

## 1. Mental Health and Emotional Support

**Definition:** Mental health refers to emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how people think, feel, and behave in daily life.

**Importance:** Good mental health helps individuals handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions.

**Common Mental Health Challenges:** Anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, and loneliness.

### 1. Anxiety & Stress Management:

- **What is Anxiety?**
  - Anxiety is a normal response to stress but becomes problematic when it is excessive or persistent.
  - **Symptoms:** Excessive worrying, restlessness, rapid heartbeat, difficulty concentrating.
- **Types of Anxiety Disorders:**
  - Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
  - Social Anxiety Disorder
  - Panic Disorder
  - Phobias
- **How to Manage Anxiety?**
  - **Breathing Exercises:** Deep breathing, 4-7-8 technique.
  - **Grounding Techniques:** 5-4-3-2-1 method (identify things you see, hear, feel, smell, taste).
  - **Cognitive Reframing:** Replacing negative thoughts with rational ones.
  - **Lifestyle Adjustments:** Regular exercise, meditation, limiting caffeine.
  - **Seeking Support:** Talking to friends, therapists, or support groups.
- **Stress Management Strategies:**
  - **Identifying Stress Triggers:** Work, relationships, financial issues.
  - **Time Management:** Prioritizing tasks, avoiding procrastination.
  - **Relaxation Techniques:** Progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness meditation.
  - **Healthy Boundaries:** Learning to say “no” without guilt.

### 2. Depression & Sadness:

- **Understanding Depression:**
  - Depression is a mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness and loss of interest.
  - **Symptoms:** Fatigue, hopelessness, changes in sleep/appetite, difficulty concentrating.
  - **Causes:** Biological, psychological, environmental factors.
- **How to Cope with Depression?**
  - **Self-Care Strategies:**
    - Establishing a daily routine.
    - Engaging in physical activity (even short walks).
    - Practicing gratitude.
  - **Cognitive Techniques:**
    - Challenging negative self-talk.

- Journaling thoughts and emotions.
- **Social Support:**
  - Talking to trusted people.
  - Joining support groups.
- **When to Seek Professional Help:**
  - If symptoms persist for more than two weeks.
  - If daily functioning is significantly impacted.

### 3. Loneliness & Social Isolation:

- **Understanding Loneliness**
  - Feeling disconnected even when surrounded by people.
  - Can be caused by life transitions (moving, job change), loss of relationships, social anxiety.
- **Ways to Overcome Loneliness**
  - **Engaging in Social Activities:** Joining clubs, volunteering.
  - **Building Meaningful Connections:** Deep conversations rather than small talk.
  - **Practicing Self-Compassion:** Avoiding self-judgment for being alone.
  - **Utilizing Technology:** Virtual communities, online support groups.

### 4. Self-Esteem & Confidence

- **What is Self-Esteem?**
  - Self-esteem is the perception of one's own worth and abilities.
  - **Low self-esteem:** Leads to self-doubt, fear of failure, over-apologizing.
  - **Healthy self-esteem:** Helps with resilience, assertiveness, and positive relationships.
- **How to Improve Self-Esteem?**
  - **Self-affirmations:** Replacing negative thoughts with positive affirmations.
  - **Celebrating Small Wins:** Recognizing achievements, no matter how small.
  - **Avoiding Comparison:** Focusing on personal growth rather than social media comparisons.
  - **Practicing Self-Compassion:** Treating yourself as you would treat a friend.

### 5. Coping with Grief & Loss:

- **Understanding Grief**
  - Grief is a natural emotional response to loss (death, breakup, job loss).
  - **Stages of Grief:** Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance (though not always linear).
- **How to Cope with Grief?**
  - **Allowing Yourself to Feel:** Suppressing emotions can delay healing.
  - **Seeking Support:** Talking to trusted individuals or professionals.
  - **Creating a Memory Ritual:** Writing letters, planting a tree in memory of a loved one.
  - **Practicing Self-Care:** Eating well, sleeping properly, engaging in hobbies.

