

WHAT THEY DID WITH YOUR PAIN

Reactive Abuse

They pushed you until you broke. Then they filmed the breaking.

”

Reactive abuse is when an abuser deliberately provokes their victim until the victim finally reacts — then uses that reaction as proof that the victim is the abusive one.

1

THEY START IT

The Provocation

Subtle digs. Silent treatment. False accusations. Mocking. Twisting your words. **It escalates slowly, so you can't name when it started.**

2

YOU REACH YOUR LIMIT

Your Reaction

You cry, yell, shut down, or say something you don't mean. You lose control in a way that feels unlike you. **This is what they were waiting for.**

3

THEY USE IT

The Reversal

Suddenly you're the problem. They're the victim. They tell others. They record it. They remind you of it for years. **The original provocation disappears from the story.**

HOW IT BECOMES A WEAPON

Your reaction becomes their evidence.

They use it to convince you — and everyone else — that you are unstable, dangerous, or "just as bad." They stay calm because they were never the ones being wounded. Calm isn't innocence. It's preparation.

You may have experienced reactive abuse if —

- You apologized more than you felt you deserved to
- You felt like you were "going crazy" or "too emotional"
- Arguments always ended with you in the wrong
- Your reactions were used as proof against you
- You questioned whether you were actually the abuser
- You felt ashamed of how you'd acted, but couldn't explain why

"Reacting to abuse is not the same as being abusive. You were not the problem. You were a person in pain, being pushed."

FREE WORKSHEET



Map your own experience. The Reactive Abuse worksheet walks you through the pattern — what they did, what you did, and why neither of those things means what they told you it meant.