



Warning Signs of an Abusive Partner

- **MOVES TOO FAST TOO SOON:** This can seem exciting at first, but it will pay off to take your time to get to know your partner. Most abusive relationships begin quickly and intensely. Once you realize that you are being controlled it is more difficult to leave because you are so deeply involved.
- **QUICK TEMPER:** Does your partner have angry outbursts? Is your partner threatening when he or she is angry? Do they play with weapons or threaten to use them? Are you afraid when your partner is angry? These are signs that they like things their way and do not have the skills to resolve conflicts in a reasonable manner.
- **EXTREMELY JEALOUS OR POSSESSIVE:** Controlling people tend to be very possessive, which is often interpreted at first as “He/She just really cares about me.” This is not the case – they want to control you. If your partner tries to tell you who to spend time with or tries to cut you off from your friends, or gets jealous when you talk to other people, they are attempting to isolate you from others.
- **USE OF PUT DOWNS AND CRITISIM:** Does your partner criticize you often? Do they blame you or others for things that go wrong? Do they put others down often? Are you starting to wonder if maybe something is wrong with you? These are signs that he or she may have low self-esteem and need to belittle others in order to feel good about themselves.
- **ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE:** This does not cause someone to be controlling or abusive, but it often intensifies his or her anger or abusiveness. Alcohol also reduces your ability to avoid dangerous or undesirable situations.
- **BLAMES OTHER PEOPLE:** When things go wrong is it always someone else’s fault? Do they always have an excuse? If they get a ticket, it’s because the cop was hiding behind the bushes. If they are not successful at work, it is because the boss is impossible. Someone like this can not accept responsibility for their actions and will not listen to criticism. They will start to blame you too, and often they are good at making you believe it.
- **SELF-CENTERED:** Someone who thinks about fulfilling his or her own needs is a bad risk. Do they not care about what you think? Do they always decide for both of you where you will go and what you will do? This behavior will usually only get worse and shows that they do not value your opinion as equal.