### 6. Handling Breakups & Relationship Issues:

- **Emotional Impact of Breakups:**
  - Common feelings: Sadness, anger, confusion, loneliness.
  - Breakups affect self-esteem and emotional stability.
- **Healthy Ways to Move On**
  - Processing Emotions: Writing down feelings, talking to a friend.
  - Avoiding Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms: Excessive alcohol, avoidance behaviors.
  - Setting Boundaries: Limiting contact if necessary for healing.
  - Focusing on Personal Growth: Learning new skills, rediscovering personal interests.

## 2. Violence

a. Types of Violence: Domestic violence can manifest as physical or sexual violence, psychological violence, or economic violence:

- i. **Physical Violence** involves violent actions intended to harm you. Contrary to common belief, physical violence is not always present in domestic violence situations. The partner may use this form of violence when his partner shows too much independence for his liking or when he hasn't managed to control all of her behaviors. This can escalate to hitting, brutality, or physical restraint.
- ii. **Sexual Violence** is any sexual act committed without your consent, under threat or blackmail. Sexual violence... it's often the most hidden. The abusive partner forces his partner into sexual acts against her will, either with him or with other partners based on his fantasies; sometimes, he may even force her into prostitution. Rape, sexual assaults, and coerced relations to appease the abuser are frequent. Victims often struggle to speak out due to the perceived marital obligations and duty

b. **Examples of physical and/or sexual violence:**

- i. Being slapped
- ii. Being punched, hit with a belt, or other objects
- iii. Being pulled by the hair or pushed
- iv. Forced sexual touching or intercourse
- v. Other acts: shoving, strangulation, attempted murder, being locked out, confinement, use of weapons, biting, burns, etc.
- vi. Sexual assault (without repetition)
- vii. Physical aggression involving violence, force, threats, or surprise on intimate body parts (mouth, chest, genitalia, buttocks, thighs).
  - 1. **Examples:** unwanted touching of intimate areas, forced kissing, non-consensual touching.
- viii. **Psychological Violence** is a behavior or series of actions aimed at belittling or degrading you. Psychological violence can be expressed through various attitudes, contemptuous or humiliating remarks. The abusive partner projects an image of incompetence onto the victim. Through the view of others, the victim's self-esteem diminishes, leading to despair, passive acceptance, isolation, shame, and a lack of initiative. This can ultimately result in depression, alcoholism, or even suicide. Verbal violence can be heard. While some abusive men may raise their

voices to intimidate, others may adopt a more sinister tone, which the victim will soon recognize as dangerous. Others may retain their usual tone but shower their partner with insults, threats, and sarcasm.

1. **Examples:** yelling, insults, threats, intimidation, demeaning statements, etc.

**c. Examples of psychological violence:**

- i. Degrading or disparaging comments, in private or public
- ii. Insults
- iii. Threats (e.g., sharing sexual videos without consent)
- iv. Control, constant criticism, humiliation, denigration, forbidding contact with family or friends, emotional blackmail, threats to life, abandonment, etc.
- v. Economic Violence is a behavior aimed at depriving you of financial independence, placing you under the control of your spouse or partner. Economic violence can vary by context (family allowances gambled or spent in bars; income deposited in a joint account where only he holds the signature; property that vanishes under the partner's "benevolent" management). The objective is to deprive the victim of financial autonomy.

**1. Examples of economic violence:**

- a. Total control over the couple's resources and their use
- b. Denying access to financial resources
- c. Endangering assets (e.g., mortgage signing, taking consumer credit)
- d. Controlling spending, withholding money, forcing or preventing work, destroying property, etc

**d. Administrative Violence Examples:**

- i. Destroying or confiscating documents, withholding administrative documents or letters, refusal to undertake necessary procedures, etc

**e. Cyber Violence Examples:**

- i. Cyberbullying, cyber harassment, geo-location software, spyware, hacking, changing passwords, sharing intimate photos or videos without consent, releasing private information, etc.
- ii. Sexual Exhibitionism involves displaying nudity publicly.
  1. Examples: Exposing genitals in public places, showing intimate parts intentionally and intrusively.
- iii. Sexual Harassment is any unwanted and repeated sexual or sexist comment or behavior (at least twice).
  1. Examples of behaviors that, when repeated, constitute sexual harassment:
    - a. Obscene or sexist jokes
    - b. Invasive questions about sexual life
    - c. Touching shoulders, hair, or hands
    - d. Persistent staring
    - e. Explicit sexual requests
    - f. Mimicked sexual acts
    - g. Remarks about appearance or clothing

