

RELATIONSHIP RIGHTS

Is your relationship
right for you?




HAPPY & HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

We all deserve a happy and fulfilling relationship. But what are the signs of a healthy relationship? Here are some of them:

- ♥ A healthy relationship is full of love, care, kindness, affection and intimacy.
- ♥ It is built on trust, honesty and respect.
- ♥ The two people in the relationship value themselves, and each other.
- ♥ They are equal partners. They make decisions together.
- ♥ They encourage and support each other.
- ♥ There is no fear or control in the relationship.
- ♥ There is communication and negotiation.
- ♥ There is no physical, emotional, sexual, financial or any other kind of abuse in the relationship.

Relationship rights

- ▶ You have the right to feel safe, and to be safe.
- ▶ You have the right to be treated with respect.
- ▶ You have the right to express yourself, your thoughts, opinions and beliefs.
- ▶ You have the right to refuse or say no to sex.
- ▶ You have the right to a healthy relationship.



If you have these in your relationship, then your relationship is right for you. Keep working with your partner to build closeness, equality, love and respect.



UNHEALTHY & ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Unhealthy relationships are not all the same, but there are some common warning signs.

When men try to control their girlfriends or wives using violence, fear, power and control, it is called domestic violence. The victims of domestic violence are mostly women.

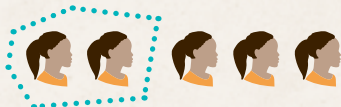
In Tonga, domestic violence is against the law. It is a crime to use any form of violence against women.

Read more about the **Tonga Family Protection Act** on page 7 ▶▶



FACT

DID YOU KNOW?



2 out of **5**
every

women under the age of 25 years in Tonga experience violence in their relationship.

National Study on Domestic Violence Against Women in Tonga (2012)

COMMON WARNING SIGNS

Does your partner:

- ▶ Hurt you physically, emotionally, or verbally; or threaten to hurt you?
- ▶ Hit you, push you, pinch you, throw things at you, or injure you with weapons?
- ▶ Yell and shout at you; put you down?
- ▶ Cheat on you, call you names, or insult you in front of your friends?
- ▶ Control where you can go and who you can see?
- ▶ Monitor your mobile phone, e-mails or internet?
- ▶ Act like he owns you?
- ▶ Prevent you from seeking help?
- ▶ Blame you for problems in the relationship or try to make you think you are crazy?
- ▶ Say that you were 'asking for it' after physically hitting or abusing you?
- ▶ Abuse you sexually, including rape?
- ▶ Bring another sexual or romantic partner into the home?
- ▶ Accuse you of having other sexual partners when it is not true?
- ▶ Stop you from working, or take your money?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it may be time to talk to someone about what is happening to you. There are details of people you can talk to on the back page.

I was with my husband David for two years. I thought he was 'the one'. We were very close and he was always telling me how special I was. But then he changed. He'd get really jealous and accuse me of cheating. He was always yelling at me. One time after a party we had a huge fight. He said I was flirting with one of his friends, and he slapped me hard across the face. After that, it got worse. He would grab me around the throat and not let go until I said I was having an affair. Then he would beat me. My mom was really worried about me. I tried to make excuses for David, but she said it was David who had the problem. I talked to a counsellor and she explained that if I was so special to him, then he wouldn't hurt me. If he really cared about me, he wouldn't hit me. With the support of my family and friends, I left. It was lonely at first. I still loved him. But, I was scared of him. Now a year later, I have a new boyfriend, and I feel safe.



Kalolaine's story

IT IS NEVER YOUR FAULT

A partner's abuse against you is **NEVER YOUR FAULT**. You are not to blame for their violence. No one deserves or asks to be beaten, humiliated or abused. Everyone has the right to feel safe and be safe.

Your partner chooses to abuse you. He does not abuse his boss, his work colleagues or friends. This means he can control the abuse. But he **CHOOSSES** to be abusive or violent towards you.

