe to tell.
- Think of it light-heartedly: domestic abuse is a serious issue.
- Refuse support to perpetrators of violence: both those enduring violence and perpetrating violence need support to get professional help. Those enduring violence need safety and support, but those perpetrating violence can also receive support to hold them accountable and prevent this behaviour in the future. If your faith group does go on to provide support to the abuser and victim, consider using separate teams of people to do this and make confidential barriers clear from the start.
- Counsel couples together – this can often increase the risk for the victim.
- Only support the abuser.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion.
- Be dismissive of the concern.
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence.
- Ask leading questions.
- Assume information.
- Make promises.
- Force them to ring the police.
- Ignore the allegation.
- Elaborate in any record that you might want to keep for safeguarding purposes.
- Panic.
- Send the victim back home, with the advice to be 'patient'.
- For some faith leaders, it might not be appropriate to be alone with someone of the opposite gender however the victim/perpetrator may only want to speak to one person.

However, you could have support people of both genders within your faith community, who could respond to these situations and provide support. If the victim wants a family member present, it is important to remember that sometimes domestic abuse can happen from more than one family member, and family members may support, collude with or protect an abuser. A support person could be a friend or someone else respected and trusted within the faith community.

QUESTION:

AN EXTENDED FAMILY ALL LIVE IN ONE HOUSE AND ATTEND YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY'S EVENTS.

However, you have never been allowed in the house, and the mother in law seems to be particularly strict when it comes to addressing those in the family.

Could this be a case of domestic abuse?

HOW CAN I STOP DOMESTIC ABUSE HAPPENING IN MY FAITH CENTRE?



Domestic abuse can be prevented in faith centres, and as a faith leader there are a number of things we would recommend you do to make it safe for individuals to disclose and to make people aware of the issue. In your sermons/teachings/study groups, you can speak about what your faith says about loving and respectful relationships, marriages and families and be clear that domestic abuse is never acceptable within your faith's teachings. You have an immense opportunity to speak out about domestic abuse as a respected leader in your faith community. Too often, domestic abuse is seen as 'a family issue' and therefore not discussed openly in faith settings.

You could also work with a local organisation to share materials and information to ensure that there is a safe way for individuals to disclose their abuse – if they do not feel safe disclosing it to someone in their immediate community – and receive support.

Think about ways that you can do this appropriately in your faith setting. In some settings small posters are placed on the back of the toilet doors with gender specific information; in others they have held a jumble sale or other community fundraising event to raise money for the local women's refuge and used this as a mechanism for introducing awareness to the community.

If I suspect someone is being abused...

If you suspect abuse, you could consider the following approaches: if you consider that an individual is in immediate danger of violence – **call the police**

Offer to have a 'catch-up' with the individual, away from the suspected abuser or anyone in their family. Think about how to do this safely: offering personal prayer time might provide a safe opportunity. Some useful initial questions are 'How are things at home?' or 'Do you ever feel like you are losing your temper?'

- If you have champions (individuals who are trained in safeguarding) you could ask one of them to spend some time with the family to see if they pick up on similar issues to yourself.
- Call a local domestic abuse service to ask for advice, you can present the situation hypothetically and explore ways to respond with them.

Remember that if someone does not want to disclose they are suffering from abuse, there are limited things that you can do, but you can be available to listen empathetically and continue to provide a safe place for them. There are ways to take simple steps to support someone, and these are: **Recognise** the abuse, **Respond** and reassure, and **Refer** to support.

THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- Create a safe place for a victim or abuser to talk
- Allow the victim access to a computer or phone line so they can seek help without the perpetrator seeing
- Continue to provide support

HOW TO DEAL WITH DOMESTIC ABUSE CASES

Domestic abuse affects one-in-four women and one-in-six men, and takes place in every section of our society. Because of this, it is highly likely that domestic abuse will affect someone in your faith community. Therefore, we would strongly suggest you have a plan for dealing with disclosures in place **before** someone discloses to you.

From speaking with faith leaders from all faiths, we recommend the following procedure:

- 1 Have people in place to help. As a faith leader, you may not be at every gathering that your faith community may be running and therefore not available at all times to those who may disclose. This is why it is worth having individuals within your faith team, of different genders, who are aware of what to do if someone needs to talk about domestic abuse.
- 2 If someone informs you that they are experiencing domestic abuse, identify immediately if there are issues regarding physical safety involved, either for them or for children in the family. To do this, you could ask questions such as:
 - 'Are you safe to go home?'This can be accompanied with:
 - 'Are either you or your children in danger?'
 - 'Has violence become more frequent or severe recently?'
 - 'Are there weapons in the home?'

If there is a concern about immediate safety, we recommend that you contact the police immediately. If you are concerned about safety, you can also offer to help the individual by calling a helpline. There are a number of faith-sensitive refuges out there, but the most important thing in these situations is getting the individual to safety, which may be outside the faith community. Please remember that it is unsafe to ask someone about domestic abuse if they are accompanied by anyone from the family and if you are not certain that a family member is not part of the abuse or is not colluding with, protecting or supporting

the abuser. This even includes young children, who are often asked to 'report back' on the conversation by a controlling partner or relative. If you do need another person in the room, it is best to ensure that the person experiencing domestic abuse trusts them and feels safe talking with them. We would generally recommend someone of the same gender as the victim, and if possible the person should be from outside the family. However, everyone is different and this might not always be true.

Sanctity of marriage vs. wellbeing of an individual

Through our discussions with faith leaders, the question of 'when is it ok to recommend divorce for a married couple?' came up frequently. Some of those we have discussed domestic abuse with said that a divorce is a way to proceed if the perpetrator of violence was not willing to change and therefore the marriage was not built upon honour for one another.

There has been general agreement with those whom we have spoken to that divorce is not the reason for breaking up the family or ending the marriage. This was done by the violence and it may be necessary for the relationship to end for the wellbeing of the individual.

Risk assessment

There are a number of risk assessment tools available for domestic abuse professionals to use, and if a victim is referred to a professional service the first thing they will do is conduct a risk assessment. It is important that these tools are only used by domestic abuse professionals who have had training in this area. The priority risk assessment for faith leaders to conduct is whether someone is at immediate risk in which case they should call the police. Beyond that, helplines, health and social care professionals or domestic abuse services can help assess risk.

DEALING WITH THE PERPETRATOR

If you suspect someone is being a perpetrator of domestic abuse, there are a few things you can do to help the situation come to light. It is worth noting that not all perpetrators of domestic abuse come home late at night and beat their partners when their dinner is not on the table... but there are still those that do.

