

Us Too: Domestic abuse, sexual violence & people with learning disabilities and autistic people

CASE STUDY ONE – JAY

Facilitator guidance notes - suggested questions

What are your concerns?

1. There are clear indications of domestic abuse, including gaslighting and coercive control.
2. Jay seems to have 'settled' for an abusive relationship in the belief that it may be their least worst option. There is also a suggestion that this may be part of an abusive relationship pattern for Jay, which should be addressed.
3. It is also possible that Jay has been targeted by their partner owing to their learning disability. If there is a significant difference in their mental capacity this would have to be addressed under the Mental Capacity Act [see below].

On your next visit Jay says that their partner talks about them as a “dream couple” and that Jay would never survive on their own. Jay seems to believe this.

What are your concerns?

1. These are clear indications of domestic abuse, including gaslighting and coercive control.
2. Your concerns about Jay's self-esteem and sense of worth will have deepened. There is a need to work with people on their self-esteem and confidence. They need to be supported to feel that they are worth more than an abusive relationship and equipped with the skills to leave abusive relationships and/or mitigate the harm that takes place within abusive relationships.

Jay phones you later, and tells you that their partner has slapped them “once or twice” but they have promised that it won't happen again.

What are your concerns?

1. Promises of reformed behaviour are common amongst abusers, but rarely fulfilled.
2. The fact that Jay has been proactive in contacting you suggests that they may be ready to take action on their relationship and is asking for your support.
3. You need to establish what Jay means by 'slaps' and 'once or twice'. Is she playing this down and/or fearful of further consequences? Immediate action and Police involvement may be indicated.

Refer back to the Toolkit Good Practice Information Sheet.