

Hyde County Hotline, Inc.

24-Hours Crisis Line 252-925-2500

Visit us at: HydeCounty-Hotline.org Facebook: [Hyde County Hotline](#)

Who Am I?

Janie thought she was losing her mind. She searched through her thoughts trying to make sense of anything. She remembered writing down the very words her husband, Jeremy, had said so she would not forget. She looked at the long list she had memorized and unfolded and read countless times before. A list of actions she needed to take to improve and points in her character she needed to work on in order to be a “good wife” and make him happy. Yet, she was never good enough! She could never measure up! As she looked at the list, she felt hopeless! She had tried all of these things, but there was no change in the relationship. She was crippled by the growing anxiety of not being good enough even though she had worked so hard to improve on everything she was told to do.

Her thoughts were racing....Why was it not good enough? Why am I not good enough? Why can't I get better even when I do all that is asked of me and more? Am I really all those things he calls me? Am I really losing my mind?

Janie had turned to family and friends and even the church to only find another list of do's and don'ts to try to live up to. She needed someone to see that she was drowning. She felt she would never measure up to anyone's standards. She was exhausted and confused by trying measure up. She couldn't even remember the person she used to be. She was disappearing. She felt so alone. In utter despair, she peered into her mirror and asked “Who am I?”



“I feel wounded, insulted, and belittled.” “I feel like I am constantly walking on egg shells and will never measure up.” “I will never be good enough.” “I constantly am **being** put down.”

If these statements describe how one feels in their relationship, it is likely they are being emotionally abused. Emotional abuse is one of the hardest forms of abuse to recognize. It can be subtle and insidious or overt and manipulative. It chips away at the victim's self-esteem and they begin to doubt their perceptions and reality. They begin to lose HOPE!

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Emotional abuse can happen in any type of relationship whether it is a marriage, or dating relationship or a relationship with a parent or sibling or other family members or even in a relationship with a friend. Emotional abuse does not discriminate. It can impact people of all genders, incomes, races and ages.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

Humiliation, Negating, Criticizing

These tactics are meant to undermine self-esteem. The abuse is harsh and unrelenting in matters big and small.

- **Name-Calling** – Abusers blatantly call names such as “stupid,” “a loser,” or words too awful to repeat here.
- **Derogatory “Pet Names -”**This is just more name-calling in not-so-subtle disguise. “My little knuckle dragger” or “My chubby pumpkin” aren’t terms of endearment.
- **Character Assassination** - This usually involves the word “always.” Telling the victim, “You are always late”, “You are always wrong”, “You always screw up.”
- **Yelling** -Yelling, screaming, and swearing are meant to intimidate and make a victim feel small and inconsequential. It might be accompanied by fist-pounding or throwing things.
- **Patronizing** - “Aw, sweetie, I know you try, but this is just beyond your understanding.”
- **Public Embarrassment** - They pick fights, expose a victim’s secrets, or make fun of their shortcomings in public.
- **Dismissiveness** - A victim tells an abuser about something important to them and the abuser says nothing or uses body language like eye-rolling, smirking, headshaking, and sighing to help convey the same message.
- **“Joking”**- The jokes might have a grain of truth to them or be a complete fabrication. Either way, they make the victim look foolish.
- **Sarcasm** - Often just a dig in disguise. When a victim objects, they claim to have been teasing and tell the victim to stop taking everything so seriously.
- **Insulting the Victims Appearance** - They tell the victim, just before they go out, that their hair is ugly or outfit is ugly.
- **Belittling Accomplishments** - The abuser might tell a victim that all of their achievements mean nothing, or the abuser will claim responsibility for every success the victim has.

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- **Put-Downs of the Victims Interest** - They might tell victims that their hobby is a childish waste of time or that something they want to do is out of their league.
- **Pushing Buttons** - Once an abuser knows about something that annoys a victim, they'll bring it up or do it every chance they get.

Control and Shame

Trying to make a victim feel ashamed of their inadequacies is just another path to power.

- **Threats** – Abusers telling the victim they'll take the kids and disappear, or threatening to kill the victim, the kids, or themselves.
- **Monitoring Victims Whereabouts or Stalking** - Abusers want to know where victims are all the time and insist that they respond to calls or texts immediately. They might show up just to see if a victim is where they say they are.
- **Digital Spying** - Abusers might check internet history, emails, texts, and call logs. They might even demand the victim's passwords.
- **Unilateral Decision-Making** – Abusers might close a joint bank account, cancel a victim's doctor's appointment, or speak with their boss without asking.
- **Financial Control** - Abusers might keep bank accounts in their name only and make the victim ask for money. Victims might be expected to account for every penny they spend.
- **Lecturing** - Belaboring a victim's errors with long monologues making it clear they think the victim is beneath them.
- **Direct Orders** - From "Get my dinner on the table now" to "Stop taking the pill," orders are expected to be followed despite the victim's plans to the contrary.
- **Outbursts** – A victim is told to do something and when they do not do it they often have to face a tirade about how uncooperative they are or how they cannot do anything.
- **Victims Treated Like a Child** – An abuser tells a victim what to wear, what and how much to eat, or which friends to can see.
- **Feigned Helplessness** – An abuser may say they don't know how to do something. Sometimes it's easier for a victim to do it than to explain it. Abusers know this and take advantage of it.
- **Unpredictability** – Abusers may explode with rage out of nowhere, suddenly shower a victim with affection, or become dark and moody at the drop of a hat to keep a victim walking on eggshells.

