

Online Therapy for Women in African Cities



GETTING OUT OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

Leaving an emotionally abusive relationship, needless to say, is very hard. However, as you embark on this difficult journey, keep in mind that it is not only necessary but also very rewarding. Whilst the first step to getting out is recognizing that you are in fact being abused, the second starts with a decision and a concrete practical plan on how you're going to do it. **This resource will help you:**

- think your situation through and help you draw a map for the journey of regaining your life.

Leaving an emotionally abusive relationship may be the hardest thing you have ever had to do. The verbal, physical and probably sexual abuse leaves you feeling immobilized, with low self esteem, full of shame, powerless and helpless, overwhelmed with despair and without the emotional energy to get yourself out of the relationship. But for you to regain your happiness, you will need to get out of this situation. Many times, we find the easier option is to stay in these relationships, because it seems easier than leaving.

NO ONE deserves to live the rest of their life in an unhappy and abusive relationship. It can drive you to serious depression, despair and the will not to live. We hope the following will help you think your life through and help you to start the journey of regaining your life.

GAIN CONTROL OVER YOUR THOUGHTS AND HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF

The most important first step is to CHANGE your thoughts about how you see and feel about yourself. You will need to REJECT all the verbal abuse of degradation that your partner has instilled into your conscience. YOU ARE A WORTHY INDIVIDUAL. You are not what your abuser has told you that you are. If you are reading this, you know that you are in an abusive relationship. You are NOT stupid (or a stupid cow, as some of us used to be called!!!) neither are you dumb nor an idiot.

LEARN TO SEE AND UNDERSTAND YOUR ABUSER'S STRATEGY

Take stock and reflect on the things your abuser says and does to make you feel worthless. What you have been told has chipped away at your self esteem, making you feel hopeless and worthless.

BEGIN TO REBUILD YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Your self-esteem has been tampered with and you will need self-confidence to bring up the emotional energy and inner strength to break free. What hobbies and interests did you have that you loved but had to drop? Try and find those things that are truly YOURS. Doing these things helps rebuild your self-confidence because they are about YOU, feeding your self without having to be dependant on anybody to give you that satisfaction. Do things that YOU enjoy. Do you have faith? Reconnect with the true friends you dropped and start getting the rest of your life back.

GIVE UP TRYING TO CHANGE THE ABUSER AND STOP HOPING THAT HE/SHE WILL CHANGE

Something that we do when in an abusive relationship is to always hope that our abuser will change. We beg, cajole, cry, pray etc. STOP trying to change the abuser, STOP believing they will stop abusing you, and STOP believing that they will change, because unless they get help themselves they NEVER DO. This hope leads us into isolating yourself from your real

friends because they can see what is going on, and you choose to remain with the abuser because you feel that because they love you dearly they will change. Abusers rarely change because they depend on the power they have over you to nourish their very own self-esteem. Let us not live in denial. You are hurting yourself and if you have children you are also really hurting them and setting them up for a similar future.

DECIDE TO LEAVE

You will also need to make a conscious decision. **DECIDE** to leave. This is about taking control back and is extremely hard for anyone in this situation, and for some people, it is much easier than for others. In emotionally abusive relationships, it is far better to remove yourself from the situation as quickly as you are able to.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE, MAKE A CONCRETE SURVIVAL PLAN

After you have made the decision to leave, it's crucial that you have a survival **PLAN** that will help you map out your exit and life after. Often people in this situation leave much too abruptly without having thought their exit through or having established a sustainable safety net. What happens then is that the abuser is usually just around the corner, waiting to come for your rescue. Soon you will find yourself back in the relationship and the vicious cycle you wanted to break out of. Except this time, the cycle quickly moves to a much higher level because the abuser now sees that you cannot live without him/her. Finances are of the uttermost importance in this plan. If you are not financially able, begin to take the steps to get financial independence, and if possible, begin a savings account which is really your escape from the emotionally abusive relationship fund.

. FINALLY PLEASE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS LIFE AFTER YOUR RELATIONSHIP. AND YES, YOU WILL BE OKAY

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RELATED ITEMS

- [How to Tell if You are in an Abusive Relationship](#)

Are you thinking you might be either on the abusing or abused end of a relationship? If you're *thinking* you might be, then you probably *are*!

This resource will help you:

- understand the dynamics of abusive relationships
- recognize the signs of a potentially abusive relationship
- identify types of abuse

- [The Drama Triangle](#)

See how we slip into the Victim, Persecutor and Rescuer roles to play seductive high energy drama games in order to avoid attention on our own personal accountability and vulnerability.

This resource will help you:

- understand the counterproductive dynamics of game playing
- recognize when games are being played
- identify your preferred role