

Does This Sound Familiar?

Signs to Look for in an Abusive Relationship

How Have You Been Behaving?: Good Questions to Ask Yourself

- Do you apologize all the time?
- Are you forced to accept the blame for everything that goes wrong in your relationship?
- Do you "walk on eggshells"? Do you watch every word you say, or rehearse what you will say to your partner, so as not to set him/her off?
- Do you cry a lot more than you used to?
- Do you repress your feelings, especially your anger?
- Do you constantly try to figure out how to get your partner's approval?
- Have you given up interests, activities, or people who were once important to you?
- Have you let go of opinions, ideas, attitudes, hopes, and dreams you had for yourself?
- Do you hold yourself back in your educational or vocational advancement?
- Have you let yourself go physically?
- Is your life based on trying to please your partner so as to avoid anger or disapproval?
- Do you tell yourself your partner's jealousy is really a sign of caring for you?
- Do you participate in sexual activities you don't like because you are afraid your partner will get angry or leave you?
- Do you want to end the relationship, but stay because you are afraid of what your partner will do?

How Has Your Partner Been Behaving?: Warning Signs of Abuse

- Does your partner insist on having control over your life, your thoughts, and your behavior?
- Does your partner tell you who to see, how to act, and what to wear?
- Is your partner unrelentingly critical of you and always finding fault, even in front of others?
- Does your partner intimidate you by yelling or by threatening to withdraw love or to leave if you don't do as he/she wishes?
- Does your partner frighten you into submission by threats of physical violence?
- Does your partner switch from charm to anger without warning?
- Does your partner withdraw love, money, approval, emotions, or sex to punish you when you displease him/her?
- Does your partner project the blame for all failures and shortcomings onto you or other people?
- Does your partner attack your character through insults and name-calling?
- Does your partner devalue your opinions and feelings?
- Does your partner accuse you of being too sensitive or of overreacting if you get upset when he/she attacks you?
- Does your partner confuse you by refusing to confront issues, by denial, by changing the subject, by rewriting history, or by acting as if nothing has happened after a big blow-up?
- Is your partner in competition with other important people in your life for your attentions?
- Is your partner jealous and possessive?
- Does your partner constantly criticize the important people in your life?
- Does your partner belittle you sexually?
- Is your partner inconsiderate of your sexual needs?
- Is your partner charming in public but apt to launch into a tirade when you are alone together?
- Has your partner ever hit a wall, broken something, or destroyed property when angry?
- Does your partner blame aggressive behaviors on being high or drunk?
- Has your partner ever pushed, shoved, hit, slapped, or in any way physically hurt you?
- Has your partner ever put you in a dangerous situation, such as driving recklessly?