UNDERSTANDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Case Study

I have been married to my husband for ten years. I became pregnant with my first child shortly after we were married. We now have three children, ages nine, seven and six. Even from the beginning, my husband has made all of the decisions for our family. He told me that my job was to be a good wife—to take care of the children and to cook and clean for him.

The first time he hit me was when I was pregnant with my first child. We had come home from my mother's house and he was angry about something. I think I had forgotten to buy a kind of food item that he wanted, and then he slapped me. I thought it was just an isolated event. I never thought he would do it again.

Since then, he has hit, kicked, choked, slapped and burned me. He does not hurt me physically that often, though, maybe only once a month. Mainly, when I do something he doesn't like, such as visiting my mother or talking on the phone to a friend, he calls me a prostitute and other bad names, and tells me that he will take the children and go to his mother's home if I am not a good wife. He refuses to let me take a job, even though all of our children are in school, and I would be qualified for many different kinds of jobs. He does not let me have any money, except for a little for grocery shopping.

He is very jealous and possessive. A few months ago, he became very angry because I was late getting home from the store. He accused me of seeing another man and punched a hole in the door between the kitchen and the living room. My sons were there and saw this, and he yelled at them to go to their rooms. I recently overheard him talking to my seven-year-old son. He was asking if my son ever saw me talking to "other men." He told my son that I was crazy and that my son should watch me and tell him if I did anything strange.

Another time, we went to a party given by a friend of his from work. I met the wife of one of the people my husband works with. We spent a long time talking. After some time, my husband came up to me, grabbed my arm so tightly it hurt and left bruises, and whispered in my ear, "We're leaving." Just by the look he gave me, I knew he was angry that I spent so much time talking with the woman, and that he would likely beat me when we got home. When we got home, he smashed a framed picture I have of myself with a group of my friends at the university, before I was married, by throwing it at the wall near where I was standing. He told me that I "knew" what would happen if I continued to disobey him.

A few months ago, my husband came home late with friends and made me get up to cook them food. He started joking with his friends about how much I weighed, and that I was like all other women who let themselves go once they got married. He called me many bad names. After his friends left, he woke me up again and forced me to have sex with him, even though I didn't want to and was feeling sick.

Recently, I tried to talk to my husband about the abuse. He got very angry. He said he doesn't hurt me any more than is to be expected of a husband and that in fact he thinks that he is too nice to me. He said that if he did happen to be a bit harsh with me sometimes, it was my fault anyway for not being a good wife and letting myself become so unattractive.

I love my husband, but I do not think I can continue to live with him. He has threatened to kill me, the children, and himself if I leave him, and I don't have anywhere to go. I don't have a job or any money, and would not be able to find another place to stay even if I did leave.

This scenario is fictional. Some aspects of the scenario are based on descriptions of domestic violence contained in reports by Minnesota Advocates For Human Rights, available at http://www.mnadvocates.org; the Domestic Violence Centre, available at http://www.dvc.org.nz; and the Family Violence Prevention Fund, available at http://www.fvpf.org.

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Do's and Don'ts of Handling Domestic Violence Victims

