

Psychological violence

Psychological violence often begins with seemingly small acts. The victims and those around them usually don't recognise it as such for a long while.

What is psychological violence?

Psychological violence may take the form of domestic violence. It includes violent acts such as insults, humiliation, intimidation, making others feel guilty, shouting at others, death threats, stalking, neglect of children or older people, jealous behaviour or psychological torment. The destruction of property or torture of pets are also forms of psychological violence.

Psychological violence also encompasses social and economic behaviours. Exerting power and control plays a significant role here.

- Social violence: For instance, someone may be stopped from meeting family members or friends. Or they may be watched when meeting coworkers.
- Economic violence: For example, someone may be prohibited from working or they may be forced to work. Their finances may be checked, restricted or taken away, or they may be financially exploited.

Important to know

Psychological violence occurs in all parts of society. It is more difficult to recognise than physical violence. However, psychological violence is also banned in Switzerland and offenders are punished.

Psychological violence is often more subtle and less externally visible than physical violence, but it can have just as severe and also fatal consequences. Victims may suffer from a lower self-esteem, sleep and eating disorders, difficulties concentrating, anxiety or depression. It is therefore important to get help at an early stage.

Where can I get help?

In the event of danger or a specific threat, the police can help (117).

Free counselling and support are available from the following centres:

- **Anlaufstelle gegen Häusliche Gewalt**, 062 550 20 20, www.ahg-aargau.ch
- **Opferberatung Aargau**, 062 835 47 90 or Chat, www.opferberatung-ag.ch
- **Tel 143** – Die Dargebotene Hand (24h), 143, www.143.ch, English hotline 0800 143 000
- **Frauenhaus Aargau-Solothurn**, 062 823 86 00 (24h helpline), www.frauenhaus-ag-so.ch
- **ZwüscheHalt**, 056 552 08 70 (Zurich), www.zwueschehalt.ch (shelter for men with or without children; a financial contribution is required)

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

dev.hallo-aargau.ch/en/haeusliche-gewalt/psychische-gewalt