

# **Gender and the Law**

## **Radio Show Scripts**



**Produced by the  
Gender Research and Advocacy Project,  
Legal Assistance Centre**



## Acknowledgements

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Funded by the Embassy of the French Republic

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An Adobe Acrobat (pdf) version of this publication is posted on the LAC website.

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## Introduction

There are many ways to teach people about human rights. Sometimes you can tell people about what the law says. Sometimes you can play games or complete activities that help people to learn about human rights. You can also use poetry and stories as teaching tools.

The Gender Research and Advocacy Project at the Legal Assistance Centre has prepared a series of radio shows that can be used to educate people about gender and the law. These shows cover a range of topics. Not all the topics are directly related to the law. For example some of the shows tackle issues such as empowerment and assertiveness. However, the topics are important because if people are able to feel empowered or assertive, they can be confident enough to use the law for their protection, or they can avoid a situation that might otherwise have required the intervention of the law. The law alone cannot tackle issues of gender-based violence or other violations of human rights by itself. This is why the shows in this package cover a broad range of topics.

The format for the shows varies. Sometimes the aim of the show is to be educational, so it focuses on facts. At other times, the aim of the show is to get people to think about an issue, so poems and stories have been used to stimulate questions and debate. These scripts are a guideline for the presenter; they can be modified or edited as appropriate. The shows are different lengths. You might want to split some of the shows into two sessions, or you might want to add other things to the show. For example, on the alcohol show you might want to invite a police officer or a pastor to talk about alcohol abuse and what can be done to tackle the issue.

## Radio show 1: Gender equality

*Note for presenter: The aim of this radio programme is to educate the listener about gender equality. In this script, a poem and a story are used to motivate the audience to think about why gender equality is important.*

### **I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**

A free bird leaps on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream till the current ends  
and dips his wing in the orange sun's rays and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill  
of things unknown but longed for still  
and his tune is heard on the distant hill  
for the caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill  
of things unknown but longed for still  
and his tune is heard on the distant hill  
for the caged bird sings of freedom.

*Maya Angelou*

The writer of this poem, Maya Angelou is not just talking about a caged bird. She is also talking about how humans can feel caged when they are restricted. This can sometimes be how women feel when they are not considered equal to men. The story you are about to hear further describes why gender equality is important. The story is fictional but it probably describes many real situations in Namibia.

I had a boyfriend once that I really loved. He really loved me too. You know how I knew? Well, he used to *tell* me he loved me. All the time. He used to buy me things – cell phones, clothes, jewellery. He used to buy me *nice* jewellery. But there was something about him that I didn't like – he never let me go out with my friends. Sometimes he would leave town and I would have nothing to do. So I would call up my friend, Tessa, and see she if she wanted to go out – you know, just to have a drink or something. When David found out, he was not happy. The first time I tried to go out without him, just me and the girls, he started yelling and screaming, calling me all sorts of names. At first I couldn't even understand why he didn't want me to go. After a lot of yelling I finally understood that he was worried that I might start looking at other men. I almost laughed out loud. I tried to tell him I loved him and that I didn't want to look at other men – I just wanted to see my friends. But that made him even angrier - he thought I was being disrespectful to him. Then I started to get angry. "Why don't you trust me?" I yelled at him. Then he hit me. Hard. On the face. I stopped yelling. Then in a very quiet voice he told me one final time – you will not go out without me. Then he left. I didn't go out with Tessa.

This happened several more times. After a few black eyes and one trip to the hospital for stitches, I learned my lesson not to put up a fight. At least then he wouldn't beat me. Plus, sometimes he could be so nice about it. He would tell me that he didn't want me to go out because he loved me and he wanted us to do things together as a couple. He loved me, he said. He loved me. I kept telling myself that over and over. It was true, right?

One time he was leaving town for two weeks. It was the same old thing – before he left he made sure to tell me not to go out. The first day, I was very obedient. The only place I went was Shop Rite. The second day, I didn't go *anywhere*. I tried to call my mom who lived 200 kilometres away, but I didn't have enough credit on my phone. The third day I started to get bored, and lonely. But I didn't leave because I wanted to show David that I loved him. Plus, I knew the consequences if I did go out. The days passed. I didn't have anything to do. I didn't even have a television to watch because David had given it to one of his friends to use while he was gone. I couldn't leave. I was a caged bird.

When David returned I was so excited. To show that he loved me he had brought me a beautiful necklace. I loved it, but it didn't make me feel better about sitting at home for two weeks. I decided that maybe I could talk to him about it. He was leaving town again the next week, so after dinner, I brought it up. That was a mistake – a mistake that left me with a bruised cheek, a dislocated shoulder, and a broken finger. But afterwards, he told me he was sorry. And that he loved me. I tried to tell myself that that made it okay. He loved me, right?

Wrong. I finally realised it. He didn't love me. What he does to me is not love. It's not even close to love. I realised that *everything* he had been doing was wrong. He has no right to tell me what I can and can't do. I am *not* his possession. I am *not* an animal. I am a person. A free person. An independent person. A strong person. I have just as much right as he does to come and go as I please. Why does he think he has the control? Is it because he's physically stronger? Is it because that's what he saw in his own family? Because it is his culture to tell women what to do? Culture can change. It just wasn't right! I couldn't believe I had put up with it for so long. Now I saw the truth. He was no better than those colonizers who oppressed Namibia, than those who oppress any country or people. He was the *same*. Why couldn't he see that? He who talked so hatefully of racist oppressors, but why couldn't he see that he was doing the same thing? I didn't see it for a while either, but all of a sudden I did. And I had had enough.