DO	DON'T
• Explain the services available in a simple and direct manner.	• Assume that battered women know about their options and the services available.
• Prioritize the victim's needs.	• Overload the victim with services and decisions.
• Express concern for their safety and that of their children. Empower the victim with information that increases their choices.	• Ever ask the victim why they stay. This is a shaming remark, which insinuates the victim is at fault. Leaving does not always solve the problem.
• Be aware of your own attitude, experiences and reactions to abuse. It is appropriate to disagree with the victim's behavior and/or attitude while remaining objective, empathetic and understanding.	• Impose your own values and make quick judgments. Your reaction to the victim's responses will be communicated strongly.
• Help the victim understand the danger and repetitiveness of the violence.	• Expect the victim to exaggerate or invent the violence.
• Encourage the victim to take small steps, which will promote independence and build self-confidence.	• Try to rescue the victim.
• Take into consideration cultural values and beliefs.	• Lump all victims into one category.
• Challenge any efforts on the victim's part to justify the abuse through religion.	• Reject the woman's religion or ignore references to religious beliefs.
• Convey fears for the victim's safety and respect their reasons for staying. Separation from the abuser can be the most dangerous time for the victim.	• Convey disappointment if the victim chooses to stay. This can elicit feelings of failure and worthlessness.
• Define your role as a court official; be realistic about what you can and cannot do with regards to the relationship.	• Get caught up in the role of marriage counselor, mediator and/or referee.
• Recognize that the victim's reactions and responses may change frequently and be unpredictable. Reactions will range from resistance to cooperation.	• Become cynical with the victim's failure to take the action or respond the way you believe they should. Your frustration can result in victim blaming and impact your ability to intervene effectively.
• Express your concerns if the situation is lethal and take appropriate action.	• Ignore or minimize the potential dangerousness of the situation.
• Be patient and honest with the victim.	• Expect instant decision-making by the victim or contribute to unrealistic expectations.
• Emphasize the abuser's responsibility for his/her own choices.	• Let the victim blame themselves or other factors for the abuse.
• Expect the "honeymoon" period to emerge following an abusive episode.	• Delay in responding to a reported incident of violence. Timing is a key factor in gathering evidentiary information.
• Challenge the victim's explanation of the incident and openly ask if their partner is hurting them. The approach must be sensitive and not threatening in nature.	• Accept unexplained injuries accompanied by implausible reasons.
• Be honest with the victim, especially about confidentiality issues.	• Make a promise you can't keep.

DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT

202 East Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-722-2781
www.duluth-model.org

Power and Control Wheel Enactments

Power and Control

Abusers believe they have a right to control their partners by:

- Telling them what to do and expecting obedience
- Using force to maintain power and control over partners
- Feeling their partners have no right to challenge their desire for power and control
- Feeling justified making the victim comply
- Blaming the abuse on the partner and not accepting responsibility for wrongful acts.

The characteristics shown in the wheel are examples of how this power and control are demonstrated and enacted against the victim.

Isolation

- Limiting outside involvement
- Making another avoid people/friends/family by deliberately embarrassing or humiliating them in front of others
- Expecting another to report every move and activity
- Restricting use of the car
- Moving residences

Emotional Abuse

- Putting another down/name-calling
- Ignoring or discounting activities and accomplishments
- Withholding approval or affection
- Making another feel as if they are crazy in public or through private humiliation
- Unreasonable jealousy and suspicion
- Playing mind games

Economic Abuse

- Preventing another from getting or keeping a job
- Withholding funds
- Spending family income without consent and/or making the partner struggle to pay bills
- Not letting someone know of or have access to family/personal income
- Forcing someone to ask for basic necessities

Intimidation

- Driving recklessly to make another feel threatened or endangered
- Destroying property or cherished possessions
- Making another afraid by using looks/actions/gestures
- Throwing objects as an expression of anger to make another feel threatened
- Displaying weapons

Using Children or Pets

- Threatening to take the children away
- Making the partner feel guilty about the children
- Abusing children or pets to punish the partner
- Using the children to relay messages

Source: This *Wheel of Abuse* information is provided courtesy of Kim Ever of dianon2.net

Power and Control Wheel Enactments

Using Privilege

- Treating another like a servant
- Making all the big decisions
- Being the one to define male and female roles
- Acting like the master or queen of the castle

Sexual Abuse

- Sex on demand or sexual withholding
- Physical assaults during sexual intercourse
- Spousal rapes or non-consensual sex
- Sexually degrading language
- Denying reproductive freedom

Threats

- Threats of violence against significant third parties
- Threats to commit physical or sexual harm
- Threats to commit property destruction
- Threats to commit suicide or murder

Physical Abuse

- Biting/scratching
- Slapping/punching
- Kicking/stomping
- Throwing objects at another
- Locking another in a closet or utilizing other confinement
- Sleep interference and/or deliberately exhausting the partner with unreasonable demands and lack of rest
- Deprivation of heat or food
- Shoving another down steps or into objects
- Assaults with weapons such as knives/guns/other objects

Source: This *Wheel of Abuse* information is provided courtesy of Kim Ever of dianon2.net

CARING FOR YOU

SELF-CARE SUGGESTIONS

BE AWARE

Be upfront about how you're doing. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself experiencing symptoms or signs of stress.

