

21 WARNING SIGNS OF BEING IN AN ABUSIVE/VIOLENT RELATIONSHIP

Source: Harbour House website. Adapted from "*The Relationship Workbook*"

There are many kinds of abusive/violent relationships, which involve individuals of many different backgrounds (e.g. gender, race, age, economic status, sexual orientation, religion, etc.).

Most women who come to Harbour House have been in abusive/violent relationships with intimate partners (e.g. husbands, boyfriends, girlfriends, etc.). It is also possible to be in an abusive/violent relationship with other individuals, such as family members, friends, landlords, employers, etc.

The following are some of the signs of being in an abusive/violent relationship with an intimate partner (e.g. husband, boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.), but may also apply to other kinds of relationships:

- 1) You got very serious about your relationship very quickly. For example, your partner told you they loved you very quickly and/or you moved in together or got engaged very quickly and/or you were pressured into a serious commitment very quickly.
- 2) Your partner has a tendency to come on very strongly and may be extremely charming and/or a 'smooth talker'.
- 3) Your partner is extremely jealous.
- 4) Your partner isolates you from your support systems. For example, they want you all to themselves and they try to keep you away from your family and/or friends and/or outside activities.
- 5) Your partner attempts to control what you wear, what you do and/or who you see.
- 6) Your partner is abusive towards other people (especially their mother or sisters if your partner is male).
- 7) Your partner blames others for their own misbehavior or failures (e.g. someone else is always to blame).
- 8) Your partner abuses drugs or alcohol.
- 9) Your partner has unrealistic expectations. For example, they expect you to meet all of their needs and to be the "perfect" partner and/or mother if there are children involved.
- 10) Your partner is overly sensitive. For example, your partner acts 'hurt' when they are not getting their own way, takes offense when others disagree with their opinion and/or gets very upset at small inconveniences that are just a normal part of life.
- 11) Your partner has been/is cruel to animals.

- 12) Your partner has been/is abusive towards children.
- 13) Your partner has hit either another partner or you in the past.
- 14) Your partner has threatened violence - even if it wasn't a 'serious' threat?
- 15) Your partner calls you names, puts you down and/or curses at you.
- 16) Your partner is extremely moody. For example, they switch quickly from being very nice to exploding in anger.
- 17) If your partner is a male, they believe women are inferior to men and should obey them.
- 18) Your partner intimidates you or others. For example, they use threatening body language, punch walls and/or break objects.
- 19) Your partner holds you against your will to keep you from walking away or leaving the room.
- 20) Your partner was abused by a parent or someone they trusted. **
- 21) Your partner grew up in a home where an adult was abused by another adult. **

** Please Note: Numbers 20 & 21 on this list do not necessarily indicate a person will be abusive. The majority of children who grow up in abusive homes choose not to be abusive as adults. However, these children still have a *higher* likelihood than *other* children of growing up to be involved in abusive relationships. These factors should be considered with other factors.