So when he left, I decided to go out! I called up Tessa and we went to get something to eat. I don't even remember what we ate. I didn't care. I was just so excited to be there. Excited, and a little nervous about what would happen if David found out. He didn't find out this time, or the next time. But eventually he did find out. That night, when David was supposed to come back from one of his trips, I got a phone call from a friend telling me he knew I had been out and was on his way home, madder than ever. For a minute I panicked. I knew exactly what was going to happen when he got home. What should I do? Should I run? Should I hide? I knew he would find me eventually. I thought about it for a minute and then made my decision. I was going to take a stand. I would not live with this any longer. I felt chills all over – for the first time in my life I was standing up for the rights I deserved. Of course I still had one problem – David was still much stronger than me. What would I do

when he attacked me? I knew he would be home soon, so I had to think quickly. And then I came up with an idea, not a good idea, but an idea. I heard him get out of the taxi outside. As he was walking to the door he had already started yelling. I heard the keys in the door. Then the doorknob turned. David came rushing through the door, but stopped short, in mid-sentence. There I stood – my clothes stuffed with pillows, wearing a motorcycle helmet that bounced around on my skinny head and holding a child’s plastic hockey stick, up in a swinging position. I don’t know what I thought I could do. I had stuffed so many pillows in my clothes I could barely move. I must have been a sight! But I was fired up and ready to fight! But then something happened I didn’t expect. David started laughing. And he kept laughing. He laughed so hard tears started streaming down his cheeks. As hard as I tried to resist it, his laughter was contagious. I let out a small giggle. Then another. Then another. Soon we were both on the floor laughing hysterically. Though inside I was still a little scared of what might happen when we stopped, I felt like the tension was gone and I was okay.

Eventually the laughing did stop. I looked at David. He looked back at me. After a long silence he said he was sorry that I was so scared of him and that he just wanted to protect me. I told him I just wanted to spend time with my friends. He nodded and said he understood. He paused for a few minutes. He didn’t say anything for so long that I thought maybe he had fallen asleep. Then he said it would be okay if I went out with Tessa while he was gone, I just had to tell him in advance so he would know where I was. I thought about it. Was it worth it to stay? Would he really change? What should I do?

**PAUSE**

I left him. I didn’t need to put up with his abuse any longer. I deserve to be able to make decisions for myself and to be free, and it was clear that would never happen as long as I was with David. It would be hard without him, I knew. He bought me a lot of things I wanted, and needed. Plus it was nice to have somebody there, to be part of a “couple.” But I knew I would make it without him. And do you know what? I did.



This story describes how inequality in a relationship can lead to violence. David thought that he owned his girlfriend, that she was a possession he could control. David did not love his girlfriend because he hit her and beat her. That is not love and it is not respect.

The aim of gender equality is to allow men and women to have equal decision making in a relationship. If David had understood what gender equality means, he would never have hit his girlfriend because she has a right to make decisions. He does not hit his male friends, because he respects them. He hits his girlfriend because he does not respect her. When people fight for gender equality, they are trying to prevent situations like this.

*Note to presenter:*

*You might like to continue this discussion by debating with the listeners what gender equality means to them. Or you could use a call-in format and invite listeners to give their input on equality.*

Next week we will be talking about the consequences of violence.

## Radio show 2: The empowerment of women

*Note to presenter:*

*The aim of this radio programme is to talk about the empowerment of women. This is an important issue because it is often reported that women are too frightened or do not feel that they are allowed to speak up against violence that happens to them. However there are laws that say violence against women is not acceptable and so women need to be empowered to take a stand against violence.*

I've got the children to tend  
The clothes to mend  
The floor to mop  
The food to shop  
Then the chicken to fry  
The baby to dry  
I got company to feed  
The garden to weed  
I've got shirts to press  
The tots to dress  
The cane to be cut  
I gotta clean up this hut  
Then see about the sick  
And the cotton to pick.

Shine on me, sunshine  
Rain on me, rain  
Fall softly, dewdrops  
And cool my brow again.

Storm, blow me from here  
With your fiercest wind  
Let me float across the sky  
'Til I can rest again.

Fall gently, snowflakes  
Cover me with white  
Cold icy kisses and  
Let me rest tonight.

Sun, rain, curving sky  
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone  
Star shine, moon glow  
You're all that I can call my own.

*Maya Angelou*

Just like the poem we read in the first show about gender equality, this poem describes how some women feel about the situation they are in. In many cases, the role of the woman is below the man and women are expected to work very hard. Listen to the following story which is about one woman who decides that she has had enough of having children to tend, clothes to mend and floors to mop.

I came home one day and my wife told me she wanted to go to work. What! I was shocked. Why on earth would she want to go to work? I didn't understand it at all. I didn't have the highest paying job in the world, but I provided enough for the both of us and for our little daughter. I could buy my wife everything she needed and sometimes some things she just wanted. So why would she want to work?

I realised that in my surprise I had not been listening to her and she had been going on about something for a quite a time now. "What?", I asked again. She said she was trying to tell me about a job that she found that she thought would be perfect for her. I told her that she didn't need to get a job. I provided for her and that was enough. If she went to work who would look after little Rebecca? Who would do the cooking? And the washing? Besides, what skills did she have? She had never worked in her life. I married her right after she had finished school.