An abusive man must take responsibility for what he is doing. You cannot take responsibility for his actions.



NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE

Sadly, violence against women is a part of everyday life for women all over the world. It affects women of all colours and religions. It affects women who are rich and poor, young and old, educated and uneducated.

Some people make excuses for domestic violence. They say it is not a man's fault because he was raised with violence, or because he is stressed in his job or his family responsibilities, or because men cannot control their anger. **THESE ARE ALL EXCUSES.**

All around the world, people also try to use culture or religion as an excuse to control women. They say that women belong to men and men must control and discipline them. Some women are told it is their duty to stay and make a relationship or marriage work. None of these things are true. None of them are justifications for violence and abuse.

There is no excuse or justification for violence against women. Not ever.

THE CYCLE OF ABUSE

An abusive relationship may not be violent all the time. Some of the time, abusive people treat their partners well. They can be very loving and sorry for their violent behaviour. It can make it hard to see what's really happening. This is called the cycle of abuse.



HOW TO STOP THE CYCLE OF ABUSE

- 1 Recognise and accept** that you are in an abusive relationship.
- 2 Don't play down** what is happening to you. It is serious and causing you harm, now and into the future. In most unhealthy relationships, the controlling and abusive behaviour will get worse over time.
- 3 Take action.** The abuse will not stop by itself. You need to take action. You may feel scared and unsure about what to do. This is normal. It is a brave decision to take action and it can be scary. But remember taking action is taking control of your life.
- 4 Talk to someone you trust,** someone who knows about abuse and violence against women – such as your friend, sister, mother, teacher or your neighbour. You may feel better if you share your problem. Sometimes, people might tell you to not do anything and that the violence is normal. **THIS IS NOT TRUE,** and you should make your own decision about what to do.

5 Make a safety plan in case you have to leave home in a hurry. Plan where you will go if you need to leave. Hide a packed bag with things you will need (identification, keys, money, bank card, important phone numbers, clothes for your children) or leave it with someone you trust.

6 Get support and protection. Contacts are listed on the next page.

POLICE

Police can grant a safety order on the spot to protect you and stop your partner from abusing you.



COURTS

Courts can grant a protection order to stop a partner from abusing you.



Talk to a doctor or nurse.



Talk to a counsellor.

TONGA FAMILY PROTECTION ACT

- ▶▶ The Family Protection Act makes domestic violence a crime.
- ▶▶ This law protects everyone within the home from domestic violence. This includes physical, sexual and mental abuse.
- ▶▶ If you are a victim of domestic violence, you are entitled to protection. You do not have to have a physical injury to get protection under the law.
- ▶▶ If you have suffered physical, sexual, mental or economic abuse, you may be able to obtain a protection order or a police safety order to help keep you safe.

YOU CAN GET HELP FROM

**Women and Children Crisis Centre,
Tungi Collonade Building**

T: 22240

E: wccrisiscentre@gmail.com

**Tongan National Centre for
Women and Children, Halaleva**

T: 26567

E: tncwcinfo@gmail.com

**Ma'a Fafine moe Famili,
Fasi-moe-afi**

T: 25991

E: mfftonga@gmail.com

**Police Domestic Violence Unit,
Police Headquarters, Nuku'alofa
or nearest Police Station**

T: 28983

**Magistrates' Court,
Central Court, Nuku'alofa**

T: 23599

Talitha Drop-In Centre

Level 1, Uata Building,
Wellington Rd

T: 28590

E: talithaproject@gmail.com

Facebook: Talitha Project



They will ensure your safety.

They will not judge you.

**They will not tell anyone
about you.**

*Relationships may not be easy,
but they should never hurt.*

*When someone matters deeply to
us, and those intense feelings of
love and respect are returned, it
enables us to face the world with
confidence. In a healthy relationship
people feel good about their partner
and good about themselves.*



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique



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