



Fifty Reasons Why Abused Partners Remain in Abusive Relationships

Fear of Retaliation If They Leave

1. Fear of greater violence if they leave
2. Fear of other forms of retaliation
3. Fear of harm being done to pets
4. Fear of losing the children
5. They have made other attempts before with significant negative consequences

Logistical Barriers to Leaving

6. Economic dependence
7. Employment concerns
8. Lack of alternative housing
9. There may be cultural and other barriers, especially if part of a marginalized group

Questioning Their Own Ability

10. Limited resources
11. Insecure over ability to live independently
12. Unsure how to go about the process of leaving
13. Co-occurring mental health/substance abuse issues caused by the abuse
14. Too exhausted or distracted to adequately plan to leave

Consequences If They Leave

15. Does not want to deal with the stresses and demands of a divorce/break-up
16. Concerns about the loss of friends, school, belongings, etc.
17. Fear of court involvement
18. Fear of the unknown
19. The fear, difficulties, and/or consequences of leaving still seem to outweigh those of staying
20. It's not the right time

Concerns for Their Children

21. Fear of hardship on the children
22. Not wanting to separate the children from the other parent
23. The children want them to stay

Fears of Social Isolation

24. Fear of loneliness
25. Fear of never being in another romantic relationship
26. Emotionally dependent on the abusive partner

Social Pressures To Stay

- 27. Pressure from others to remain in the relationship including:
 - Family members
 - Friends
 - Clergy
 - Neighbors
- 28. Guilt over ending the relationship
- 29. Embarrassment
- 30. Ashamed to admit abuse is that bad
- 31. Doesn't want to be a "quitter"
- 32. Does not want to break the marriage vows/commitment
- 33. Limited support from others to leave

Hope

- 34. Doesn't want to give up hope
- 35. Continued hope that maybe it will get better
- 36. Manipulations by the abusive partner to stay

Positive Connections with the Abusive Partner

- 37. Regularly reminded of abusive partner's positive and desirable qualities
- 38. Still loves the abusive partner
- 39. Shared history/emotional investment
- 40. Significant periods of time where the abuse declines
- 41. Mistaken assumption that the abusive partner is in alliance with them
- 42. Ambivalence

They Feel Responsible

- 43. Blames themselves for the abuse
- 44. Concern that the abusive partner will not be able to live on their own
- 45. They still believe there are things they can do to make it better

Denial

- 46. Assumes that abuse is common and a part of life
- 47. Does not view the abuse they are experiencing as "that bad"
- 48. Not fully aware of the nature, extent and impact of the abuse
- 49. Questioning their own judgement
- 50. Emotional numbness/anesthetizing

Compiled from multiple sources by
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