People can be abusive without being violent and it is important to recognise that this will also have a devastating effect on the victim and their children.

We have heard instances where male perpetrators of domestic abuse will ask for help by stating that they have problems with stress, anger, depression or alcohol. This may be at life-changing times for their family:

a family death, their partner being pregnant or the relationship breaking down, the loss of a job or financial stress.

How to ask about domestic abuse

Sometimes, a simple question such as 'how are things at home?' can open up a discussion about particular stresses at home and how they are dealing with things. Alternatively, asking whether they 'argue a lot' with their partner, or 'have you ever pushed/slapped/hit your partner?' or 'have you ever been physically violent to your partner?' can bring a more specific answer to the question. There are some important things to note when dealing with perpetrators of violence or abuse:

DO...

- Acknowledge that their disclosure is the first step towards finding a way out of domestic abuse.
- Support them in their disclosure: show gratitude that they disclosed to you.
- Affirm any accountability shown by them. Their behaviours are a choice and they can choose to stop.
- Be respectful and empathic but DO NOT collude. Domestic abuse is unacceptable and many of the behaviours are against the law.

DON'T...

- Assume that accessing help for alcohol or drug difficulties will stop someone's violence/abuse. Sometimes alcohol or drugs are used as the excuse for the abuse. However, they may need to get help for their substance abuse alongside help for their abusive behaviour.
- Assume that anger management, individual or couples counselling are appropriate – these are potentially dangerous situations.
- Protect the abuser. If you know children or adults are in immediate danger, you should call the police. If you are unsure, you can call anonymously for advice or call a domestic abuse helpline for advice.

Referring

If you have discovered that there is a perpetrator in your faith community, you can recommend the perpetrator contact Respect – a confidential information and advice line for people worried about their abusive behaviour.

0845 122 8609

www.respectphoneline.org.uk

OTHER FORMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female genital mutilation is classed as an act of domestic abuse by the Home Office. It can be defined as females, usually under the age of 16, undergoing procedures wrongly believed to ensure their beauty, chastity and marital fidelity. It can also be known as female circumcision or cutting.

The process is often done without the young woman's consent, anaesthetic or regard for infection. It is estimated that every year two million women will undergo genital mutilation. FGM occurs in parts of Africa, the Middle East, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Iraq and also the UK, although it is illegal in this country. Many girls living in Britain will be affected, either as they have had it done in their home country before moving to the UK or because they are taken back to the home country for the procedure. FGM is against the law under the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) and being taken abroad for the procedure is illegal in this country. The UN recognises FGM as a form of child abuse and as a human rights violation and there is no justification for the procedure under any circumstance.

Stats on FGM¹

- 60,000 girls under 15 in the UK are at risk of FGM.
- 137,000 girls and women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM.
- Over 130 million girls and women worldwide have undergone FGM.
- FGM is practised in more than 29 countries across Africa, parts of the Middle East, South East Asia and countries where migrants from FGM affected communities live.

If you know of someone in your faith community who is at risk of FGM you can seek specific assistance from the following agencies:

NSPCC – have a helpline dedicated to FGM that is anonymous and open 24/7. You can call them on 0800 028 3550

Your local social services department – will be able to protect you or provide support. You can contact them through your local council.

Your local police child protection unit – will be able to protect you or provide support. You can contact them through your local police station. If you are in London you can also contact the Metropolitan Police Child Abuse Investigation Command on 020 7161 2888.

If someone in your community has had FGM, and they need some support, a list of clinics can be found here:

<http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Specialist-Clinic-Services-Listing-10-12-14.pdf>

If there is a child that you believe is at risk of FGM, you must report it to either the local social services or the local child protection unit. It is worth noting here that reporting that you suspect that FGM might be carried out on a child does not mean a girl will automatically be taken away from her home. This will only happen in rare cases where the parents fail to guarantee that they will not carry out FGM on their daughter.

Further information on the side effects of FGM can be found at NHS Choices:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation/pages/introduction.aspx>

FGM and Islam:

<http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/FGM-Islam-Leaflet.pdf>

FGM frequently asked questions:

http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Forward_FGM-FAQ.pdf

28 Too Many, a charity working to eliminate FGM, can be found here:

<http://28toomany.org/>

From FORWARD - <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/>

HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE

'Honour' based violence is a form of domestic abuse, which is perpetrated in the name of so-called 'honour'. The honour code, to which it refers, is set at the discretion of male family members and those who do not abide by the 'rules' are punished for bringing shame on the family. It is worth noting here that the punishment will not always be violence. Infringements may include a woman rejecting a forced marriage, pregnancy outside of marriage, interfaith relationships or having a boyfriend, seeking

divorce or inappropriate dress or appearance.

Men can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of having a relationship which is deemed to be inappropriate if they are gay or disabled. They can also be victims if they have assisted a victim.

This is not a crime that is perpetrated by men only: sometimes female relatives will support, incite or assist honour based violence. It is also not unusual for younger relatives to be selected to undertake the abuse as a way to protect the honour of senior members of the family or to reverse the shame placed on a family.

Crimes can include:

- threats of violence
- sexual or psychological abuse
- forced marriage
- being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go
- assault
- murder

Honour based violence can exist in any culture or community where males are in a position to establish and enforce women's conduct.

FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced marriage is defined as where one or both parties do not consent to the marriage and pressure or coercion is used to force them to marry. This pressure can take many forms, from financial pressure or emotional blackmail to threatened or actual physical or sexual violence. It is a recognised form of violence against women and men in the UK, specifically as a form of domestic abuse, child abuse and an abuse of human rights. This is different from an arranged marriage which both people have agreed to enter into. However, forced marriage can be claimed if the marriage was consented to under false pretences.

The reasons behind forced marriage vary, with some stating that they have been forced to marry to gain a visa into a specific country.



How much of an issue is forced marriage?

In 2005, the Forced Marriage Unit was set up by central government as a body between the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The aim of this body was to provide support and advice to victims of forced marriage.

In 2012, the Forced Marriage Unit dealt with 1,485 cases where it had to give advice or support related to possible forced marriages. In 2013, the number dropped to 1,302 – however, it is worth noting that the Forced Marriage Unit will only deal with the cases that it has been made aware of. In 82% of these cases the victims were female. More than half of the victims were under 21, with one in eight under the age of 16 – below the legal age of consent for marriage in the UK. Around a third of the victims were between 18 and 21, with the youngest case in 2012 being a two-year-old and the oldest a 71-year-old.