She seemed surprised that I was being so forceful about the issue. But she wanted to work, she said. She thought it would be fun to have a job. I said, "Woman, having a job ain't no easy task. It's hard work! I have to get up early, work all day, come home late, and then do it all over again. Every single day. Well, except the weekend." She didn't seem to believe me. She still thought it would be a good idea. I said no. She said yes. So I said fine, if she wanted to get a job, she could consider that her only income. She could keep hers, and I would keep mine. She muttered something about Namibia's Married Persons Equality Act and that because we were married in community of property she had a legal right to half of my income. I didn't really understand it, but she seemed to know what she was talking about, so I could only reply with a "huh". My plan hadn't worked. I really didn't mean it anyway, I just didn't want her to go to work and I told her that again. This time she didn't

reply, she was just quiet. She looked at me and said she really wanted this job. She was so sincere that I couldn't resist any longer. So I told her to tell me about the job. She said the job was in a house. She would be doing the cleaning, the washing, the cooking, and looking after one child. That didn't sound so bad I thought. Then I moved to the real question, how much does it pay.

Nothing, she said.

That was the biggest blow! How could she work for no money! Who was this person that she wanted to work for who wasn't going to pay, I shrieked.

She looked at me and said "You".

If she hadn't smiled at that moment, I would have been furious, and deeply offended. Instead, I started to chuckle. She kept smiling. I realised then what she was getting at. I saw that I hadn't shown her how much I appreciated the work she did in our home. It's hard work she told me. I believed her. She too gets up early every day, works hard all day long, sometimes until very late. She doesn't even get the weekends off like I do. It's not fair, she was saying, that I had all the control over the money, just because I was paid for my work by somebody else. I realised that it took both of us to keep our family afloat. I couldn't get along without the work she did, just as she couldn't get along without the work I did.

I promised her then and there that I would try to respect the work she did for us. And we could both make decisions about our money. After all, she was right, it did legally belong to both of us. I knew it would take some time for me to change the way I thought about things, but I knew I could do it eventually. And in the end, it would be so much better.

This story describes an empowered woman. She is not leaving her husband, she is not even going out and getting a job. She is simply standing up for herself and making it clear that her own work has as much value as her husband's. The story is a good illustration of the fact that the empowerment of women does not have to be threatening or life-changing. Sometimes it is simply about changing opinions to ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

*Note to presenter:*

*You might want to continue this discussion by asking the listeners to call in and say how much they think the work a wife does in the house is worth in terms of monetary value.*

Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.

When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life.

*Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary General*

## Radio show 3: The consequences of violence

*Note to the presenter:*

*The aim of this radio programme is to educate the listener that violence is not an isolated action. It can have consequences for the community and long-term consequences for the victim of the abuse.*

“Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”

World Health Organisation (WHO), Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA)

The goal of violence is to destroy, punish or gain control over a person or thing. Violent people are often aggressive.

“Aggression is a behaviour aimed to hurt or harm another being while the other is motivated to avoid being harmed or hurt.”

*As defined by two researchers in 1994*

According to this definition, the mere thought or intention of hurting another person is NOT aggression. Violence also needs to have an intention to hurt or harm another person. Accidental harm, such as a dentist having to pull out one of your teeth and hurting you in the process, is not aggression. Hitting your girlfriend because she spilt your drink is aggression.

Violence has short-term and long-term effects. Immediately after an act of violence, the victim might be injured and upset. In the long-term, the victim might be afraid to go out in public, or be afraid of other people in case they too are abusive.

But the impact of violence is not just limited to the abuser and the victim. Who else might be affected by a violent event?

Pause.

The answer is:

- the abuser;
- other family members;
- neighbours; and
- the community.

The abuser is affected because he or she will lose the respect of the people who witness or know about the abuse. The abuser will also lose his or her own self-respect.

Family members, such as children, who see the violence may learn that violence is acceptable. The children then may become violent at school, when they are playing with friends, or perhaps later in life abuse their partner or commit violent crimes such as assault or even murder.

The community is also affected by violence because people become afraid that the abuser might start attacking them. If the victim is unable to work, the business or company where the victim works might lose money and if the victim needs to see the police or a doctor, this involves taxpayers' money.

However, violence is a choice – not everyone is violent when they become angry. The story we are about to read, which has been taken from the Window of Hope training pack, explains this:

### The Two Lions

One evening an old Chief told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people –in their hearts and minds.

He said “My son, the battle is between two lions inside us all. One lion is ‘Down’. It is jealousy and greed, hate, violence and drunkenness, lies and fear, laziness and weakness.

The other lion is ‘Up’. It is kindness and compassion, love and joy, peace and hope, truth and respect, determination and faith”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather:  
“Which lion wins?”

*The old wise Chief simply replied: “The one you feed.”*

The story shows that most of the time we can choose how we want to behave. Do we want to use violence in our life or do we want to have respect for each other?

Do we want to accept violence that is directed at us or do we want to put a stop to violence?

Listen to the following conversation between a boyfriend and a girlfriend:

Man:	Sophie, where is my dinner?
Woman:	It will be ready in ten minutes. I could not start making dinner because Lukas was crying.
Man:	Well if you did your work properly there wouldn't be a problem. You are a stupid, stupid woman. I don't know why I ever married



you.

Woman: Marcus I am sorry.

Man: Ha, you do it on purpose to make me angry. I am going out to get a drink and find a real woman who can look after me.

Woman: *Crying*. He says I am stupid everyday. I must be stupid. I hate myself and I wish that I was dead.

Was the man being violent in the drama?

**Pause**

The answer is yes he was. He was using verbal abuse. The woman said that he told her she was stupid everyday. When someone uses a pattern of insulting behaviour it can be classed as violence. His behaviour is making her feel worthless. No one has the right to do that to another person.

Listen to another conversation between two children:

Girl: Hey Johannes, lets play a game.

Boy: Ok what?

