

Below are some resources tailored for specific faith communities that may be helpful to you:

**Texas Muslim Women's Foundation**

24-hour domestic violence hotline: 972-880-4192  
WhatsApp available Monday–Friday, 9AM–5PM (CST)

**Catholics For Family Peace Education and Research on Domestic Abuse**

[catholicsforfamilypeace.org](http://catholicsforfamilypeace.org)

**Shalom Task Force**

Call: 718-337-3700

Call/Text/WhatsApp: 888-883-2323

**Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas**

24-hour hotline: 972-437-9950

Email: [info@jfsdallas.org](mailto:info@jfsdallas.org)

To find local support for survivors of domestic violence, visit:

**TCFV Service Directory**

[https://tcfv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-TCFV-Service-Directory\\_web-pages.pdf](https://tcfv.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-TCFV-Service-Directory_web-pages.pdf)

**The National Domestic Violence Hotline**

[thehotline.org](https://thehotline.org)

1-800-799-7233

text 'START' to 88788 to connect with NDVH

**LovelsRespect.org**

1-866-331-9474

800-787-3224 (TTY)

text 'lovéis' to 22522 to connect with LovelsRespect

Other non-faith-based resources that may be helpful:

**Stalking Awareness Handbook**

[stalkingawareness.org/documentation-log](https://stalkingawareness.org/documentation-log)

**Strong Hearts Native Helpline**

[strongheartshelpline.org](https://strongheartshelpline.org)

**Violence Against Black Women**

[ujimacommunity.org/resources](https://ujimacommunity.org/resources)

**Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-based Violence**

[api-gbv.org](https://api-gbv.org)

You are the expert on your own safety.

There are many resources and support services available to survivors of domestic violence, including, but not limited to:

- » **Emergency shelter**
- » **Counseling**
- » **Crisis intervention**
- » **Peer support groups**
- » **Accompaniment to law enforcement and the courts**
- » **Medical accompaniment**
- » **Legal advocacy**

These services are confidential and free when you reach out to your local provider.

**Helpful Books:**

*Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse*, (1987) by Marie M. Fortune

*Never Ever After: How recognizing red flags in relationships can save you a whole lot of grief*, (2024) by Geneece Goertzen

*The Black Woman's Guide to Overcoming Domestic Violence: Tools to Move Beyond Trauma, Reclaim Freedom, and Create the Life You Deserve*, (2022) by Robyn L. Gobin, Shavonne J. Moore-Lobban, and Thema Bryant (Foreword)

*Taking It Seriously: A Faith Leader's Guide to Domestic Violence*, (2024) by Geneece Goertzen (Author), Jay Kieve (Foreword)

*Mejor sola que mal acompañada: para la mujer golpeada / For the Latina in an Abusive Relationship*, (1993) by Myrna M. Zambrano

*The Power to Break Free: Surviving Domestic Violence, with a Special Reference to Abuse in Indian Marriages*, (2012) by Anisha Durve

*Breaking the Silence: Domestic Violence in the South Asian-American Community*, (2001) by Sandhya Nankani (Editor)



TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE



# Domestic Violence and Your Faith Community



TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

888.450.TCFV (8238)

[WWW.TCFV.ORG](http://WWW.TCFV.ORG)

