

Signs of Unhealthy Relationships

Abuse is a pattern of coercive, intimidating, or manipulative behaviors used to exert power and control over a partner.

While we define dating violence as a pattern, that doesn't mean the first instance of abuse isn't also dating violence; we simply recognize that dating violence tends to involve a series of abusive behaviors over a course of time.

This holds true for any relationship, marital or not.

Relationships exist on a spectrum and it can sometimes be hard to tell when a behavior goes from healthy to unhealthy (or even abusive). Typical warning signs of abuse from your partner include:

- Checking your phone, email or social media accounts without your permission
- Putting you down frequently, especially in front of others
- Isolating you from friends or family (emotionally, financially or physically)
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Explosive outbursts, temper or mood swings
- Any form of physical harm
- Pressuring you or forcing you to have sex
- Controlling every penny you spend
- Preventing you from making your own decisions

Relationship abuse is all about power and control. While you may be unwilling or unable to leave your relationship right now, it's important to remember that abusive partners are unlikely to change their behavior.

Reclaim Power and Control:

Dating abuse is an attempt by abusive partners to gain or maintain power and control, and it comes in many forms.

- Form of patterns and behaviors that when looked at all together make you question your own self-worth and become further under the control of the partner
- Behaviors can be very subtle and continuous over time
 - Using intimidation
 - Certain looks
 - Actions
 - Smashing things destroying property
 - Displaying weapons
 - Using coercion and threat
 - ❖ Threatening to leave
 - ❖ To commit suicide
 - ❖ Making threats or carrying out threats

- Using economic threats
 - Preventing you from getting or keeping a job
 - Asking for and using your money
 - Taking your money
 - Not letting you know they have access to money
 - Keeping you from having money
- Using privilege
 - Treating you like a servant
 - Making all the decisions
 - Acting like the “master of the castle”
 - Being the one to define the roles
- Minimizing, denying or blaming
 - Not taking your concerns seriously
 - Saying the abuse doesn’t happen or you are taking it out of proportion
 - Shifting responsibility for behavior – maybe to you – “It’s all your fault.”
- Using Isolation
 - Controlling what you do
 - Who you see or talk too
 - What you read
 - Where you go
 - Tries to limit outside involvement
 - Using jealousy to justify actions
 - ❖ You don’t really love me if ...
 - ❖ You should pay more attention to me
- Using emotion abuse
 - Putting you down
 - Making you feel bad about yourself
 - Calling you names
 - Making you think you are crazy
 - Playing mind games
 - Humiliating you
 - Making you feel guilty
- Using children as a threat
 - Taking custody
 - To harm children
 - Using children against partner
 - Undermining partners parenting

The link below will take you to the National Domestic Violence Hotline where you can create a printable safety plan. If you would like to talk with someone about the process, please reach out to Counseling staff located in the Student Success Center 101A on the Greenwood campus or call 864-941-8356 to make an appointment.

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)



Career Planning & Counseling Services • Room 101A • Greenwood, SC • (864) 941-8356