Girl: Let's play Mummies and Daddies.

Boy: Ok.

Boy: *Putting on a deep voice* Wife get here now.

Girl: Yes husband.

Boy: Come closer.

Girl: Yes husband.

Boy: *Clap hands to sound like slapping*.

Girl: *Crying* Ahhhhhh why did you do that?

Boy: Because I am the man of the house and it is my right. My Papa does it to my Ma and so I can do it to you.

The play illustrates that children often learn from the parents and behave in the same way. It shows that violence has long-term consequences because these children may continue to behave like this for the rest of their lives. Already Johannes has hurt someone else simply because of the way his father behaves.

In Namibia it is estimated that one in five women are in an abusive relationship.

This is a big number. Think about five friends that you have. Now imagine that one of those friends is being beaten by their partner every night and you know nothing about it.

Violence is not acceptable. We must all work together to stop violence in our communities if we want to make life better for the people around us, for our children, and for our children's children.

## **Radio show 4: Domestic Violence – Part 1**

*Note to presenter:*

*The aim of this radio programme is to educate listeners about domestic violence. The programme on domestic violence has been divided into two parts. The first show describes domestic violence and gives suggestions about what an abuser can do if he or she is feeling violent. The second show deals with what a victim of domestic violence can do.*

Domestic violence is violence that takes place within a family relationship or another close relationship.

It is sometimes called battering, wife abuse or husband abuse – although it also happens to children, aunts and uncles, and grandparents. Domestic violence is a problem because the home and family are places where people should feel the most safe and secure. Although women can be violent, it is most often women and children who are the victims of the abuse.

People who are married, engaged to be married, living together, girlfriend and boyfriend, or are parents of a child, are in a domestic relationship. Other family members who live together or have some other connection between them, such as financial dependency, such as an uncle paying his niece's school fees, are also in a domestic relationship.

The law says that a domestic relationship continues for at least one year after separation. But if two people have a child together, they have a domestic relationship as long as that child is alive, or for at least one year after the child's death.

When people talk about domestic violence, they often only talk about physical abuse, such as a husband beating his wife because she has not got the dinner ready on time. However, domestic violence is not just physical abuse, it can also

be economic abuse, intimidation, harassment, trespass, emotional abuse or threats.

- If a partner deprives the other of food or destroys property, it is economic abuse.
- A partner does not have to actually harm the other person for it to be domestic violence. If he or she threatens, intimidates or harasses the partner, it can still be domestic violence.
- Emotional abuse is when a partner continuously degrades or humiliates the other person, such as where the abuser repeatedly insults his or her partner.
- It is also domestic violence if a child is allowed to see physical, sexual or psychological abuse against a family member.

These examples show that there are many types of domestic violence. But not all arguments are classed as domestic violence. Petty arguments or occasional insults are not domestic violence. You should not seek legal help just because you have had the first argument in your relationship.

Listen to the following questions and decide whether they are examples of domestic violence:

*Note to presenter: Read each question and then pause. Then read the answer.*

**1. A child has been naughty and his mother refuses to give him pocket money that week. PAUSE**

*This is not economic abuse – domestic violence is not about petty things. This is a reasonable punishment for a child who has misbehaved.*

2. **A teenage girl finishes a relationship with a boy. The ex-boyfriend follows her around, watching who she talks to and where she goes.**

**PAUSE**

*This is domestic violence because a relationship continues for 1 year after separation. The ex-boyfriend is harassing the girl. Studies show that this kind of harassment often leads to physical violence.*

3. **A woman is living with a man. She says she doesn't want to have sex with him because he has other girlfriends. He says unless she has sex with him he will have sex with her daughter.** **PAUSE**

*This is domestic violence. The man is using threats of sexual abuse and intimidation.*

4. **A boss says she will not promote her male assistant unless he has sex with her.** **PAUSE**

*This is not domestic violence because the incident has happened in the workplace between a boss and an employee. But it would be sexual harassment under the Labour Act.*

5. **A step-father constantly shouts at his step-daughter, swearing at her and telling her she is stupid.** **PAUSE**

*This is domestic violence. Although the step-father and step-daughter are not biologically related, they are in a domestic relationship. The step-father is psychologically abusing his step-daughter.*

### **What to do if you are an abuser**

Very few people will admit that they are abusing their partner. This is one of the reasons this radio show has been produced. We are not asking anyone to admit that they are violent or aggressive to their partner, we just want you to listen to this show. The time you spend now listening to this could help you stop or reduce your violent behaviour.

The most important thing to remember is that you can control your anger so that it does not hurt anyone else. Ask yourself why you are hurting your partner. Why are you not picking on the biggest and strongest man in your community? Many people say that they cannot control themselves when they get angry. But being abusive to someone who is weaker than you, rather than being abusive to the strongest person in your community shows that you do have some control over your anger.

### **How can you stop yourself from being violent?**

We have five steps to help you stop being violent:

1. Admit that you have a problem.
2. Make a commitment to yourself that you will stop.
3. Find a counsellor or support group.
4. Contact a social worker or Lifeline.
5. Learn more about relationships

We will look at each of these points in turn.

#### **Admit that you have a problem.**

The most important thing to do is admit that you have a problem. If you want to change, it has to be something that you want to do for yourself, not because anyone else asks you. You will not be able to change unless you admit to yourself that you have a problem.

#### **Make a commitment to yourself.**

Once you have admitted that you have a problem, make a commitment to yourself. Say to yourself "I will not hit, I will not be violent". You might want to write this down and sign and date the paper. Whenever you feel violent you can look at it and remind yourself of your commitment.

