This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 1:05:43 2026 / +0000 GMT

Ask a psychotherapist

Question:

I feel stupid writing to you about this because I'm a guy and if anyone's going to be abusive in a relationship it should be me, right? You always hear about women getting beat up or called names but sometimes it's the guy who's taking it. In my case, my wife always accuses me of things I didn't do. She reads my emails and texts and accuses me of having someone on the side. She's constantly screaming at me or giving me the cold shoulder and threatening to leave and take the kids. I've never cheated on her and I wouldn't but she won't believe me. Now I'm terrified of losing her and the kids. I can't sleep, I'm losing weight and the constant stress is starting to show at work. What should I do?

Answer:

I appreciate the courage it must have taken for you to write and how desperate you must feel in this situation. While the majority of victims of spousal abuse are female, there are a significant number of male victims. This can take the form of physical violence but more often it falls under the category of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse includes name calling, excessive criticism, contempt and what you have termed ?the cold shoulder?. It can be expressed as pathological suspicion and jealousy and in attempts to control the partner generally. Sometimes the abuse is delivered via a contemptuous tone of voice, eye-rolling or a disgusted look.

The impact of emotional abuse on the victim is to undermine self-esteem and any sense of well-being. No one, male or female deserves to be abused physically or emotionally in an intimate relationship. While abused women may be willing to talk to friends about their situation, abused men often isolate themselves, feeling ashamed that this is happening to them. I advise you to talk about the abuse to someone you trust, ideally a therapist with experience in this area.

Alison Kerr, Ph.D., Psychotherapist can be reached at 905 936-2400 or at allikerr@rogers.com