- h. Showing sexual or pornographic images or objects
- f. **Rape:** Rape is any act of sexual penetration, of any kind (genitalia, mouth, with fingers, objects, etc.), committed through violence, coercion, threat, or surprise. The perpetrator alone is responsible for these acts, which are prohibited and punishable by law. They are not mentally ill or perverse. In the vast majority of cases, the harasser or aggressor is fully aware of their actions. They are mentally sound and rarely have psychiatric disorders. They are entirely responsible for their actions and words. The victim is never to blame, regardless of how they dress, their state, or behavior. If you experience one or more of the above-mentioned forms of abuse from your spouse, or partner (married, in a civil union, or in an informal relationship), you are a victim of domestic violence. Domestic violence is not limited to marriage or cohabitation it can also occur in relationships, such as with a boyfriend.
- g. **Forced Marriage:** a woman is free to marry, and she is equally free to refuse marriage. Marriage requires the mutual consent of both future spouses.
  - i. Who is affected by forced marriage?
    1. Are your parents pressuring you to meet a man they know but whom you have never met?
    2. Does the idea of a trip to visit family in your country of origin, or in your parents' country of origin, make you fear that you might not be able to return home?
    3. Is your immediate circle whether family, in-laws, or friends pressuring you to accept the marriage of your daughter?

"Marriage can only be entered into with the free and full consent of the future spouses." According to Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, forced marriage is a violation of fundamental human rights, especially regarding freedom and physical integrity. Every person has the right to choose their spouse. Forced marriage refers to any union civil, religious, or customary where one or both individuals are subjected to threats and/or violence to compel them into marriage. Forced marriage affects both minors and adults. The pressure to marry can take many forms, often combined and repeated, such as physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal violence; restrictions and prohibitions on many aspects of the victim's life; deceit to lure the victim abroad under false pretenses; or using fabricated family, emotional, cultural, and/or religious justifications.

- **It is essential to speak up** to someone you trust, a professional (doctor, social worker, lawyer), or an organization specializing in combating rape and violence against women, which can provide support.
- **Report** the situation to the police or gendarmerie. Police services and gendarmerie units, with special victim support programs in place, such as social workers and psychologists, will provide you with particular attention.
- **It is possible to escape a forced marriage.** The law protects you.
- **If you are abroad:** Contact the nearest consulate or embassy to your location.

- **Prostitution:** Prostitution is an environment marked by extreme violence and severe psychological and physiological repercussions. Prostitution itself is a form of violence, specifically violence against women
- **Domestic Violence:** Domestic violence can include punches, slaps, humiliation, confinement, strangulation, burns, knife wounds, fractures, sexual abuse, sarcasm, harassment, denigration, contradictory orders, shouting, contempt, torture, mutilations, death threats, destruction of property... In a private or close relationship, domestic violence is a deliberate attack on another's integrity, a form of control that is difficult for victims to escape. These acts are neither accidental nor the result of simple conflict or signs of a troubled relationship; they are unacceptable behaviors that are punishable by law. Domestic violence represents an abuse of power within a relationship, where one partner uses force to control the other. The incidents are not isolated or accidental; violence appears in many forms, with aggressive behaviors alternating with calm periods. This cycle

destabilizes the victim and often goes misunderstood by friends, family, and professionals. Domestic violence is often hidden within the privacy of a relationship, allowing perpetrators to maintain control with impunity. It is the most common form of violence against women, rooted in the patriarchal heritage of our society, characterized by a power imbalance between genders. The impact of domestic violence is vast, affecting not only society but also children who are often indirect victims. Domestic violence should not be regarded as a private matter; it is a barrier to gender equality and the fundamental rights of women and children.