Another way of making a commitment is to stick a photograph of you and your partner somewhere that will remind you that you want to have a strong and loving relationship. Or you could wear a bracelet or ring as a reminder of the band of love that you share with your partner.

**Find a counsellor or support group.**

Talking about your problem with someone else can help you to handle your feelings and aggression. There may not be a support group or a counsellor in your area. If there is not one, you could organise a group yourself. It does not have to be labelled as a group for people who abuse their partners, it could just be called a social group. You could use the group to discuss issues such as aggression and anger management, and learn from each other about how people deal with relationships.

**Contact a social worker or Lifeline.**

Social workers in some parts of Namibia are already running programmes for people who use violence against their partners. Lifeline is a 24 hour telephone counselling service. The Windhoek number for Lifeline is: 061 232221 If you feel that you cannot talk to someone you know, or are feeling very violent and don't know what to do, you might find that speaking to a trained counsellor will help.

*Note to presenter: If you are presenting this show outside Windhoek, check to see if there is a Lifeline office closer to you.*

**Learn more about relationships.**

Learn more about relationships and gender issues. There are many groups in Namibia who run workshops and training sessions.

These five steps provide some information about what you can do if you are an abuser. In the next show we will talk about what you can do if you are a victim of domestic violence.

## **Radio show 5: Domestic Violence – Part 2**

*Note to presenter:*

*This is the second section of the domestic violence show. It is important that these shows are given together. If there has been too much time between the shows, it might be worth repeating the introductory information about domestic violence from Part 1.*

### **What to do if you are a victim of domestic violence**

It can be very difficult for people who are being abused by their partner to admit to this abuse. Instead excuses for the partner may be given, such as “he is tired tonight”, or “it is my fault because I cannot keep the children quiet”. However, it is not your fault if you are being beaten by your partner.

We have 5 suggestions to help people fight domestic abuse:

1. Take it seriously.
2. Make a plan for your safety.
3. Join a support group.
4. Contact a social worker or Childline/Lifeline.
5. Use the legal system.

### **Take it seriously.**

Let your abuser know that all types of domestic violence, whether they are physical or emotional, are serious and dangerous. Sometimes it can help if the person who is being abused is able to tell the abuser that the violence is not acceptable. This can be important for people in cultures where men think that they have a right to abuse their partners.

Some people may not feel able to tell their partner to stop. As a first step, try telling a friend or trusted person that your partner is being violent towards you. It is very important that you get support from people around you.



**Make a plan for your safety.**

You may not want to leave your partner. But, you might want to consider making a plan to escape if things become dangerous. Think about where you could go to stay or who you could call. You might want to pack a bag of clothes together with important papers such as your ID and your health passport so that you can leave quickly. Include other people in your plan for safety, such as a relative or friend.

**Join or start a support group.**

Consider attending a support group to help give you courage. In a large town you might be able to find a self-defence class to attend or a group where women come together to discuss their relationships. If there is no such thing in your area, consider starting a group. You might be surprised to find out how many people want to join. Together you will feel stronger and this may help you to deal with your partner at home.

**Contact a social worker or Childline/Lifeline**

A social worker may be able to give you personal counselling, or refer you to a specialised counsellor, Childline and Lifeline provide 24 hour telephone counselling services. The Windhoek number is 061 232221 If you feel that you cannot talk to someone you know, consider speaking to a trained counselling who can give you advice and support.

*Note to presenter: If you are presenting this show outside Windhoek, check to see if there is a Lifeline office closer to you.*

## **Use the legal system**

Domestic violence is against the law. Your partner's abuse against you is almost always a crime. Under the law, someone who is experiencing domestic violence can:

- Make an application for a protection order at a Magistrates' Court.
- Go to the police. If the abuse amounts to a crime, such as hitting which is assault, rape, or stabbing which may be attempted murder, you can lay a charge with the police.
- You can ask the police to give the abuser a formal warning about their behaviour if you do not want to lay a charge.

You can go to the police and apply for a protection order at the same time. We will now discuss how you can apply for a protection order.

To apply for a protection order you need to go to the Magistrate's Court. You do not need a lawyer, and the clerk of the court will help you to fill in the forms. You should take any witnesses who have seen the abuse or evidence that you may have - such as medical records. If the Magistrate approves the application, you will be given an interim protection order that same day. An interim protection order is only temporary. It is there to protect you until there is an enquiry. At the enquiry, the Magistrate will listen to both sides of the story and will decide whether or not to grant a final protection order.

All protection orders say that the abuser must stop committing domestic violence. Each protection order is specific to the situation. It might ask the abuser to hand over weapons to the police. It might order the abuser to stay away from your home and workplace. It might ask the abuser to pay rent for the victim to live elsewhere and to pay maintenance for any children the couple have together.

Some parts of the protection order, such as ordering no-contact between the partners, can remain in force for up to 3 years. Other parts of a protection order, such as maintenance orders, last for only 6 months. This is because a protection order is an emergency measure. It is not meant to substitute for a normal maintenance order. You will need to apply to the maintenance court for a maintenance order if you need one in the long term.

A person who is being abused has many options, such as telling the abuser to stop, seeking help and support from friends and seeking counselling from a social worker or Childline/Lifeline. The law is also there to protect the victim, with either a protection order or a criminal charge with the police.

Further information on domestic violence can be obtained from the police, the Magistrate's Court or the Legal Assistance Centre.

## **Radio show 6:**

### **Supporting someone who has been abused**

*Note to presenter:*

*The aim of this show is to give advice on how to support someone who has been abused.*

Becoming aware of and trying to understand the feelings of another person is called empathy. Empathy involves trying to understand the world of an abused person and what this person is feeling. This often means that you have to suspend your own judgements of what is right or wrong for the time you are speaking with the abused person, as well as your own feelings at that time.

