

Warning Signs of an Abusive Relationship

At the start of any relationship we tend to view the other person through 'rose coloured glasses': ie we only really see the positive things about them and overlook the negative. This is only human nature since we are all made up of positives and negatives!

When a relationship becomes abusive it is sometimes possible to look back at early warning signs, which were all there at the time but were not identified or recognised for various reasons.

Women who have experienced abusive relationships suggest some of the following questions may help you to decide whether your relationship is abusive or not:

- **Are you afraid of someone you live with?** Yes/No
- **Does it feel as if you tiptoe around in order to keep your partner (or other relative) in a good mood?** Yes/No
- **Does he/she decide who you may be friends with, how you should dress, what you should/should/not spend money on or try to control other areas of your life or relationship?** Yes/No
- **Does he/she get jealous when there is no reason?** Yes/No
- **Does he/she physically harm you (or others) even if it's just grabbing or pushing?** Yes/No
- **Do you 'never know where you are' as your partner's mood changes all the time?** Yes/No
- **Have you ever made changes to your life eg no longer see friends/relatives, do things in secret, so as not to provoke your partner to anger?** Yes/No
- **Does your partner involve your children in arguments eg does he/she use threats against the children as a way of controlling you?** Yes/No

If you have said 'Yes' to two or more of the above questions, then you may be in an abusive relationship. You might find it useful to have more information about domestic violence and abusive relationships.

You can find other information as follows:

24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 200 0247
MALE (Advice line for men as victims)	0808 801 0327
RESPECT (for perpetrators of domestic violence/abuse)	0845 122 8609

Or visit the following websites:

www.womensaid.org.uk
www.refuge.org.uk
www.mensadviceline.org.uk
www.respect.uk.net

Each of these sites will give you information about covering your tracks so no one know you have visited them.