

*“Learn character from trees, values from roots and change from leaves”*

*- Tasneern Harneed*

## IS MY RELATIONSHIP UNHEALTHY? AT WHAT POINT DOES A RELATIONSHIP BECOME ABUSIVE?

Author: Jenna Froelich, LCPC, CDVP

“Domestic Violence” is a word that I think a lot more people are familiar with now. We know these “toxic” or “unhealthy” relationships harm us, but it can be hard to know what “toxic” actually means because even the healthiest of relationships have their problems. How do you differentiate between the normal problems that can be worked through, vs. the deal-breaker type issues that could be a red flag for abuse?

The answer to this is pretty complex, but a good starting point is to learn more about red flags of abuse. Tools like the Power and Control Wheel, Equality Wheel, and Cycle of Violence help to summarize some of these. The [Power and Control Wheel](#) gives examples of common abuse patterns and the [Equality Wheel](#) shows the opposite (what behaviors to look for in healthy relationships) (search the phrase “[Gender Neutral Power and Control Wheel](#)” for a wheel that does not assume the gender of the abusive partner). The [Cycle of Violence](#) helps explain why toxic relationships cycle between being really great and really bad, but never actually get better permanently. Know that there are some old versions of the Cycle that focus on physical abuse; these are inaccurate, as psychological/emotional/verbal abuse on their own absolutely constitute domestic violence! It’s not true that there must be physical abuse for a relationship to be abusive/unhealthy.

You can google these resources and read more about them, but since I know not all sources are reputable, here are a few that are! The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website ([ncadv.org](http://ncadv.org)) or the National Domestic Violence Hotline’s website ([thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)) have articles you can click through as a starting point to build your knowledge. You can also talk to your therapist about it! We’re always happy to help find useful resources. I always say: you can’t fix what you’re not aware of, so if you have concerns about the health of your relationships, either past, present, or future, learning how to know when a relationship has abuse potential is a really great place to start!

## AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

National Suicide Prevention Month:  
*September*

National Suicide Prevention Week:  
*September 4-10*

National Suicide Prevention Day:  
*September 10*

Domestic Violence Awareness month:  
*October*

## MEET THE STAFF



**Silvia Gomez, LCSW**

Each quarter get to know the therapists of Obsidian Behavioral Health with a Q & A!

Q: When did you know you wanted to be a social worker?

A. I worked for 9 years as a domestic violence worker and started to notice that my clients were not only dealing with domestic violence issues but also mental health, substance abuse, past trauma, family conflict and a myriad of or their obstacles. I decided to become a Social worker to be adequately trained to be able to provide comprehensive services to my clients.

Q. What do you do for self-care?

A. I study Buddhism and Stoic Philosophy. I spend time with my children and create memorable experiences for us. I also spend time with my pets and paint occasionally.

Q: What is your favorite coping skill?

A. I try not to take things personally. I try to understand that life happens to all of us and that we can choose how to react. I also try to remember that the only things I have control over are my thoughts and my reactions. For example, I cannot get upset over traffic, I remember that I live in a major metropolitan area and that traffic is part of the experience of living here. So, I buy a coffee and listen to music and go about my drive in peace.

Q: What is a fun fact about you?

A. I like to collect witch figurines.

Q: What is your favorite movie and/or TV show?

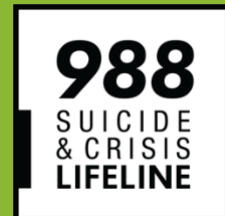
A. I do not have a favorite TV show or movie. I have favorite genres! I like Science Fiction, Horror and Action, Real Life stories and documentaries.

Mental Illness  
Awareness week:  
*October 2-8*

World Mental  
Health day :  
*October 10*

World Kindness  
day: *November 13*

Adoption  
Awareness Month:  
*November*



## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### *Kane County Cougars Game*

This picture shows Obsidian staff members, pictured left to right, Silvia Gomez, Lindsey Kovalik Bianchini and Jenna Froelich, attended a baseball game on 8/21/2022. This day was dedicated to mental health awareness. They can be seen sporting their Obsidian t-shirts and helping spread mental health awareness!



## REMINDERS AND UPDATES

- In case you missed it! Click here for the summer quarter [newsletter](#).
- Out of the office reminders:  
Lindsey & Danielle : December 23

*Please speak to your therapist about your session needs during those times. Additional dates may be communicated to you by your therapist.*

- Stay connected! Click on the icons below to add Obsidian on social media.

## COPING SKILLS CORNER

### *Grounding Skills: Non-Dominant Writing Hand Exercise*

1. With your pen/pencil in your dominant writing hand, write down 5 questions or prompts of your choice (you can find some fun and interesting ones online!)
2. Switch and place your pen/pencil in your non-dominant writing hand
3. With your non-dominant hand, take your time writing down the answers to your 5 prompts
4. This will probably feel slow and awkward. However, as you persevere, you're likely to come up with new thoughts and ideas and feel more grounded in the present