Signs of Stress

Irritation or Anger	Trouble Concentrating
Anxious/Nervous	Sad or Depressed
Overwhelmed	Lack of Motivation
Lack of Energy	Feeling Uncertain
Trouble Sleeping	Denial

Work-Related Factors

Concern of Exposure
Personal & Family Needs
Managing New Duties
Guilt
Adapting to New Processes/ Technologies/Work space

BE ENGAGED

Here are some ways to take care of you, to de-stress.

Body	Mind	Spirit
Sleep	Purpose	Draw on Your Belief System
Physical Activity/Exercise	Routine	Set Priorities
Eating Healthy	Stay busy	Make Connections
Avoid Tobacco/Alcohol/Drugs	Limit Media	Support Others
Relax & Recharge	Positive Thoughts	
	Remember You Matter	

GET HELP

When these signs and symptoms last for several days, make you miserable, or cause problems in your daily life, it's time to ask for help.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Deer Oaks EAP Services	
Phone Number	866-327-2400
Website	deeroakseap.com
User & Password	NCAOC

North Carolina Resources

NC 2-1-1	Simply Dial 2-1-1
NC HopeLine	877-235-4525

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255

juno.nccourts.org/human-resources/employee-assistance-program

CARING FOR YOU

SELF-CARE SUGGESTIONS

No one alive today has lived through a time like this COVID-19 pandemic. **Everyone** is affected in some way, and everyone is subject to stressors at a time like this. Stressors can come from anywhere and everywhere. For example, being overworked; having no work; being isolated; having too much family time with no breathing room; feeling anxious about having to deal with the public; having personal or family health concerns; money concerns; and loss of hope for the future are all potential sources of stress. African Americans, and other friends and colleagues of color, are faced with the compounded stressors of health disparities and structural inequities. Everyone is different, but no one is immune. Even the people who cheerfully say, "I'm fine," are affected, as well.

During this time, it helps to remember two things. First, the justice system will survive and come through this pandemic, hopefully as a stronger and more equitable institution. Second, your role in making that happen is critical; the work you do matters. It helps us preserve a system of justice that everyone counts on, whether they use it or not. Thank you for doing this work.

Whatever your personal situation, you should be engaging in some self-care. There are many aspects of this situation that cannot be controlled. Practicing self-care is not one of them.

During this pandemic, it is critical that you recognize what stress looks like, take steps to build your resilience and manage job stress, and know where to go if you need additional help. In addition to increased stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, and loneliness are common. And mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can develop or worsen.

This document provides some strategies to help promote resiliency and wellness. The material is based on documents prepared by the Mayo Clinic and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Links to materials from both sources, as well as other helpful resources, are included.

COMMON SIGNS OF STRESS

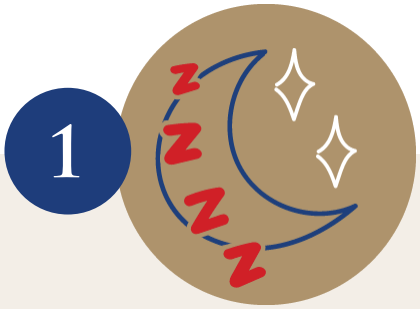
- Feeling irritation, anger, or being in denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, or anxious
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating

WORK-RELATED STRESS FACTORS

- Concern about the risk of being exposed to COVID-19 at work
- Need to take care of new personal and family needs while working
- Managing new duties
- Lack of access to the safety equipment
- Feeling that you are not doing your part or guilt because others have to be on frontlines
- Having to learn new technologies
- Adapting to a different workspace and/or work schedule

Suggestions for Self Care

TAKE CARE OF **YOUR BODY**



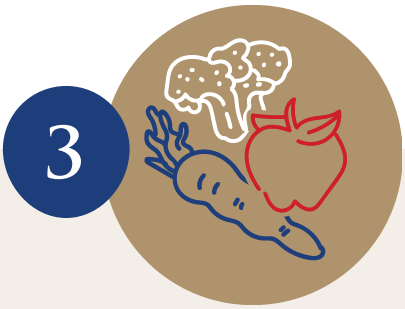
GET ENOUGH SLEEP.