- **Who is affected by domestic violence?** Every year, There is no specific profile of a woman who suffers domestic violence; any woman can, at some point in her life, find herself under the control of a violent spouse, friend, or partner. However, personal history and periods of vulnerability can increase risk factors. A woman who experiences violence from her partner is not necessarily someone without resources. The person suffering from this violence due to another's actions is not responsible for the violence they endure.
- **An Abuse of Power:** Domestic violence occurs in increasingly frequent cycles, with intensifying severity that can endanger both the victim and their children. Violent actions or behaviors are part of a strategy to control or impose the perpetrator's will on the other, using physical assault, humiliation, denigration, insults, threats, and blackmail. Domestic violence constitutes an abuse of power and trust, obstructing relationships based on equality and respect. Isolation, shame, ingrained beliefs, and feelings of guilt and failure plunge victims into silence, preventing them from seeking help or envisioning an end to their suffering.
- **The Cycle of Violence:** Violence often follows a repeating cycle in a relationship, with phases that become more frequent and dangerous over time. This cycle, established and controlled by the aggressor, enables them to assert and maintain dominance over their victim.

- **Escalation:** At first, everything seems fine in the relationship, but gradually, tension begins to build. The aggressor uses minor pretexts like a misplaced salt shaker, the children being too noisy, a three-minute delay, or the victim showing enjoyment with others as justifications to create tension. Other triggers might include overwork, alcohol, stress, unemployment, or illness. To avoid an incident, the victim tries to lower their partner's tension by anticipating their needs and complying with their demands. Fear, paralysis, and terror set in
- **Explosion:** The violent episode occurs, no matter the form of violence used. The aggressor seems to lose control, claiming, "I can't help it." The victim feels helpless and broken inside.
- **Transfer of Responsibility:** After the outburst, the aggressor tries to shift the blame onto the victim, using the initial trigger as an excuse. If the salt shaker had been placed correctly, the children hadn't been noisy, or she hadn't shown enjoyment with others... The victim internalizes this blame, rationalizing that it's because her partner dislikes how she dresses, works, or interacts with friends. She convinces herself that she is at fault and begins to believe she must change her behavior to avoid further violence. The aggressor quickly returns to a "normal" life.
- **Honeymoon Phase:** After the incident, fearing he may lose his partner, the aggressor shows remorse, downplays the event, and justifies his actions. He seeks reconciliation, apologizes, and pleads for a fresh start. He becomes affectionate again, buys gifts, helps with household chores, shares in raising the children, and promises he won't repeat his actions and will seek help if necessary. The victim, hoping things will improve, forgives him, rediscovering the man she once loved. As the victim becomes more enmeshed in this cycle of violence, the honeymoon periods grow shorter and eventually disappear. The aggressor no longer needs these phases to retain control over the victim, who, overwhelmed by the toll on her health and life, feels incapable of escaping. Her tolerance for violence has destabilized her surroundings. During the honeymoon phase, believing things might change, the victim may withdraw her complaint, return home, and cut off relationships with her support network. This phase is also when, due to a lack of understanding of the cycle and its grip on victims, friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, and professionals become frustrated and may vow not to intervene again.

Violence occurs when one partner dominates the other, creating an atmosphere of fear, distress, and confusion. It is essential to distinguish between conflict and violence in relationships. In a marital conflict, two points of view clash on an equal footing, with each person retaining their autonomy. In cases of domestic violence, the dynamic shifts to one of dominance, where the aggressor seeks power and control over the victim. Through words and actions, the aggressor aims to control and break down their partner. To maintain control over the victim, the aggressor develops strategies: isolation, threats, pressure. This is known as "coercive control"—a slow, progressive, and insidious process where the aggressor alternates

between simulated affection and repeated behaviors of denigration and reproach. This process is a powerful tool for subjugation.

- **The Difference Between Conflict and Violence:**
  - **Conflict:** A situation where two parties in disagreement have relatively equal power to express and resolve their differences.
  - **Sexist and Sexual Violence:** Characterized by an imbalance and domination of one person over another.
- **What is Consent?** Any sexual act must be consensual between both partners. Consent must be:
  - **Freely given:** Without pressure, threat, or coercion.
  - **Informed:** Based on a clear understanding of the situation and the actions involved.
  - **Given personally:** Coming directly from the person involved, without influence from others.

Consent must always be explicit and enthusiastic.

