



Warning Signs of an Abusive Relationship

A push for quick involvement

Comes on very strong, may say, "I've never felt loved like this before." An abuser may pressure their partner for an exclusive commitment almost immediately.

Jealousy

Excessively possessive; calls constantly or visits unexpectedly; prevents their partner from going out because "you might meet someone;" checks the mileage on their car.

Controlling

Interrogates their partner intensely (especially if they are late) about whom they spoke with and where they were; keeps all the money; insists they ask permission to go anywhere or do anything.

Unrealistic expectations

Expects their partner to be perfect and meet their every need.

Isolation

Tries to cut their partner off from family and friends; accuses their friends or family of "causing trouble."

Blames others for problems and mistakes

The boss, their partner... it's always the fault of someone else if anything goes wrong.

Makes others responsible for their feelings

The abuser may say things to their partner such as: "You make me angry" instead of "I am angry" or "You're hurting me by not doing what I tell you." The abuser may also put the burden of their happiness on their partner.

Hypersensitivity

The abuser may be easily insulted and may rant about the injustice of things that are just part of life.

Cruelty to animals and/or children

The abuser may expect children to do things that are far beyond their ability such as expecting potty training too early and punishing a child for wetting a diaper. The abuser may also tease children until they cry. Some abusers kill or punish animals brutally.

"Playful" use of force during sex

May enjoy throwing their partner down or holding them down against their will during sex.

**Verbal abuse**

Constantly criticizes their partner or says blatantly cruel, hurtful things; degrades, curses, and/or calls them ugly names. Interrupts their sleep by waking them with verbal abuse.

Rigid sex roles

Expects their partner to serve, obey, and stay at home.

Sudden mood swings

Switches from loving to explosively verbally or physically violent in a matter of minutes.

Past Battering

Admits hitting a partner in the past, but said the partner made them do it because of the partner's behavior.

Threats of violence

Makes statements to their partner such as, "I'll break your neck" or "I'll kill you" then dismisses the statements with, "everybody talks that way" or "I really didn't mean it."