

Ten Top Tips



When men want to stop being abusive toward their partners and families

1. **Men who abuse** their partners and families don't only use physical violence. Abuse is not just physical. Tactics of sexual, emotional, verbal, social or financial abuse can be used. If one of these tactics of abuse applies to you, you may be committing acts of domestic violence.
2. **Any form of abuse** is a way to control another person. Men can choose to use violence and abuse as a means of trying to stop their partner from leaving them when in fact what they are doing is driving their partner and children away. It is important for men to face their fear of losing their family before they resort to further violence as a means of trying to control their partner or trying to make her stay through inducing fear in her about what might happen. Men may make threats to harm their partner, or the children, or pets or significant others as a means of controlling the situation. In many cases some of these threats of violence have already been carried out and women and others know these are not idle threats and pose a real danger. Men need to seek help to find out what alternatives they have other than resorting to violence and abuse, and before a loved one is seriously injured or in some cases killed.
3. **Violence and abuse** are often mistakenly called conflict, fighting, arguments etc, when in fact something different is happening, as fear is being generated which is not usually the case when couples are just experiencing a difference of opinion or arguing. Women do not choose to be treated abusively or invite violence or cause it to happen because using violence is a choice and when people choose to use violence then they responsible for perpetrating it.
4. **Men who hurt** their loved ones become experts at making excuses for themselves. Contrary to common belief, each individual is responsible for the words they use and actions they undertake. There are no excuses for violence and abuse.
5. **Men who abuse** and use violence towards their partners and families are also violating their basic human rights. Women and children are equal to all others and have a right to live in a safe environment, free from violence and fear.
6. **Most men who abuse** and use violence against their partners want to stop, but then it happens again. Men sometimes feel that they are trapped in a cycle of committing violence. This is because the pattern of abuse, patch-up, abuse, patch-up, abuse, patch-up continues to happen. Men can break free, there are professionals who can help men see this cycle and end the violence and abuse.
7. **Men who have successfully** escaped their abusive practices are the ones who say to themselves: 'I have to change me!' and then do something about it.

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8. **For many men**, facing up to what they have been doing to their loved ones takes a lot of courage and is generally the hardest thing they have ever done in their lives. Facing up means being willing to name all the hurtful things they have said and own the violent and abusive acts they are responsible for and have directed towards their loved ones.
9. **Try to understand** how it would feel to be the partner of a man who chooses to use violence; put yourself in their shoes. Can you imagine what it's like to feel afraid, humiliated, and as if you are walking on eggshells. If you have children try and remember back to when you were a child and what it felt like to be scared of an adult. There is much evidence now that clearly shows that children's brain development and emotional wellbeing can be profoundly affected when they witness or experience violence and abuse. Most fathers want the best for their children and want to stop what they are doing once they understand the serious impacts their violence and abuse is having on their children and their partner.
10. **Men also need to understand** that some acts of domestic violence are considered criminal and can result in an arrest or criminal charges being laid by Police. This can be devastating and shameful for a family, so getting help before this happens is really important. Research also shows that violent and abusive behavior tends to escalate over time rather than diminish which means Men are at risk of seriously harming their partner or children if they don't stop.

Asking for professional help takes guts but may be the only way out. If you, or someone you love wants to talk to someone about abuse or domestic violence, please call the numbers below.

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| Centrecare | (08) 9325 6644 |
| Women's Domestic Violence Helpline | Free call 1800 007 339 |
| Crisis Care Helpline | Free call 1800 199 008 |
| Men's Domestic Violence Helpline | Free Call 1800 000 599 |