Go to bed and get up at the same times each day. Stick close to your typical schedule, even if you're staying at home.

LIMIT SCREEN TIME.

Turn off electronic devices for some time each day, including 30 minutes before bedtime.

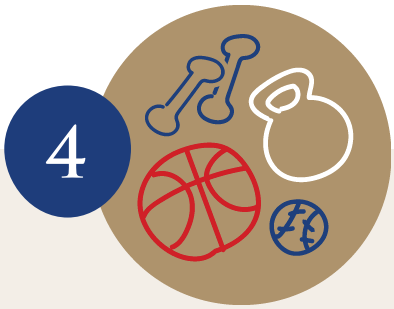
Make a conscious effort to spend less time in front of a screen — television, tablet, computer, and phone.



EAT HEALTHY.

Choose a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar.

Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress and anxiety.



PARTICIPATE IN REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood.

Find an activity that includes movement, such as dance or exercise apps. Get outside in an area that makes it easy to maintain social and physical distancing. It can be as simple as walking.

Suggestions for Self Care

TAKE CARE OF **YOUR BODY**

5

AVOID TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS.

Because COVID-19 affects the lungs, the risk to smokers and vapers is increased.

Using alcohol to try to cope can make matters worse and reduce your coping skills.

Avoid taking drugs to cope, unless your doctor prescribed medications for you.

6

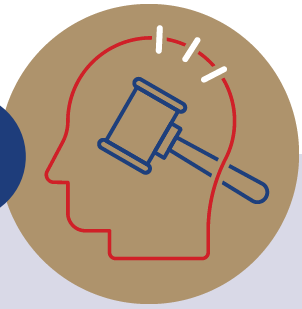
RELAX AND RECHARGE.

Set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to quiet your mind and reduce anxiety. Many people benefit from practices such as deep breathing, tai chi, yoga, or meditation.

Soak in a bubble bath, listen to music, or read or listen to a book — whatever helps you relax. Select a technique that works for you and practice it regularly. There are many sources online for meditation to assist you in starting some of these practices.

TAKE CARE OF **YOUR MIND**

1



REMEMBER THE REASONS YOU WORK IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

The work you do is vital to the functioning of our state. Without a justice system, a democracy cannot function. The importance of your work hasn't changed. And this crisis will end.

What you do matters, no matter how stressful it is right now; it is helpful to remind yourself of that.

2

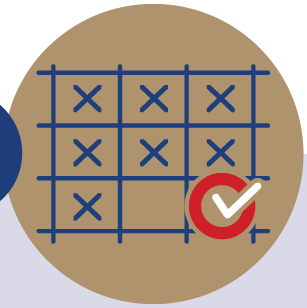
LIMIT EXPOSURE TO NEWS MEDIA.

Constant news about COVID-19 from all types of media can heighten fears about the disease. Limit social media that may expose you to rumors and false information. Limit reading, hearing, or watching other news, but keep up to date on national and local recommendations. Look for reliable sources of authority such as the NC DHHS or the CDC.

Suggestions for Self Care

TAKE CARE OF **YOUR MIND**

3

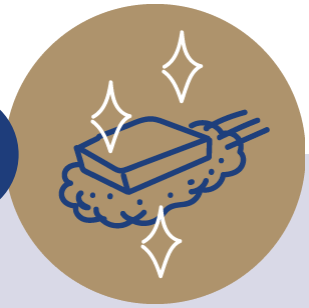


KEEP YOUR REGULAR ROUTINE.

Maintaining a regular schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise.

Set aside time for activities you enjoy. Predictability can make you feel more in control.

4

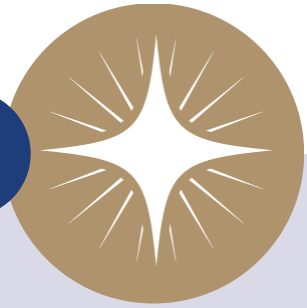


STAY BUSY.

