

Kalamunda

Know the Signs

# Identifying Red Flags in Relationships

16 October | 6.30pm

Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre, Kalamunda

This is a free event, however registrations are required.





# PARTNER ABUSE: HOW TO SPOT **RED FLAGS** AT AN EARLY STAGE

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DR LORRAINE SHERIDAN



# ABOUT LORRAINE



Forensic Psychologist in private practice



Former academic



Stalking, family violence, profiling, offenders, risk assessment, sexual offending, threat assessment, expert witness, research



# SOME NUMBERS

- **1 in 4 women** and **1 in 14 men** in Australia have experienced violence from an intimate partner since the age of 15
  - 2.3 million women
  - 693,000 men

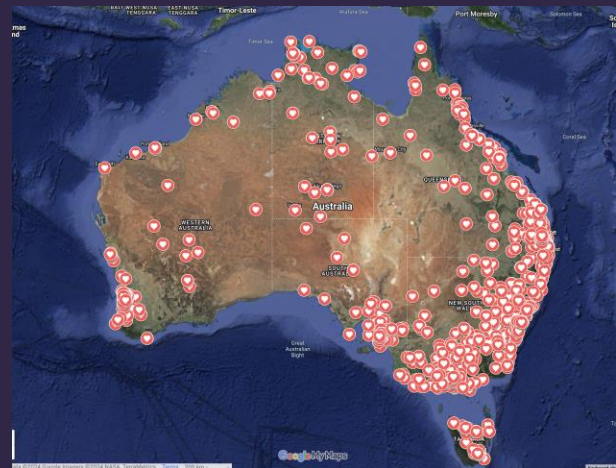
*(Australian Bureau of Statistics)*

- One woman was killed **every 11 days** and one man was killed **every 91 days** by an intimate partner on average in Australia in 2022–23

*(Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing)*

- In Australia, **60% of all women** presenting at a hospital with assault injuries were injured by their partner and 61% of these involved head injuries

*(Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing)*





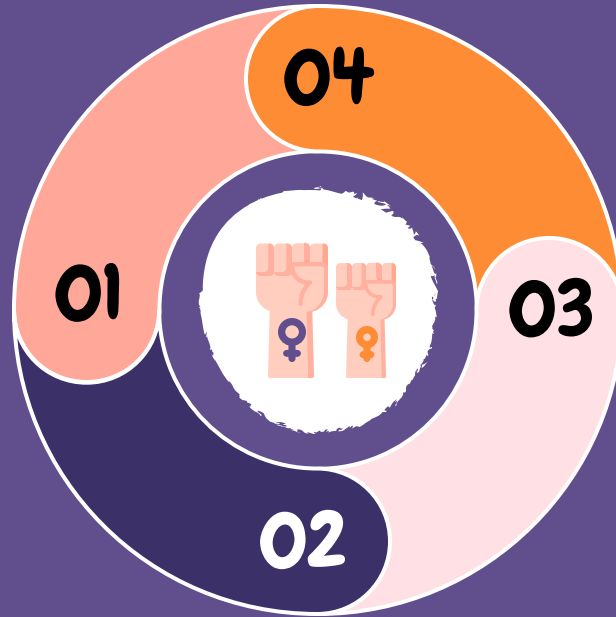
# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CYCLE

 Calm

 Tension

 Making up

 Incident





# SOME FORMS OF ABUSE ARE OBVIOUS

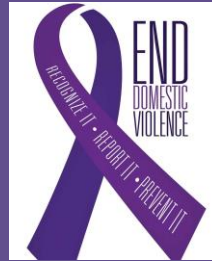


Physical Violence

Sexual abuse

\$Financial Control\$

Psychological Violence  
(manipulation and control)



Emotional Violence  
(threats and insults)

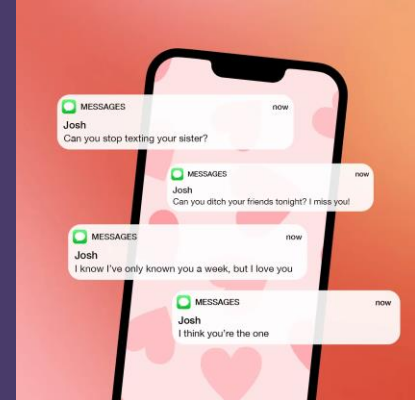
HOW DO WE RECOGNISE SIGNS OF TROUBLE **BEFORE**  
THINGS BECOME VERY OBVIOUS?

# RED FLAGS: LOVE-BOMBING

- Escalates relationship quickly
- Excessive affection/generosity
- Constant communication
- Prematurely declares love
- Seeks early commitment
- Puts victim on a pedestal

*“They're extremely nice to you. I mean to the point where it seems suspicious. Especially when it comes to money. They love to buy you things...”*

*“They wanna jump into a serious relationship ASAP.”*







## RED FLAGS: MANIPULATION

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- Guilt-trips
- Emotional blackmail
- Lies often/easily
- Threatening to harm/kill themselves
- Gives ultimatums
- Withdraws communication/affection/love
- Makes empty promises
- Makes counter accusations
- Threatening to break up with victim

*“Them buying you lots of things after they snap at you.”*

*“They act disappointed if you have plans with other people which then turns into guiltting you into not seeing your friends anymore.”*

