

WARNING LIST

This list identifies a series of abusive behaviors. All of these forms of abuse come from the desire of power and control. The list can help you recognize if you or someone you know is in an unhealthy relationship. Highlight those behaviors that apply to your partner and circle any that apply to you. The more highlighted and circled, the more abusive the situation may be.

PART 1 Emotional and Economic Attacks

Destructive Criticism/Verbal Abuse: Name-calling; mocking; accusing; blaming; yelling; swearing; making humiliating remarks or gestures.

Pressure Tactics: Rushing you to make decisions through “guilt-tripping” and other forms of intimidation; sulking; threatening to withhold money; manipulating the children; telling you what to do.

Abusing Authority: Always claiming to be right (insisting statements are “the truth”) telling you what to do; making big decision; using “logic.”

Disrespect: Interrupting; changing topics; not listening or responding; twisting your words; putting you down in front of others; saying bad things about your friends & family.

Abusing Trust: Lying; withholding information; cheating on you; being overly jealous.

Breaking Promises: Not following through on agreements; not taking a fair share of responsibility; refusing to help with childcare or housework.

Emotional Withholding: Not expressing feelings; not giving support, attention, or compliments; not respecting feelings, rights or opinions.

Minimizing, Denying & Blaming: Making light of behavior and not taking your concerns about it seriously; saying the abuse didn’t happen; shifting responsibility for abusive; saying you caused it.

Economic Control: Interfering with your work or not letting you work; refusing to give you or taking your money; taking your car keys or otherwise preventing you from using the car; threatening to report you to welfare or other social service agencies.

Self-Destructive Behavior: Abusing drugs or alcohol; threatening suicide or other forms of self-harm; deliberately saying or doing things that will have negative consequences.

Isolation: Preventing or making it difficult for you to see friends or relatives; monitoring phone calls; telling you where you can and cannot go.

Harassment: Making uninvited visits or calls; following you; checking up on you; embarrassing you in public; refusing to leave when asked.

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PART 2 Acts of Violence

Intimidation: Making angry or threatening gestures; use of physical size to intimidate standing in doorway during arguments; out shouting you; driving recklessly.

Destruction: Destroying your possessions (e.g. furniture); punching walls; throwing and/or breaking things.

Threats: Making and/or carrying out threats to hurt you or others.

Sexual Violence: Degrading treatment based on your sex or sexual orientation; using force or coercion to obtain sex or perform sexual acts.

Physical Violence: Being violent to you, your children, household pets or others. Slapping; punching; grabbing; kicking; choking; pushing; biting; burning; stabbing; shooting; etc.

Weapons: Use of weapons, keeping weapons around which frighten you, threatening or attempting to kill you or those you love.

Adapted from "Domestic Violence: The Facts" – A Handbook to STOP violence (Reprinted by permission of Battered Women Fighting Back, Boston Ph 617-482-9497; Fax 617-482-6504)