There aren't reliable statistics about forced marriage worldwide simply because of its clandestine nature, and the fact that victims feel they can't come forward.



If someone in your faith community is at risk of a forced marriage, either to be undertaken here in the UK or abroad, you should contact the Forced Marriage Unit:

Forced Marriage Unit

fmufco.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7008 0151

From overseas: +44 (0)20 7008 0151

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Out of hours: 020 7008 1500

(ask for the Global Response Centre)

If you are reporting that someone has been taken abroad, you will need to give as many details as you can, e.g.:

- where the person has gone
- when they were due back
- when you last heard from them

For further information about forced marriage and for some specific training and support, please contact

<http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

ELDER ABUSE

Domestic abuse can include elder abuse. This is where harm is done, or distress caused, to an older person within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust.

The official definition is:

'A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person'.

At the heart of the definition is the 'expectation of trust' that an older person may rightly establish

with another person – particularly a family member – which is subsequently violated.

Some statistics on elder abuse:

- 500,000 older people are believed to be abused at any one time in the UK.
- Half of the people who abuse are related to the person they are abusing, but very rarely (in only 1% of cases) is the abuser the main family carer.
- 53% of those who abuse are sons or daughters.
- Those aged 80 – 89 years old are the most vulnerable to abuse.
- Two-thirds of abuse is committed at home, by someone in a position of trust.

- In 37% of situations, two types of abuse occur simultaneously.
- In a third of circumstances, the abuse is perpetrated by more than one person in collusion.

For further help or advice on this issue, contact Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) which works to protect, and prevent the abuse of, vulnerable older adults.

Helpline: 080 8808 8141

DOMESTIC ABUSE AND THE LAW

Domestic abuse and violence is dealt with both under the criminal law and the civil law. The two systems are separate and are administered by separate courts.

- The civil law is primarily aimed at protection and therefore a survivor of domestic violence can make an application for an injunction (a court order) either to the Family Proceedings Court or the County Court (usually through their solicitor). Other family proceedings also take place in the County Court (such as child contact or divorce).
- The criminal law is primarily aimed at punishing the offender and the police work with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to initiate the process. Criminal cases are heard in either the Magistrates' Court or the Crown Court depending on the severity of the charge.

Legal status

One of the reasons some individuals do not want to report that they are a victim of domestic abuse, or highlight to anyone the problems they are having at home, could be that they have insecure immigration status. This is a particular problem if the perpetrator is a British citizen or a person with permanent settlement. This is an area where as a faith leader you will need to have some sort of clarity to be able to advise appropriately.

The Crown Prosecution Service is clear that victims with an insecure immigration status may be entitled to remain in the UK if they have experienced domestic violence and they enter or remain in the country on the basis of marriage/relationship/civil partnership to a British citizen or a partner with permanent settlement (the sponsor), subject to a two year probationary period.

'A probationary period is the period for which the foreign spouse/partner has limited leave to remain in the UK which is dependent on their marriage/relationship being subsisting. Currently, the probationary period is two years, at the end of which the foreign spouse can obtain indefinite leave to remain in the UK with the support of their British spouse/partner. If the marriage/relationship breaks down during the probationary period, the foreign

spouse/partner is normally required to leave the UK and return to their country of origin. The domestic violence rules enables victims to stay in the UK indefinitely if the marriage/relationship breaks down due to domestic violence within the probationary period and they meet the evidential criteria as set out in the immigration rules.'¹

Legal aid

Some people who have experienced domestic violence who are divorcing or separating from an abusive partner can get legal aid to help (it is worth noting that this is dependent on the victim's financial circumstances and eligibility for legal aid). This legal aid can help with the divorce or things such as child contact or how to share money or property. To get legal aid victims must be able to give the solicitor some evidence (either a doctor's report, police report or other similar) that they have been a victim of domestic violence by their partner or spouse.

Further information

Rights of Women

You can contact their free legal advice lines run for women by women. The advice lines cover Family Law, Criminal Law, Immigration and Asylum Law and they have a specific line for women in London.

<http://rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/>

Southall Black Sisters

Provides advice and information on domestic violence, racial harassment, welfare and immigration, primarily for Asian, African and African-Caribbean women. Casework primarily undertaken in the London Borough of Ealing, but deals with enquiries on a national basis.

Tel: 0208 571 0800 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

<http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

¹ Taken from CPS guide on Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage

SPECIALIST ADVICE FOR FAITH GROUPS

CHRISTIAN

Restored (www.restoredrelationships.org) is an international Christian alliance, based in the UK, working to transform relationships and end violence against women. Restored has produced a pack for Christian churches seeking to address domestic violence which you can download for free from their website (www.restoredrelationships.org/resources/info/51/).

For more information contact Restored at info@restoredrelationships.org

Introduction

Throughout history, the Bible has been used to justify, perpetuate and propagate the abuse of women. The misuse of the Bible in this way not only gives perpetrators the ability to start and continue abusing, but it can also cause those who are experiencing domestic abuse to be plagued with spiritual dilemmas about the abuse being inflicted on them.

This section is aimed at identifying some helpful ways of understanding Scripture and also highlighting some of the Scriptures or belief systems that have been used in an unhelpful way, and re-examining them.

- 1 It is important to recognise the divine authority of the Bible: 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...' (2 Timothy 3:16)
- 2 The word of God that is the Bible must be understood in relation to His incarnate Word, Jesus: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' (John 1:1)
- 3 All this must be understood within the context of love: 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.' (1 Corinthians 13:13)
- 4 For any and all actions we take, an account will be required of us: 'Each of us will give an account of himself before God.' (Romans 14:12)

Theology tables

The table opposite lists some Scriptures that have been used unhelpfully with regard to victims of domestic abuse. The table also shows how these scriptures can be used helpfully and resources for further study.

QUESTION:

A MAN JOKES TO YOU THAT HIS WIFE IS "HIS"
AND THEREFORE HE CAN DO WHAT HE WANTS TO HER...

He is joking, but there is an element of truth in what he says.

What would you do?