A distraction can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression.

Enjoy hobbies that you can do at home, identify a new project, or clean out that infamous closet or drawer.

5



USE YOUR MORAL COMPASS OR SPIRITUAL LIFE FOR SUPPORT.

If you are part of a faith community or tradition, seek out the sources of comfort and support it provides.

If you draw strength from a belief system, let it bring you comfort during difficult times.

6

FOCUS ON POSITIVE THOUGHTS.

Choose to focus on the positive things in your life, instead of dwelling on how bad you feel.

Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. Ask yourself, “What else is true?” Maintain a sense of hope, work to accept changes as they occur, and try to keep problems in perspective.

Suggestions for Self Care

TAKE CARE OF **YOUR MIND**

SET PRIORITIES.

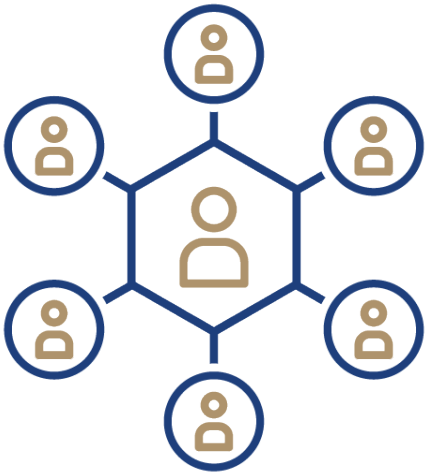
Don't become overwhelmed by your to-do list. Set reasonable and achievable goals each day.

Give yourself credit for positive steps and recognize that some days will be better than others.

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

MAKE CONNECTIONS.

If you need to stay at home and distance yourself from others, avoid social isolation. Find time each day to make virtual connections by email, texts, phone, or FaceTime or similar apps. If you're working remotely from home, ask your co-workers how they're doing and share coping tips. Enjoy virtual socializing and talking to those in your home.



DO SOMETHING FOR OTHERS.

Find purpose in helping the people around you. For example, email, text, or call to check on your friends, family members, and neighbors — especially those who are elderly. If you know someone who can't get out, ask if there's something needed, such as groceries or a prescription picked up, for instance. But be sure to follow guidelines on social distancing and group meetings.

SUPPORT A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND.

If a family member or friend needs to be isolated for safety reasons or gets sick and needs to be quarantined, come up with ways to stay in contact—electronically, by phone, or by mail.

Suggestions for Self Care

GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT

Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling helpless, sad, angry, irritable, hopeless, anxious, or afraid. You may have trouble concentrating on typical tasks, changes in appetite, body aches and pains, or difficulty sleeping, or you may struggle to face routine chores.

When these signs and symptoms last for several days in a row, make you miserable, and cause problems in your daily life so that you find it hard to carry out normal responsibilities, it's time to ask for help.

Hoping mental health problems such as anxiety or depression will go away on their own can lead to worsening symptoms.

If you have concerns or if you experience worsening of mental health symptoms, ask for help when you need it, and be upfront about how you're doing. To get help you may want to:

Contact the Employee Assistance Program provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts through Deer Oaks EAP Services, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Contact information is provided below.

Call or use social media to contact a close friend or loved one — even though it may be hard to talk about your feelings.

Contact a minister, spiritual leader, or someone in your faith community.

Call your primary care provider or mental health professional to ask about appointment options to talk about your anxiety or depression and get advice and guidance.

Contact organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for help and guidance.

FURTHER INFORMATION

In the United States, call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)** or use its webchat at suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat.

If you're feeling suicidal or thinking of hurting yourself, seek help. Contact your primary care provider or a mental health professional. Or call a suicide hotline.

Continue your self-care strategies.
Sometimes symptoms may take as long as 9-12 months to show up after the initial event

And, stress won't disappear from your life when the health crisis of COVID-19 ends.