- **There is no consent if:**
  - It is given by a third person.
  - The person lacks the capacity to consent (e.g., due to unconsciousness from alcohol, drugs, or medication).
  - The person has experienced violence, threats, or physical or moral coercion. Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
- **It is essential to:**
  - Explicitly seek and look for an enthusiastic "yes": Ask simple questions: "Do you want to?", "Can I?", "What do you enjoy?", "What would you like us to explore together?" Ensure an environment where the other person feels comfortable giving an honest response.
  - Listen to and respect the other person's preferences and boundaries: Pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal cues. Respect the other person's limits without insisting or pressuring them to go further.
  - Accept "no": Understand that "no" means no, and no justification is needed. A "yes" should be enthusiastic and voluntary, not the result of pressure or insistence.
- **Consequences of Violence on Victims** These symptoms can persist for years after the event, intensifying feelings of guilt and vulnerability toward the aggressor.
- **Mental Health Consequences:**
  - Sadness, depression, and suicidal tendencies
  - Anger, rage, and frequent mood swings
  - Self-harm
  - Decreased self-esteem and feelings of shame
  - Memory loss related to the violent episode
  - Generalized fear: Fear of being alone or in crowds, fear of triggering situations
  - Fear and guilt: Constant sense of threat, self-blame



- Loss of self-esteem and autonomy: Doubts about self-worth and decision-making capacity
- Stress: Persistent state of tension
- PTSD: Flashbacks, nightmares, avoidance, hypervigilance, phobias, OCD, addictive behaviors
- Isolation: Withdrawal from loved ones due to fear or shame
- Physical and emotional numbness: Inability to speak or move, frozen state, silence
- Partial amnesia: Memory gaps
- Feeling of being a spectator of oneself: Dissociation during the assault
- Traumatic emotional memory: Negative scenes and sensations stored without processing by the brain, resulting in confusion and contradictory behaviors
- **Educational Consequences:**
  - Fear of attending classes or participating in student life
  - Difficulty engaging in studies
  - Changing schools or dropping out
- **Physical Health Consequences:**
  - Visible or internal injuries
  - Fatigue, sleep disturbances, nightmares
  - Eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia
  - Gynecological and perinatal complications
  - Risky lifestyle habits: alcohol and drug abuse
- **Social and Professional Consequences:**
  - **Withdrawal:** social isolation, reluctance to participate in activities
  - Irritability and refusal of invitations
  - **Professional difficulties:** frequent tardiness, repeated absences, low self-confidence, lack of motivation, memory loss, concentration issues
- **PTSD:** Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD is a severe anxiety disorder that may develop after experiencing gender-based or sexual violence.
- **Impacts of the Aggressor's Strategy on the Victim:** The violence exerted by the aggressor has various effects on the victim
  - Fear of not being believed
  - Loss of self-esteem and self-worth, loss of confidence, shame, and guilt
  - Minimization of violence, fear of retaliation against herself and/or her loved ones and/or her children
  - Isolation, lack of awareness of her rights, support resources, and anxiety over the obstacles that separation might cause (housing, finances, work...)
- A Man Who Beats His Partner Cannot Be a Good Father Whether or not they witness the acts of violence directly, children are always impacted by the atmosphere created by violence. A child sees or senses that someone they love, their mother, is being harmed by someone else they love, their father.
- **Consequences for Children Who Witness Violence:**
  - Withdrawal and social isolation
  - Separation anxiety, attachment issues

- Depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress symptoms (nightmares, violent play, aggressive behavior, concentration difficulties, irritability, and hypervigilance)
- Dissociative suffering that prevents them from feeling fear, anger, or sadness
- Risk of reproducing patterns of being a victim or an aggressor
- **Warning Signs and Indicators of Sexist and Sexual Violence:**

There is no standard profile for a harasser or sexual aggressor, but they often use specific strategies to dominate the victim, ensure impunity, and continue their acts of violence. These strategies can render the victim powerless and unable to respond.

