

Signs of an Abusive Partner

Below are some of the signs of an abusive partner. However, all abusers are not alike. Some are more dangerous than others. This bulletin lists three common types of abusers and suggestions if you are in an abusive relationship.

- Blaming others for problems
- Blaming you or others for their feelings
- Breaking things that belong to you
- Constantly checking up on you
- Explosive anger
- Forcing sex on you
- Forcing traditional gender roles
- History of abuse in their family
- Hypersensitivity to criticism
- Isolating you from friends and family
- Their belief that everything must be their way
- Substance abuse
- Threats of violence
- Use of force during an argument
- Verbal abuse and name-calling

Every 6 minutes a woman is killed by her husband or boyfriend. It is reported that at least 2 million women are beaten every year by someone they think *loves* them. These are just the reported cases of battering. Many more go unreported.

In Michael Groetsch's book, He Promised He'd Stop, the author outlines 3 categories of batterers:

- The Remorseful Batterer
 - He does not tend to use weapons
 - He does not intend to torture, harm, or disfigure his victim
 - His violence is limited to a few specific episodes
 - His episodes are related to something that happened to him, such as a job loss, that he takes out on his victim

- He has a ability to feel remorse and empathize with others
 - He is the most willing (of all of the types of abusers) to seek help and learn to change
- The Sporadic Batterer
 - He might or might not have a history of battering women
 - He has some serious personality issues
 - He has the type of personality that causes his rage to be triggered by external events
 - He abuses drugs and alcohol
 - He goes into fits of uncontrollable rage and could likely kill his victim
 - He is not likely to change but it is not impossible
- The Serial Batterer
 - He has a history of abusing women
 - His physical aggression comes from inside himself (rather than an external event)
 - He tends to beat his partner when she is pregnant
 - He tends to use weapons
 - He systematically tortures his victims and often mutilates them
 - His actions are often premeditated
 - He wants absolute control
 - He humiliates his victim and takes away her self control
 - He tries to destroy her self-esteem and free will
 - He takes no responsibility for his actions and blames his victim or others for his action
 - This type of batterer is extremely dangerous and does not intend to change

If his partner tries to leave, he will:

- Use any method to try to get her back such as begging, harassing her, her family, and her friends
- Use intimidation tactics such as stalking her at work
- Destroy her property
- Threaten her safety and the safety of her children and loved ones

What Can the Victim Do to Get Out of the Abusive Relationship?

Many women feel that they are helpless. If you are in an abusive relationship, what your partner is doing to you is a crime. Studies show that with the remorseful and the sporadic batterer, arrest and prosecution have a tendency to discourage the behavior.

When the Police Arrive:

- Send the children out of the room
- Tell the police exactly what the batterer did to you
- Show the police any evidence of the battering (broken glass or torn clothing)

The Follow-up:

- Find out about the court date
- Enlist an advocate's help (such as a lawyer)
- Don't be afraid to prosecute
- Get a restraining order
- Ask to be notified of the batterer's release from jail

Develop a Safety Plan:

The heart of your safety plan is your support system, which is made up of:

- friends and family

- domestic violence programs
- domestic women's shelters
- advocates
- police
- doctors and hospitals
- counselors
- child care facilities
- banks
- the court system

A Final Note:

Leaving is never easy. But, the longer you wait, the harder it becomes to leave. This is because the woman, who is systematically abused learns to believe that she is helpless.

One woman decided to leave her husband after 20 years of marriage.

From the moment he got up until he went to bed, he yelled at her. He would put his hands around her neck and described how easily he could kill her. "I could split your head in the bathtub", he'd say. She knew she needed to leave. She also knew she needed to plan carefully.

Every night, when he took out the garbage, she took a few personal items into the storage closet in the basement. She learned about a shelter that would give her a temporary place to stay. One day, when her husband was out, she retrieved her personal items and went to the shelter.

She was 88 years old when she left. It is never too late to leave.

For more information, read [He Promised He'd Stop](#) by Michael Groetsch

Or visit these websites:

<http://www.theresnoexcuse.com/>

<http://www.abusedadultresourcecenter.com/donations.htm>

<http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/abuse/a/990407.htm>

