

## What can you do about it?

- Realize that emotional abuse is a serious problem and you can get help.
- Recognize that emotional abuse is as bad or worse than physical abuse.
- Take your own safety and the safety of your children seriously.
- Know that emotional abuse can lead to physical violence or death.
- Know that you are not to blame for your partner's abusive behavior.
- Find people to talk to that can support you. Consider going for counseling.
- Do not give up if community professionals are not helpful. Keep looking for someone that will listen to you and take emotional abuse seriously.
- Recognize that you have the right to make your own decisions, in your own time, and that dealing with any form of abuse may take time.
- Trust yourself and your own experiences. Believe in your own strengths. Remember that you are your own best source of knowledge and strength and that you already have the tools you need to survive.

## Where can you turn to?

- Women's help lines are for you too. Find the number in the front of your phone book.
- Shelters do accept women who are emotionally abused and have not been physically abused. The help line can refer you to the one nearest you. If you have a disability, ask where there is an accessible shelter in your area.
- If you have been threatened with harm or death, or are being stalked (followed and harassed) by your partner or ex-partner, you can call the police. Dial 911, or if you are in a rural area, find out the emergency number.
- If you are considering leaving, especially if you have children, see a lawyer.
- Abused women are at the greatest risk of being harmed or killed when they leave. Ensure that you have a safety plan in place.



# Emotional Abuse



Box 403, 203 Patricia St.  
Hudson Bay, SK S0E 0Y0  
Phone~ (306) 865-3064  
Fax~ (306) 865-3391

[hbfamilyandsupport@sasktel.net](mailto:hbfamilyandsupport@sasktel.net)  
[www.hbfamilyandsupport.ca](http://www.hbfamilyandsupport.ca)

24 Hour Crisis Line  
(North East Region)  
1-800-611-6349

# Symptoms of Emotional Abuse

**"I feel depressed, but my boyfriend/husband doesn't seem to care, and won't help me with it. Is it possible that my depression is being caused by my relationship?"**

Many women assume that if they're not being physically abused by their partner, then they're not being abused. That's not necessarily true. You may be in a relationship which is draining something from you -- you might not have recognized that your partner has eroded your self-esteem and happiness.

An abusive partner will railroad discussions, so that you don't have time to think about what's right and what's wrong in their behavior.



Take a moment to consider these questions. Your partner might have behaved as though these things were okay, even though it's obvious that they aren't okay.

Do you feel that you can't discuss with your partner what is bothering you?

Does your partner frequently criticize you, humiliate you or undermine your self-esteem?

Does your partner ridicule you for expressing yourself?

Does your partner isolate you from friends, family or groups?

Does your partner limit your access to work, money or material resources?

Has your partner ever stolen from you? Or run up debts for you to handle?

Does your relationship swing back and forth between a lot of emotional distance and being very close?

Have you ever felt obligated to have sex, just to avoid an argument about it?

Do you sometimes feel trapped in the relationship?

Has your partner ever thrown away your belongings, destroyed objects or threatened pets?

Are you afraid of your partner?

## How are you affected?

- Are you unable or afraid to make decisions for yourself?
- Do you do anything you can to please your partner or not upset him?
- Do you make excuses for your partner's behavior?
- Are you forgetful, confused or unable to concentrate?
- Have you noticed changes in your eating, sleeping, alcohol or drug use?
- Have you lost interest or energy to do the things you used to?
- Do you feel sick, anxious, tired or depressed a lot of the time?
- Have you lost contact with your friends, family or neighbors?
- Have you lost self-confidence and feel afraid that you could not make it alone?