

Are You Being Emotionally Abused?

Emotional abuse can be difficult to recognize because it often leaves **invisible wounds** rather than visible ones. It is a pattern of behaviors that seeks to **control, manipulate, intimidate, shame, or diminish another person's sense of worth and safety**.

Emotional abuse can happen in marriages, families, friendships, workplaces, or other relationships.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Emotional Abuse

1. Constant Criticism and Belittling

You regularly hear messages like:

- "You're too sensitive."
- "You never do anything right."
- "Nobody else would put up with you."
- "You're not smart enough."
- "You're the problem."

Over time, repeated criticism can cause you to question your value and abilities.

2. Control and Manipulation

The person tries to control:

- Who you spend time with
- How you spend money
- What you wear or do
- Your decisions and opinions
- Your access to family and friends

They may use guilt, threats, or pressure to get their way.

3. Gaslighting

Gaslighting is when someone repeatedly causes you to doubt your own thoughts, feelings, or memories.

Examples:

- "That never happened."
- "You're imagining things."
- "You're crazy."
- "You always twist everything."

You may find yourself constantly asking: **"Am I the problem?"**

4. Walking on Eggshells

You feel like you have to carefully monitor:

- What you say
- How you say it
- Your facial expressions
- Your reactions

You may avoid bringing up concerns because you fear anger, rejection, punishment, or withdrawal.

5. Emotional Withholding

A person may use:

- The silent treatment
- Withdrawal of affection
- Refusing communication
- Withholding kindness or connection

The goal is often to make you feel anxious and desperate to restore peace.

6. Blaming and Refusing Responsibility

An emotionally abusive person often:

- Never apologizes
- Makes everything your fault
- Justifies hurtful behavior
- Turns your concerns back on you

Healthy relationships include accountability and repair.

7. Humiliation and Shame

They may:

- Mock you
- Embarrass you publicly
- Make jokes at your expense
- Expose personal information
- Compare you negatively to others

Love does not require you to lose your dignity.

How Emotional Abuse Can Affect You

Over time, emotional abuse can lead to:

- Low self-esteem

- Anxiety or depression
 - Confusion and self-doubt
 - Isolation
 - Loss of confidence
 - Feeling trapped or powerless
 - Difficulty trusting your own judgment
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What To Do If You Think You Are Being Emotionally Abused

1. Trust Your Experience

Your feelings matter. If a relationship consistently leaves you feeling afraid, diminished, or controlled, pay attention.

2. Name the Pattern

Ask:

- Is this a one-time mistake or a repeated pattern?
- Can we discuss problems safely?
- Does this person take responsibility and change?

3. Talk to Someone Safe

Isolation strengthens unhealthy dynamics. Consider speaking with:

- A trusted friend
- A counselor
- A pastor or spiritual mentor
- A support organization

4. Set Healthy Boundaries

Boundaries are not punishments. They communicate:

- “This behavior is not acceptable.”
- “I am willing to work through conflict, but not through insults or intimidation.”

5. Seek Professional Support

A trained counselor can help you:

- Understand the relationship dynamics
- Rebuild confidence

- Develop healthy boundaries
- Make wise decisions about next steps

Remember:

Love builds up. Abuse tears down.

Love seeks understanding. Abuse seeks control.

Love creates safety. Abuse creates fear.

A healthy relationship allows you to be:

- Heard without fear
- Respected without earning it
- Honest without punishment
- Yourself without shame

If you are asking, “**Am I being emotionally abused?**” that question itself may be an important signal that something in the relationship needs attention. You deserve relationships marked by respect, safety, and dignity.

Are You Being Emotionally Abused? ASsessment

Here is a simple **Emotionally Abused? Assessment** you can use for personal reflection, counseling, or a marriage workshop. It is designed to help identify **patterns of unhealthy emotional behaviors** (not to diagnose a person or relationship).

Are You Being Emotionally Abused?

Emotional Safety Assessment

Instructions: Read each statement and rate how often this happens in your relationship.

0 = Never

1 = Rarely

2 = Sometimes

3 = Often

4 = Frequently

1. Respect & Communication

Statement

Score

I feel afraid to express my honest thoughts or feelings.

My partner dismisses my feelings or tells me I am overreacting.

I am regularly criticized, mocked, or put down.	_____
My mistakes are brought up repeatedly to shame me.	_____
Conversations often become attacks instead of problem-solving.	_____

Subtotal: _____ / 20

2. Control & Manipulation

Statement	Score
My partner tries to control who I see or spend time with.	_____
I feel pressured to agree because disagreement creates conflict.	_____
My partner uses guilt, threats, or intimidation to get their way.	_____
I feel like I must “walk on eggshells” around them.	_____
My choices, opinions, or decisions are often controlled or undermined.	_____

Subtotal: _____ / 20

3. Emotional Safety

Statement	Score
I feel anxious about my partner’s reactions.	_____
My partner uses silence, withdrawal, or affection as punishment.	_____
I feel responsible for keeping my partner happy or calm.	_____
I often feel confused about what is true or question my own judgment.	_____
I feel smaller, weaker, or less valuable because of this relationship.	_____

Subtotal: _____ / 20

4. Accountability & Trust

Statement	Score
My partner rarely admits when they are wrong.	_____
Apologies are replaced with excuses or blame-shifting.	_____

Problems are usually turned back on me. _____

Hurtful behaviors continue even after I explain the impact. _____

I feel my needs matter less than my partner's needs. _____

Subtotal: _____ / 20

Total Score: _____ / 80

Understanding Your Results

0–15: Generally Emotionally Healthy

Your relationship appears to have healthy patterns, though every relationship has areas to improve.

16–30: Some Unhealthy Patterns

There may be communication issues, unresolved conflict, or behaviors that need attention. Consider honest conversations and growth.

31–50: Concerning Emotional Patterns

You may be experiencing repeated behaviors that damage emotional safety and trust. Seeking outside perspective or counseling may be helpful.

51–80: High Concern for Emotional Abuse

Your relationship may include significant patterns of control, intimidation, manipulation, or emotional harm. Consider seeking support from a qualified professional or trusted person.

Reflection Questions

1. **Do I feel safe being fully honest in this relationship?**
2. **Can we disagree without fear, punishment, or humiliation?**
3. **Do I feel valued, respected, and loved?**
4. **Am I becoming more myself—or less myself—in this relationship?**
5. **Would I want someone I love to experience this relationship dynamic?**