- **Strategies Used by the Harasser/Aggressor:**
  - **Establishing a Climate of Trust**
    - **Offering Help:** The aggressor may offer help to the victim to gain her trust.
    - **Personal Conversations:** He engages in personal topics to create a sense of closeness.
  - **Physical Isolation**
    - **Getting Alone with the Victim:** The aggressor seeks opportunities to be alone with the victim, which facilitates acts of violence.
  - **Unpredictable Behavior**
    - **Behavioral Swings:** The aggressor alternates between calm moments and periods of pressure, threats, blackmail, or psychological, physical, and verbal violence.
    - **Threats of Retaliation:** He imposes silence by threatening the victim with repercussions on her personal or professional life.
  - **Social Manipulation**
    - **Spreading Rumors:** The aggressor spreads rumors to turn others against the victim.
    - **Public Humiliation:** He humiliates the victim publicly, demeaning her in her work or studies.
  - **Creating Professional and Social Isolation**
    - **Isolation:** The aggressor isolates the victim from her professional and social circles, making her more vulnerable.
  - **Devaluation of the Victim**
    - **Maintaining a Good Public Image:** The aggressor remains unsuspected by presenting his best side to others.
    - **Instilling Guilt:** He makes the victim feel guilty, suggesting that her words or clothing were responsible for the assault

No outfit, words, or behavior by the victim ever justifies the violence she suffers.

### 3. If You Are a Witness and Want to Help:

- a. Support and Accompany the Victim:
  - i. Offer to accompany the victim in any necessary actions.

- ii. Guide them toward resources and supportive organizations.
- b. Create a Safe Space for Conversation:
  - i. Talk to the victim privately, in a secure place where they feel safe and confidential.
- c. Listen, Respect, and Inform:
  - i. Listen to the victim with empathy, respecting their pace and choices.
  - ii. Explain their rights and share information about organizations that can help.
  - iii. Accompany them to a support organization or nearby police station, if necessary.
- d. Encourage Documentation:
  - i. If the victim is not ready to file a report, suggest they write down what they have told you.
  - ii. Keep this testimony to support them if they decide to file a report later.
  - iii. Document facts for yourself to aid your memory, as your testimony may be valuable if they press charges.
- e. Offer Support through Communication:
  - i. What to Say to the Victim:
    1. "The law prohibits and punishes violence."
    2. "You are not to blame."
    3. "The aggressor is solely responsible."
    4. "I believe you."
    5. "Help is available."
  - ii. What Not to Say:
    1. "Why do you put up with this?"
    2. "Do you realize what they're doing to you?"
    3. "Things will work out between you two."
    4. "It's not that serious."
    5. "Why didn't you leave?"

#### **4. How to React During the Incident:**

- a. If the situation poses a serious and immediate threat to the victim. Be as precise as possible when providing information to the authorities: the location of the assault, the number of aggressors, the number of victims, any weapons present, children's presence, entry codes to the building, or any other relevant details that may aid their intervention.
- b. Avoid any actions that would endanger you or the victim. If you feel safe, consider intervening to stop the assault or harassment. Possible strategies include mobilizing other witnesses, confronting the aggressor, or creating a diversion. Your response should match the level of threat.

#### **5. How to Act Toward the Victim:**

- a. Do not question the victim's account or try to downplay the aggressor's responsibility. The victim should feel believed and supported.
- b. The victim may sometimes minimize the incident. Help put words to what they experienced and affirm that what you witnessed or heard was indeed violent.
- c. If the aggressor tries to gain your support to blame the victim, avoid being complacent. This is a typical tactic used by aggressors, which you must reject.

