

## Emotional Abuse...

...When the Characteristics Below Establish a Clear and Consistent Pattern:

### Humiliation and Degradation

**Discounting or Trivializing:** Your feelings/experiences are wrong, worth nothing. (i.e., "You're too sensitive," or, "What's important to you is just silly").

### Domination and Control, Ordering

**Blocking and Diverting:** The abuser refuses to communicate, or defines what can or cannot be discussed by direct demand or by diverting and changing the topic.

**Negating, Countering:** Treating any communication as a debate, as if every point needs a counterpoint.

**Judging and Criticizing, Name Calling:** Defining the partner in a negative way.

**Accusing and Blaming:** The abusive partner blames their own behavior or any discontentment in the relationship on the other person.

**Trivial, Unreasonable, or Unpredictable Demands or Expectations:** A partner may never be allowed to succeed in a relationship. Revolving gripes or complaints create a moving target of what their spouse "needs" to fully accept or love them, or to deem the relationship worthwhile or lasting.

### Isolation, Emotional Distancing, Withholding Attention or Affection

**Sulking or Pouting, Playing the Martyr or Victim Role**

**Disapproving, Dismissive, or Condescending Looks, Comments, or Behavior**

**Subtle Threats of Physical or Emotional Abandonment**

**Denial, Consistently "Forgetting", "Gas-Lighting"**

**Selective Application of Religion**

**Disparagement in the name of "Concern":** Put downs disguised as a sincere desire to help them better themselves. "It is out of love that I am pointing out what is wrong with you."

**Hurtful "Jokes," Embarrassing in Front of Others**

**Justifying through "Equalization":** Comparing hurts or wrong-doings in the relationship as equal regardless of great discrepancies in the severity of such hurts or relationship "misbehaviors."

### Emotional abuse can occur as much in attitude as behavior:

Believing others should do as you say, or that you are always right

Not noticing or caring how others feel

Believing that everyone else is inferior to you

Treating others as though you know them better than they know themselves

Acting as the ultimate authority or judge in defining another person; what is right or wrong, acceptable or not, about them.

### Symbolic Violence: Intimidating physical behaviors that may accompany verbal abuse.

-Violence towards Property: slamming doors, kicking walls, throwing objects, destroying or threatening to destroy things the other person values.

-Reckless Driving

-Threatening Gestures: shaking a fist or finger, aggressive facial expressions or body posturing, acting as if one wants to injure or kill the other.