SCRIPTURE	UNHELPFUL APPLICATION	HELPFUL APPLICATION
<p>SUBMISSION</p> <p>'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord'</p> <p>Ephesians 5:22</p>	<p>OBEDIENCE</p> <p>The woman must obey her partner.</p> <p>NOT SUBMITTING CAUSES ABUSE</p> <p>If a man abuses his partner it is because she is not being submissive enough.</p>	<p>MUTUAL SUBMISSION</p> <p>The previous verse (5:21) says 'Submit to one another' and 5:22 must be read in light of the mutual submission we should be giving to one another. To submit does not mean to rule over; it means to choose to place oneself under another.</p> <p>SUBMISSION IS A CHOICE</p> <p>Submission cannot be forced; it must be chosen. Not submitting can never justify abuse.</p>
<p>HEADSHIP</p> <p>'For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.'</p> <p>Ephesians 5:23</p>	<p>THE ASSERTING OF POWER</p> <p>The man is the head therefore he has all the power and the right to assert it.</p> <p>SUPERIORITY</p> <p>Headship means being superior and having the right to take more than give.</p>	<p>THE LAYING DOWN OF POWER</p> <p>The example given of headship is of Christ's headship of the Church. When Christ came to earth, He gave up all His heavenly power for His bride the Church. The original Greek word used for head in this passage is <i>kephale</i>; this word means the head of a river or the source of the river. It does not imply superiority.</p>
<p>RULERSHIP</p> <p>'To the woman he said, "... Your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you"'</p> <p>Genesis 3:16</p>	<p>RULERSHIP: A RIGHT</p> <p>God determined men should rule their wives; therefore that is how it should be.</p>	<p>RULERSHIP: A RESULT</p> <p>A consequence of sin is that a man will rule over his wife; it was not God's best plan for humanity. Before the Fall, men and women were equal.</p>
<p>CREATION OF WOMAN</p> <p>'The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."'</p> <p>Genesis 2:18</p>	<p>INFERIOR</p> <p>To help means to serve; this verse shows that God created women to serve men and suggests they are inferior to men.</p>	<p>EQUAL</p> <p>The word 'helper' (<i>ezer</i>), here referring to women, most often refers to God in the Old Testament (e.g. 1 Samuel 7:12; Psalm 121:1-2). Therefore there is no suggestion at all of female inferiority.</p> <p>Resource: Slaves, Women and Homosexuals; William Webb</p>
<p>FORGIVENESS</p> <p>'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.'</p> <p>Matthew 6:12</p>	<p>DISREGARD</p> <p>Forgiving someone should mean disregarding what they have done and maintaining the same relationship with them regardless of whether they change.</p>	<p>CONSEQUENCES</p> <p>Sin has consequences and forgiving does not remove those consequences. Forgiveness is a process and must not nullify the consequences of abuse or mean that the situation must continue as it always has. Women should not have to stay in an abusive situation in order to forgive their partner.</p> <p>Resource: Nooma: Luggage 07, Rob Bell</p>
<p>THE ORIGINAL SIN</p> <p>'When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.'</p> <p>Genesis 3:6</p>	<p>SIN: WOMEN ARE WEAKER</p> <p>Eve took the fruit, and gave some to her husband; this shows women are weaker and more likely to be sinful.</p>	<p>SIN: EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Man and woman were both participants in the Fall: Adam was no less to blame than Eve.</p> <p>'Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned...'</p> <p>Romans 5:12-21</p>
<p>DIVORCE</p> <p>'But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, causes her to become an adulteress...'</p> <p>Matthew 5:32</p>	<p>CONTRACT</p> <p>Marriage is a contract and the person who cancels the contract - i.e. files for divorce - is the one who is responsible. Therefore if a woman divorces a man for abusing her, she is at fault, not him.</p>	<p>COVENANT</p> <p>Marriage is a covenant; divorce is the breaking of that covenant. When a man chooses to be abusive, he breaks the covenant. If his wife chooses to divorce him, she is making public his breaking of the covenant, not going against what the Bible says about divorce.</p>
<p>SUFFERING</p> <p>'In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.'</p> <p>1 Peter 1:6</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <p>Women should accept abuse and use the suffering as an opportunity to grow their faith.</p>	<p>REFUTE</p> <p>By staying in an abusive situation a woman is risking being murdered. When Jesus was tempted to risk His life, He said 'It is also written: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test"' (Matthew 4:7). God wants abused women to be safe and protected.</p> <p>Resource: http://www.hiddenhurt.co.uk/spiritual_obstacles_to_leaving_abuse.html</p>

The table below looks at some beliefs and attitudes which will enable the Church, and Christian individuals, to more effectively support those suffering.

BELIEF	ATTITUDE
DOMESTIC ABUSE IS A SIN	Domestic abuse is a gross injustice that can never be condoned under any circumstances. It is sinful and offends the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person. It also offends God's law of love. When dealing with domestic abuse, it must be always be with the understanding that domestic abuse is a sin, a choice by a person to hurt another person. It should also be understood as a criminal act.
THE CHURCH HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT AND HELP ABUSED WOMEN	Throughout the Bible, God has consistently called His people to support and help the poor and needy: 'Learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow' – Isaiah 1:17; 'Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.' – Hebrews 13:3
THE CHURCH HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO HOLD THE PERPETRATOR ACCOUNTABLE	Domestic abuse is a sin. Romans 6:26 says 'For the wages of sin is death...' In order to show love to a perpetrator of abuse we must hold them to account in order to enable them to choose to change. Galatians 6:1 says 'Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted'.

Christian

Restored

<http://www.restoredrelationships.org>

Hidden Hurt

<http://www.hiddenhurt.co.uk/>

Dwell Project

<http://dwelldomesticviolence.com/>

General resources that might be of help:

When Two Faiths Meet – Marriage, Family and Pastoral Care – Christian Muslim Forum

<http://www.christianmuslimforum.org/images/When%20Two%20Faiths%20Meet%20guidelines.pdf>

10 tips from survivors to make your church a safe space – Restored

<http://www.restoredrelationships.org/resources/info/96/>

Toilet Door Poster for Churches – Restored

http://restored.contentfiles.net/media/resources/files/Toilet_Door_Poster_Updated_eBhUnA8.pdf

QUESTION:

YOU OVERHEAR A WOMAN IN YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY HAVING A HEATED ARGUMENT WITH HER HUSBAND...

You overhear her saying 'That's it – I'm going to take the kids away from you...' and the husband replies 'you always say that...'

Is this domestic abuse?

MUSLIM

Reproduced from the *Faith Trust Institute*.

For further information, visit

<http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/>

What is Islam's position regarding domestic violence?

Islam prohibits all forms of oppression and injustice (Qur'an 5:8; 41:135; 42:42-43). Muslim scholars agree that Islam does not allow any form of abuse.

Doesn't the Qur'an instruct men to beat their wives if they are disobedient?