#### **6. Support the Victim After the Incident:**

- a. Ask if they're okay or if there's anything you can do to help. A witness's indifference can feel like a second assault to the victim.
  - b. Express solidarity by saying things like:
    - i. "The law prohibits and punishes these acts."
    - ii. "The aggressor is solely responsible."
    - iii. "You are not to blame."
    - iv. "I can accompany you to the authorities or security services."
    - v. "I can write a statement for you describing what I saw or heard."
    - vi. "Help is available."
7. **Respect the Victim's Choices:** Do not make decisions on their behalf. Unless there's immediate danger, actions should only be taken with the victim's consent (for instance, going to the police station). If the victim wants to report the incident to the police or gendarmerie, offer to provide testimony about what you saw and heard. Share any evidence, such as photos, videos, or audio recordings, with them. Never share footage of the incident online without the victim's consent, as witnessing their assault shared publicly can deepen their trauma and isolation. If the victim is not ready to file a report immediately, leave your contact information so they can reach out later. Reporting an assault can take time, especially in cases of intimate partner or sexual violence. Your testimony could be decisive when they are ready to take action. Therefore, if you witness violent acts, it can be helpful to keep a written record of what you saw.
8. **Being a Witness to Harassment or Violence:** Witnessing an act of harassment or violence is not trivial. You may experience a range of emotions: fear, guilt, discomfort... These feelings are normal. In the moment, the violence can shock the witness just as much as the victim, and witnesses may struggle afterward. Don't hesitate to seek help, especially from victim support organizations.
9. **If You Are Concerned About Someone:** If you are worried about your sister, mother, friend, neighbor, or coworker and suspect they are a victim of domestic violence, don't hesitate to take action. Domestic violence is not just a private matter; it concerns all of us, and each person can play a role in fighting this issue.
10. **In Case of Emergency:** If you witness violence from a partner or hear someone calling for help, call the police.
11. **In Other Cases:**
  - a. Contact a Support Organization: They can provide a safe space to discuss your concerns, ask questions, receive useful information, and build confidence.
  - b. Reach Out to the Victim: Show kindness and attention, express your concern about what you have observed, and, if applicable, your worry for her and her children
12. **If Your Help is Refused:** Whether the victim accepts or refuses your help, it is essential to let her know that what she's experiencing is not normal, that domestic violence is punishable by law, and that there are organizations specialized in providing support. Share the contact details of support organizations. It is challenging and anxiety-provoking for a woman experiencing domestic violence, who may be under her partner's control and living in fear, to start a process to end her suffering. The important thing is not to judge her refusal, to remain available and vigilant, and to assure her that she can count on you whenever she's ready.
13. **If Your Help is Accepted:**
  - a. Listen without judgment to what the victim confides in you.

- b. Do not question her account.
- c. Offer your help, such as:
  - i. Accompanying her to the police station or helping her contact a support organization.
  - ii. Safeguarding her important personal documents.
  - iii. Providing your testimony if she initiates legal proceedings.

**14. If You Are a Witness of Domestic Violence and Communicate with the Victim:**

- a. Listen attentively and respectfully, allowing her to express herself.
- b. Believe what she shares with you and let her know you believe her.
- c. Help her articulate her requests for help, respect her choices, and support her decisions.
- d. Reassure her that it is possible to break free from violence.

The needs and requests of a woman experiencing domestic violence are varied: social, medical, legal, psychological... To help effectively:

- Offer support within your area of expertise and provide her with a written statement or certificate if needed.
- Reassure her by informing her about the network of professionals and organizations working together to provide complementary support.
- Help her identify potential supports within her social, professional, or family circles.
- Inform her about the legal framework and protection measures available.
- Make it clear that you are available for future support.

**15. Understanding the Physical and Psychological Impact of Violence:** Awareness of the physical and psychological consequences of violence on the victim can help you adapt your professional approach. However, violence can provoke a range of complex emotions and reactions (anger, anxiety, frustration, pain), which may lead to negative attitudes toward the victim (doubt, trivialization, rejection, judgment). It's essential to identify and understand these responses to better support the victim and respect her choices

**16. How to Respond to Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:**

- a. If You Are a Victim
  - i. Don't Stay Silent– Speak Out
    - 1. Seek support from trusted people.
    - 2. Talk about your experience with a friend, family member, or a designated support person at your institution.
  - ii. Collect and Keep Evidence
    - 1. Save emails, text messages, photos, screen shots, etc.
    - 2. Write a detailed account of the events, including dates, times, locations, names of witnesses, actions taken, words spoken, feelings, and reactions

**17. Emergency Contact Information for Victims of Violence**

- a. France
  - i. Police: Dial 17 (priority for emergencies).
  - ii. European Emergency Services: Dial 112 if you don't speak French.
  - iii. TextEmergency (if unable to call): Send SMS to 114.

