

RECOVER ARRIVE BECOME

CLINICAL THERAPY PRACTICE

GASLIGHTING & TRUSTING YOUR PERCEPTION

NOTICE PATTERNS • REALITY-CHECK • REBUILD TRUST

Gaslighting is a repeated pattern of manipulation that can make someone doubt their memory, perception, judgment, or understanding of events.

WHAT GASLIGHTING IS

- Repeatedly denying events or conversations that occurred.
- Insisting your memory or perception is unreliable while presenting their version as the only truth.
- Changing the story, withholding information, or using confusion to gain control.
- Gaslighting is more than ordinary disagreement, forgetfulness, or two people remembering something differently.

COMMON PATTERNS

- 'That never happened.' 'You're imagining things.' 'You're too sensitive.'
- Moving the goalposts or changing explanations when facts are raised.
- Using your emotional reaction as proof that your concern is invalid.
- Recruiting other people to reinforce a distorted version of events.

HOW IT CAN AFFECT YOU

- Second-guessing simple decisions or memories.
- Feeling confused after conversations that seemed clear beforehand.
- Apologizing frequently or assuming you are always the problem.
- Depending on the other person to tell you what is real or reasonable.
- Feeling anxious about raising concerns.

REALITY-CHECK GENTLY

- Write down important events soon after they happen.
- Keep messages, schedules, receipts, or other records when useful and safe.
- Separate what you directly observed from interpretations or assumptions.
- Ask a trustworthy person for perspective without asking them to simply take sides.

REBUILD SELF-TRUST

- Practice making small decisions without seeking repeated reassurance.
- Notice when facts support your memory or judgment.
- Allow uncertainty: you do not have to remember every detail perfectly for your experience to matter.
- Use specific language: 'I remember...' 'I observed...' 'I am not comfortable with...'

SAFETY & SUPPORT

- If manipulation occurs with threats, stalking, violence, coercive control, or isolation, consider a safety plan.
- A trauma-informed clinician or victim advocate can help you sort through patterns without deciding for you.
- DV Hotline: 800-799-7233; text START to 88788.
- Call 911 for immediate danger.

You can rebuild confidence in your own observations and choices.

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