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EXPECT RESPECT



WOMEN'S AID AND THE BODY SHOP BELIEVE THAT ALL PEOPLE DESERVE RESPECT

Abuse and domestic violence sometimes happens when there is a lack of respect for one person in a relationship or in a family.

This booklet is about understanding what respect is and what it means to be in a healthy (good/respectful) relationship. It also tells you what you can do if you're not being treated right or if you are being abused. You deserve love and respect.

RESPECT – RELATIONSHIPS CAN'T WORK WITHOUT IT

What does it mean to have a respectful relationship... with your friends, family, boyfriend or girlfriend?

Respect is about understanding that other people are different to you and accepting that others have the right to do and say what they want as long as nobody else is harmed.

When there is respect in a relationship, both people feel free to be themselves, and they feel more trusting of each other.



RESPECT CHECKLIST

When someone really likes or loves you, they treat you with respect. The following are signs of a relationship that is based on respect.

- You are free to say no to things you don't want to do.
- You feel safe and never scared or threatened.
- You are free to see other friends and family and do what you want.
- You can express your opinions and beliefs.
- You are free to change your mind.
- You feel like you can be yourself – even if you are different to the other person.
- You feel good about yourself.
- You are supported to make your own decisions.
- You are free to end the relationship if you want to.

Think about how you feel in your relationship or in your friendships. If you don't always feel like this, maybe you are not being treated with respect.



“MY GIRLFRIEND REALLY LIKES GOING TO THE CINEMA, WHICH I'M NOT REALLY INTO BUT THEN SHE COMES ALONG TO WATCH ME SKATEBOARD. WE BOTH MAKE AN EFFORT TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN EACH OTHER'S HOBBIES, AS ALL RELATIONSHIPS HAVE TO HAVE A BIT OF GIVE AND TAKE” **Imran**

A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP IS BASED ON RESPECT

People want different things from a relationship. Some people want a casual relationship, some want romance, some want sex and others want someone to be close to. Some people are attracted to the opposite sex and some people are attracted to the same sex.

Remember, it's ok to take your time and ask yourself:

What do I want from a relationship?

What don't I want?

What qualities do I like in a person?

What don't I like?

A healthy relationship means that you must also give respect.

WHAT A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP LOOKS LIKE

“We must have fun with each other and like being around each other”

“We don’t see each other all the time. We both spend time on our own or with our own friends”

“She has her own interests, like she is really into sport. I love that she is different to me”

“I sometimes get a bit jealous when he talks to other girls, but that’s ok, I trust him”

“We do have arguments but we are pretty good at listening to each other and compromising”

“She has very different opinions to me but it’s always interesting to hear what she’s got to say”

How you feel in your relationship can tell you whether it’s healthy or not. In a healthy relationship you feel respected, happy, cared for, supported and safe.



RELATIONSHIP QUIZ

How do you know if you’re being treated right? Be honest with yourself... Tick the box if the statement applies to you.

My boyfriend or girlfriend:

- Seems to like me as a person.**
- Won’t let me talk to other guys/girls.
- Respects my feelings, opinions and beliefs.**
- Doesn’t want me to spend time with my friends or family.
- Is ok if I say no to something (including sex).**
- Makes me feel like I need to watch what I do and say.
- Is happy for me to make my own decisions about my life.**
- Often puts me down or criticises me.
- Tries to work out arrangements by compromising or talking.**
- Sometimes scares or hurts me by being aggressive or violent.
- Is happy for me to see my own friends if I want to.**
- Might try to hurt me or him/herself if I wanted to break up.
- Makes me feel scared to disagree or to say no to things.

The **bold statements** are signs of love and respect. If you are being treated right, you should have ticked all of these. If you have ticked any answers not in bold, then there are signs that you are not being treated right.

WHEN LOVE HURTS

Abuse or domestic violence happens when one person tries to control, bully or hurt another. It's about lack of respect for the other person. The abuse might be physical, sexual or emotional. When someone who is supposed to love you treats you badly, it can be very hurtful. They might not always treat you like this – sometimes they might be caring and nice to you.

