

# FACILITATOR GUIDE | A Dating Story

## Objectives:

By the end of this program, participants will be able to...

1. Successfully identify different forms of abuse and qualities of abusive relationships.
2. Articulate an empathetic understanding of why someone may stay in an abusive relationship.
3. Discuss effective strategies for supporting someone experiencing dating violence or abuse.
4. Recognize the availability of and need to utilize campus and electronic resources when dealing with an abusive relationship.

**Special Supplies Needed:** *Flip chart/poster and markers and printed handouts.*

**Additional Notes:** *There may be participants in the room who have been personally affected by abuse and may have a difficult time in this program. As the facilitator, you will need to keep your eye out for participants who seem to be having an emotional reaction to the material in this program so that you may follow up with them individually to ensure they have all the resources they could need to get support. If possible, it would be helpful to contact your campus counseling center before facilitating this program to collect any resources they too might have. Be sure to read the included handout and explore the suggested resources.*



## Introduction

SHARE: 3 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Today we are going to discuss abusive relationships and how we can best support friends who are or have been survivors of abuse. This program should take 90-120 minutes.</li><li>• Whether we are in serious relationships, casually dating or neither, this is a topic that is relevant to us and our friends. It is also one that can be difficult to discuss. Know that today is an opportunity to learn and discuss with our friends, and that no one will be forced to share out loud. If at any point anyone needs to leave the room, please feel free to do so. Be sure you find someone you feel comfortable and safe with to talk to, and remember that we are all here for one another.</li></ul>
ASK: 2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Expectations:</b> What should we expect of each other and of me in today's program?</li></ul> <p><i><b>Facilitator Note:</b> DO NOT PROMISE SECRECY. You may promise confidentiality—that no one will gossip about any personal stories that are shared during the program; however, if you are concerned that any member may harm herself or someone else, or that any member may benefit from talking with a professional counselor, you need to feel free to tell a faculty member, staff member or a counselor/professional.</i></p>
SHARE: 1 minute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Parking Lot:</b> Ideas are placed here that are important but off topic.</li></ul> <p><i><b>Facilitator Note:</b> Review the items in the Parking Lot at the end of the program to ensure all questions are answered.</i></p>



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## The Beginning

SHARE: 2 minutes

- To get started today, we are going to learn about Ciara. Let's hear the beginning of her story:
  - Ciara is just starting her sophomore year and could not be more excited. She's moved into a new residence hall and is excited to begin taking classes in her major, education. She's even enjoying the group work—especially her latest group assignment for her secondary education class with her partner Sam. They have been working on the project almost every day for the past two weeks, and she's really starting to like Sam. Sam seems to like her too and even asked her on a date!
  - Sam's a junior with a car, so they drove together from the residence hall and went to a delicious dinner and a great movie. They held hands and even kissed goodnight. The two have been texting and spending all of their time together since. Sam walks her to class and back to the residence hall daily. Ciara's never been in a relationship before and finally understands what's so great about it!

ASK: 3 minutes

- How many of us have ever felt like Ciara?
- What positive feelings or experiences is Ciara having that you can empathize with?
- Is there anything about this new relationship that makes you nervous or uncomfortable?



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<p>SHARE: 3 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's ok if none of this story brings about any red flags for you. Many of our relationships and even friendships in college might start out something like Ciara and Sam's. Stories like these might be so common, in fact, that we might assume all relationships start this way and continue to be this fun and light-hearted. The unfortunate reality is that not all relationships stay like this; far too many can become abusive, especially in college. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 43% of dating college women report experiencing abusive dating behaviors including physical, sexual, digital, verbal or controlling abuse.</li> <li>▪ More than half (57%) of college students who report experiencing dating violence said it occurred while in college.</li> <li>▪ Nearly 1 in 3 college students report abuse by a previous partner. 21% of students report the abusive behaviors are from a current partner.</li> <li>▪ One in five (22%) report actual physical abuse, sexual abuse or threats of physical abuse.</li> <li>▪ 60% of acquaintance rapes on college campuses occur in casual or steady dating relationships.</li> <li>▪ 52% of college women report knowing a friend who has experienced violent and abusive dating behaviors including physical, sexual, digital, verbal or controlling abuse.</li> <li>▪ 38% of college students say they don't know how to get help for themselves if they were a victim of dating violence.</li> <li>▪ 58% of college students say they don't know how to help someone who is a victim of dating abuse.<sup>1</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>ASK: 2 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your reaction to these statistics? Which statistic surprised or affected you the most?</li> </ul>
<p>SHARE: 1 minute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether or not you have ever experienced abuse of any kind, it is important that we understand that it does happen, far too frequently. That's why it is important for us to have this conversation today. We are going to learn more about what abuse really is, how someone in an abusive relationship might respond and how we as friends can be supportive of someone experiencing an abusive relationship.</li> <li>• We're going to use the story of Ciara and Sam to continue to have this conversation. While this story might help us better understand an abusive relationship, <u>it is not the only example of how abusive relationships can take form.</u></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> College Dating Violence and Abuse Poll - <https://www.breakthecycle.org/college-dating-violence-and-abuse-poll>

