

## Partner abuse happens to trans folks too!

If you or a friend is experiencing abuse, you can get support: **617-742-4911 (V)**  
**617-227-4911 (TTY)**

\*Partner abuse is also called domestic violence, battering, dating violence, or intimate partner abuse.

### What is partner abuse?

A systematic pattern of behaviors where one person tries to control the thoughts, beliefs, and/or actions of their partner or someone they are dating or had an intimate relationship with.

### Abuse is not about size, strength, or who is more masculine.

Anyone of any gender can be abusive.

**Abuse is not just about physical violence.** It's about controlling the other person. Abusers can use emotional, economic, sexual, cultural and identity, and physical tactics to control their partners.

#### Abusers may say:

- "You're not a real man"
- "Real women dress like this"
- "No one is going to help you because you are trans."
- "I know I can't trust you alone with your friends because you'll sleep with anyone."
- "Even with that wig on, you still look like a man."
- "If you leave me, I'll tell your boss that you are trans."
- "You are never going to find someone else who will date someone like you."
- "If you really want to be a man you have to pay for everything."
- "If you want to be a real woman you have to have sex like this."
- "I'm embarrassed to be seen with you."
- "You are just confused about your gender."

**Abuse crosses all social, ethnic, racial, and economic lines.** You can't tell if someone is abused or abusive by race, size, strength, economic level, gender expression, religion, politics, or personality.

### Abuse is never mutual.

Although both partners may use violence, abusers do so to control their partners; a survivor may use violence in self-defense or to try to stop the abuse.

**Abuse can happen regardless of the length of relationship or living situation.** It doesn't matter if you live together or just started dating.

### Abuse does not lessen; it tends to get worse over time.

Couples counseling, anger management, alcoholics anonymous and communication workshops do not help abusers stop abusing and can be dangerous for the survivor.

#### Does your partner:

- threaten to tell people that you are trans?
- make fun of your gender or call you names?
- try to control how you dress or act?
- refuse to use the name or pronouns you choose for yourself?
- get angry or jealous when you spend time with others?
- hide or steal your hormones?
- use money or gifts to make you feel like you owe them something?
- prevent you from going to trans events?
- not respect your safeword?
- pressure you to have sex in ways that you don't want to?
- force you into a gender role?

### Emotional Abuse:

- Telling you that you are crazy
- Blaming everything on you
- Isolating you from your friends and family,
- Controlling what you do
- Lying and manipulating

### Sexual Abuse:

- Forcing you to have sex when you don't want to
- Forcing you into certain sex roles
- Calling your body parts by the wrong names
- Posting or sharing nude photos or videos without your permission

### Cultural/ Identity Abuse:

- Using racism, classism, anti-semitism, ableism, homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia against you
- Threatening to out you
- Not letting you wear clothes that express your gender

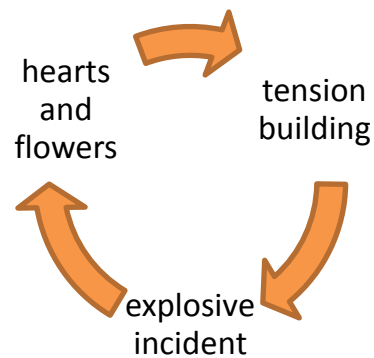
### Economic Abuse:

- Getting you fired from your job
- Threatening to out you at work
- Controlling the money
- Running up credit cards in your name

### Physical Abuse:

- Hitting, punching, or shoving
- Threatening to harm or kill you
- Taking away your wheelchair, crutches, or hearing aids.
- Locking you in or out of the house

## Cycle of Abuse:



**Hearts and Flowers-** This is how the relationship starts. The abuser can be charming, charismatic, sincere, and sexy.

**Tension Building-** The abuser starts to use subtle controlling behaviors like guilt or blame (or other examples on the left). You might feel like you are walking on eggshells. Survivors often become aware of their own behavior and try to do things to avoid conflict or “not get in trouble.”

**Explosive-** Your partner uses a tactic or multiple tactics of abuse to control you (see examples on the left). At this point you may be ready to leave or start questioning the relationship.

**Hearts and Flowers-** Your partner tries to prevent you from leaving by becoming the same person you fell in love with. They may do nice things for you, buy you flowers, take you out, etc. or just apologize for the abuse. Your partner may claim, “This will never happen again” or “I will get help” or blames the abuse on drugs, alcohol, or stress. Although the abuser seems to be acting nice, they are still trying to control their partner. You may feel relief that the explosive incident is over and that everything seems to be okay again but then the tension builds again...

The cycle is often repeated over and over again, more rapidly over time. If this sounds familiar to you, you can get support. The Network/La Red is an organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer survivors of partner abuse and allies. We can help you talk through your concerns and connect you to services that may be helpful to you such as support groups, restraining orders, or confidential shelter. You don't have to leave or even want to leave to get support.