

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>