

# If Your Friend is Being Abused...

## LISTEN TO THE VICTIM

It is really hard to admit to someone that you are being abused. If someone confides in you about abuse, listen to what they have to say and BELIEVE him or her.

## HELP THE VICTIM FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF/HERSELF

An abuser will usually put their victim down, call him or her names and just make them feel really badly about themselves. You can use compliments and friendly gestures to make someone feel good. Remember, the nice thing you say may be the only nice thing they hear about themselves.

## GIVE SUPPORT – OFFER TO GO WITH YOUR FRIEND TO GET HELP

It can be hard to take the first steps alone. If possible, go with your friend when they talk to someone about what's happening to them.

## OFFER OPTIONS AND SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ABUSE

You learned some really important things today about what makes a relationship unhealthy. Pass that wisdom on. If you don't know what to say, you can direct your friend to a trusted adult (a parent, teacher, coach) or you can give them the number for SafeNet: 454-8161.

## SHARE INFORMATION ON WHERE TO GET HELP

Sometimes we can't do things on our own – we need to ask for help. Reaching out for help and support takes a lot of courage. Again, if you don't know what to say, you can direct your friend to a trusted adult (a parent, teacher, coach) or you can give them the number for SafeNet: 454-8161.

## BE PATIENT

It can take a victim a long time to realize that they don't deserve to be hurt. You can help by simply being there and listening when the victim needs to talk.

## CALL OUR HOTLINE FOR MORE INFORMATION: 454-8161

If you have questions or concerns, or if you just need to talk about what you are dealing with, you can call our hotline, too. A lot of people call us because they are worried about a family member or friend who is being abused. Your needs are important, too. Everything you say is confidential, and you do not have to give your name, phone number or the name of the victim or abuser.

## If Your Friend is Being Abused...

### DON'T JUDGE OR BLAME THE VICTIM

An abuser blames his or her victim for the abuser and does not take responsibility for his or her own behavior. Other people sometimes blame a victim for staying in an abusive relationship. It is important that we tell the victim that he or she does not deserve to be abused.

### DON'T SAY NASTY THINGS ABOUT THE ABUSER

It is hard to admit that someone you love is hurting you. Because a victim does care about his or her partner, they may become defensive or untrusting of us if we make mean or threatening statements about the abuser.

### DON'T LET THE VICTIM BECOME ISOLATED

It's common for an abuser to try to isolate his or her partner from friends and family. Let the victim know that you are there for them anytime they need to talk or if they need help.

### DON'T PRESSURE THE VICTIM TO MAKE A DECISION OR TAKE AN ACTION THAT THEY'RE NOT READY FOR

It is important to remember that a victim knows best what might happen to him or her if she or he ends the relationship. Leaving can be difficult and dangerous. Be patient with a victim – and if they say they can't break the relationship off yet, don't make them feel guilty or ashamed.

### DON'T SHARE THE VICTIM'S STORY WITH OTHER PEOPLE

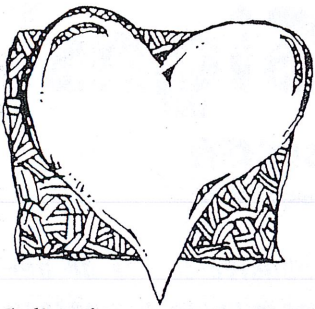
Reaching out for help from a parent, teacher or other adult is okay, but consider carefully whether or not it is safe for you to share the name of the victim or abuser. Contacting SafeNet for information and support is okay. However, it is NOT okay to spread gossip or rumors about people in violent relationships. If the victim finds out that you have shared their story, they may see you as untrustworthy. If the abuser hears the rumor and realizes that the victim has told someone, this can endanger the victim AND you.

### DON'T ACCEPT THE ABUSERS BEHAVIOR

Let the victim know that she or he does not deserve to be hurt and that the abuse is not his or her fault.

### DON'T CONFRONT THE ABUSER

This can be dangerous for the victim because the abuser may be angry that the victim told someone. It can also be dangerous for you – this is a violent person. They may try to hurt you, too.



# How Healthy Is My Relationship?

Following are two lists, one of healthy relationship characteristics and one of unhealthy traits. Many relationships have a combination of both. The point of this exercise is to figure out what things in your relationship are healthy or unhealthy, so you can gain appreciation for the best things and decide what you want to change. Read both lists, and check the heart next to every statement that is true about your relationship.

