

ARE YOU AN ABUSIVE EX?

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“ I am going to see that she pays for this for the rest of her life....She is not going to have a moments peace as long as I carry on living ” These were the words of someone struggling with the loss of their marriage. However I empathized with their sense of rejection, I still put it to them that they should consider whether this intended mission may actually use up an enormous amount of energy that could better be put towards healing from this break up. ***“No”*** the person answered ***“I don’t care what it does to me, my life has ended and she will never just get rid of me.”***

Break ups are painful. They can be difficult, even for the person who initiates the ending. Often when we are angry, it is a mask for sadness, pain or anxiety.

But sometimes, to be honest, we view our long term partners as ours when our lives have been bound together. When one person in a long term relationship leaves, there are a range of different feelings that you might have to battle with. One of those might be rage; the rage of possessiveness, the raging against abandonment. This is not easy to acknowledge because we tend to focus on what is wrong with the other person. Sometimes their acts of separateness are too much to bear at the time.

Feelings of pain, rage and wishes to be revengeful are common. However acting out destructively on these feelings is not okay.

Do you:-

- belittle your ex, swear at them or get very personal?
- go out of your way to make their life difficult?
- sabotage their efforts at bringing up the children?
- hit, kick, slap or use any physical violence against them?
- threaten to use any physical violence against them if they don’t do what you want them to?
- follow/stalk them so that they do not have any personal privacy
- continually phone them, sms them to bother them or remind them of your presence?
- do or say anything to intimidate them, their friends, family or any new partner they may have?
- destroy any of their property?
- constantly ask about their movements, new friends or possessions from your children?
- deliberately withhold important information from them that they need to know?
- violate their privacy, personal space or boundaries in any way?

If you do any of this, ask yourself why.

Yes, you are hurting.

Yes, you are angry.

But does this behaviour heal you? Maybe you believe that punishing someone or taking revenge will make you feel better. Actually it may- very temporarily - but it will not help you to move forward with your life. It may also bring you a criminal record.

It will not bring them back.

Sometimes you may believe that if you persuade them to come back you can also convince them to want you again. No abusive behaviour does this. It may be that you would prefer someone to be with you out of fear of you rather than to be alone or see them with someone else. However, even if this works, you will not truly have this person back because they really want to be with you.

The best revenge you can have is to work towards your own genuine healing and self fulfilment, as difficult or unattainable as that may seem to be. We do not own other people but we do have choices as to how we are going to live our own lives.

Sometimes it is impossible to see how to do this as they seem to be such a part of your world. When attachment becomes obsession and obsession becomes destructive, it is important to seek help with the things you can't change on your own.