

# Red Flags of an Abusive Person

1. **JEALOUSY:** it's a sign of possessiveness and lack of trust. He/ she will question the woman about who she talks to, accuse her of flirting, or be jealous of time she spends with family, friends, or children. As jealousy progresses, he/she may call her frequently during the day or drop by unexpectedly.
2. **CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR:** He/she will question her closely about where she went, and whom she has talked to. As this behavior gets worse, he/she may not let the woman make personal decisions about the house, her clothing.
3. **QUICK INVOLVEMENT:** Many victims dated or knew their abuser for less than six months before they were married, engaged or living together. He/she will pressure their partner to commit to the relationship in such a way that later the partner may feel very guilty for letting them down" if they want to slow the involvement down or break it off.
4. **UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:** Abusive people will expect their partner to meet all their needs. He/she expects the woman to be the perfect wife, mother, lover, and friend. He/she will say things like "If you love me, I'm all you need—you're all I need". A woman is supposed to take care of everything for him/her emotionally and in the home.
5. **ISOLATION:** The abusive person tries to cut the woman off from people who support her. If she has male friends, she's a flirt, if she's close to family, she's "tied to the apron strings". He/she accuses people who are part of the woman's support system of "causing trouble" between them.
6. **BLAMES OTHERS FOR THEIR PROBLEMS:** He/she may make mistakes and then blame the woman for upsetting him/her and keeping him/her from concentrating on their job or school. He/she will tell the woman she is at fault for almost anything that goes wrong.
7. **BLAMES OTHERS FOR THEIR FEELINGS:** He/she will tell the woman "You make me mad", "You're hurting me by not doing what I want you to do", and "I can't help being angry".
8. **HYPERSENSITIVITY:** An abuser is easily insulted. He/she claims their feelings are "hurt" when really he/she's very mad or he/she takes the slightest setbacks as personal attacks. He/she will "rant and rave" about the injustice for things that have happened—things that are truly just a part of living—like being asked to work overtime, getting a traffic ticket, being told some behavior is annoying, or being asked to help with daily chores.
9. **CRUELTY TO ANIMALS OR CHILDREN:** This is a person who punishes animals brutally or is insensitive to their pain, suffering and daily needs.
10. **VERBAL ABUSE:** In addition to saying things that are meant to be cruel and hurtful, this can be seen when the abuser degrades the woman, cursing her, running down any of her accomplishments. The abuser will tell the woman that she's stupid and unable to function without him/her. This may involve waking the woman up to verbally abuse her, or not letting her go to sleep.
11. **RIGID SEX ROLES:** The abuser expects a woman to serve him: he/she may say the woman must stay at home, that she must obey in all things—even things that are criminal in nature. The abuser will see women as inferior to men, responsible for menial tasks, stupid and unable to be a whole person without their relationship
12. **DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE:** Many women are confused by their abuser's "sudden" change in moods.
13. **PAST BATTERING:** This person may say he/she has hit women in the past, but they were made to do so. The woman may hear from relatives or ex-spouses/girlfriends that the person is abusive, but the batterer will have an explanation. The batterer will eventually be violent in every relationship, provided they are in the relationship long enough. Situational circumstances **do not** make a person an abusive personality.
14. **BREAKING OR STRIKING OBJECTS:** This behavior is used as punishment (breaking cherished possessions), and is mostly used to terrorize the woman into submission. The abuser may beat on the table with his/her fist; throw objects around or near the woman. Again, this is very remarkable behavior—not only is this a sign of extreme emotional immaturity, but there's great danger when someone thinks they have the 'right' to punish or frighten their partner.
15. **ANY USE OF FORCE DURING AN ARGUMENT:** This may involve a batterer holding a woman down, physically restraining her from leaving the room, any pushing or shoving. They may hold the woman against the wall and say, "You're going to listen to me!"

Genesis House Domestic Violence Shelter

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