

## Ideas for Coping

**Do not keep your abuse a secret. Secrecy is the abuser's weapon.**

Take care of yourself! This may include:

- Journaling/keeping a log
- Eating nutritious meals
- Talking with someone you trust
- Getting enough sleep
- Avoid self-medicating, the use of alcohol and other drugs can interfere with your ability to keep yourself safe
- Attending support groups
- Using internet resources, and make sure you are able to lock your computer, or use one in a public space, so your activity can not be traced by your abuser

**Develop a safety plan!** For more information about safety plans, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program.

## Help is Available

**Your safety is your first priority.**

**Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault agencies provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To locate the program nearest you, visit [www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org).**

Or Call:

1-877-215-0167

Línea de Crisis en Nebraska  
(en español)

1-800-799-7233

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
[www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)

1-800-656-4673

National Sexual Assault Hotline  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

1-866-331-9474

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline



Nebraska Domestic Violence  
Sexual Assault Coalition  
402-476-6256 [www.ndvsac.org](http://www.ndvsac.org)

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# Mental Health and Domestic Violence

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# Are you being abused?

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Does your partner:

- ever hurt you physically or threaten to hurt you or someone you care about?
- try to control where you go and who you see?
- accuse you of having affairs?
- stop you from seeing family or friends?
- control your finances?
- threaten to kill you, himself/herself, your children, or your pets if you leave?
- blame his/her behavior on drugs, alcohol, your behavior or his/her childhood trauma?
- force you to engage in sexual activities that make you feel uncomfortable?

If you answer **yes** to some or all of these questions, you could be experiencing abuse.

**Remember you are not to blame and you don't need to face this alone.**

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*Shame, embarrassment, guilt, fear, emotional and physical exhaustion, responsible, afraid, lonely, "crazy," hopelessness...*

...All of these words describe how many women feel when they are being physically, sexually, and/or psychologically abused.

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Many women also describe "crazy-making behavior." Your partner may call you names, accuse you of lying, tell others you are making things up, and deny and minimize the abusive behavior.

This is especially true if you are taking medication for depression, anxiety, or another mental health issue, or if you are seeing a therapist. Abused women sometimes *do* feel crazy, and there is help and hope available to you. You do not have to live like this!

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# Common reactions to being abused

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- Fear
- Nightmares and sleep disturbances
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shame and embarrassment
- Chronic physical complaints
- Substance abuse
- Social withdrawal
- Feelings of helplessness & hopelessness
- Self-blame
- Numbness
- Inability to relax, jumpiness
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

National Center for Victims of Crime, (2004)

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**No one deserves to be abused.**