Verse 4:34 in the Qur'an prescribes a step-by-step process for husbands to address a wife's behaviour if she is acting in a manner that would threaten the integrity of the family unit (such as promiscuous behaviour). The Arabic word that has often been translated as "beat her" also has many other meanings, such as "leave her." Scholars who choose the translation of "beat" emphasise that it is symbolic and can leave no mark or injury. These scholars suggest that the husband might use the equivalent of a tissue or blade of grass to make his point. Abusers may take this verse out of context and forget the multiple teachings that emphasise equity, mutual compassion and respect in the marital relationship (Qur'an 4:1; 30:21; 42:38; 49:13; 65:6).

What does Islam say about ending abuse?

Islam holds its followers responsible for speaking out against injustice and doing whatever is possible to end all forms of oppression (5:8; 42:42-43). The Qur'an reminds victims of oppression that if they are powerless to end the oppression, God's earth is spacious enough for them to find a place free of oppression (4:97).

Will God be angry if I get a divorce or leave my husband if he is abusive?

God hates all forms of oppression. The Qur'an clearly allows divorce and provides details on the just manner in which a divorce should take place. Although Islam teaches that God dislikes divorce, he has not prohibited it. On the other hand, the Qur'an clearly prohibits injustice and oppression. The Qur'an has provided divorce as a peaceful solution (See Qur'an 2:227-242; 4:19-21; 65:1-8). The Prophet Muhammad married a woman who had been divorced, reinforcing the acceptability of divorce in the Muslim community.

Is abuse a punishment for past sins?

Numerous verses in the Qur'an serve as reminders that God will test each person in his or her lifetime in a multitude of ways (2:155; 3:142, 3:186; 29:2). Even the most righteous people will be and have been tested. For some people, their test may come in the form of an abusive spouse. Rather than believing that suffering through the abuse is a way to atone for past sins, a person who is being abused could focus on ways to overcome the test. Overcoming the test might include remaining steadfast in one's faith, continuing to pray, protecting oneself and one's children from abuse, and seeking ways to end or escape the oppression and injustice.

Won't God be angry that I am not obeying my husband?

Muslims must never obey anyone who is commanding a behaviour that is contrary to God's teachings. When obeying a husband involves behaviour that is hurtful or destructive to oneself or others, a Muslim wife must remember that her primary obedience is to God. Muslim husbands should remember that their responsibility is to lead a healthy family unit in which all members are striving to implement God's teachings, not to serve under the husband's rule. Both husband and wife are directly accountable to God.



After years of being insulted and abused by my husband, I feel repulsed by him. Will I be punished if I avoid intimate relations with my husband?

The Qur'an emphasises the mutual rights of husband and wife in all areas, and specifically in the sexual relationship, which should be mutually satisfying (2:187; 4:1; 30:21). A husband must take care of his wife emotionally and physically in order to exercise his right to intimate relations. If a spouse feels repulsed, it is important to explore appropriate options and interventions to remedy the situation.

Isn't it better for my children to have two parents than to leave the abusive relationship?

Children are greatly impacted by witnessing abuse between their parents, or by growing up in a home where the victim may be experiencing depression as a result of the abuse. The damage to children is long-term and can affect their personality, their ability to study, and their future relationships. It is more important for children to live with a healthy parent who can be a good role model than to grow up in a climate of fear and anxiety when one or both parents are abusive.

Why does my partner abuse me? Is there something wrong with me?

People are abusive for many different reasons: they may have grown up in abusive homes and learned abusive behaviour or they may believe they have the right to control others. But the bottom line is that people abuse because they can get away with it and because it is effective in controlling others. The person who is abusive is the one who has a problem. An abusive person will always be able to find fault with others and blame others, rather than taking responsibility for problems and trying to find solutions.

Is this my fate?

Islam teaches that each person has been given freedom of choice and is accountable for his/her own life (2:256; 13:11; 8:8-21-24). Although having an abusive partner may be a test, it does not have to be a life sentence. Part of dealing with the test may include finding ways to end or escape the abuse and helping yourself and your children seek safety.

Reproduced information from *Nour*

<http://nour-dv.org.uk/>

Further information from Nour

The misunderstood verse:

'...and beat them' (Qur'an 4:34)

The verse mentioned here is widely referred to but it is consistently misconceived. The focus tends to lie on the surface meaning, indicating permissibility of wife beating. It should be acknowledged that reliance on the translation alone causes misunderstanding, misrepresentation and falsification of the original meaning.

It is not permissible to quote part of a verse and implement it to justify wrongdoing. The verse does not permit or condone violence, as violence is not a way of Islam. The word 'beat' used in the verse does not account for violence. The Prophet Muhammad explained it as, 'dharban ghayra mubarrih' which means, 'a light tap, as light as a feather stroke that leaves no mark'.

The Prophet Muhammad discouraged his people from implementing this. He never hit a female and emphasised that the best of men are those who are best to their women. He articulated his intense detestation of abusive behaviour by stating,

'how does anyone of you beat his wife as he beats the stallion camel and then embrace (sleep with) her?'

[Al-Bkhari]

He also stressed to his followers,

'Do not beat the female servants of Allah.'

[Abu Dawud]

Muhammad – The perfect example

The Prophet Muhammad is the most perfect example as a husband, who did not deem it dishonouring to help with household chores such as cooking and cleaning. He treated his wives in such a manner that each of them felt they were his most beloved. There are no narrations that will show he behaved harshly or negatively towards his wives, but rather with love, respect and humour.

The Prophet Muhammad discussed issues with his wives as companions and never failed to show them affection. Safiyah, a wife of the Prophet said,

'The Messenger of Allah went to Hajj with his wives. On the way my camel knelt down for it was the weakest among all the other camels and so I wept. The Prophet came to me and wiped away my tears with his dress and hands. The more he asked me not to weep the more I went on weeping'
[Ahmad]

This took place in public whilst he was travelling with all his wives, yet he never felt embarrassed to express his affection. He managed to recognise the emotional needs of his wife and did not hesitate to console her.

The Qur'an commands Muslims to follow the examples of Muhammad. He never harmed or oppressed any of his wives, and as he is the best role model for Muslims, as given by God, Muslims too are strongly instructed to not harm or oppress their spouse.

'There is indeed a good model for you in the Messenger of Allah'
[Qur'an 33:21]

Further verses from <http://www.kalamullah.com/spouse.html>

There is no doubt that it is obligatory upon the spouses to treat each other in a kind and respectable manner. They should treat each other with love, good disposition and beautiful manners.

Allah has stated, *"Live with them honorably"*
(al-Nisa 19).

Allah also says, *"And they (women) have rights similar to [those] over them according to what is reasonable, but men have a degree [of responsibility] over them"*
(al-Baqara 228).