I am evaluating my relationship with: \_\_\_\_\_

## IS IT HEALTHY?

*Check the heart if you and this person...*

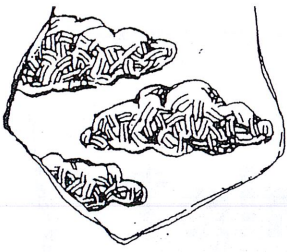
- ♥ Have fun together more often than not
- ♥ Each enjoy spending time separately, with your own friends, as well as with each other's friends
- ♥ Always feel safe with each other
- ♥ Trust each other
- ♥ Are faithful to each other if you have made this commitment
- ♥ Support each other's individual goals in life, like getting a job or going to college
- ♥ Respect each other's opinions, even when they are different
- ♥ Solve conflicts without putting each other down, cursing at each other or making threats
- ♥ Both accept responsibility for your actions
- ♥ Both apologize when you're wrong
- ♥ Have equal decision-making power about what you do in your relationship
- ♥ Each control your own money
- ♥ Are proud to be with each other
- ♥ Encourage each other's interests - like sports & extracurricular activities
- ♥ Have some privacy - your letters, diary, personal phone calls are respected as your own
- ♥ Have close friends & family who like the other person and are happy about your relationship
- ♥ Never feel like you're being pressured for sex
- ♥ Communicate about sex, if your relationship is sexual
- ♥ Allow each other 'space' when you need it
- ♥ Always treat each other with respect

## IS IT UNHEALTHY?

*Check the heart if one of you...*

- ♥ Gets extremely jealous or accuses the other of cheating
- ♥ Puts the other down by calling names, cursing or making the other feel bad about him or herself
- ♥ Yells at and treats the other like a child
- ♥ Doesn't take the other person, or things that are important to him/her, seriously
- ♥ Doesn't listen when the other talks
- ♥ Frequently criticizes the other's friends or family
- ♥ Pressures the other for sex, or makes sex hurt or feel humiliating
- ♥ Has ever threatened to hurt the other or commit suicide if they leave
- ♥ Cheats or threatens to cheat
- ♥ Tells the other how to dress
- ♥ Has ever grabbed, pushed, hit, or physically hurt the other
- ♥ Blames the other for your own behavior ("If you hadn't made me mad, I wouldn't have...")
- ♥ Embarrasses or humiliates the other
- ♥ Smashes, throws or destroys things
- ♥ Tries to keep the other from having a job or furthering his/her education
- ♥ Makes all the decisions about what the two of you do
- ♥ Tries to make the other feel crazy or plays mind games
- ♥ Goes back on promises
- ♥ Acts controlling or possessive - like you own your partner
- ♥ Uses alcohol or drugs as an excuse for hurtful behavior
- ♥ Ignores or withholds affection as a way of punishing the other
- ♥ Depends completely on the other to meet social or emotional needs

*This list is a way of identifying some of the healthy and unhealthy characteristics of your relationship - it does not cover every possible situation. You may want to share this list with someone in your support system, and talk about where you want to make changes in your relationship and how you can begin to do this.*



# 21 Warning Signs

## ... of an Abusive Person

**Following are some common signs that a person is or may turn out to be abusive to his or her intimate partner. Answering yes to one or two questions below does not necessarily mean a person is abusive. However, if any of the questions below are true about you or your partner, you should be cautious about proceeding with the relationship and be sure to address those issues right away, preferably with the help of a counselor.**

### AM I / IS MY PARTNER A PERSON WHO...

	TRUE of ME	TRUE of MY PARTNER
1. * Was or is abused by a parent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. * Grew up in a home where an adult was abused by another adult?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Gets very serious with boyfriends/girlfriends very quickly - saying "I love you" very early in the relationship, wanting to move in together or get engaged after only a few months, or pressuring partner for a serious commitment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Comes on very strong, is extremely charming and an overly smooth talker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is extremely jealous?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Isolates partner from support systems - wants partner all to themselves, and tries to keep partner from friends, family or outside activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Attempts to control what partner wears, what s/he does or who s/he sees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is abusive toward other people, especially mother or sisters if he is a male?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Blames others for one's own misbehavior or failures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Abuses drugs or alcohol?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Has unrealistic expectations, like expecting partner to meet all of one's needs and be the perfect partner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is overly sensitive - acts 'hurt' when not getting one's way, takes offense when others disagree with an opinion, gets very upset at small inconveniences that are just a normal part of life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Has ever been cruel to animals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Has ever abused children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Has ever hit a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Has ever threatened violence, even if it wasn't a 'serious' threat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Calls partner names, puts him/her down or curses at him/her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Is extremely moody, and switches quickly from being very nice to exploding in anger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. If a male, believes women are inferior to men and should obey them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Is intimidating, for example using threatening body language, punching walls or breaking objects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Holds partner against his/her will to keep him/her from walking away or leaving the room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Numbers 1 and 2 do not indicate a person will be abusive. The majority of children who grow up in abusive homes choose not to be abusive as adults. However, these children have a higher likelihood than other children of growing up to be involved in abusive relationships. These factors should be considered with other factors.

