

# BARRIERS TO LEAVING

There are many reasons why victims of domestic violence remain in abusive relationships. These reasons are often viewed as barriers to leaving. As you work to overcome these barriers and empower yourself, you will become a survivor. Below are barriers that various survivors of domestic violence have overcome to reach emotional and physical safety.

1. Guilt
2. Pressure from children to stay
3. Fear of financial problems
4. Companionship
5. Hope that an abuser will change
6. History together
7. Commitment to the relationship
8. Don't want a divorce
9. Fear of being/living alone
10. Not wanting to start over/look for someone else
11. Fear of losing children
12. Not wanting to grieve (loss of partner)
13. Threats/fear of physical harm
14. Fear of losing the house/car
15. Pressure from others to stay
16. Feeling defective
17. Low self-esteem
18. Attempting to preserve family's reputation
19. Self-blame for the abuse/victim blaming
20. Belief that single parenting is unattractive
21. Fear of being left out of social functions/invitations
22. Stigma/Rejection
23. Love/Affection, kindness (some of the time)
24. Isolation
25. Denial & minimization of the abuse
26. Traditional views of marriage
27. Abuse disguised as "male privilege"
28. Prior lack of serious intervention
29. Promises
30. Cultural constraints
31. Apologies/crying
32. Security
33. Fear of losing abuser's family
34. Cycle of abuse is familiar
35. Upbringing modeled abuse as normal
36. Not wanting to give up "the dream"
37. Partner threatens suicide
38. Abuser's power or social status/Family's power
39. Religion
40. Fear of harassment
41. "Mr. Nice Guy/Girl" image
42. Fear of the unknown
43. Lack of awareness that it's okay to leave
44. Not identifying what's going on is abuse
45. No support system
46. Nowhere else to go
47. Others blame you
48. Abusive behavior becomes "normal"
49. No one believes you
50. Fear of involvement in court process
51. Lack of education or job skills
52. Fear of custody battles
53. Fear of emotional damage to children
54. Fear that partner is not able to survive alone
55. Insecurity over potential independence
56. Fear of retaliation from abuser/friends/family

**24-Hour Crisis Line:**  
**(269) 385-3587**

**Main Line:**  
**(269) 345-5595**

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