The Prophet also said, *"Piety is good behavior."*

The Prophet also said, *"The believer with the most complete faith is the one with the best character. The best of you are those who are best to their wives and I am best to my family."*

Further verses from <http://www.missionislam.com/family/husband.htm>

'Among His signs is the fact that he has created spouses from among yourselves, so that you may find tranquillity with them; and he has put love and mercy between you. In that are signs for people who reflect.'
[Qur'an 30:21]

'They (wives) are garments for you, while you are garments for them.'
[Qur'an 2:187]

Muslim Community Helpline:

0208 904 8193 / 0208 908 6715

Monday to Friday, 10am to 1pm

Nour Domestic Violence (for Muslims)

<http://nour-dv.org.uk/>

Amirah Foundation

<http://amirahfoundation.org/>

General resources that might be of help:

When Two Families Meet – Marriage, Family and Pastoral Care – Christian Muslim Forum

<http://www.christianmuslimforum.org/images/When%20Two%20Faiths%20Meet%20guidelines.pdf>

Nour Advice booklet

<http://nour-dv.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Nour%20-%20Domestic%20Violence%20-%20Booklet.pdf>



JEWISH

Reproduced from *Jewish Women's Aid*.

For further information, visit

<http://jwa.org.uk/>

Domestic violence is against Jewish law

A husband should love his wife as much as he does himself and should respect her even more than he respects himself – Talmud (Yevamot 62b) 6th century

Men's success in life is depends on their giving proper honour to their wives – Talmud (Baba Metzia 59a) 6th century

A man who strikes his wife commits a sin, just as if he strikes anyone else – Shulchan Aruch (The Rema on Even HaEzer 154:3) 16th century

Rape, even of one's wife [sic], is forbidden – The Tur (quoting his father, the Rosh) 14th century

Jews are commanded to divert harm from coming to another person

Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour (Leviticus 19:16)

Anyone who has the ability to correct a situation and is derelict in doing so, bears the responsibility for whatever results from it – Talmud (Shabbat 54b) 6th century

One in 4 women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime. Sadly, Jewish women are no different. We're here to help.

Jewish Women's Aid's core services

Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) has been supporting Jewish women and children affected by domestic violence and domestic abuse for over 30 years. Their services include:

- A helpline, open 9.30-9.30 Monday to Thursday.
- A refuge is the only kosher and Sabbath-observant refuge in Europe.
- A client support team offer a wide range of ongoing practical and emotional support, including safety planning, housing and benefits.
- A free face-to-face and telephone counselling from highly trained and dedicated counsellors.
- A Children's Worker that supports the children of our clients, and runs parenting groups to empower the women to help their children.
- Education programmes in schools focussed on healthy & unhealthy relationships, self-esteem, boundaries and risk-taking and outreach work to university students, partly in response to young adults' concerns about harassment, stalking and unwanted sexual contact on campus.
- In-house training programmes exist to train Jewish professionals and volunteers in how to spot and deal with domestic violence in communal settings. Training of teachers and SENCOs in Jewish schools along with doctors, health visitors, maternity nurses and other healthcare professionals who have Jewish patients.

Who does JWA help?

JWA supports women and children across every sector of the community: from ultra-orthodox to secular. Their clients, volunteers and staff also cross the entire spectrum of religious observance, and they also have specific case workers for the ultra-orthodox community. They only work with women, but when male survivors of domestic abuse contact them, they are able to refer them to suitable services so they can get the support they need.

For further information, please contact them on 0208 445 8060.

Jewish Women's Aid

www.jwa.org.uk

Norwood

Children and Family Services
020 8954 4555

www.norwood.org.uk

The Jewish Helpline

Telephone Crisis Line 0800 652 9249

www.jewishhelpline.co.uk

Jewish Marriage Council

Provides family therapy and counselling, as well as assistance in obtaining a Get
020 8203 6311

www.jmc-uk.org

www.gettingyourget.co.uk

Resources that might be helpful:

Jewish Women's Aid Campaigns

<http://jwa.org.uk/support-jwa/recent-campaigns/>



HINDU

Information from the *Hindu Council UK*.

For further information, please contact Satya Minhas, Chairperson of the Hindu Council UK.

www.hinducouncil.net

Hindu view regarding women and domestic violence

In Hinduism, a woman is given the highest status. The family and society have been made responsible for maintaining her chastity and guarding her virtue. A Hindu woman gets equal share in the ancestral property as her brothers by Hindu law. A married woman is called Ardhangini (half part of a male's body) of the husband. The main Hindu deity, Lord Shiva, is depicted as half male and half female.

Hindus have worshipped Goddesses like Maha Laxmi, Parvati, Amba, Durga, Kali and other female deities since ancient times. Most Hindus worship the female Goddess called Devi, the Supreme God. "Where women are honoured, there the Gods are pleased. But where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields rewards."

Women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare. According to Hindu scriptures, men and women are equal. Nobody is superior or inferior with respect to each other. The same soul dwells in men and in women.

Hindu scripture also provide examples of Lord Ram and the Goddess Sita (from the Ramayana) and Lord Shiv and the Goddess Parvati as perfect couples, and shows the love and peace in their relationships. Hinduism teaches love and respect for all human beings and of course protection of the needy, poor and vulnerable.

Children in Hinduism

Children are well looked after with their education and development given top priority. They are encouraged to achieve the highest possible positions in their careers.

However in a few families, the practice can be that the male is considered to be more important in most households; males are pampered and treated favourably in daily life and in terms of the distribution of parents' property and wealth. Female discrimination is based on socioeconomic conditions and dependency. Children are occasionally beaten and mistreated by some parents and grandparents for minor issues.

SIKH

Information taken from *Metropolitan Police Sikh Association*

Around the time of the birth of the Sikh Guru Nanak in 1469AD, in Punjab, India as in other parts of the sub-continent it was customary to discriminate against women (regardless of caste).