## Warning Signs

<p>SHARE: 3 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's learn a bit more about Ciara and Sam's relationship:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ciara and Sam have been together for a few months now, and things still seem to be going really well. Sam is working hard to get a degree and start teaching high school math. Sam volunteers at the local community center, plays intramurals and is very popular—everyone on campus seems to know and like Sam, and Ciara feels so lucky to be with Sam.</li> <li>▪ They are still spending all of their time together, and Sam makes Ciara feel amazing, loved and taken care of. Sam often tells Ciara how important she is, and how Sam would never let anyone hurt her or come between them.</li> <li>▪ Sam wants them to be together at all times, and Ciara has no complaints; not until one Sunday when she has to go to a chapter meeting. Sam is not happy about Ciara not being available to text for a few hours—normally the two of them text non-stop, but tonight the chapter was having Initiation rehearsal, which means that the meeting will last longer than usual.</li> <li>▪ Ciara has to promise Sam that she will text as soon as she is out and that the two can get ice cream right after. It's the only way Sam said she could go. She has a test to study for, but this is clearly really important to Sam. Ciara realizes just how important when she leaves the chapter meeting and discovers she received 16 texts from Sam within the past two hours.</li> <li>▪ When she asks Sam about it later, Sam replies with a smile, "I want you all to myself. Is that really such a bad thing?" When Sam puts it like that, Ciara can't help but smile back. Sam really cares about her, and that feels amazing!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>PAIR SHARE: 2-5 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a partner and discuss the following questions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is your reaction to this part of Ciara's story? How do you feel about her and Sam's relationship at this point?</li> <li>▪ What about Sam's behavior seems normal to you? Does anything about Sam's behavior make you uncomfortable?</li> <li>▪ What about Ciara's behavior? Did anything about her thoughts or choices make you uncomfortable?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>ASK: 2 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who heard something you would like to share?</li> </ul>

## Defining Abuse

ACTIVITY: 5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abuse can take many shapes and forms, no matter how subtle or blatant it might be. Abuse is often such an ambiguous concept, and so difficult to define, that abusive behaviors or tendencies could take place right in front of us or even in our own relationships without us realizing it. Let's work now as a group to come up with a working definition of abuse to make sure we're all on the same page. I'll ask a few questions and ask you to share your thoughts.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What comes to mind when you think of the words abuse, dating violence or abusive relationships?</li><li>▪ What are different forms of abuse come to mind?</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Facilitator Note:</b> Write their responses to these questions and other thoughts shared on the flip chart paper.</p>
SHARE: 2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is a difficult task; thank you for participating. All of these pieces we came up with are great examples and parts of a complicated definition. For the rest of the program, let's think about abuse in terms of this definition:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Abuse (dating abuse, abusive relationships, etc.) is a pattern of destructive behaviors used to exert power and control over someone else (a dating partner, for instance). It can come in many forms, all of which are used for power and control, none of which are ever acceptable or appropriate:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Emotional or verbal abuse (using intimidation, insults, threats, manipulation or put downs)</li><li>○ Stalking (following and controlling you)</li><li>○ Financial abuse (controlling your finances, likely to keep you from leaving)</li><li>○ Physical abuse (kicking, pushing, scratching, hitting, biting, shoving, wrestling, etc.)</li><li>○ Sexual abuse (manipulating or forcing you into sexual situations of any kind or threatening to do so)</li><li>○ Digital abuse (controlling your social media, saying inappropriate things to you or about you on social media, cell phone or email control, etc.)</li></ul></li><li>• Abuse is always a choice of the abuser, and never a choice that anyone should make. It's also something no one should ever have to experience. All of our relationships, especially our dating relationships, should make us feel happy, safe and loved. Each of us deserves that.</li></ul></li></ul>
ASK: 2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does this definition of abuse change your perspective about Ciara and Sam's relationship?</li></ul>

## The Story Continues

SHARE: 4 minutes

- Let's learn more about Ciara and Sam's relationship:
  - Ciara is thrilled when she is able to convince Sam to go to the party this weekend. Sam didn't used to like hanging out with other people much, and she's excited to show her friends what's so great about Sam.
  - That Friday night starts out great—Sam has all Ciara's friends laughing and smiling. Everyone at the party is drinking, and Sam seems to be having a great time. While Sam is talking to a group of friends, Ciara grabs another drink for them both.
  - Then a friend from class, Riley, starts talking to Ciara. They are laughing about their professor when all the sudden Sam appears right behind Ciara and puts an arm around her shoulders. Ciara introduces the two, but doesn't notice until Riley had left that there was something different about Sam.
  - Ciara has never seen Sam so tense or Sam's eyes so angry. Sam grabs her by the arm and takes her into the bathroom, locking the door behind them. While Ciara rubs the new bruises Sam had just put on her arm with that grip, Sam starts yelling about Ciara being a slut and a flirt. Ciara could tell that Sam was intoxicated and feels like she was a bit too. She tries to calm Sam down, to explain that Riley was just a friend and that she'd never leave Sam, but it is no use.
  - Sam grabs for Ciara's cell phone to check to see if she'd been texting Riley. When Ciara resists, Sam grabs the cell phone and throws it against the wall, smashing it into pieces. Ciara is angry and starting to get scared. She reaches out to calm Sam down when Sam shoves her away.
  - Ciara falls back, hitting her head on the towel rack. She cries and falls to the floor. Sam apologizes immediately, telling Ciara how important she is and how Sam never wants to lose her to someone else.
  - Sam tells Ciara if she'd just given up the cell phone none of this would have happened, and promises that it will never happen again. Ciara is scared and confused, but Sam embraces her and tells her that she just doesn't realize how other people are, that Sam is just trying to protect her from Riley.
  - When Sam walks Ciara back to her residence hall after the party, Sam tells her "I love you." Even though she's feeling strange about what had happened at the party, she feels so special when Sam says those words. She says it back and throws her arms around Sam.

