



When control becomes abuse

Unhealthy relationships have one defining characteristic: control. There is a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another. Abuse can be emotional, psychological, sexual, or physical. And abuse tends to worsen over time.

Few people go into a relationship with the goal of abuse. Many in fact don't recognize their unhealthy behaviors until it's too late and they have physically or emotionally hurt another. Could you be causing damage to someone you love?

The following checklist indicates some general behaviors demonstrated in an abusive relationship. If you recognize yourself in this list, reach out now for help. You don't need to be a victim of your own behaviors.

Do you:

- Keep track of your partner's time — with whom he or she has been, where he or she is, what he or she is doing?
- Keep your partner from having relationships with family and friends?
- Prevent your partner from working or attending school?
- Criticize your partner for little things.
- Anger easily?
- Control your partner's money and force him or her to account for all spending?
- Listen to your partner talk on the phone or keep your partner from using the phone at all?
- Make fun of your partner in front of others?
- Destroy personal property or sentimental items?
- Hit, punch, slap, kick, bite, or otherwise physically harm your partner or your children?
- Force your partner to have sex?
- Hurt or threaten to hurt your partner's pets?
- Threaten to hurt your partner or your children?
- Use or threaten to use a weapon against your partner?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, your behavior may not be healthy. Life Solutions can help. Call the National Service Center at **1-800-647-3327** today.