

# How Do You Know If You Are in an Unsafe Relationship?

An unsafe and exploitative relationship can be very dangerous for you. Here are five checklists featuring **warning signs** that may help you identify if you are in an unsafe relationship. If you are experiencing some of these warning signs, seek help from a professional organization that works with people in domestic and family violence situations.

## Control

- The person may try to control everything you do. At first they may seem charming and say all the right things, but as time goes on, they try to control your life; they want to know what you are doing and/or who you are with at anytime of the day or night.
- They may control yours or the household money.
- They may stalk you physically and/or by phone and/or on social media.
- They gradually start deciding who you should mix with, where you should go, who you should speak to, what you should wear, etc.
- They may be jealous of your relationship with family and friends, and try to turn you away from them.
- They may refuse to talk to you about your relationship or important issues, for example, family.
- They do not trust you and you do not trust them.
- They may also threaten to harm themselves if you do not do what they ask. They may refuse to eat, cut or injure themselves or say they will commit suicide to manipulate you.
- They may promise you fancy gifts, expensive trips or take you to beautiful restaurants in exchange for a relationship or taking care of them or simply to make you feel obliged to them.
- They may decide where you are to work or study.
- They may try to hinder your progress in school, college or work and eventually make you drop out.
- They may ask you or force you to take and share revealing photos or videos and then they may use these to blackmail you in some way.
- They may touch you inappropriately and/or threaten you.

## Abuse

- The person may physically hit and/or kick you and/or threaten to harm or kill you.
- They may shout, scream and/or say verbally abusive things to you.
- They may sexually assault you. They may force you to do sexual acts when you do not want to.
- They may force you to watch pornography.
- They may say things to you to make you feel awful and damage your self-esteem.
- They may be cruel and unkind to you in secretive ways that others can't see.
- They may be abusive to you in front of others and make fun of you.
- They may make fun of and/or are critical of your body, how you look and/or how you dress.
- They may share details of your personal relationship with friends in a harmful manner and character shame you.

## Manipulation

- The person may try to turn other people against you and tell lies about you.
- They may make you feel like everything is your fault.
- They may make you feel like everything you do is not good enough.
- They may say that they are much more powerful and stronger than you, and that you are a weak and useless person.
- They may also trick you and say that you are lucky to be with them because no one else would want to be with you.
- They may bully you into doing things that are illegal or against your beliefs.
- They do not tell you where they have been but expect you to always tell them where you have been or where you are going.
- They may compare you to other people to make you feel a lesser person.
- They may insist that you are mad or crazy if you argue back or accuse them of any form of manipulation or abuse. They may say you are imagining it and may threaten to harm themselves if you don't do what they tell you to.

- They may blackmail you by saying that they will disclose your secrets and/or share images of intimate conversations or situations.

## Inequality

- The person may expect you to do all the work and they do very little.
- They may say that women are not equal to men and that you are a lesser person.
- They may treat you as a lesser person and unequal to them in status in the community and/or family.
- They may treat you as stupid and that you are incapable of trying anything new.
- They may not respect your 'No' and do not ask your consent for anything.
- They may threaten that they are going to leave you, and you will have nothing and be nothing.

## Value

- The person may say they only value you for one thing; that might be your looks or ability to make money.
- They don't value your emotions or feelings. They only abuse you and/or make fun of you if you are anxious, scared and/or sad.
- The person does not make you feel good about yourself, and you do not value yourself ever since you have been in the relationship.
- They are often not interested in your work or projects.
- They are often not interested in meeting your friends and family.
- They may make you feel lonely and isolated.

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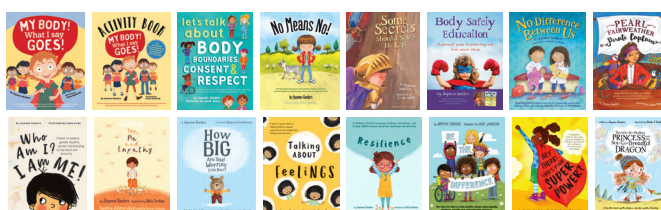
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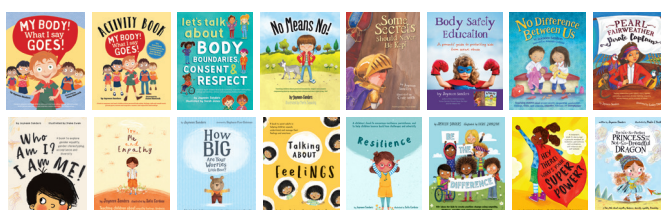
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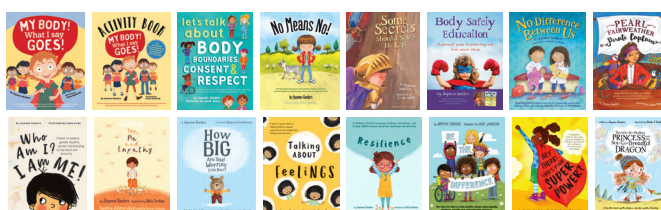
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