

**HANDOUT ...****Red Flags For Abusive Relationships**

The following is a list of warning signs for potentially abusive relationships. They are presented as guidelines and cues to pay attention to, not as judgments on the worth of the other person.

**Question relationships with partners who:**

- Abuse alcohol or other drugs.
- Monitors all of your activities and demands to know where you are at all times.
- Are jealous and don't want to "share" you with friends and family.
- Seems "too good to be true".
- Has a history of stalking.
- Can't stand to spend time away from you.
- Have a history of trouble with the law, get into fights, or break and destroy property.
- Blame you for how they treat you, or for anything bad that happens.
- Abuse siblings, other family members, children or pets.
- Put down people, including your family and friends, or call them names.
- Are always angry at someone or something.
- Try to isolate you and control whom you see or where you go.
- Idolize you and don't see you as a whole person.
- Nag you or force you to be sexual when you don't want to be.
- Cheat on you or have lots of partners.
- Are physically rough with you (push, shove, pull, yank, squeeze, restrain).
- Take your money or take advantage of you in other ways.
- Accuse you of flirting or "coming on" to others or accuse you of cheating on them.
- Don't listen to you or show interest in your opinions or feelings. . . things always have to be done their way.
- Ignore you, give you the silent treatment, or hang up on you.

- Lie to you, don't show up for dates, maybe even disappear for days.
- Make vulgar comments about others in your presence
- Blame all arguments and problems on you.
- Tell you how to dress or act.
- Threaten to kill themselves if you break up with them, or tell you that they cannot live without you.
- Experience extreme mood swings. . . tell you you're the greatest one minute and rip you apart the next minute.
- Tell you to shut up or tell you you're dumb, stupid, fat, or call you some other name (directly or indirectly).
- Compare you to former partners.

**Some other cues that might indicate an abusive relationship might include:**

- You feel afraid to break up with them.
- You feel tied down, feel like you have to check-in.
- You feel afraid to make decisions or bring up certain subjects so that the other person won't get mad.
- You get angry often towards your partner.
- You find yourself not trusting your thoughts, ideas, instincts.
- You find yourself doing things that don't feel right for you.
- You find yourself often defending your partner to your best friends and family.
- You tell yourself that if you just try harder and love your partner enough that everything will be just fine.
- You find yourself crying a lot, being depressed or unhappy.
- You find yourself worrying and obsessing about how to please your partner and keep them happy.
- You find the physical or emotional abuse getting worse over time.

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project  
<http://www.domesticabuseproject.org>