



/guide

Your questions answered

ARE YOU IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH AN EMOTIONAL BULLY?

The purpose of this Stowe guide is to explain the signs that you may be in a relationship with an emotional bully.

Emotional bullies are not happy people. Motivated by fear, their insecurities plague them creating a need to command and dominate others to make up for how vulnerable they feel. Controlling others inflates the bully's ego, masking their self-confidence issues.

Tell-tale signs you are married to an emotional bully

Bullying comes in many forms, here are the four key behaviours to look out for:

Aggression (verbal & physical)

Name-calling, critical comments, slamming doors, blaming, accusations, undermining your decisions, arguments from nowhere... the bully has many verbal and physical options to control and dominate. Once they have established the pattern of using anger as a first response, the bully can rule on the fear of anger alone.

Controlling

A bully will use control to limit your freedom. Isolating you slowly from friends and family, they will manage your time and decide how you spend it and who with; then make you feel guilty when you leave them to spend time with them.

They will also text, stalk social media and call continuously to check where you are and what you are up to.

Passive-aggressive

The silent treatment, coming home late, not helping in the house, withholding sex, controlling finances, undermining your decisions in small, all subtle ways that a bully will use to keep in control of you and the relationship.

Threats

When a bully gets scared of losing you, out comes the threat card. Divorce, moving out, cheating or even harming themselves are just some of the tactics a bully will roll out when desperate.

Living with a bully

Sadly you can spot bullies everywhere: the playground, the classroom, at work and in the home. But what is it like to live with one?

In a functional relationship, both people are equals. In a bullying relationship, there is an imbalance and an uneven distribution of power.

Typically people in a bullying relationship tend to have lowered self-esteem, suffer from depression and/or anxiety, are fearful and feel powerless and trapped. These emotional feelings often manifest physically in addiction, insomnia, changes to appetite and illness.

Leaving a bully

Being married to a bully can be emotionally distressing and the road to separation very stressful but one of the hardest parts is recognising that you are. Long relationships have behaviour patterns within them that are difficult to break.

Start by keeping a written record of your partners bullying for a month. Note down dates, times, situations and how they made you feel. Sometimes when you are living in a situation it is hard to see the bigger picture. Writing it down will show you the extent of your partner's behaviour.

If you decide to divorce a bully, you will need a strong support team in place. Seek out professional and emotional support from lawyers, counsellors, consultants as well as friends and family on the side.

Sources of support

If you or someone you know is suffering in an abusive relationship, please do get support. The organisations below have advice and details of who to contact. If you feel scared for your safety, please do contact the police,

- [Refuge](#)
- [Women's Aid](#)
- [Mankind](#)
- [Men's Advice Line](#)
- [Galop](#) (for LGBT people affected by relationship violence)

Need more information?

Call our Client Care Team on **0330 838 7456** to speak with one of our specialist family lawyers or visit www.stowefamilylaw.co.uk



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