🛑

Before It Turns Physical

Recognizing the Slow Progression of Abuse and Breaking Through Denial

Not every wound leaves a bruise.

✨ FACING WHAT YOU FEEL

If you've found yourself confused, anxious, afraid, or emotionally exhausted in a relationship—but unsure why—this worksheet is for you.

You may not have visible bruises, but something feels off. You've tried harder. You've prayed more. But something deep inside still feels unsafe, unsteady, or unseen.

This guide is here to help you face the truth—not with shame, but with clarity and compassion.

You are not crazy.

You are not overreacting.

And you are not alone.

You have a choice in what to do with this information.

You can sit with it, pray through it, ask for help, or reach out to someone safe.

But you do not have to stay stuck in confusion. The Lord is not the author of fear, intimidation, or emotional manipulation. He is the God of light, peace, and truth.

📖 WHY THIS MATTERS

Abuse doesn't always start with fists. It begins with charm, control, and confusion—layered in emotion and denial. By the time physical harm begins, many feel stuck, afraid, and unsure of what's real. This guide is meant to help you name what's happening, break through deception, and move toward God's truth, safety, and healing.

🔍 SECTION 1: The Slow, Subtle Progression of Abuse

☑️ Check any that apply, even if it only happened once:

📍

1. Love Bombing & Intensity

- Overwhelming praise, early "soulmate" language
- Fast-tracking the relationship (moving in, spiritual intimacy)
- Excessive texting or gifts early on
- 🧠 Denial says: "They're just passionate."
- 💡 Truth: Healthy love honors your pace.

📍

2. Control Disguised as Care

- Monitors where you go, who you see
- Chooses what you wear, spend, or eat
- Criticizes friends or family so you spend more time with them

- 🧠 Denial says: “They’re just protective.”
- 💡 Truth: Love respects freedom, not force.

📍

3. Gaslighting & Emotional Confusion

- “You’re remembering it wrong.”
- “You’re just too sensitive.”
- You feel like you’re always the problem
- 🧠 Denial says: “Maybe I am overreacting.”
- 💡 Truth: Love doesn’t make you feel crazy.

📍

4. Isolation & Emotional Dependence

- Discourages relationships with family/friends
- Makes you feel like no one else understands you
- You begin to rely solely on them for emotional stability
- 🧠 Denial says: “We’re just really close.”
- 💡 Truth: Love connects—abuse isolates.

📍

5. Jealousy, Possessiveness, & Accusations

- Constantly suspicious or accusing you
- Treats your independence as betrayal
- Uses “jealousy” to justify anger
- 🧠 Denial says: “They just love me too much.”
- 💡 Truth: Love does not control or accuse.

📍

6. Verbal & Emotional Abuse

- Yelling, name-calling, sarcasm, shaming
- “Jokes” that tear you down
- Shifts blame: “You make me act this way.”
- 🧠 Denial says: “We just argue like everyone.”
- 💡 Truth: Abuse isn’t a “normal” argument—it’s a pattern of harm.

📍

7. Intimidation & Threats

- Punching walls, slamming doors, reckless driving
- Threats to harm self or others if you leave
- Silent treatment or long stares that cause fear
- 🧠 Denial says: “But they didn’t hit me.”
- 💡 Truth: Intimidation is a form of abuse.

📍

8. Financial or Sexual Coercion

- Takes control of money or doesn't allow access
- Uses guilt or spiritual pressure to demand sex
- 🧠 Denial says: "I'm just being selfish."
- 💡 Truth: God never uses fear or force.

📍

9. "Test" Acts of Violence

- Grabbing your wrist, blocking doors, restraining you
- Harming pets or throwing things near you
- First push or slap brushed off as an accident
- 🧠 Denial says: "They didn't mean to."
- 💡 Truth: Testing your limits is still abuse.

📍

10. First Act of Physical Violence

- Apologies, tears, or gifts afterward
- Promises: "It will never happen again"
- Blames you: "You triggered me"

- 🧠 Denial says: “It was just once.”
- 💡 Truth: One time is too many.

🗣️ SECTION 2: “Have You Heard…” (Verbal Red Flags Checklist)

☑️ Check anything you’ve been told. These are NOT loving or biblical.

☐ “You’re too emotional.”

☐ “You’re the problem, not me.”

☐ “You’re lucky I love you.”

☐ “You made me hit you.”

☐ “Don’t talk to anyone about our problems.”

☐ “God hates divorce, so you’re stuck with me.”

☐ “No one else would want you.”

☐ “You’re not submitting like the Bible says.”

☐ “I said I’m sorry. You need to forgive me.”

☐ “You’re sinning by making me look bad.”

☐ “If you leave, you’ll regret it forever.”

☐ “You’re being dramatic.”

> 🧠 Even if they’re quoting Scripture, manipulation is not God’s heart.
> 📖 “By their fruit you will recognize them…” – Matthew 7:16

✍️ SECTION 3: Journal – Breaking Through Denial

Reflect honestly. No one else has to see this.

1. What behaviors have I explained away that I would never excuse for someone I love?

✎

_____

✎

_____

2. What did I hope this relationship would be? What has it actually become?

✎

_____

✎

_____

3. What am I afraid would happen if I told the truth out loud?

✎

_____

✎

_____

4. What lies have I believed about God that keep me stuck?

✎

_____

✎

_____

5. What do I sense God saying to me now about safety, truth, and love?

✎

_____

✎

_____

📖 GOD'S HEART FOR THE OPPRESSED

"The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble."
— Psalm 9:9
"Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."
— Psalm 82:4
"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."
— Psalm 147:3
"Love… does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."
— 1 Corinthians 13:4–5

🕊️ FINAL TRUTH:

You were never created to live in fear.

You are not "too much." You are not "crazy."

You are deeply seen by God—and He calls you worthy of safety, truth, and love.

🙏 A PRAYER FOR CLARITY AND COURAGE

Father, I'm tired of being confused and afraid. I want to walk in truth, not fear. I confess where I've minimized the harm or doubted my own worth. Help me to see what You see and to say yes to freedom—even if it's hard. I believe You're a God of rescue, wisdom, and peace. Make a way. In Jesus' name, amen.

✝️ ABBA REACH MINISTRIES

“Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save…” – Isaiah 59:1

🌐 www.AbbaReachMinistries.com