Magiczny Kraków

How to recognize abuse

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Abuse harms the physical or mental health of those who suffer it, causing far-reaching consequences, even involving harm to health or loss of life. It is important to be able to recognize violent behavior. The situations described below can help with this.

Physical violence

Jacek returned late and slammed the door. Once again, he greeted me again with a series of insults. He shouted that he didn't believe me, that I was nobody. He pushed me. He grabbed my hand and twisted it until it hurt, and then ... I don't remember what happened next. I was lying on the floor. In the kitchen. My whole body was in pain. As if from afar, I could hear Jacek saying: Anka, you must have slipped again, do you understand, do you understand? Kubuś was standing in the doorway, terrified. And Jacek went on saying ... mummy slipped. Go to bed.

Shaking, pushing and kicking me, hitting someone with objects, restraining body movements, choking, banging someone's head, beating someone with the hand, stubbing out cigarettes on someone, mutilating someone's body with sharp objects, leaving a person without help or without calling for help and other similar behavior are typical examples of physical abuse. This abuse can lead to serious injuries or endanger your life.

Mental abuse

She would take the children to school every morning and then she would lock the door. From the outside. It could not be opened from the inside. I protested only once. Then I heard Dorota saying: Kuba, who will believe you? If you try to leave, you'll be left with nothing, you'll be even more of a nobody. You'll lose everything. You'll lose the children! You have no idea of the people my father knows. If you say one word, you'll regret it."

Threats, blackmail, observing someone, restricting someone's freedom and their contacts with others, coercing someone into obedience, subjugation, verbal abuse, degrading treatment, humiliation embarrassing, belittling, and ridiculing someone, criticism, and forcing one's views or opinions on others - these are behaviors indicative of psychological abuse, intended to make someone dependent, force them to comply with the perpetrator's decisions, or make them obey the perpetrator of abuse. Experiencing such behavior takes a toll on your mental and physical health, causing loss of sleep, stress and psychosomatic illnesses.

Economic abuse

This is not how it was supposed to be. Marek was earning good money, but then it started. "We took out" one loan, then another one. He was supposed to buy a car, but there was no car or money. He forbade me to open any correspondence, but I saw that it was from the court, the bank... When I

refused to take out the third loan, all hell broke loose. My things started disappearing from the house, and Marek began threatening me. My friends would say: Kasia, run away!

Incurring debts and taking out loans without the spouse’s consent, coercing people into borrowing, stealing personal belongings and money, taking someone’s wages, preventing someone from taking up gainful employment, coercing people into borrowing from family members, failing to meet the material needs of the family, restricting access to things and facilities necessary for life (cutting off electricity, obstructing access to the bathroom) - these are behaviors that constitute economic abuse. They are aimed at depriving a person of his or her sense of dignity, depriving him or her of the ability to meet his or her needs, and bringing about a situation of total dependence on the perpetrator.

Sexual abuse

First Kamil started talking about his fantasies. Then he started saying “Anita, you don't think about my needs” and making me feel guilty. I thought maybe people do that. Until finally, especially when he would return drunk after a company party or meeting with his mates, he simply started to satisfy his desires. He forced me to do everything he felt like doing when he felt like doing it, saying that we were married, and this was my duty. I couldn’t say “no”.

Ridiculing someone, forcing someone into sexual acts or behavior without consent, forcing people into sexual intercourse, rape, sadism, forcing people to have intercourse with third parties, and forcing people to watch pornography are behaviors that constitute sexual abuse. Such behavior can result in physical injury, poor self-esteem, pain and suffering, a sense of loss of dignity, and a loss of self-respect.

Negligence

When Halina died, I was left alone, and then Justyna said that the house was too big for me and that she would move in. Sebastian moved in along with her, and is a bad influence on her. She would not be like that herself. First they borrowed from my pension. Because Sebastian hadn’t been paid his wages, because they needed money for the car. And then I didn't even see my pension any more - they just took it. I told my daughter that I had no medication, that I was hungry. I was told that this was a good thing and maybe I would die quicker.

Failure to satisfy someone’s basic physical and emotional needs, denying someone food, care or necessary assistance, refusal to provide medical assistance or necessary medication, failure to provide decent living conditions, restricting access to rooms in the house where basic needs are met (kitchen, bathroom), emotional coldness in relationships - these are examples of abuse defined as negligence. This is a form of economic abuse. Negligence is most often referred to in the context of children, but it is experienced just as often by the elderly, the sick and those with disabilities.