

“Domestic abuse is indefensible, illegal in many countries, and never acceptable within the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) anywhere in the world. Any interpretation of Vaishnava religious or social teachings that condones, endorses, or justifies domestic abuse is rejected by the Governing Body Commission (GBC).”

– Governing Body Commission (GBC)  
Resolution March 2020.  
Read the full statement and appendices here:  
[www.iskcon.org/resources/abusepolicy](http://www.iskcon.org/resources/abusepolicy)

Domestic abuse is a severe violation of the essential practices of Krishna consciousness and Vaishnava culture. Vaishnava culture includes cultivating the qualities of mercy, austerity (or self-discipline), truthfulness, and cleanliness. These are sometimes referred to as the pillars of religion. Domestic abuse undermines and destroys these qualities.

“A man in devotional service is automatically non-violent. He is the best of gentlemen.”

– Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-līla 24:272

#### For more information:

Please contact Krishnarupa devi dasi  
Women’s Minister for ISKCON Australia,  
or your local temple women’s representative.  
Email: [krishnarupa.acbsp@gmail.com](mailto:krishnarupa.acbsp@gmail.com)

#### RESOURCES:

If you are in an abusive relationship, it is important to protect yourself and your children:

Call the police (000) if you believe you are in immediate danger of harm.

IMMEDIATELY go to a safe place and take your children with you.

#### National Crisis Hotline:

1800RESPECT (24 hours, 7 days) 1800 737 732

#### Mensline Australia:

1300 789 978

Supports men who are dealing with family and relationship difficulties. 24 hours, 7 days a week.

#### Kids Helpline

Webchat Counselling

<https://kidshelpline.com.au>

1800 55 1800

#### STATE RESOURCES:

##### VICTORIA:

#### Safe Steps

[www.safesteps.org.au](http://www.safesteps.org.au)

1800 015 188 (24/7)

#### Orange door

[Orangedoor.vic.gov.au](http://Orangedoor.vic.gov.au)

##### NEW SOUTH WALES:

#### DVNSW

[www.dvnsw.org.au/](http://www.dvnsw.org.au/)

1800 656 463

##### QUEENSLAND:

#### DV connect

1800 811 811

[www.dvconnect.org/](http://www.dvconnect.org/)

##### WESTERN AUSTRALIA:

[www.dcp.wa.gov.au/](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/)

1800 007 339

##### ACT:

#### DVCS (Domestic Violence Crisis Service)

02 6280 0900

##### NORTHERN TERRITORY:

1800RESPECT

1800 737 732

##### SOUTH AUSTRALIA:

#### Domestic Violence Crisis Line

1800 800 098

##### TASMANIA:

#### Safe at Home

1800 608 122

## Domestic & Family Violence

Love  
Shouldn't  
Hurt

Domestic & Family Violence (D&FV) is a major problem all over the world. It affects people of all backgrounds, including our temple communities. D&FV has lasting effects on the victim as well as the children who witness the abuse. In most countries, D&FV is a criminal offence. The International GBC Body condemns abuse of all devotees with no exceptions.



A policy statement for the benefit of temple communities.

### If you have ever been abused

- You are not alone. There are many victims of domestic violence.
- You are not to blame. There is never, ever an excuse for abuse.
- You deserve to be treated with respect.
- You deserve a safe and happy life.
- Your children deserve the same.
- There are people who can help.

### How can you help a friend or community member who is being abused?

- Do NOT blame the victim for the abuse.
- Be a caring, objective listener in confidence.
- Encourage your friend to seek professional help.
- Don't tell them what to do.
- Ask them if they are safe and what they need to feel safe.
- Do not confront the abuser.

### Why victims don't leave

- Threats of violence to themselves or their children.
- Fear of losing custody of the children.
- Financial insecurity.
- Abuser threatens to harm self if the victim leaves.
- Lack of self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Unsupportive community
- Blames self for the abuse.
- Convinced the abuser will stop/change.
- Fear of stigma or humiliation if it becomes public.

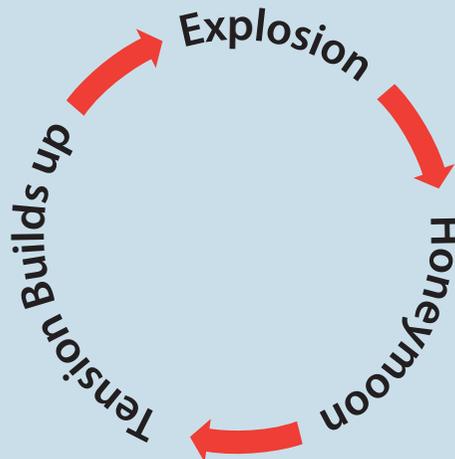
### What is it?

Domestic & Family Violence is a pattern of physical, psychological, sexual or financial abuse that is used by one person in a relationship or marriage to control the intimate partner. Certain types of domestic violence can also be perpetrated on a family member, such as a vulnerable elder. It is a process that doesn't start out with sustained physical violence, for instance, but does escalate. The abuse can happen often or with long gaps in between – very rarely does it occur only once. Abuse is not the same as normal disagreements in a marriage.

### Cycle of abuse

In the 'honeymoon' phase, the victim is hopeful and forgives the abuser and agrees to stay. Tensions slowly begin to build up again. The abuser picks fights, accuses the victim of cheating, or withholds affection while the victim tries to calm the abuser.

In the explosion phase, the abuser isolates and physically or emotionally abuses the victim by hitting, humiliating, insulting, kicking, spitting etc.



### I am being abused what should I do?

There is never, ever an excuse for abuse. To disclose that you are in an abusive situation to someone you trust like a close friend, spiritual guide, a Vaishnavi Minister, or a professional, is not acknowledging personal failure or shortcomings, but is a positive step towards healing.

Take the brave step and seek out professional help. You have options and you should know what they are. The decision whether to leave an abusive relationship is up to you and should be made after exploring the options with a trained counsellor and discussion with loved ones or others you trust. Solutions may vary based on the situation.

Domestic violence also has serious effects on children who hear or witness abusive situations. It is important to ensure that in all instances you and your children are safe. The most dangerous times are when your partner knows you are leaving and after you have left. Srila Prabhupada did tell some devotees to leave their abusive marriages.

### When you are safe

Google 'domestic abuse assistance' in your area for helpful advice. Many places have hotlines where you can talk to someone who can help. Report the abuse to a local ISKCON authority who will listen objectively and not blame you, such as your country's ISKCON Women's Minister and Temple President.

Talk to a devotee friend who will listen to you and give you friendship and kindness in confidence. Find professional help (counselling) even if the professional is not a devotee.