There is a difference between sympathy and empathy. Sympathy is a feeling followed by an action to remove the discomfort, pain or distress. If overused, it can lead to pity, which may prevent the other person from utilising his or her own coping skills. The difference between pity and empathy is that we can feel empathy with a person in respect of a range of feelings, whereas pity means feeling sorry for a person who is suffering.

Empathy has 2 main components:

1) A non-judgemental attitude

This involves genuine acceptance and respect of the abused person, no matter how different that person's values and beliefs are from yours. Never reject them even in the smallest of ways (this includes non-verbal ways).

For example, if you are opposed to same-sex relationships, what would you do if a lesbian woman came to you for help after she was raped by her partner? If you had a non-judgemental attitude you would listen to her and help her even though you do not believe in same-sex relationships.

2) A genuine attitude

This means being honest about your willingness to help, being yourself, and being natural.

**"I survived this torture which left me paralysed for years. That's what that night was all about, mutilation, more than violence, through sex. I really do feel as though I was psychologically mutilated that night and now I'm trying to put the pieces back together again."** *Tori Amos, songwriter*

Every person responds differently to abuse, although there are some feelings that are often common, such as fear, distress, humiliation, anger, confusion, numbness and guilt. The feelings a person has may vary from week-to-week, day-to-day or even minute-to-minute.

**"Words seemed to make it visible. But, speaking, even when it embarrassed me, also slowly freed me from the shame I felt. The more I struggled to speak, the less power the rape, and its aftermath, seemed to have over me."**

*Nancy Raine, in her book After Silence: Rape and My Journey Back, 1998*

It is important that when someone has been attacked, he or she is allowed to show his or her emotions without fear of being laughed at or corrected. It is important that the survivor is allowed to talk and feel understood rather than being told that others know best and being rushed to "get over it".

The survivor should be allowed to rebuild his or her life at whatever pace is necessary to recover. Abuse is something that is forced on a person against their will. People who have been abused need to rebuild feelings of safety, trust, control and self-worth, all things which are often lost through an assault.

**"It was a very long time after that before I was able to be with anyone again. And it has never been the same as it was before. But I am finding that vulnerability gives me great strength, because I'm not hiding anymore."**

*Tori Amos, songwriter*

The following are some tips on "DOs" and "DON'Ts" to help you help the person you love through the trauma of abuse. This information is taken from a leaflet provided by the Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Counseling Service in the UK.

**Don't criticise.**

Don't criticise a survivor of abuse for being where they were at the time, or for not resisting, not screaming, not talking about it earlier...or for anything else. Anybody, anywhere, can be a survivor of abuse, regardless of age or sex.

Myths about women "asking for it" or men being "unable to help themselves" are well known. The abused person may already feel partly responsible for the abuse. Criticising the abused person can increase these feelings of guilt. It is important that the blame is placed firmly where it belongs - with the person who committed the assault.

**Do understand.**

Listen and try to understand why the abused person was unable to prevent the situation from happening.

**Do listen to their reasons.**

If the survivor of the abuse did not immediately talk about the abuse, listen to the reasons for not speaking out about the situation. He or she may have been scared of your reaction, may have felt ashamed or embarrassed to tell you or may have been trying to protect you from the upset of knowing. These are only some of the reasons why someone might not want to talk immediately.

**Don't over-simplify.**

Try not to over-simplify what has happened by saying things like "it wasn't that bad", "never mind", or "forget about it". Let the abused person say exactly how he or she feels and give them time to express their thoughts fully.

**Do reassure the abused person that you will provide emotional support.**

Reassure the abused person that you will offer your support. Make it clear that you will be around to talk now or in the future. Ask if they know any other friends they might like to talk to, or if they would like to see a counselor, and offer to help them organise this if they'd like you to. But remember not to pressure a survivor of abuse into anything they don't feel ready for.

**Do help the abused person to feel safe.**

Do what you can to help the survivor of abuse feel safe and take part in normal life again, but only at their own pace and in ways they feel are best. Knowing they can talk to you about feeling unsafe and can ask for your companionship when they need it, will be reassuring as they tackle difficult things.

This radio programme has covered only a small number of ways that you can help a survivor of abuse. There are many other things that you can do as well. You might want to look for more information on how you can help people who have been abused, if this is something that affects you. Contact a social worker, a Woman Child Abuse Centre or an NGO which works with domestic violence in your area.

## **Radio show 7: Assertiveness**

*Note for presenter:*

*The aim of this radio programme is to teach the listeners how to be assertive.*

The way we behave is often based on how we were treated in the past and how we have been taught to behave by our families. Domestic violence, rape or child abuse can occur because the abuser has been taught to behave in that way.

Gender-based violence is destructive, as we discussed on a previous show, and it needs to be stopped. This radio show is about assertiveness – a type of behaviour that can help deal with conflict and situations of gender-based violence. Assertiveness is a way of behaving that respects your own rights as well as those of others. Being assertive does not mean you have to be aggressive, it is simply about being firm about a situation.

Everybody has rights. Rights are basic entitlements that every person has, such as the right to own property, the right to choose a religion and the right to education. The Namibian Constitution is a good place to look at the most fundamental rights that people in Namibia have.

It is important that every person in Namibia stands up for their rights, and for the rights of others if necessary. The law is clear about what is right and what is wrong, and people need to have the confidence to stand up for their rights. The aim of this show is to teach people how to be assertive.