Self-care is a life-long activity.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/mental-health-non-healthcare.html

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html

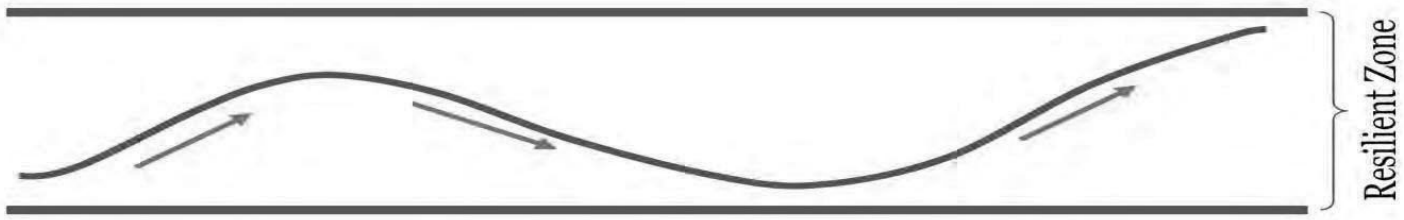
Mayo Clinic
mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/self-care-tips-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic

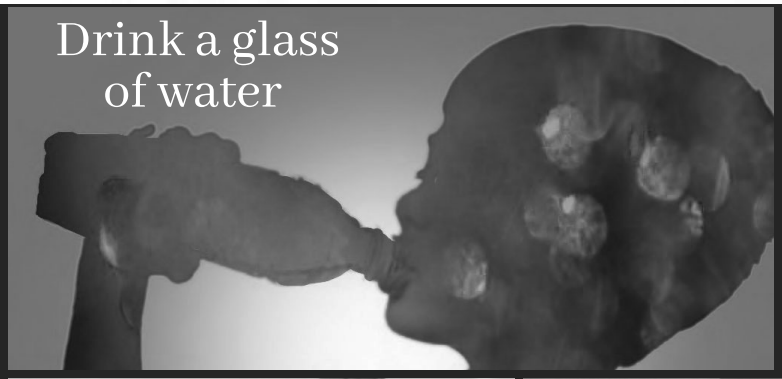
NCAOC Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
juno.nccourts.org/human-resources/employee-assistance-program

Administered by Deer Oaks EAP Services. In addition to website resources, in-person consultation is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for Judicial Branch employees.

American Bar Association (ABA) Lawyer Assistance Program
americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/COVID-19--mental-health-resources/

Help Now!





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Chapter 50B.

Domestic Violence.

§ 50B-1. Domestic violence; definition.

(a) Domestic violence means the commission of one or more of the following acts upon an aggrieved party or upon a minor child residing with or in the custody of the aggrieved party by a person with whom the aggrieved party has or has had a personal relationship, but does not include acts of self-defense:

(1) Attempting to cause bodily injury, or intentionally causing bodily injury; or

(2) Placing the aggrieved party or a member of the aggrieved party's family or household in fear of imminent serious bodily injury or continued harassment, as defined in G.S. 14-277.3A, that rises to such a level as to inflict substantial emotional distress; or

(3) Committing any act defined in G.S. 14-27.21 through G.S. 14-27.33.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term "personal relationship" means a relationship wherein the parties involved:

(1) Are current or former spouses;

(2) Are persons of opposite sex who live together or have lived together;

(3) Are related as parents and children, including others acting in loco parentis to a minor child, or as grandparents and grandchildren. For purposes of this subdivision, an aggrieved party may not obtain an order of protection against a child or grandchild under the age of 16;

(4) Have a child in common;

(5) Are current or former household members;

(6) Are persons of the opposite sex who are in a dating relationship or have been in a dating relationship. For purposes of this subdivision, a dating relationship is one wherein the parties are romantically involved over time and on a continuous basis during the course of the relationship. A casual acquaintance or ordinary fraternization between persons in a business or social context is not a dating relationship.

(c) As used in this Chapter, the term "protective order" includes any order entered pursuant to this Chapter upon hearing by the court or consent of the parties. (1979, c. 561, s. 1; 1985, c. 113, s. 1; 1987, c. 828; 1987 (Reg. Sess., 1988), c. 893, ss. 1, 3; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 591, s. 1; 1997-471, s. 1; 2001-518, s. 3; 2003-107, s. 1; 2009-58, s. 5; 2015-181, s. 36.)