“HE GETS MAD OVER LITTLE THINGS, LIKE WHAT TV SHOW WE SHOULD WATCH. HE FLIES INTO A MAD TEMPER SO QUICKLY, IT SCARES ME. IT'S JUST EASIER TO DO WHAT HE WANTS” **Charlotte**

So you might think, “it's not that bad”. But if someone really likes or loves you, they should treat you with respect, always.

The first step in changing things is to understand what's happening.

Physical abuse is when someone is violent or threatens to hurt you (e.g. pushes you, smashes things, drives dangerously to scare you, etc).

Sexual abuse is when someone pressures you or forces you into doing sexual things that you don't want to.

It's against the law for someone to physically hurt you, threaten, threaten to hurt you or force you into a sexual relationship with them. You can contact the police and the person could be charged with a crime.



“SHE CONSTANTLY WATCHES WHERE I AM AND WHAT I'M UP TO. SHE RINGS ME EVERY COUPLE OF HOURS AND TELLS ME I HAVE TO SPEND EVERY SPARE MINUTE WITH HER” **Ben**

Emotional abuse includes when someone...

- Checks up on what you're doing all the time
- Stops you from seeing friends and family
- Puts you down or humiliates you
- Says that they will kill themselves if you break up with them
- Blackmails you – like threatening to tell your family something that you don't want them to know

Emotional abuse can hurt you just as much as physical or sexual abuse. This behaviour could also be a warning sign that the person could become physically violent in the future. Have a plan to protect yourself.

If someone is abusing you, it's not your fault.



JESSICA'S STORY

I was going out with a boy I knew for about six months. At first he seemed to be really nice, but after a month I could see that there were some issues. I thought he was just insecure so I spent more time with him. It all started when he'd get angry when I'd talk to my friends or really jealous if I talked to any other boys and tell me that I was acting like a 'slut'. He'd say that my friends and family don't care about me and that he was the only person who would ever care for me in such a deep way. At first I didn't believe the stuff that he said to me, but soon he got into my head and I stopped seeing my friends.

I cried a lot during the relationship. I couldn't really talk to my friends or family about it because I didn't want them to tell me to break up with him. I kept telling myself that he needed someone who loves him and that I shouldn't break up with him because it will hurt him. Eventually I started seeing my friends again, even though it made him angry. I started to talk to them about it and started to realise that there were other people who cared about me, which made me feel stronger.

When I finally broke up with him, he started acting desperately to get me back. He threatened to kill himself, to smash up my stuff and to tell my parents things that weren't true about me. But even though it was really hard, I just walked away. He now acts really nice and tells me that he's changed, but I can see right through him. He tricked me once but he won't trick me again.

Now I have a boyfriend who I really love and trust. He's like one of my best friends, I can tell him anything. He just wants us to have fun together, there's no pressure and he doesn't make a big deal of it if I don't want to do what he wants. I can be myself with him.



MY ADVICE TO OTHERS:

Sometimes when you really care about someone it's hard to see that they aren't right for you. No one should ever make you feel pressurised to stay in a relationship based on guilt. The longer you stay with them the more you get attached. Don't think that they can change because they love you or that you can change them. Believe me I've tried – I think we all have. It's better to realise this before something serious happens. Talk to family or friends about it. I'm happy I did, and think I did just in time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS TO ME?

People who are abusive will often make excuses for the way they act. They might say...

- “I was just joking”
- “You made me do it”
- “I couldn’t help it”
- “I was drunk”

But really, they act this way to try and control you. They pressurise you or scare you as a way of getting you to do what they want. Some boys think they have the right to dominate their girlfriends, and to be ‘the boss’ – but they haven’t.