Listen to the following story and think about how you would react:

Emily is at a party with her boyfriend Mark. He is drinking many beers. He starts to get annoyed that Emily is not drinking. He starts saying rude comments about Emily such as “You are a stupid woman. You do not even know how to have fun”.

How should Emily respond?

**Pause**

Emily could say that just because she does not want to drink does not mean that she cannot have a good time. She could also ask Mark to stop drinking. This would be assertive behaviour because she is not going to be intimidated by Mark.

People deal with conflict in different ways. Some people become aggressive, while others try to avoid the situation. Aggressive people use shouting, insults and personal attacks to get their way. Some people are indirectly aggressive. They may make others feel guilty to get what they want.

A better way to deal with a situation of conflict is to be assertive. An assertive person states their opinions and feelings calmly, clearly and honestly. An assertive person is not dependent on the approval of others. An assertive person can still be polite and respectful, but has the confidence to speak out.

In many cultures, women and girls are brought up to accept dominating or violent behaviour from other people. It can be very difficult to say ‘no,’ particularly to someone who has more authority. A woman may also feel that she cannot say ‘no’ to her husband because she believes that he is the ‘head of the household’.

Being assertive does not mean that the man cannot be the head of the household if that is what the couple wants. It simply means that the wife can

state her opinions clearly and honestly, and with confidence. Being assertive can be particularly important in a situation where there can be no compromise –for example if someone wants to have sex with you without a condom and you do not want to.

A person may also need to be assertive in a relationship if there is an imbalance of power, perhaps if a husband is controlling all the money and not allowing the woman to make any decisions about how it is spent. If his way of controlling the money makes the woman suffer, his behaviour could be called a type of domestic violence. Economic abuse can be as serious as physical abuse.

Listen to these examples. One shows assertiveness, the other does not. Can you tell which is which?

Woman:	William, my friend Sarah has asked me to visit her this evening. Do you mind if I go to see her?
Man:	Ruth, you have not cleaned my clothes yet, you must stay at home
Woman:	I have been working all day and I need a rest. I am doing washing tomorrow morning and your clothes will be ready for when you need them next week
Man:	That is true. Ok, go and visit Sarah.

Woman:	William, my friend Sarah has asked me to visit her this evening. Do you mind if I go to see her?
Man:	Ruth, you have not cleaned my clothes yet you must stay at home
Woman:	<i>Said in a soft voice</i> Oh but I er um she is really upset because she was beaten by her husband today and needs someone to talk to
Man:	Do you want me to beat you are well?
Woman:	I er um, I can see her tomorrow. It doesn't matter.

In the first example, Ruth was assertive. She was confident that she could go out and she had a solution to the problem William had, which she calmly explained. In the second example, Ruth did not stand up to her partner, even though she has a good reason to visit her friend.

Decisions about sex are another good example to illustrate assertiveness. If a person says no to sex, it should be understood that the “no” is final. Unfortunately some people do not believe that ‘no means no’ and they keep pressing a person to have sex. Being assertive can help make it very clear that ‘no really does mean no.’ Listen to the different ways no can be said:

*Instructions for the presenter:*

*Say ‘no’:*

- *Quietly (very soft and unconvincing)*
- *Unsurely (in a wavering way)*
- *Aggressively (in an angry way)*
- *Assertively (calmly but firmly)*

Can you hear the difference in the way the “no” was spoken? The first time it was said quietly, then it was said unsurely. Both of these ways are not assertive. Then it was said aggressively, this is not assertive either. The best way to say no was the final way it was spoken. This was an assertive “no”. The “no” was spoken firmly and confidently.

The following role play is another example of how to be assertive:

Mother:	Our daughter is going to start school in two month’s time. I need you to give me N\$200 next month to help pay our child’s school fees and school uniform. I will need a regular payment of N\$100 per month to help maintain her.
Father:	<i>(Aggressively)</i> Why should I help? You have a job and a boyfriend!
Mother:	It’s YOUR legal responsibility to help me maintain her. I need N\$200 next month and N\$100 each month after that.

Father:	But I can't afford that!
Mother:	<i>(Calmly)</i> I know how much you earn. You can afford it. If you keep refusing, I will go to the Maintenance Court.
Father:	OK. But don't keep running back to me asking me to give you more than that.
Mother:	Thank you. This money will help our daughter.

In the play the mother asked for what she needs specifically and directly. Even though she received an aggressive response at first, she did not give up. She kept calm and was assertive. She did not mix her statement with other unrelated issues. She told the father what would happen if he refused and she stuck to the statement of what she wanted and repeated it.

This repetition is called the “broken record” technique – just like when a CD gets stuck and you hear the same phrase or piece of music over and over again. The broken record technique uses a short phrase or sentence to make a request. The request is repeated as often as necessary. You can use slightly different words each time and you can acknowledge the feelings of the other person if necessary, but repeat the request.

When you are making a request you should slow down the speed of your speech. The slower you speak (without being too slow!), the more confident you sound, because when people are scared they often speak very fast.

Your body language also affects what you are trying to communicate. If you are not clear in your body language – for example, if you say “no I do not want any more food” but at the same time hold out your plate for more, you are confusing people. You should try to make sure that your body language agrees with what you are saying.

Assertive behaviour needs practice. To summarise what we have learnt in this show, listen to the following list. It is a list of your assertive rights.

