



Safety plan

Safety planning is important for ensuring ways you can protect yourself and to remain safe while in the relationship, planning to leave, or after you leave.

Physical Abuse

Key considerations and tips to protect yourself:

- Curl up in a little ball, protecting your face by wrapping your arms around each side of your head and entwining your fingers.
- Go to the safest room/place in the house.
 - Which room has soft places to land on? such as a bed, couch, etc.
 - Where are the lockable doors in your home? Would it be safe for you to lock yourself in a room? If it is safe, lock yourself in a room.
 - Where do you have access to a phone in your home?
 - Which room allows an easy escape or exit? If leaving seems unsafe and violence is unavoidable, go to your safe spot and make yourself a small target by curling up in a little ball, protecting your face by wrapping your arms around each side of your head and entwining your fingers.
 - Does the perpetrator have any weapons (such as guns in the house)? If yes, which room is the weapon located in? This is not a safe room.
 - What can be made into a weapon in the house (such as a knife in the kitchen, sharp edges, etc.)? This is not a safe room.

If you have children, these are some key reminders:

- Do not run to them when your partner becomes violent. This could potentially put them in danger.
- Teach them how to get help, but instruct them not to interfere with any arguments that are happening.
- Come up with a code word together that will let them know when they need to leave the house or hide to protect themselves.
- Practice how to safely exit the home with them.
- If you trust your friend and/or neighbors, develop a system to let them know when violence is occurring and you need help. Your children can go to their house to stay safe, they can call the police and you can stash an overnight bag there for quick getaways.

Other strategies to consider to ensure your children's safety:

- Come up with some predetermined safety words you could use with your children to notify them to:
 - Leave the room
 - Call a friend/family member/police when in immediate danger
 - To gather their things in preparation to leave
- Where can you keep a bag of items (such as your passport, children's passports, money, etc.) to take with you in case you suddenly need to leave? Items can include:
 - Identification cards or copies on phone
 - Passport
 - Driver's License
 - Birth certificates (You and children)
 - Credit Cards or money
 - House Keys
 - Medication
 - Optional items: Address book including phone numbers, items of sentimental value, children's favorite toys or blanket, pictures/jewelry, medical records, lease agreement, rental payment books

Emotional Abuse

Emotional safety looks different for different people. It is about developing a personalized plan that helps you feel accepting of your emotions and decisions when dealing with abuse.

If your partner is emotionally abusive, **here are some ideas to create and maintain an emotional safety plan:**

- Be kind to yourself. It is never your fault when someone chooses to be abusive to you. It is not a reflection of the value you have as a person. You deserve support from other people, and you also have a right to be kind to yourself. Try writing messages to yourself about things you like about yourself or saying these things out loud every day.
- Stay connected to a support network. If you feel comfortable, talk to someone about what is happening. A caring presence, such as a trusted friend or family member, can be helpful to build you up and create a healthy emotional atmosphere. You deserve to feel safe while expressing yourself and your opinions, and having supportive people around you can help foster this space. Further, this will allow you to think through difficult situations and discuss other potential options.
- Try to stay involved in activities that you love or develop new hobbies.
- Keep a journal of all of the good things in your life and all of the things that you like about yourself.

- Make a list of things that help you to relax and do them, one by one, until you feel calm and relaxed.

If you've left the relationship:

Emotional safety planning may look different than what it would be if you were still in an abusive situation. Leaving a relationship is one of the most dangerous times in the physical as well as emotional sense. It is normal and expected that you'll be encountering new feelings, such as, loneliness, struggling with being uprooted, difficulty adjusting to a new life. **Shamsaha's advocates are here for you during this challenging time.** Reach out for emotional support today.

If you have children:

You must consider them in your safety plan. Planning for both their physical and emotional safety. If you're in a physically abusive relationship, refer to the physical abuse section of the safety plan or **speak to a Shamsaha advocate today.**