



Warning Signs of an Abusive Relationship

How an Abuser Acts Toward His or Her Partner

Dominates

- Demands attention
- Demands certain behaviors from her partner
- Tells his partner how to look and dress
- Makes decisions for her partner
- Is physically violent, such as slapping, punching, pushing, pinching
- Wants his partner to take care of him and pay for things
- Takes advantage of her partner
- Destroys his partner's belongings
- Acts excessively jealous and possessive
- Yells
- Controls his partner's use of money

Note: To make it easier to read, we have used the male or female pronoun in each descriptor. Abusers can be either male or female. Partners of abusers can be either male or female.

Humiliates

- Tells his partner what she can and can't do and expects her to obey
- Shows disrespect for her partner in front of friends or electronically by texting or sending messages or pictures on the Internet
- Puts down his partner, sometimes in a joking manner
- Tells embarrassing things about her partner
- Calls his partner names

Isolates

- Tells her partner what he can and can't do and expects him to obey
- Tells his partner what activities she can be involved in
- Phones or texts frequently to check up on her partner
- Tells his partner who she can be friends with
- Keeps her partner from seeing friends or family
- Isolates his partner from others

Threatens

- Threatens her partner with violence
- Threatens to hurt self
- Threatens to leave his partner if she doesn't do what the abuser says
- Has an unpredictable temper

Intimidates

- Smashes things in front of his partner
- Hurts animals
- Forces her partner to participate in unwanted, unsafe, or degrading sexual activities
- Sees his partner as property rather than a person

Denies and Blames

- Blames her partner for abusive behavior
- Blames a bad childhood or experience
- Denies the abuse happened





How the Person Being Abused Thinks, Feels, and Behaves

- Fears the abuser
- Thinks she can't do anything right
- Feels embarrassed to have friends and family see how the abuser treats him
- Dresses in clothing to hide signs of abuse
- Is frequently absent from work, school, or social gatherings
- Is afraid to disagree with the abuser
- Makes excuses for the abuser
- Stops hanging out with friends
- Changes eating behavior to make changes in appearance for abuser

Consequences for the Person Being Abused

- Feels as if he doesn't deserve respect
- Feels desperate and helpless
- Feels a lack of self-worth
- Feels anxious and needs to please the abuser
- Feels depressed
- Is suicidal
- Feels scared, confused, ashamed, stuck
- Loses confidence
- Does poorly in school
- Is more likely to have eating disorders
- Is more likely to be victimized later in life

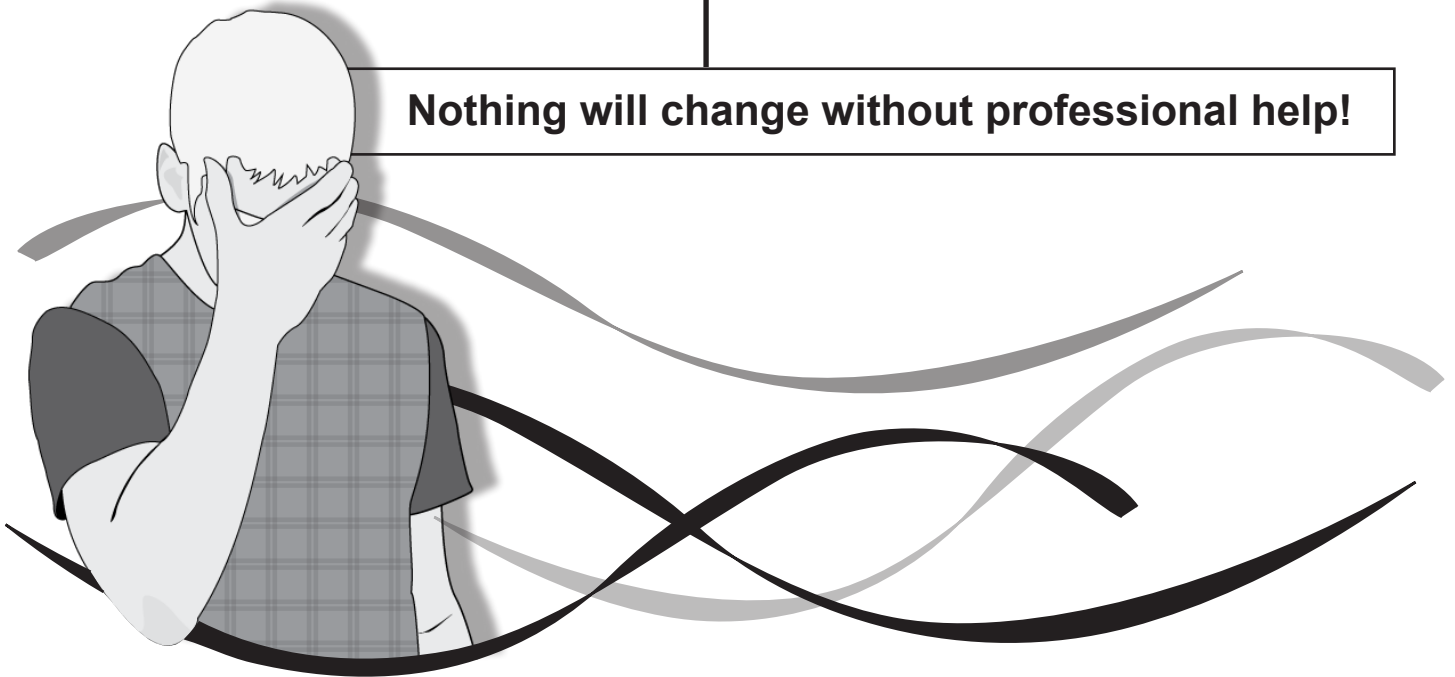
Consequences for the Abuser

- May have trouble with authorities
- May get arrested by police
- May spend time in jail or prison

Reasons Someone Might Stay in an Abusive Relationship

- Thinks she isn't going to get another boyfriend
- Believes all relationships will be the same
- Feels helpless
- Feels scared

Nothing will change without professional help!



Sources:
Helpguide, Harvard Health Publications, <http://www.helpguide.org/>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Understanding Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet, www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence2012-a.pdf