Recognizing the Signs of an Abusive Relationship

At first Amy thought it was sweet when her new boyfriend was jealous of the time she spent with her friends. But when he started to tell her when she could see them and follow her when they weren’t together to see where she was, she began to feel uncomfortable.

Sandy was used to covering the bruises her husband gave her. She tried to leave him many times, but each time she did, he told her he couldn’t live without her and that he would change. She lived in constant fear because she never knew when he would “lose control” next.

All of Mike’s co-workers thought of him as the guy who had it all together. But no one knew that when he went home at night, Mike’s wife would start insulting him and calling him names. Even though he was unhappy with their relationship, he thought he’d never be able to find someone else and he didn’t want to spend his life alone.

Although each of these situations is very different, all of these people are involved in an abusive relationship. Sometimes an abusive relationship may not be as obvious as you think it might be.

Abuse can occur in any type of intimate relationship and it can happen to anyone. Types of abuse can include physical, emotional, social, economic, and sexual abuse.

Here are some warning signs of an abusive relationship.

Does your partner…

☐ Physically harm you in any way?
☐ Often get angry very easily or for no reason?
☐ Call you names or put you down?
☐ Ignore your feelings and needs?
☐ Show you little or no affection?
☐ Cheat on you?
☐ Act extremely jealous or possessive?
☐ Try to keep you from your friends or family?
☐ Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends, or pets?
☐ Threaten to hurt him/herself?
☐ Make you feel scared or nervous to say or do certain things?
☐ Blame you, or other factors (such as alcohol use), for their behavior?
☐ Pressure you to do things (such as sexual activities or using drugs) you aren’t comfortable with?
☐ Try to control things you do – for example, who you see, where you go, or what you wear?

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, you may be in an abusive relationship. If you are in this situation, it’s important to remember that it’s not your fault. Help is available.

For more information or to get help, contact your EAP at 888.431.4334 or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

References:

This material is provided by CIGNA for informational/educational purposes only. It is not intended as medical/clinical advice. Only a healthcare provider can make a diagnosis or recommend a treatment plan. For more information about your behavioral health benefits, you can call the member services or behavioral health telephone number listed on your healthcare identification card.