

# About The Hotline

The National Domestic Violence Hotline is the only national organization that directly serves victims of domestic abuse, their friends and family. Highly-trained, expert advocates are available 24/7 by phone to talk with anyone who is affected by physical, emotional, verbal, sexual or financial abuse. The Hotline also offers an online chat service at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) that is available every day from 7 a.m. – 2 a.m. CT.

Our services are **completely free and confidential**, and we have the largest and most comprehensive database of local and national resources in the country. Along with these resources, we offer lifesaving tools, immediate support and hope to empower victims to break free of abuse.



**CALL 24/7**

1.800.799.SAFE (7233)



**TTY 24/7**

1.800.787.3224



**CHAT**

every day 7 a.m. – 2 a.m. CT

[www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)



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The National Domestic Violence  
**HOTLINE**

1.800.799.SAFE (7233) • 1.800.787.3224 (TTY)

**Sexual Coercion**

**FREE  
CONFIDENTIAL  
24/7/365**



**1.800.799.SAFE (7233)**



## What is Sexual Coercion?

Have you ever felt pressured by your partner to be intimate? Have you ever felt guilty into it or like you weren't able to say no? **Abuse is often centered on power and control in all aspects of the relationship**, so it's not uncommon that an abusive partner will try to force intimacy.

This is often referred to as **sexual coercion**. Sexual coercion can vary from being egged on and persuaded, to being forced to have contact. It can be verbal and emotional, in the form of statements that make you feel pressure, guilt or shame. You can also be made to feel forced through more subtle actions.

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*Being in a relationship never means that you owe your partner intimacy of any kind.*

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## Signs of Sexual Coercion

Your partner might:

- Make you feel like you owe them; for example, because you're in a relationship, because you've had sex before or because they spent money on you or bought you a gift
- Give you compliments that sound extreme or insincere as an attempt to get you to agree to something
- Give you drugs and alcohol to "loosen up" your inhibitions
- Play on the fact that you're in a relationship, saying things such as: "Sex is the way to prove your love for me"
- React negatively with sadness, anger or resentment if you say no or don't immediately agree to something
- Continue to pressure you after you say no
- Make you feel threatened or afraid of what might happen if you say no
- Try to normalize their sexual expectations, saying things such as: "I need it, I'm a man"

Even if your partner isn't forcing you to do sexual acts against your will, being made to feel *obligated* is considered coercion. **Dating someone, being in a relationship or being married never means that you owe your partner intimacy of any kind.**

## What is Healthy Consent?

In a relationship where sexual coercion is occurring, there is a lack of healthy consent and the coercive partner doesn't respect the boundaries or wishes of the other. But what is healthy consent?

- Consent means being clear and direct with your partner about what you do and do not want to do.
- Consent is not a "given" for any act, even if you've consented to that act in the past.
- Consent can be taken back at any time. You always have the right to stop.
- It's not consent if you're afraid—or unable—to say no.



Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender. If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, or if you have questions about abuse, we can help.

**1-800-799-SAFE (7233)**

**thehotline.org**



**love is respect.org**

**1-866-331-9474**

**loveisrespect.org**

**text "loveis" to 22522**