

TWU Counseling Center

Signs of Physical, Sexual and Emotional Abuse

Relationship violence is often experienced as a combination of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse. The following are some examples of the range of battering and abuse that can occur. This list includes examples of behaviors and actions that are violent and abusive and can help you assess the healthiness of your relationship. If any of these signs are present, you may want to seek professional help to assess the healthiness of your relationship and your safety.

Physical Abuse

- Pushes
- Injures with slaps, kicks, or punches
- Exposure to risks, such as reckless driving
- Throws objects
- Threatens or injures partner with a weapon
- Physically prevents partner from leaving the house
- Locks partner out of the house
- Abandons partner in dangerous places
- Refuses to help partner when sick, injured, or pregnant
- Prevents partner from seeking medical care
- Keeps partner awake at night against partner's will
- Refuses to buy food or other articles necessary (for partner or the family)
- Destroys property
- Abuses the children
- Threatens to injure partner's family or friends

Sexual Abuse

- Withholds sex and/or affection
- Forces to strip when doesn't want to
- Commits cruel sexual acts
- Forces to have sex against partner's will
- Forces to have sex after a beating
- Extremely jealous, accuses of having affairs
- Forces to watch and/or repeat pornographic acts

Emotional Abuse

- Continually criticizes, yelling and/or insulting (e.g. telling is too fat, too skinny, too stupid, bad parent, bad partner, bad lover)
- Ignores feelings
- Ridicules most valued beliefs
- Denies affections
- Refuses to work and share financial responsibilities
- Keeps from working outside the home
- Manipulates with lies and contradictions
- Insults partner's family and friends to drive them away
- Refuses to socialize with partner or partner's friends and family
- Prevents contact with partner's family and friends
- Keeps from using the telephone or controls use of the phone, internet, etc.
- Controls all the money and makes all financial decisions
- Humiliates partner in public
- Harasses partner at work
- Threatens to leave or throw partner out of the house
- Threatens to kidnap the children
- Punishes or deprives the children

From MAV: Men Against Violence <http://orgs.unt.edu/mav>