Guru Nanak directly challenged the existing discrimination. He did this by liberating all women, declaring equality between men and women for the first time in Indian society. His teachings were against rituals or customs that discriminated against women. He did not consider

women in any way impure and/or evil, and his teachings reinforced this. He recorded many bold compositions in praise of women:

'Of woman are we born, of woman conceived; to woman engaged, to woman married. Women are befriended, by woman is the civilisation continued. When woman dies, woman is sought for. It is by woman that the entire social order is maintained. Then why call her evil of whom great men are born?' (Asa ki Var, Guru Granth Sahib)

To ensure equal status for women, the Guru made no distinction between the sexes in matters of initiation, instruction or participation

in congregation. The Sikh Gurus forbade female infanticide in their code of conduct for Sikhs, prohibiting Sikhs from having any contact or relationship with those who indulge in this practice:

'With the slayers of daughters. Whosoever has social contact; him do I curse' and again 'Whosoever takes food from the slayers of daughters, shall die unabsolved'. (Guru Gobind Singh, Rehat nameh, p385. Cunningham, J.D. History of the Sikhs. 1st Publ: 1849)

Helpline for Sikh individuals:

<http://www.sikhhelpline.com/>

GENERAL RESOURCES THAT MIGHT BE OF USE:

Vulnerable adult safeguarding policy – FaithAction

www.faithaction.net

AVA (Against Violence and Abuse) guidance for faith leaders -

www.avaproject.org.uk

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

Domestic violence and associated services for survivors

Aanchal Women's Aid

020 3384 9412 / (Helpline) 0845 451 2547

www.aanchal.org.uk

Helpline specifically for Asian women. Languages available: English, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Sylheti, Tamil and Urdu.

Action on Elder Abuse

020 8765 7000 / (Helpline) 0808 808 8141

www.elderabuse.org.uk

A national organisation that aims to prevent abuse of older people by raising awareness, providing education and promoting research.

Al-Aman

020 8748 2577 / 020 8563 2250

www.dvip.org/al-aman-services.html

Arabic-speaking service for men and women affected by domestic violence working out of the London Boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster.

Ann Craft Trust

0115 951 5400

www.anncrafttrust.org

Offers advice for vulnerable adults and disabled children; also runs national training and workshops. Formerly NAPSAC – National Association of the Protection from Sexual Abuse of Adults and Children with Learning Disabilities.

Amirah Foundation

0121 572 6821

info@amirahfoundation.org

Amirah Foundation work with homeless and vulnerable women to break the cycle of abuse, violence and isolation.

Ashiana Project

020 8539 0427

www.ashiana.org.uk

Provides advice, support and temporary housing for South Asian, Turkish and Iranian women. Outreach available at home and community level, refuges provided and takes referrals nationally.

Asylum Aid

020 7354 9631 / (Legal advice) 020 7354 9264

www.asylumaid.org.uk

Provides legal advice, original research and country information expertise, as well as undertaking policy, lobbying and campaigning activities.

Beverley Lewis House + East Thames Care & Support

0300 303 7333 /

(Beverley Lewis House) 0207 473 2813

www.eastthames.co.uk/domesticviolence

Beverley Lewis House is a specialist refuge centre for women with learning difficulties. Due to demand East Thames has expanded and now has two other refuges available.

Broken Rainbow

0300 999 5428 / (Helpline) 0800 999 5428

www.brokenrainbow.org.uk

Providing information and support to lesbian, gay men, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence.

Chinese Information and Advice Centre (CIAC)

020 7734 1039 / (Translators available)

0845 313 1868

www.ciac.co.uk

A national charity that provides information and support on domestic violence, and translation services in Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese.

DIAS

01942 495 230

www.diasdvc.org

Provides counselling for child witnesses to domestic abuse, as well as men and women's counselling, support and advocacy. Across Wigan and Leigh Borough.

Eaves 4 Women – The Amina Scheme

020 7735 2062

www.eavesforwomen.org.uk

Providing help and support for homeless women who have experienced sexual and domestic violence. They also undertake development and campaign work around violence against women, prostitution and trafficking.

Forced Marriage Unit

020 7008 0151 / (Out of hours) 020 7008 1500

www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Government unit providing confidential advice and assistance for those at risk of being forced into marriage.

Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development

(Forward)

020 8960 4000

www.forwarduk.org.uk

An international organisation which provides information and advice in relation to FGM. It delivers training on FGM and child protection, and supports girls and women who have undergone or are at risk of FGM.

Galop

020 7704 6767 / (Helpline) 020 7704 2040

www.galop.org.uk

Provides advice support and advocacy to lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people who have experienced sexual assault or abuse in the Greater London area.

The Havens – Specialist Sexual Assault

(Camberwell) 02032991599 / (Paddington) 020 3312 1101 / (Whitechapel) 020 7247 4787

www.thehavens.co.uk

Providing medical services, including care and examinations for people who have recently experienced sexual violence. Available to adults, children and young people in the above areas.

Hestia

020 7378 3100

www.hestia.org

Providing refuges all over London. Some refuges specialise in women from cultural backgrounds such as North African, Middle Eastern and Turkish. They work closely with the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

Hidden Hurt

www.hiddenhurt.co.uk

Written by a survivor of domestic violence, this provides advice and information for those in an abusive relationship. There is also a link to a forum page for people to meet with like-minded individuals.

Hopscotch Asian Women's Centre

020 7388 8198

www.hopscotchawc.org.uk

Provides support services for Asian women including those experiencing domestic violence and problems arising therefrom. Languages available include Bengali, Sylheti, Hindi, Urdu and English.

IMECE – Women's centre

020 7354 1359

www.imece.org.uk

Culturally sensitive services especially for Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot women. Advice available on domestic violence, welfare, housing and immigration; outreach service also available.

Imkaan

020 7250 3933

www.imkaan.org.uk

A national research and policy project, Imkaan profiles and advocates on behalf of BME women and is dedicated to preventing violence against women.

Jewish Women's Aid

020 8445 8060 / (Helpline) 0808 801 0500

www.jwa.org.uk

Provides advice and refuges for Jewish women and children experiencing domestic violence. Takes referrals nationally.

Karma Nirvana

0800 599 9247

www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Supporting victims of honour crimes and forced marriage, run by survivors.

Kiran Project

020 8558 1986

www.kiranproject.org.uk

Provides support and safe temporary accommodation for Asian women and children escaping domestic violence. Also offers training, advocacy, advice and information. Takes referrals nationally.

Latin American Women's Aid

020 7275 0321

www.lawadv.org.uk

Advice, support and temporary accommodation for Latin American women fleeing domestic violence. Portuguese and Spanish-speaking services available; takes referrals nationally.

Latin American Women's Rights Services

020 7336 0888

www/lawrs.org.uk

Offers advice on housing, welfare, and domestic violence. Portuguese and Spanish services available.

Mankind

01823 334 244

www.mankind.org.uk

Support for male victims, including legal services and parental support.

Men's Advice Line

0808 801 0327

www.mensadvice.org.uk

National services providing help for men experiencing domestic abuse.

Newham Asian Women's Project

020 8472 0528

www.nawp.org

Advice and support for Asian women and children experiencing domestic violence. Takes national referrals for its refuges.

