

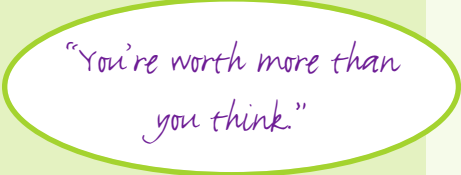
Looking After Yourself

Whether or not you are still living with an abusive partner, domestic abuse can seriously affect how you feel about yourself and your life generally. Being abused can leave many women feeling low about themselves, lacking in confidence and uncertain about the future. It can also affect mental and physical health. Having to make difficult decisions and trying to keep on top of things for the sake of your children can make you feel tired, anxious and upset.

So, however bad things are, it is important to get some time and space for yourself. The stronger and less stressed you are, the better you are likely to feel and the more likely you are to make good decisions about your future.

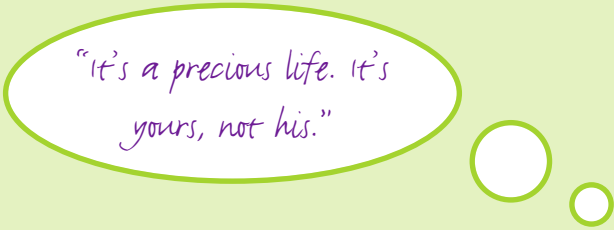
This leaflet gives some ideas of things that have worked for other women. Some of these you might not be able to do if your partner is still with you but keep them in mind for the future.

- Think about yourself and your children rather than person who is abusing you/has abused you – try to keep him out of your head
- Take time and space for yourself each day even if it's just for a short while – you might need to think up some excuse so that you get out for a short walk or get some time to think
- Spend time with people who like you and who make you feel good about yourself
- Do things you enjoy doing like having a hot bath with bubbles, watching TV, listening to music or reading
- Eat well and regularly – this will help you feel better physically
- Sleep – try to get enough sleep; avoid drinking too much alcohol or caffeine as this can make it difficult to get a good night's sleep



"You're worth more than you think."

- Relax – think about massage, yoga or Tai Chi – but even breathing deeply for a few minutes every day can help
- Exercise regularly (this doesn't have to be complicated – just get out for a walk)
- Do something you enjoy and are good at
- Take up a new hobby – check in the library or local paper to see if there are any leisure classes locally
- Think about learning some new skills if you need to get a job. Volunteering is a good way to learn new skills and meet other people
- Speak to other women who have been through the same thing. East Lothian Women's Aid are there to listen to you and can tell you about support groups and others who can help
- Be patient – it will take you time to work out what to do for yourself and your children. Do what's best for you rather than for other people
- Be kind to yourself – things might take a while to sort out and you may not get it right every time
- Get support when you need it – there are people who want to help



"It's a precious life. It's yours, not his."

Phone the Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline in confidence on 0800 027 1234 any time, day or night.

Domestic abuse: there's no excuse

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