
Red Flags



Although no one can fully predict whether or not a relationship will turn out to be abusive, some warning signs do exist. If your partner displays any of the following characteristics, you need to be cautious.

- **Prior violent or abusive behavior:**
Probably the most important risk factor to battering is past abusive behavior. Without some form of intervention, the abuser is likely to continue.
- **Violent abuse by his/her parents:**
Studies show that abusers were more likely to have been abused as children. Abusers who witnessed abuse between their parents were more likely to batter as adults.
- **Alcohol and Drug abuse:**
About 80% of domestic abuse involves alcohol and/or drug abuse.
- **Cruelty to Animals:**
Any person who beats animals ought to be considered a potential domestic abuser.
- **Wanting control over financial matters:**
If he/she insists that the rent, car, bank accounts, etc. be kept in his/her name, their partner will be less likely to be able to leave and is therefore subject to his/her control.
- **Holding rigid, traditional views of sex roles and parenting, or negative attitudes toward their partner in general**
- **Showing extreme jealousy and possessiveness, which often leads to isolation of the victim from other family and friends**
- **Physical abuse during courtship**
- **Denying the abuse, minimizing the seriousness of the abuse, or refusing to take responsibility for the abusive behavior**

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