# RED FLAGS: CONTROL

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- Isolates partner from others
- Demands all of the partner's time/attention
- Controls partner's interactions with others
- Double standards
- Location monitoring
- Controls partner's body/appearance
- Phone checking
- Encourages dependence
- Constant questioning
- Sabotages activities victim enjoys
- Gets angry when partner disagrees with them
- Tries to prevent others from seeing the abuse

*“Attempting to remove or isolate you from your support system is a huge red flag.”*

*“Restrictions on your social life and an expectation to be the most important person in your life, even above yourself.”*

## RED FLAGS: DEVALUING

- Denigration
- Makes false accusations
- Disregards victim's needs/thoughts/feelings
- Cheats on victim
- Hides the relationship



***“The insults started coming like I threw out my shoulder and she tied it to my weight...”***

***“Disregarding what you want is a big one too, no matter how small.”***

# RED FLAGS: GASLIGHTING



- Invalidates partner's feelings
- Tries to justify their actions
- Offers false interpretations of events
- Project/deflects their issues onto victim
- Reframes abuse as humour
- Tests/plays mind games with partner

*“When any emotion you display is labelled as fake. You are crying because he said something really heartless? Those must be crocodile tears...”*

*“When you talk to them about something they did that was bad and they say ‘oh I didn’t know that’, ‘I didn’t say that’, or ‘I think you’re just imagining it’...”*



“Perpetrators of abuse often make their victims believe that they are somehow responsible for their own abuse. Such misplaced notions shift the blame of the abuse from the abuser to the abusee”

**-MALLIKA NAWAL**

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# WHY DON'T PEOPLE LEAVE ABUSERS?



FEAR



ECONOMIC



CHILDREN



THEY BELIEVE  
WHAT THE  
ABUSER TELLS  
THEM

He makes me feel  
euphoric  
heartbroken  
guilty  
suicidal  
worthless  
and in love  
all at the same time.



# THE LINK BETWEEN PARTNER ABUSE AND STALKING

*“Stalking is a core element of the cycle of domestic violence”*

(Coleman)

*“Stalkers most often target ex-partners. Stalking most often evolves from an abusive relationship”*

(Lorraine)

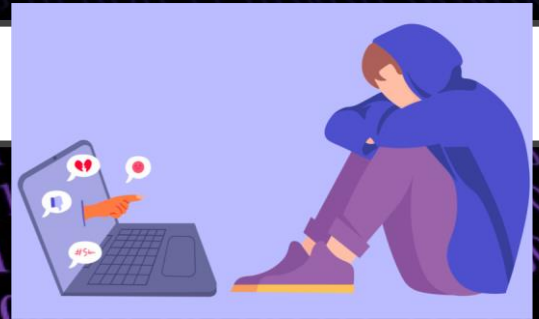
*“The prevalence of stalking was 76% for femicide victims and 85% for attempted femicide victims”*

(McFarlane et al.)

*“A former (violent) relationship increases the risk of stalking victimization and... a prior romantic involvement has an influence on the seriousness and duration of the stalking”*

(van der Aa)

# STALKING VERSUS CYBERSTALKING



Usually an artificial distinction these days as most cases include a cyber element.

Stalking that begins online can cross over into the offline world.

Some “cyberstalking strangers” are actually people known to the victim.

Impact = often the same.

Cyberstalking cases can often be solved more easily.

There are many many ways to cyberstalk:

- ★ Information brokers
- ★ Spyware
- ★ Trackers
- ★ Spoofing services
- ★ Using phone as a remote listening device

A fast moving and easily accessible world.



# Are abusers generally criminal?

- Lorraine's study in Western Australia...
- We analysed...
- 13,768 Domestic Violence Incident Reports (DVIR) and
- All stalking incident reports from 2013 to 2017



THE STUDY IDENTIFIED A TOTAL OF **11,544** BROKEN RESTRAINING ORDERS



# Are abusers generally criminal?

## “Super generalist” offenders

Those who had engaged in more than one offence against the index victim (so, stalking plus one or more other offences) and who had also offended against others (59%).

## “Generalist” offenders

Those who stalked the index victim but did not offend against this victim in any other manner, and who did offend against others (15%).

## “Specialist” offenders

Those who engaged in both stalking and other crimes against the same victim, but who did not offend against others (15%).

## “Super specialist” offenders

Those who only stalked the index victim and who had not been engaged in any other crimes against that victim or against others (10%).



# WHY DO THEY DO IT?

## OFTEN ROOTED IN...

**family/developmental factors** (e.g. attachment styles, poor family relationships, witnessing parental violence, developmental issues)

**contextual factors** (e.g. poor relationships/networks with peers, financial problems)



**individual/behavioural factors** (e.g. generalised trait aggression, positive attitudes towards violence, substance abuse)

**cognitive factors** (e.g. distorted cognitions about relationships, hostile attitudes and beliefs)






### Motivations include:

hatred, revenge, reconciliation, jealousy, desire for control, perceived insult or humiliation



# What to do



-  TELL SOMEONE! If they invalidate you, TELL SOMEONE ELSE!
-  Phone 000 in an emergency
-  Non emergency police number 131 444
-  Phone 1800 RESPECT
-  If aged between 5 and 25, phone Kid's helpline on 1800 551 800

**TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS**

The background features a dense pattern of question marks in various colors (yellow, green, blue, pink, orange) scattered across a purple gradient. There are two pink brushstroke-like shapes: one in the upper left and one in the lower right. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the text.

**ANY  
QUESTIONS?**