



24-hour Help Line: 206.522.9472

Relationship Red Flags

Here are some good questions to ask yourself if you're concerned you may be in an abusive relationship:

- ❖ Do I withhold information from my partner about my social interactions for fear of what he may do or say?
- ❖ Do I have the feeling that it is somehow “bad” if I want to be emotionally intimate with someone other than my partner?
- ❖ Does this relationship prevent me from feeling that I am part of a community, or from maintaining a support system?
- ❖ When I am around my partner and other friends or family, am I nervous about what he might say or do to embarrass or humiliate me?
- ❖ Does my partner seem to “take over” my friendships?
- ❖ Do I ever find myself making excuses for my partner’s behavior when we are out in public?
- ❖ Do I feel like I am isolated from my friends and family, or feel like I have to stop spending time with my acquaintances and can only be involved with his circle of friends?
- ❖ When I catch my partner in lies and then question her, does he then make me feel like I’ve done something wrong, or make me question my own sense of reality?
- ❖ Do I have feelings of being controlled, isolated, intimidated or exhausted?
- ❖ Do I experience shame or guilt in my relationship with my partner?

ISOLATION

- ❖ Your lover is so jealous that you limit your contact with other people so that you won’t have to put up with his jealous remarks or rage.
- ❖ Your partner finds fault with all of your friends. For example, he may criticize them for being too political and radical, or insufficiently political and radical.
- ❖ Your partner is always in the midst of a crisis so that you can never leave him alone.
- ❖ Your partner becomes sick, needy or angry when you try to spend time away from him, or with friends and family.
- ❖ Your partner creates embarrassing scenes in front of your friends or family so that none of them feel comfortable visiting you anymore.
- ❖ Your partner always seems to know what’s best for you, how to dress, who you should talk to, creating a “you and me” scenario.

- ❖ Your partner tries to convince you that it's you and him against the world and that no one else can or will understand your relationship.

MONOPOLIZATION OF PERCEPTIONS

- ❖ You feel like it is easier to go along with your partner than to fight for your own decision.
- ❖ Your partner's explanations always seem to make more sense than yours do, his politics are always more correct, his opinions more important.
- ❖ You watch what you say so that it meets with his approval.
- ❖ His very presence overwhelms everything else that is happening.
- ❖ He ridicules or belittles your identity, however you define that.

INDUCEMENT OF DEBILITY AND EXHAUSTION

- ❖ Your partner wakes you up to fight in the middle of the night or keeps you from sleeping until he's ready to quit fighting.
- ❖ Your partner criticizes you around a disability you have, belittling it or denying its existence or harmful effects.
- ❖ Your partner tries to convince you if you'd just change your attitude (or something else about your lifestyle, like the food you eat or how much you sleep), you could cure yourself.
- ❖ Your partner controls your access to food and sleep

THREATS

- ❖ Your partner threatens to slander you in your community.
- ❖ Your partner threatens to break or destroy things that you love.
- ❖ Your partner silences you with a look or an expression when you are in public.
- ❖ Your partner threatens to physically hurt you or others.
- ❖ Your partner threatens to destroy your car, hide your keys, or otherwise prevent you from leaving the house.

DEMONSTRATING POWER

- ❖ Your partner always claims to be politically correct and know the right way to do things.
- ❖ Your partner always claims to know what you are thinking and what you are planning.
- ❖ Your partner always seems to know more about you than you know about yourself.
- ❖ Your partner claims to have friends who report back to him on your activities.

DEGRADATION

- ❖ Your partner puts you down in a way that makes you think there is something essentially wrong with you.
- ❖ Your partner talks you into doing sexual things which are embarrassing to you or that feel bad.
- ❖ Your partner “jokingly” makes fun of you in front of others.
- ❖ Your partner interrogates you about past lovers or lovers he THINKS you have currently, or that you do have currently.

ENFORCING TRIVIAL DEMANDS

- ❖ Your partner demands detailed reports from you when you get back from errands or work.
- ❖ Your partner has rigidly defined ways of doing things that you must adhere to, from the way you clean the house, to making beds, washing dishes, driving the car, doing laundry, or your appearance, etc.
- ❖ Your partner is super critical of your way of doing things.

CRAZY-MAKING BEHAVIOR

- ❖ Your partner lies to you and then denies it.
- ❖ Your partner contradicts himself in the same conversation and then denies making the contradictory statement.
- ❖ Your partner changes the rules of the relationship without warning or explanation, leaving you constantly confused about what just happened.
- ❖ When you refer to an agreement you previously made, he says he does not remember it, or tells you it did not happen.
- ❖ He tells you that you are irrational or crazy.
- ❖ He convinces you that you are at fault for everything that goes wrong.

OCCASIONAL INDULGENCES

- ❖ Your partner surprises you with presents when you least expect it.
- ❖ You learn to believe that your partner is the only person that can make you really feel better about yourself, and when he’s being nice to you, you really feel good about yourself and your abilities.
- ❖ Your lovemaking is sometimes sweet, tender and wonderful.
- ❖ Your partner occasionally apologizes for being hurtful or demanding, but the pattern doesn’t seem to change.