- iv. EmergencyShelter: Call 115.
- v. Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Reporting: Dial 119 or use the anonymous online chat platform.
- vi. Self-Control Helpline (if fearing violent behavior): Dial 08 019 019 11.
- b. United States
  - i. Immediate Danger: Call 911.
  - ii. National Helplines:
    - 1. Domestic Violence: 1-800-799-7233
    - 2. Sexual Assault: 1-800-656-4673
    - 3. TeenDating Abuse: 1-866-331-9474
- c. United Kingdom
  - i. Immediate Danger: Dial 999. If unable to speak, press 55 to transfer to the police.
  - ii. Domestic Abuse Helplines (24/7):
    - 1. England: Refuge National Helpline 0808 2000 247 (online chat, web form available)
    - 2. Northern Ireland: Domestic & Sexual Abuse Helpline 0808 802 1414 (email: [help@dsahelpline.org](mailto:help@dsahelpline.org))
    - 3. Scotland: Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline 0800 027 1234 (email: [helpline@sdafmh.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sdafmh.org.uk))
    - 4. Wales: Live Fear Free 0808 80 10 100 (text and email: [info@livefearfreehelpline.wales](mailto:info@livefearfreehelpline.wales))
    - 5. UK-wideMen's Helpline: Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327 (email: [info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk))
- d. Australia
  - i. Police for Family Violence: Call 131 444.
  - ii. KidsHelpline: 1800 551 800 (support for ages 5-25).
  - iii. Patricia Giles Centre for Non-Violence: Call (08) 9300 0340 for support programs for youth.
- e. Italy
  - i. Gender-Based Violence & Stalking Helpline: 1522
  - ii. Health Emergency: Dial 118
  - iii. Police: Dial 113
  - iv. LGBTQI+Support: Call +393487669298
- f. Morocco
  - i. Gendarmerie Royale: 177
  - ii. Police (Service Police-secours): 19 or 112
  - iii. Protection Civile (Fire/Ambulance): 15
  - iv. Medical Partner (for assault): +212 (0) 6 61 93 43 54 (24/7)
  - v. UNHCRProtection Hotline: +212(0) 666 58 43 61
- g. Spain
  - i. Life-Threatening Emergency: Dial 112.
  - ii. Ambulance: 061
  - iii. FireBrigade: 080
  - iv. Police: 091 (National) or 092 (Local)
  - v. Mental Health Support: Visit your doctor or health center.
  - vi. English-Language Helpline: Samaritans 900 525 100

- vii. GenderViolence: 016 or 900 116 016
  - viii. Child Abuse: 900 202 010
  - ix. Support for Women: 900 580 888
- h. Germany
  - i. Police: Dial 110
  - ii. EmergencyServices (medical, fire): Dial 112
- i. Turkey
  - i. EmergencyServices: Dial 112
  - ii. Domestic Violence (Women): 183
- j. Egypt
  - i. Women'sHelpline: 15115
  - ii. Children's Helpline: 16000
- k. India
  - i. Primary Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance): Dial 112
  - ii. Women'sHelpline: 1091
  - iii. Domestic Abuse Helpline: 181
- l. Russia
  - i. Police: Dial 102
  - ii. Ambulance: Dial 103
  - iii. FireService: Dial 101
  - iv. Domestic Violence Hotline: +7 800 700 0600
- m. Canada
  - i. Primary Emergency: Call 911
  - ii. Child Abduction:
    - 1. Inside Canada: Contact local police.
    - 2. Outside Canada: Call Consular Services at 613-996-8885 or 1-800-387-3124.
- n. Ireland
  - i. EmergencyServices: Dial 112 or 999
  - ii. Domestic Violence Helpline: Women's Aid National Freephone 1800 341 900

These emergency numbers are free and accessible from any landline or mobile phone, even if blocked or out of credit.

## **18. Key Statistics on Domestic and Gender-Based Violence:**

Global Prevalence: Approximately 736 million women nearly one in three have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.

Intimate Partner Violence: About 641 million women have been subjected to intimate partner violence.

In some regions, this accounts for up to 33% of women aged 15-49. Non-Partner Sexual Violence: Globally, 6% of women report experiencing sexual violence from

someone other than their partner. This figure is likely underestimated due to underreporting.

**Adolescent Exposure:** Nearly 25% of adolescent girls aged 15–19 who have been in a relationship have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.

**Femicide:** In 2022, around 48,800 women and girls were killed by intimate partners or other family members, averaging more than five deaths per hour.

**Impact of Humanitarian Crises:** In humanitarian contexts, up to 70% of women experience GBV, compared to 35% globally