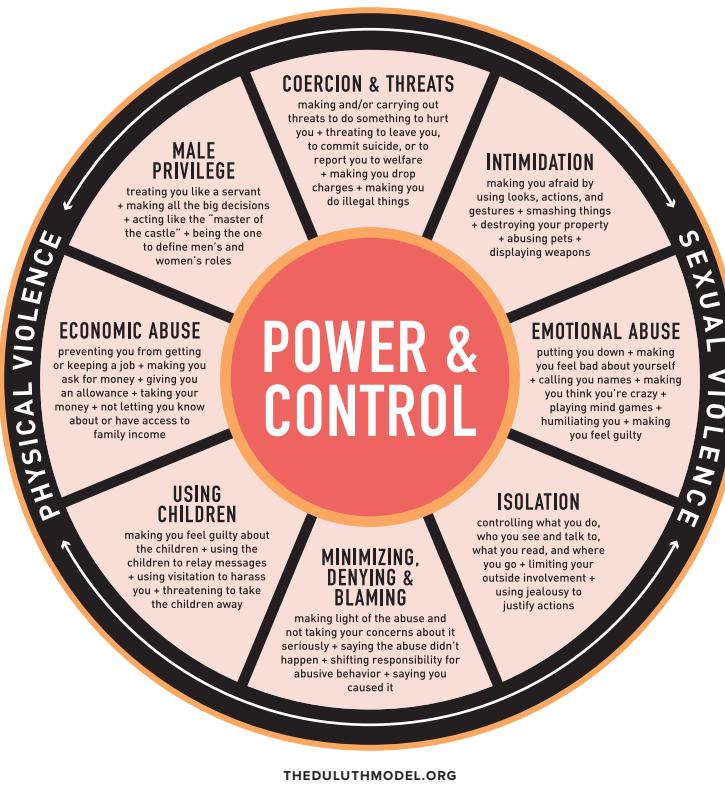
Domestic violence (or domestic abuse) is a pattern of behaviors used to maintain emotional, psychological, spiritual, economic, physical and/or sexual power and control over an intimate partner or family member.

While the majority of domestic violence cases are perpetrated by men against women, domestic violence affects people of every race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. Those who are married, living together, or have an existing or previous intimate relationship can be victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. It is common in many communities for harmful behaviors to be normalized and even promoted within the context of roles in a family or intimate partner relationship.

Domestic Violence often involves isolation, which can be dangerous when harm escalates over time. A healthy support system can help serve as a protective factor when addressing domestic violence in your relationship. For many, a support system can look like having an advocate, licensed professional counselor who specializes in domestic violence, or a trusted neighbor, friend or family member. Your support system may include your faith community, which should be a space where you feel safe and supported, no matter your background or beliefs. Your support system should include those who are willing to listen and play an active role in supporting your stated safety needs and goals.

Abusive behavior is a choice—it impacts different people in different ways and escalates in severity over time. The person being harmed is never responsible for the harm perpetrated against them. The risk for physical harm is highest when a survivor leaves an abusive relationship. If you think you might be experiencing domestic violence, help is available. It is of utmost importance that you have the information, tools, resources and support you need to make informed decisions about your and your children's safety and wellness.

Below is a visual representation of some of the tactics used to gain and maintain power and control in intimate partner violence (IPV).



Within a religious or spiritual context, an unsafe person may misuse scripture, traditions or cultural norms to justify their use of some or all of the tactics represented above. Your partner, and even leaders of varying faiths may do this by asserting authority to reinforce the use of abusive or coercive gender roles. They may also do this by placing blame for the abuse on you or their assessment of your faith practices.

### What can your faith community do to support your overall safety?

» Some faith leaders and/or other members of your faith community can connect you with local service providers who are trained in responding to and supporting survivors of domestic violence.

- » Having safe, healthy peers around you whose beliefs and values align with your own can keep you grounded and focused during times of uncertainty and confusion.
- » Belief in a higher power or purpose can help motivate you to prioritize your safety and wellness when you are experiencing the painful impact(s) of emotional, financial/economic, spiritual, physical or sexual abuse.

### How can you assess for safety within your faith community?

- » Is domestic violence discussed as unacceptable in your faith community?
- » Do those in your faith community listen with non-judgement and support you in making informed decisions for yourself?
- » Would you be required or encouraged to join spaces or services that felt unsafe for you, with or without your abusive partner, if you talked to someone in your faith community about the abuse?
- » Does your faith community partner with local agencies or participate in events that offer resources and support to survivors of domestic violence?

### When reaching out to your faith community for support, here are some things you can be mindful of:

- » Many faith leaders have not had much training about how domestic violence works or how it affects people. Spiritual and emotional support from your faith community can be meaningful, and it can also work alongside other kinds of support that are focused on your safety and healing.
- » Faith communities cannot guarantee privacy or confidentiality of information shared.
- » If your partner holds a prominent position within your faith community or is a financial contributor to your place of worship, consider alternative individuals or faith institutions you can reach out to.
- » While services such as anger management or couples counseling can be recommended as useful tools in some situations, these services do not address the inherent safety risks posed to the survivor, harmful beliefs that contribute to domestic violence, or accountability for the person causing harm.