- 1 You have the right to ask for what you want (realising that the other person has the right to say “No”).
- 2 You have the right to refuse requests.
- 3 You have the right to have an opinion, feelings and emotions, and you have the right to express them appropriately.
- 4 You have the right to make your own decisions and to cope with the consequences.
- 5 You have the right to change your mind.
- 6 You have the right to make mistakes and be responsible for them.
- 7 You have the right to say “I don’t know”, and “I don’t understand”, or “I don’t know how I feel” or “I need more time to think” without apology.
- 8 You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.
- 9 You have the right to choose not to assert yourself if you do not want to.
- 10 You have the right to privacy.

Good luck with practicing and stay strong.

## Radio show 8: Alcohol

*Note to presenter:*

*Alcohol is a common excuse for violence. The aim of this show is to use a story to illustrate some of the consequences of alcohol abuse. The aim of the story is to be funny but it has a serious message.*

Ahhh, finally Friday night. I've been waiting for tonight all week. Tonight, I'm going out. I'm gonna have some drinks and get some girls. I hear my friend pull up to my house. I run outside and jump into the car. We head to the nearest bar. We walk in and walk up to the counter. I quickly order a drink, just to have something to hold, and then slowly look around the room to see which ladies have come out tonight. Nobody yet. Oh well, it's still early. The girls have plenty of time to get here. As I'm finishing my first drink, a group of girls walk through the door. I elbow my friend and he turns around. We check them out together. They were not looking good. Not only did they look older than my mother, they were dressed like they had just come from working in a mine or something. Come on ladies, ever heard of makeup? Or high heels? I turn back to the bar and order another drink. I notice the group of women sit down in the corner of the bar and start chatting. I finish my second drink and order another. Still no good-looking girls come in. As I finish my third drink, I turn around and watch the women in the corner. You know, come to think of it, they don't look so old. The one closest to us in blue looks like she might be my mother's age – not older. But still, it would be like dating one of my mother's friends. So instead I get another drink. This one goes down nicely. I start to feel light and a little fuzzy, but really confident. Tonight, I'm king of the world. After being king for about 30 minutes, I order another beer and turn around to survey my kingdom. Leaning back against the bar, I notice that the woman in blue actually has really nice eyes. I think. I can't really see them that well, plus they're covered by glasses, but I imagine they're nice. I bet one more beer will really make them sparkle! So I have another. Turning around this time, I realize that I was right –

those eyes were sparkling now! And she wasn't that old. I bet she was even younger than my mother. Maybe even just a couple of years older than me. Should I go talk to her? I ask my friend. He laughs and says I've had too much to drink. That there is an *old* woman, he says. But I don't agree, just look at her! That is a *fine* woman! I'm a little embarrassed to walk up to her. I think I need another drink. That will give me courage. After downing another, I decide I'm ready. With a new drink in hand, I head toward her. But for some reason she keeps weaving around. Now she's on the right, now the left, now the right again. Stop moving woman! Finally I reach her. What do I say? Do I buy her a drink? Doesn't matter, whatever I say will be fine, because I'm the king of the world and no woman would reject me. So I try to ask her if I can buy her a drink. She turns her head toward me and a small smile comes to her lips. Honey, she says, you've had too much to drink. I'm going to tell your mother. My mother? How could she know my mother? Young attractive girls like her wouldn't be talking to my mother. But you know, she does look a little familiar. Where have I seen her before? Was it at church? It may have been at my house. Maybe a party or something? But I don't have parties. The only person at home who invites people over is my mother. Hmm. I push the thought aside – it is taking too much effort. I ask the girl again if I can buy her a drink. Now the smile gets even bigger, but she just says no. No? How could she say no to me, the king of the world? I'm confused. I try to tell her that she can't say no, that I know what's best for her and that is to be with me. Wow! I didn't believe I could be so bold. But when I see her reaction, I think maybe it wasn't the best decision in the world. The smile goes away. She slowly stands up and turns towards me. Wow she's tall! And she looks pretty strong. Maybe I shouldn't have messed with her. But no! I'm strong too, in fact, I'm sure I can take her. If she says no one more time, that's it! At that moment, I feel someone grab my arm and pull me away. No man, I'm yelling, let me at her. But my friend is just laughing as he drags me back to the bar. Cool it, he's saying. She's not for you. How can she not be for me? I'll show her what happens when somebody says no to me! My friend keeps laughing. She'll beat you in a fight any day, he's saying. No way, I yell. Look at these muscles. I pull up my sleeve and flex my muscles for him. This only

makes him laugh harder. I can fit my fingers around your arm, he says. No way! I show the bartender and the guy sitting on the other side of me. Look at my muscles I tell them. I don't understand why they're not impressed. I'll show them! I just need a couple more drinks. I ask the bartender for another and he slides it down the bar. I drink it down fast and have another. And another. I drink half of this last beer in one gulp. My eyes start to swim. I put the bar back on the bottle and lean towards my friend on my right. Wait, my left is on my friend. Will he pay for my money, I ask, I'm out of beer. I beer down the rest of my gulp and ask the drink for another bartender. That show will really woman me now! But where has she gone? On my friend is my right and in front of my behind is the tender-bar. She is there, behind my front! My drink won't hold my hand and my forward won't move feet. Go woman towards the! I feel my throat rise into my stomach. Fast is coming the face toward my ground. I upstand and again I toward her walk. Closer. Closer. My throat stomachs higher in my rising. Funny feeling. Feeling funny. In my mouth what's that? Now on her shoes it is. What have I done? Oh, the shame. Why did I beer so many drinks? Now this beautiful idiot is looking at me like a woman. I bar slowly toward the walk. I friend to my turn and say, take me drunk, I'm home.

*Note to presenter:*

*You might want to ask listeners to contribute to the show about their opinions on alcohol abuse and what they think can be done to tackle the issue.*