# CHART OF DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS

	PHYSICAL ABUSE	EMOTIONAL/ PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL/ ENVIROMENTAL	SEXUAL ABUSE
<b>POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS</b>	Pinch Squeeze Push--Shove Restrain Jerk--Pull Shake--Slap Bite Pull hair	Ignores women's feelings, withholding approval as punishment  Repeated humiliation, both public and private  Blames victim for all faults.  Labeling: "Crazy", "Bitch", "Whore"	Jokes about role of women  Denies victim her history, heritage	Looks at and makes jokes about women as sex objects  Jealousy may become extreme  Minimizes her feelings and needs regarding sex  Sexual criticism
<b>DANGEROUS</b>	Shaking, with bruises  Hit--Punch Kick Objects thrown  Targeted or repeated hitting for punishment	Threats of violence, retaliation  Puts down abilities as worker, mother, lover  Threatens her with abusing children or getting custody of children	Isolates victim by no friends, repeated moves  Economic dependency (gets her fired; takes her money; etc.)  Threatens to hurt her family  Man stays isolated and demands control of environment	Forces victim to touch or look at genitalia  Withholds sex and affection  Forces victim to watch sex with others
<b>HIGHLY DANGEROUS</b>	Choking Household objects as weapons: restraining & hitting  Bones broken, internal injuries, medical treatment needed.  Use of knives, guns, poisons for disabling or disfiguring	Provokes following reactions in victim:  -Powerlessness (learned) -Unpredictable consequences of actions -Nervous breakdown, depression, mental illness	Hits, punches or kicks walls, not her.  Deprives victim of food, sleep, medicine, etc.  Destroys pets  Incest or child abuse  Threatens suicide	Demands sex with threats  Forces uncomfortable sex after a beating  Sadism; sex for purpose of hurting, uses objects and weapons
<b>LETHAL</b>	Homicide	Suicide	Death	Murder

-Source Unknown

SafeNet Hotline: (814) 454 - 8161

## BIDERMAN'S CHART OF COERCION

from Amnesty International's "Report on Torture"  
paraphrased by Starr Luteri, SafeNet

GENERAL METHOD	EFFECTS AND PURPOSES
<i>ISOLATION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deprives victim of all social support (for the) ability to resist</li> <li>- Develops an intense concern with self</li> <li>- Makes victim dependent upon interrogator</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: ISOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keeps her away from friends and family</li> <li>- He removes telephone, keeps mail, etc.</li> </ul>
<i>MONOPOLIZATION OF PERCEPTION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fixes attention upon immediate predicament; fosters introspection</li> <li>- Eliminates stimuli competing with those controlled by captor</li> <li>- Frustrates all actions not consistent with compliance</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: HE LIMITS INFORMATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He shuts out anything that disagrees with what he wants her to think</li> <li>- She keeps wondering what she did wrong</li> </ul>
<i>INDUCED DEBILITY &amp; EXHAUSTION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weakens mental &amp; physical ability to resist</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: HE KEEPS HER WEAK &amp; TIRED ON PURPOSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wears her down until she is too tired to fight back</li> <li>- Wakes her up in the middle of the night</li> <li>- Won't let her eat enough regular food</li> <li>- Won't let her take prescribed medicine</li> </ul>
<i>THREATS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultivates anxiety and despair</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: THREATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She gets in the habit of being afraid</li> <li>- He changes the rules when he likes, so she has to read his mind to avoid punishment</li> </ul>
<i>OCCASIONAL INDULGENCES</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides positive motivation for compliance</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: LITTLE TREATS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Jeckle / Mr Hyde: He is so wonderful sometimes - so she believes it must be her fault when things go wrong</li> <li>- If she were perfect, he would be nice all the time</li> </ul>
<i>DEMONSTRATING "OMNIPOTENCE"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suggests futility of resistance</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: ACTS LIKE GOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes her believe it's useless to fight back</li> </ul>
<i>DEGRADATION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes cost of resistance appear more damaging to self-esteem than capitulation</li> <li>- Reduces prisoner to "animal level" concerns</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: PUTS HER DOWN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes her believe that she will be even more unhappy if she leaves; nobody will believe her, they will blame her, put her in jail, take the children away from her</li> <li>- Brings her to the point where she can only think about survival</li> </ul>
<i>ENFORCING TRIVIAL DEMANDS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develops habit of compliance</li> </ul>
<b>DV Situation: DEMANDS LITTLE THINGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes her obey him in picky little things, so she will obey him automatically in more important things</li> </ul>

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