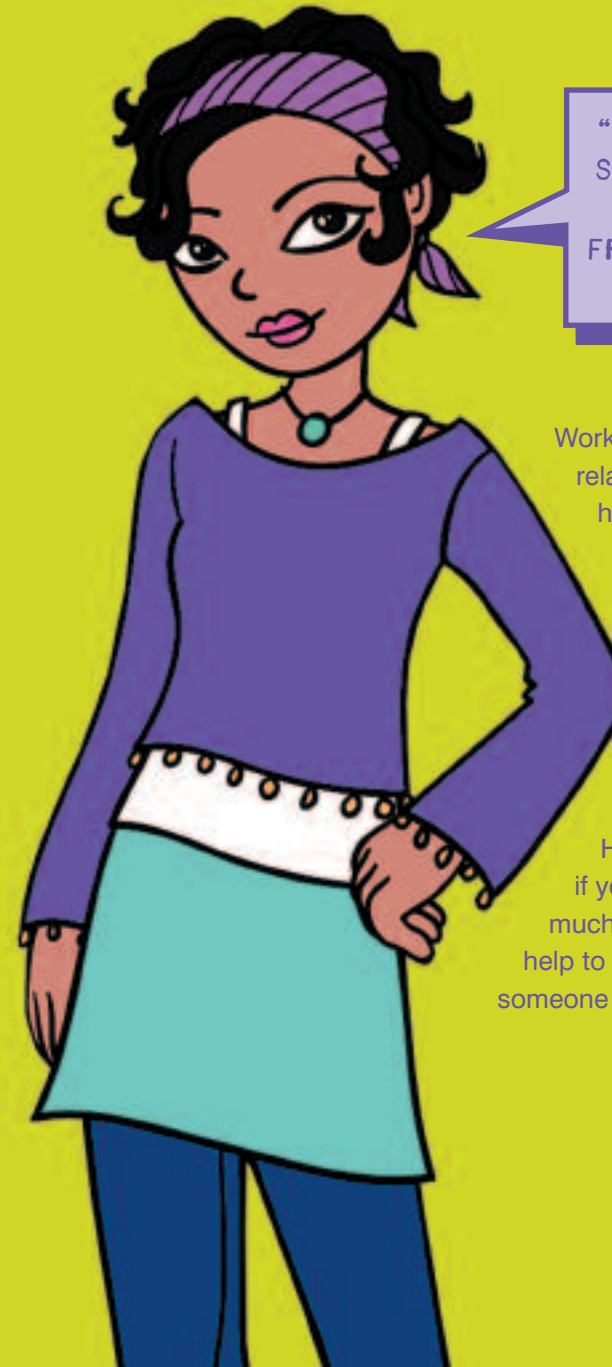
AM I CAUSING THEM TO ABUSE ME?

No. The abuse is not your fault. Don’t blame yourself – the way they behave says more about them than it does about you. Even if they feel upset or angry about something they could deal with it by talking to you or their friends or family. They don’t have the right to treat you like this.

HOW CAN I GET THEM TO CHANGE?

You can’t make someone change their attitude or behaviour – only they can do that. They have to start respecting you. But this won’t happen overnight. Unfortunately abuse only gets worse, not better.

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?



“SHE SULKS FOR DAYS IF I SAY I WANT TO GO OUT FOR A NIGHT WITH OTHER FRIENDS. SO I END UP ONLY SEEING HER” **Natasha**

Working out whether to stay in a relationship or break up can be a hard decision.

Maybe you still love them or feel that you would be nothing without them. Maybe you feel trapped or scared of what they might do if you leave.

Have a break from the relationship, if you can, or don’t see each other as much. Give yourself time to think. It can help to write your feelings down. Find someone to talk to, so you feel less alone.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

You should talk to a friend, a sister or brother, a relative, your parents, teacher or ring a helpline.

Whoever you talk to shouldn't judge or criticise you.

Helpline workers are there to listen, and give you support and ideas. It's ok to feel nervous about ringing a helpline service. If you are nervous, remember that you do not have to give your name or address to the person on the helpline.

Helpline workers will keep what you tell them private (except if they think you are in immediate danger).

You should always call the police on 999 if you are in danger. Violence is a crime and your boyfriend or girlfriend can be charged, or you can take out a court order to protect you from further violence.



HOW CAN I HELP MY FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER?

