



Elmwood Community Resource Centre

Gaslighting



What is Gaslighting?

Gaslighting is an extremely effective form of psychological abuse in which one partner uses manipulative tactics to causes the other person involved to question their own feelings, instincts and sanity.

There is a tendency for the gaslighting process to occur gradually in a relationship, which can make it challenging to identify when it is occurring. Overtime, however, the severity of the gaslighting increases; leaving the victim to feel scared, confused, all while losing a sense of what is happening.

What are some Gaslighting Techniques?

There are numerous gaslighting techniques which an abusive partner may use manipulate and control their partner. Some of these techniques include;

- **Withholding:** the abusive partner pretends not to understand or refuses to listen. Example; “I don’t want to hear this again”
- **Countering:** the abusive partner questions their partner’s memory of events, even when the victim remembers them accurately. Example; “You’re wrong, you never remember things correctly”
- **Blocking/Diverting:** the abusive partner changes the subject and/or questions their partner’s thoughts. Example; “You’re imagining things”
- **Trivializing:** the abusive partner makes their partner’s needs or feelings seem invalid or unimportant. Example; “You’re so dramatic!”
- **Forgetting/Denial:** the abusive partner pretends to have forgotten about what actually occurred or denies promises that were made. Example; “I never said that”

Signs of Gaslighting

- You’re always apologizing to your partner
- You constantly second guess yourself and your actions
- You often feel confused and even crazy
- You find yourself withholding information from friends and family so you don’t have to explain or make excuses
- You wonder if you’re a “good enough” partner
- You frequently make excuses for your partner’s behavior to friends and family

Healing from Gaslighting

- Survivors may benefit from reconnecting with friends and family that they previously had pulled away from. It can be helpful to have individual’s around whom you trust and may be able to confirm your thoughts and perceptions
- Individuals who have experienced gaslighting can benefit from obtaining counselling and additional supports
- For more information please call Elmwood Community Resource Centre; call 204-982-1720 ext. 201