

Types of Emotional Abuse

Domination

People who dominate others need to be in charge, and they often try to control another person's every action. They have to have their own way and they will often resort to threats to get it.

When you allow yourself to be dominated by someone else, you begin to lose respect for yourself, and you become silently enraged. Someone else is in control of your life, just as assuredly as if you were a slave doing what you were ordered to do. You are no longer the master of your own destiny.

Verbal Assaults

This set of behavior involves berating, belittling, criticizing, name calling, screaming, threatening, blaming, and using sarcasm and humiliation. This kind of abuse is extremely damaging to the victim's self-esteem and self-image. Just as assuredly as physical violence assaults the body, verbal abuse assaults the mind and spirit, causing wounds that are extremely difficult to heal. Not only is this kind of abuse demeaning, but it is frightening as well. When someone yells at us, we become afraid that they may also resort to physical violence.

Abusive Expectations

Here, the abuser places unreasonable demands on you, and you are expected to put aside everything to satisfy his or her needs. This abuser demonstrates a constant need for your undivided attention, demands frequent sex, or requires you to spend all of your free time with him or her. But no matter how much time or attention you give, it is never enough; this person can never be pleased, because there is always something more you could have done. You are subjected to constant criticism, and you are constantly berated because you don't fulfill all of this person's needs.

Emotional Blackmail

Emotional blackmail is one of the most powerful ways of manipulation. An emotional blackmailer either consciously or unconsciously coerces another person into doing what he or she wants by playing on that person's fear, guilt, or compassion. Women, in particular, are easily exploited because they tend to place other's wishes and feelings ahead of their own. They can be made to feel guilty simply for thinking of their own needs and feelings first.

You are being emotionally blackmailed when someone threatens to end a relationship if you don't give them what they want. Or when someone rejects you or distances themselves from you until you give in to their demands.

Unpredictable Responses

In this type of abusive situation, the abuser has drastic mood swings or sudden emotional outbursts for no apparent reason, or gives inconsistent responses. Whenever someone in your life reacts very differently at different times to the same behavior from you, tells you one thing one day and the opposite the next, or frequently changes his or her mind you are being abused with unpredictable responses. This behavior forces you to be constantly on edge.