


ABUSE: TRUTH OR MYTH?

While every situation is unique, there are some misconceptions regarding domestic violence.

 Check "True" or "False" for each statement and tell why you answered this way.

1. If my partner acts loving and apologizes, I can assume the abuse won't happen again or was just a fluke. True False

Why do you think this? _____

2. Emotional abuse often precedes physical abuse. True False

Why do you think this? _____

3. I caused the abuse. It's my fault. True False

Why do you think this? _____

4. If I report the incident, there will have to be an official investigation. True False

Why do you think this? _____

5. Women use weapons against men more often than the other way around. True False

Why do you think this? _____

6. My partner can't control him/herself. It's the way he/she is. True False

Why do you think this? _____

1. *If my partner acts loving and apologizes, I can assume the abuse won't happen again or was just a fluke.*

False. Your partner may be truly contrite, but if he/she has threatened or hurt you once, it's likely to occur again.

2. *Emotional abuse often precedes physical abuse.*

True. Sometimes name calling, hurling insults, and putting you down is a prelude to physical threats or actions. The two behaviors often go hand in hand. Be on the alert for these other types of abuse.

3. *I caused the abuse. It's my fault.*

False. No matter how difficult you may have been—and you may not even have been difficult at all—there is never an excuse for a partner abusing you. An abuser's decision to use violence has nothing to do with your behavior. There are healthy ways to show frustration over a relationship, job, or situation. Abuse is not one of them.

4. *If I report the incident, there will have to be an official investigation.*

False. There are two types of reporting options: restricted and unrestricted. The restricted option allows the victim to get medical and psychological help without triggering an official law enforcement investigation or notifying the alleged offender's commander. (If the abuser presents a high risk to himself or someone else, restricted reporting is not an option.) With the unrestricted option, police and the command are told and take action, if warranted. To check your reporting option, call the U.S. Department of Defense's MilitaryHOMEFRONT hotline at 1-800-342-9647 or the Family Advocacy Program in your installation.

5. *Women use weapons against men more often than the other way around.*

True. A woman is far more likely to use a weapon. Men usually hurt their victims by direct physical contact.

6. *My partner can't control him/herself. It's the way he/she is.*

False. Not so! People may have trouble controlling themselves for a variety of reasons: emotional difficulties, not knowing how to handle anger appropriately, or substance abuse problems, among others. But "It's the way he/she is" is rationalizing and enabling the abuse. It does not excuse terrible behavior.