

Do You Think You're Being Abused?

For anonymous, confidential help available 24/7, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY) now.

Look over the following questions. Think about how you are being treated and how you treat your partner. Remember, when one person scares, hurts, or continually puts down the other person, it is abuse.

Does your partner ...

- Embarrass or make fun of you in front of friends or family? Put down your accomplishments or goals?
- Make you feel like you are unable to make decisions? Use intimidation or threats to gain compliance?
- Tell you that you are nothing without them?
- Treat you roughly -- grab, push, pinch, shove or hit you? Threaten or abuse your pets?
- Call you several times a night or show up to make sure you are where you said you would be?
- Use drugs or alcohol as an excuse for saying hurtful things or abusing you?
- Blame you for how they feel or act?
- Pressure you sexually for things you aren't ready for?
- Make you feel like there "is no way out" of the relationship?
- Prevent you from doing things you want, like spending time with your friends or family?
- Try to keep you from leaving after a fight, or leave you somewhere after a fight to "teach you a lesson?"

Do you ...

- Sometimes feel scared of how your partner will act?
- Constantly make excuses to other people for your partner's behavior?
- Believe that you can help your partner change if only you changed something about yourself?
- Try not to do anything that would cause conflict or make your partner angry?
- Feel like no matter what you do, your partner is never happy with you?
- Always do what your partner wants you to do instead of what you want?
- Stay with your partner because you are afraid of what your partner would do if you broke up?
- Without help, the abuse will continue.

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If any of these situations are happening in your relationship, talk to someone you trust or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (available 24/7): 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE).

Do You Think Your Partner Might Be Abusive?

The following signs often occur before manifestation of full abuse and may serve clues to one person in a relationship becoming abusive of the other. Think about the following questions and apply them to your partner. If you can identify with one or more of the scenarios or answer "yes" to any of the questions below, you may be with an abusive partner.

Did your partner grow up in a violent family?

Does your partner tend to use force or violence to "solve" their problems?

Does your partner have a quick temper? Do they over-react to little problems and frustration? Are they cruel to animals? Do they punch walls or throw things when they are upset?

Do they abuse alcohol or other drugs?

Do they have strong traditional ideas about "roles" in relationships? For example, do they think all women should stay at home, take care of their husbands, and follow their wishes and orders?

Are they jealous of your other relationships -- anyone you may know? Do they keep tabs on you? Do they want to know where you are at all times? Do they want you with them all of the time?

Do they have access to guns, knives or other lethal weapons? Do they talk of using them against people or threaten to use them to get even?

Do they expect you to follow their orders or advice? Do they become angry if you do not fulfill their wishes or if you cannot anticipate what they want?

Do they go through extreme highs and lows almost as though they are two different people? Are they extremely kind one time, and extremely cruel another?

When your partner gets angry, do you fear them? Do you find that not making them angry has become a major part of your life? Do you do what they want you to do, rather than what you want to do?

Do they treat you roughly? Do they physically force you to do what you do not want to do?

Do they threaten or abuse your pets?

Threats and physical abuse are prevalent in relationship violence, often occurring in an escalating cycle.

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