If you think your friend is being abused, here are some ideas on how to provide support.

DO

- ✓ Let them know that you have noticed that they don't seem happy in their relationship. Tell them you are there if they want to talk about it.
- ✓ Listen to them and help them think about the relationship.
- ✓ Believe what they tell you. It will have taken a lot for them to talk to you and trust you.
- ✓ Take the abuse seriously. Help them work out how they can stay safe.
- ✓ Support them whether their decision is to stay or leave.
- ✓ Encourage them to ring a helpline for information and support.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't blame them for the abuse or make judgmental comments like, "if you stay in the relationship then the abuse is your fault".
- ✗ Don't focus on working out the abuser's reasons for the abuse. Concentrate on supporting your friend and on what they can do to protect themselves.
- ✗ Try not to be impatient or critical of them if they are confused about what to do. It is very difficult for anyone to break up a relationship and especially hard if they are being abused.

SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

The Hideout

If you are a child or young person experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, you can visit **The Hideout** www.thehideout.org.uk. The Hideout is the first national website for children and young people to inform about domestic violence, to help identify whether it is happening in your home, to provide indirect and informal support and to signpost additional help and direct support.

Below is a selected list of helpline numbers available in the UK. Some are specifically for children and young people. Others are primarily for adults, but they will also take calls from children and young people. All helpline numbers provided will be able to discuss your worries about domestic violence with you.

In an emergency, please ring the police on 999 for immediate help.

You can also try ringing social services by phoning your local town hall (look in the phone book under your local council) and ask for the duty social worker.

NSPCC & ChildLine – 0800 1111

The NSPCC and ChildLine have now formally joined together in a move that will ensure even stronger services and a more influential voice for children and young people. The ChildLine service now within the NSPCC still has the same well known telephone number – 0800 1111 – and children and young people can still call 24 hours a day and receive the same crucial service. The NSPCC's National Helpline – 0808 800 5000 – also remains the same and can be contacted 24 hours a day by anyone with concerns or worries about a child.

Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0808 2000 247

Run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. This helpline service provides support, information and a listening ear to women experiencing domestic violence. It also provides assistance to women and children to access a place of safety in a women's refuge. The helpline is a member of Language Line and can provide access to an interpreter for non-English speaking callers. The helpline can also access the BT Type Talk Service.

24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline (Northern Ireland) – 0800 917 1414

Managed by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, the Helpline is open to anyone affected by domestic violence. The service offers an initial listening ear, information about relevant services, support and assistance.

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 027 1234

Confidential information and support service for those affected by domestic abuse. Freephone service and telephone number will not appear on your phone bill.

Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 80 10 800

Open 24 hours a day. Free and confidential service for anyone being abused at home or concerned about someone they know.

Samaritans – 08457 90 90 90 (UK)

Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

The Respect Phonenumber – 0845 122 8609

National phonenumber offering information and advice to those who are violent and abusive to their partners. Specialises in providing services to male perpetrators, but will also be available for female perpetrators and those in same sex relationships.

M.A.L.E. (Men's Advice Line and Enquiries) – 0845 064 6800

If you are a male victim of domestic violence, in a heterosexual, gay, bi-sexual or transgender relationship and need confidential help, contact the M.A.L.E. helpline. It also offers an outreach and confidential support service for gay, bisexual and transgender men in Devon.



WE SHOULD ALL EXPECT RESPECT FOR OURSELVES, AND TREAT OTHERS WITH THE SAME

We are all unique, and worthy of love and respect.

Ways you can build self-respect and confidence include:

- Don't be hard on yourself or focus on mistakes
- Don't blame yourself for the way other people act
- Focus on positive things, for example:
 - Things I've done that I feel proud of are...
 - What I like about myself is...
 - My favourite things are...
 - Some of the things I'd like to do in my life are...

REMEMBER :

- You are important
- You don't have to match up to anyone's standards except your own
- You have the right to express your racial or cultural beliefs
- You have the right to have your own feelings, opinions and friends
- You deserve love and respect