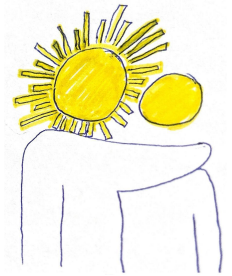




If you scanned the poster because something felt familiar, this handout is for you.



What exactly is 'honour'-based abuse?

'Honour'-based abuse happens when a person is controlled, threatened, pressured, or harmed because their family or community believes they have brought shame or dishonour and are not complying with expected family or community norms.

It can include:

- Pressure to marry
- Restrictions on education or work
- Monitoring your phone or social media
- Controlling friendships or relationships
- Emotional blackmail
- Threats, intimidation or violence
- Pressure from multiple family or community members

Recent statistics show that nearly 3,000 'honour'-based abuse related offences were recorded by the police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2025. You are not alone. It is never your fault, and it is never justified by culture, tradition or religion.

Free and confidential support is available, see the helplines below

Is this really abuse, or is it just my family being strict?

Many families have rules and expectations. But when fear, guilt, threats, surveillance or pressure are used to control your choices, it may be 'honour'-based abuse.

Why do I feel guilty for wanting my own life?

Many people are taught that their decisions affect the family's honour or reputation. Wanting an education, career, relationship or independence does not make you selfish or dishonourable.

Can 'honour'-based abuse happen even if no one has hit me?

Yes. 'Honour'-based abuse is not only physical violence. It can include emotional pressure, controlling behaviour, forced marriage, isolation, monitoring your phone, restricting your movements or threatening to shame or disown you.

What if I still love my family?

You can love your family and still be experiencing abuse. Many survivors struggle with loyalty, guilt and the fear of losing family relationships. Those feelings are completely understandable.

What if no one believes me?

This is a common fear. 'Honour'-based abuse is often hidden because victims are told to stay silent or protect the family. Specialist organisations understand these situations and can listen without judgement.

Could things get worse if I ask for help?

You can speak to a specialist service confidentially. They can help you think about your choices and safety.

What if I'm not ready to leave?

You do not have to make any immediate decisions. Speaking to someone does not mean you have to leave your family, report anyone or take action before you are ready. You deserve information, support and a chance to explore your options safely.

What do I do if someone is checking my phone?

If someone else may check your phone or internet history:

- Use a private browser where possible
- Clear your browsing history if it is safe to do so
- Consider using another trusted device to access support

Who can I talk to?

In an emergency always call **999**.

Support services:

- Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- From overseas: +44 (0)20 7008 0151
- Muslim Women's Network UK: 0800 999 5786
- Southall Black Sisters: 020 8571 0800
- Sikh Women's Aid: 0333 090 1220
- Roshni Birmingham: 0800 953 9777 (24-hour multilingual helpline for West Midlands)

How can I help someone experiencing 'honour'-based abuse?

If someone tells you they are experiencing 'honour'-based abuse:

- Listen without judgement
- Believe them
- Do **not** contact their family or community
- Encourage them to speak to a specialist service
- If they are in immediate danger, contact emergency services

Remember

- Your safety matters.
- Your voice matters.
- You have the right to make your own choices.
- You do not have to go through this alone.