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- **Using Others** - Abusers may tell a victim, “everybody thinks you’re crazy” or “they all say you’re wrong.”

Accusing, Blaming, and Denial

This behavior comes from an abuser’s insecurities. They want to create a hierarchy in which they’re at the top and the victim is at the bottom.

- **Jealousy** - An abuser may accuse the victim of flirting or cheating on them.
- **Turning the Tables** – Abusers may say the victim cause their rage and control issues by being such a pain.
- **Denying Something the Victim Knows is True** - An abuser will deny that an argument or even an agreement took place. This is called gaslighting. It’s meant to make a victim question their own memory and sanity.
- **Using Guilt** – An abuser might say something like, “You owe me this. Look at all I’ve done for you,” in an attempt to get their way.
- **Goading then Blaming** - Abusers know just how to upset victims. But, once the trouble starts, it’s the victim’s fault for creating it.
- **Denying their Abuse** - When a victim complains about their attacks, abusers will deny it, seemingly bewildered at the very thought of it.
- **Accusing the Victim of Abuse** - Abusers say that victims are the ones who have anger and control issues and they’re the helpless victim.
- **Trivializing** – When victims want to talk about their hurt feelings, the abuser will accuse them of overreacting and making mountains out of molehills.
- **Saying Victim Has No Sense of Humor** - An abuser may make personal jokes about the victim and if they object they tell them to lighten up.
- **Destroying and Denying** - An abuser might destroy a victim’s personal items or “lose” their car keys, then deny it.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 1 Corinthians 13:4-6

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Emotional Neglect and Isolation

Abusers tend to place their own emotional needs ahead the victim. Many abusers will try to come between the victim and people who are supportive of the victim to cause the victim to become more dependent on them. They do this by:

- **Demanding Respect** - No perceived slight will go unpunished, and the victim is expected to defer to them.
- **Shutting Down Communication** – An abuser will ignore a victim’s attempts at conversation in person, by text, or by phone.
- **Keeping a Victim From Socializing** - Whenever victims have plans to go out, an abuser will often come up with a distraction or beg them not to go.
- **Trying to Come Between the Victim and Their Family** - They’ll tell family members that the victim doesn’t want to see them or make excuses why they can’t attend family functions.
- **Withholding Affection** - They won’t touch the victim, not even to hold your hand or refuse sexual relations to punish the victim or to get back at them for something.
- **Actively Working to Turn Others Against the Victim** - They’ll tell co-workers, friends, and even family that the victim is unstable and prone to hysterics.
- **Calling the Victim Needy** - When a victim is really down and out and reach out for support, abusers tell them they are needy.
- **Interrupting** – When a victim is on the phone, texting or in a face to face meeting the abuser may get in their face to let a victim know that their attention should be on them. .
- **Indifference** - They see a victim is hurt or crying and do nothing.

Information shared from article by Sherri Gordon, Publisher, author and Bullying prevention Expert.

If you or someone you know is experiencing emotional abuse, it is not your fault! There is help available! Please call Hyde County Hotline’s **24-Hour Crisis Line at 252-925-2500.**

No one deserves abuse! Speak up for those who may not know how or do not have the strength to speak for themselves! You can make a difference!

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Hyde County Hotline would like to thank Mattamuskeet Senior Center for allowing us to complete monthly programming. As you know, February was Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and we were able to work with Mattamuskeet Senior Center to educate parents, grandparents and great grandparents on Teen Dating Violence and we had a wonderful time decorating cookies as part of this awareness event.



**If you would like to have programming at your place of business,
civic center, church or school please give us a call at
252-925-2502.**

What We Do:

- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence & Human Trafficking Advocacy
- Survivor Services
- Safe Shelter
- Safety Planning
- Support Groups and Referrals
- Program Presentations for Adults and Children in Churches, Businesses and Schools
- Referrals

How You Can Help...

- Ask Us About Community Presentations
- Tell Others About Us
- Become a Crisis Line Volunteer
- Donate to Our Thrift Store
- Ask For a Copy of Our Shelter Needs List
- Monetary Donations are Accepted

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If you are a victim of Human Trafficking or you know a victims of Human Trafficking please call **Hyde County Hotline** staff on our **24-Hour Crisis Line at 252-925-2500** or the **National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7888**

SMS: 233733 (Text "HELP" or "INFO")

Languages: English, Spanish and 200 more languages

Website: humantraffickinghotline.org



BREAK THE SILENCE AND BREAK THE CHAINS OF BONDAGE!

NO ONE DESERVES TO BE BOUGHT AND SOLD!

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN THE BONDAGE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

HYDE COUNTY HOTLINE IS HERE TO HELP.

Please Call Our 24-Hour Crisis Line 252-925-2500



Thank you to the N.C. Council for Women and Youth Involvement-Family Violence Prevention and Services