Nia Project

020 7683 1270 / (Emergency) 0845 702 3468

www.niaproject.info

Provides refuge accommodation, advice and support for women and children escaping abuse. Specialist services for Turkish speakers and women involved in prostitution.

Paws for Kids

01204 394 842

www.pawforkids.org.uk

Providing support for women and children experiencing domestic violence in the North West.

Rape Crisis Helpline

0808 802 999

Freephone helpline for victims of sexual violence.

Refuge

020 7395 7700 / (Helpline) 0808 200 0247

www.refuge.co.uk

National organisation that runs a 24-hour helpline. Provides accommodation services and counselling and runs outreach projects with BME women and children.

Respond

020 7383 0700 / (Helpline) 0808 808 0700

www.respond.org.uk

National organisation providing services for people with learning disabilities who have been victims of trauma of various types including domestic abuse.

Samaritans

0845 790 9090

www.samaritans.org.uk

24-hour confidential emotional support helpline.

St Mary's Centre

0161 276 6515

www.stmaryscentre.org

Sexual assault referral centre for counselling and aftercare for men, women and children in the Greater Manchester and Cheshire area.

Solace Women's Aid

0808 802 5565

www.solaceswomensaid.org

London based charity supporting women and children affected by domestic violence.

Southall Black Sisters

020 8751 9595 / (Helpline) 020 8571 0800

www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Specialist advice, information, advocacy and counselling services provided to women experiencing domestic violence, forced marriages, honour crimes and immigration issues. Primarily in London Borough of Ealing.

Victim Support

0845 303 0900 / (Freephone) 0808 168 9111

www.victimsupport.org.uk

Offers information and support to victims of crime, whether or not it has been reported to the police.

Survivors UK

0845 122 1201

www.survivorsuk.org

Dealing with male victims of rape and sexual abuse.

Wai Yin Society

0161 833 0377

www.waiyin.org.uk

Based in Manchester, predominantly dealing with Chinese communities. The society runs interventions with troubled families and they also work with other communities including Somalians.

Women & Girls Network

020 7610 4678 / (Helpline) 0808 010 660

www.wgn.org.uk

Holistic healing centre for women and girls overcoming the experience of domestic violence.

Women's Aid

0808 200 0247

www.womensaid.org.uk

24 hour helpline. A national charity working to end domestic violence, they offer support, advice, accommodation and information.

Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline

0161 636 75825

www.wdchoices.org.uk

Run by people who are survivors of still experiencing domestic abuse. Urdu and Punjabi services available.

Woman's Trust

020 7034 0303/04

www.womanstrust.org.uk

Pan-London service providing independent, confidential, women-only services to women affected by domestic violence.

Children and young people's and parenting services

Childline

020 7650 3200 / (Helpline) 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Free 24-hour confidential helpline for children and young people.

Gingerbread

020 7428 5420 / (Advice) 0808 802 0925

www.gingerbread.org.uk

National membership organisation providing advice and information for lone parents.

The Hideout

www.thehideout.org.uk

National domestic violence website for children and young people, providing information to help identify what is happening and signposting them to additional support.

NSPCC

Helpline 0808 800 5000

Bengali/Sylheti 0800 096 7714; Gujarati 0800 096 7715; Hindi 0800 096 7716; Punjabi 0800 096 7717; Urdu 0800 0967 718; Asian (in English) 0800 096 7719; Textphone 0800 056 0566

www.nspcc.org.uk

National charity working to end cruelty to children. Helplines for if you are worried about a child's safety, 24 hours.

Reunite

0116 255 6234

www.reunite.org

National organisation that provides support to anyone who has had a child abducted, or is in fear of this. Assists with international issues and legal matters.

Runaway Helpline

116 000

www.runawayhelpline.org

Freephone helpline for those aged 17 or under who have run away from or are being forced to leave home. Gives advice and referrals as appropriate and can pass messages on to family members.

The Tulip Project

0151 637 6363

Support for parents who have experienced abuse from their children.

Legal services

Children's Legal Centre

01206 872 466 / 0808 802 0008

(Young People Freephone) 0800 783 2187 / (Child Law Advice) 0845 120 2948

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Provides legal advice and representation to children, their carers and professionals throughout the UK.

Community Legal Advice

0845 345 4345

www.clsdirect.org.uk

Government agency providing information about legal aid and free and confidential legal advice paid for by legal aid, and also advice on where and how to access other help.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

0300 003 3601

www.cica.gov.uk

Government agency which operates the compensation scheme for survivors who were blameless victims of a violent crime.

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants

020 7251 8708

www.jcwi.org.uk

A national organisation providing free advice, support and case work.

The Corporate Alliance

www.caadv.org.uk

Information and support for faith groups that employ members of staff, offering support and information on how to address the impact of domestic abuse as an employer.

The Law Centres Federation

020 3637 1330

www.lawcentres.org.uk

Various centres based all over the country which can provide free legal advice.

Rights of Women

020 7251 6575

www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Services for women by women. Provides free, confidential advice on family, criminal and immigration law and sexual crime.

Housing services

Crisis

0300 636 1967

www.crisis.org.uk

National charity providing services and programmes to help homeless people.

Homeless Link

020 7840 4430

www.homeless.org.uk

A national membership organisation for agencies all over England. The website provides links to local support services.

Shelter

0808 800 444

www.shelter.org.uk

Housing advice and information including finding accommodation.

Stonewall Housing

020 7359 5767

www.stonewallhousing.org

Housing advice, support and advocacy for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people.

Perpetrator services

Respect

020 7549 0578 / (Helpline) 08088024040

www.respect.uk.net

Registered charity promoting best practice for perpetrator programmes throughout the UK.

Domestic Violence Intervention Project

Yuva (Young People) 020 8222 8281 / Violence Prevention Programme 020 7633 9181

www.dvip.org

Runs perpetrator programmes and support services for partners, families and children in London.

FAITH AND DOMESTIC ABUSE



"There are a number of valuable initiatives being undertaken by groups based in churches, mosques, synagogues and temples, and examples also of collaboration between people from different faith backgrounds... there is a growing movement of faith-based social activism around the country, and a growing range of projects, which should be better known and appreciated."

Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP, Chair of APPG on Faith and Society

The logo for FaithAction features the word "FaithAction" in a white, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a large, solid red square. Above this main square are two smaller, semi-transparent red squares, one positioned to the left and one to the right, creating a layered effect.

FaithAction

Because faith reaches the parts that nothing else can

www.faithaction.net

