

Are you or your friend in a controlling, abusive relationship?

There are several types of abuse; physical, verbal, sexual, financial and neglect. Girls can tend to rationalize their boyfriend's behavior and ignore the warning signs of emotional abuse, which can lead to physical and sexual abuse. To many tweens and teens it is not considered abuse until it gets physical. This is FALSE. The damage from emotional abuse can last a lifetime unless the person seeks help.

Do any of these signs sound like your relationship or your friend's relationship:

- Are you more sad, than happy in your relationship?
- Do you cry frequently?
- Are you upset when you're not with him?
- Do you constantly apologize for incidents that are not your fault just to make the fighting stop?
- Does he blame his outbursts, drinking or drug use on you?
- Does he have a volatile relationship with one or both parents?
- Does he text you or call you constantly?
- If you don't respond to his text immediately or answer his call, does he yell at you, question you, ask you who you were with, who you were talking to and what you were doing that you couldn't respond to him?
- Do you ever feel like you're on trial; like a lawyer is interrogating you?
- Does he make demeaning comments about your family and friends?
- Does he tell you that he's the only one that really cares about you?
- Does he tell you that your friends are not good friends and that if he wanted to hook up with them at any point, they would choose him over your friendship?
- Did he tell you he loved you early on in the relationship?
- Does he tell you that if you don't have sex with him, he'll have sex with someone else because he has needs?
- Does he comment on what you look like; your hair, your clothes, your nails etc.?
- Does he tell you, he won't leave the house with you unless you change the way you look?
- Does he accuse you on wearing certain clothes, so you can get attention from other guys?
- Does he accuse you of flirting or leading guys on?
- Does he fight with you when you speak to other guys?

- Have you stopped doing extra-curricular activities; like modeling, acting, singing, instruments and sports since you met him?
- Have you stopped spending time with your friends?
- Have your friends asked you to break up with him because they're concerned about you?
- When you tell your boyfriend that your friends don't like the way he treats you, does he tell you that they're just jealous?
- Does he call you names, put you down and then say he's just kidding OR that he's sorry?
- Does he make fun of you in front of other people?
- Does he say and do things to you just to get your reaction?
- Do you feel like you're constantly making excuses for his behavior to your family and friends?
- Do you feel like you're the only one that can help him and the only person he has in his life because he comes from a dysfunctional family?
- Do you stay in the relationship because you couldn't handle it if he were with another girl?
- Do you think he would treat another girl better than you?
- Do you threaten to break up with him, but don't follow through because he tells you that he can't live without you and/or he'll kill himself if you do?
- Do you try to break up with him after a big verbal or physical fight and through tears or just a really sincere voice, apologizes and promises he'll never do it again?
- Does he accuse you of things that you never did and won't let it go?
- Does he tell you that you are lucky to be with him because no one else would be with you?
- Do you feel like you've started lying to your family and friends since you started dating this guy because you know they don't approve?
- Do you feel like no one knows him like you do?
- When people ask you why you like him so much, can you list the reasons without putting the word *sometimes* in the sentence (i.e.; "He's nice *sometimes*. He's respectful *sometimes*.").

All abusers have the same script. Don't be manipulated. Don't be with someone that can only be a good person *sometimes*. If anything you just read resonates with you, please get help. Things will not get better if you keep giving him more chances. Nothing is going to change with his behavior unless there are consequences for his actions; like you ending the relationship. When and if he works on himself, you need to as well. You need to work on rebuilding your self-esteem and try to figure out why you gravitated towards an emotionally unhealthy person.