SMALL GROUP: 5 minutes

- Find a group of 3-4 others and discuss this part of Ciara's story. Think about these questions:
  - How does this story make you feel about Ciara and Sam's relationship?
  - What parts of the story make you uncomfortable?
  - Where do you see evidence of dating abuse happening between Ciara and Sam?

ASK: 3 minutes

- Did you hear anything in your small groups that you would like to share?
- Sam’s behavior in this part of the story is abusive in many ways. There is evidence in this story of multiple forms of dating abuse, and yet, Ciara allowed Sam to walk her home, even saying “I love you” for the first time. Is anyone confused or frustrated about Ciara’s behavior after the party? Why?

## Reasons She Stays

SHARE: 1 minute

- It’s incredibly common for those of us on the outside of abusive relationships or situations to feel, think or say “She should just leave! What is happening is wrong. She should get out of that relationship. I would have broken up with Sam right then and there.”
- Unfortunately, abusive relationships aren’t that simple, and sometimes for that person, simply leaving or ending the relationship doesn’t feel like an option.

SMALL GROUP: 5 minutes

- With your same small group, discuss for a few minutes why simply breaking up with Sam might not have felt like an option for Ciara. What might she be thinking or feeling? Why might she have stayed in this relationship after the incident at the party?

ASK: 2 minutes

- Did anyone hear anything they’d like to share?

SHARE: 4 minutes

- Getting out of an abusive relationship can be just as difficult as recognizing that abuse is taking place. While from the outside we might be able to look at Ciara and Sam’s relationship and know that she should leave Sam, it is not that simple or as cut-and-dry for Ciara. There could be any number of reasons we wouldn’t know or understand why Ciara would stay in the relationship, or why any other person in an abusive relationship does not immediately leave it:
  - Your friends experiencing dating violence might stay because of conflicting emotions. She may be feeling fear, embarrassment, even love. She might feel like abuse in relationships is normal, or have low enough self-esteem that she believes she deserves the abuse. She might also be feeling any combination of those things at once.
  - She may feel pressure to stay. She may be concerned that no one will believe her, or that someone will take Sam’s side. Targets of abuse may also feel pressure to stay in a relationship based on their traditional cultural or religious beliefs, or even because of family dynamics or expectations.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ She may have <u>distrust for authority</u>. This is common for women in high school and college. Ciara might feel as though she is too young to be experiencing a seriously abusive situation, or too young to be taken seriously. She may not trust law enforcement or university officials.</li> <li>▪ She may also be <u>relying on her partner</u> in many ways, making her feel as though she can't leave. Perhaps they live together and she doesn't have the money to leave. She may feel as though she has nowhere to go, or may even be physically dependent on her partner depending on her medical health.</li> </ul>
PAIR SHARE: 2-5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a partner and discuss the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which one of the potential reasons someone might stay in an abusive relationship had you never thought about before?</li> <li>▪ Can you think of a situation in which you felt as though you were required or obligated to do something, be somewhere or spend time with someone or a group of people?</li> <li>▪ How does this list help you better understand the kinds of thoughts or feelings Ciara or any other victim of dating violence might be contemplating?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
ASK: 2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did anyone hear anything they'd like to share?</li> </ul>
SHARE: 4 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We may not understand why someone gets into or continues to be in an unhealthy dating relationship. We may never understand. What that woman is experiencing is something we may never empathize with, which can sometimes make it more difficult to be supportive of her decisions. Next, we're going to talk about our role as friends when someone tells us about their relationship, and how we can best support them.</li> </ul>



## Supporting One Another

SHARE: 2 minutes

- Let's learn a bit more about Ciara and Sam:
  - Ciara never tells anyone what happened with Sam in the bathroom at the party last month. Sam told her that it would never happen again, apologized a million times and even bought Ciara a ring to symbolize their commitment to one another. She understands Sam is just being protective, but Sam has taken it even farther, telling Ciara she can only talk to or text a few of her friends that Sam trusts.
  - She's never been punched or kicked by Sam, and although Sam had shoved her into a wall a few times, Sam would never intentionally hurt her and she knows that. But one night, Sam wants to leave a party after noticing Ciara talking to friends from her new education classes. Sam yells at Ciara, calling her a slut and stupid for not noticing how people see her. Sam grabs her by the arm and drags her to the car.
  - Ciara protests—she says that Sam has had too much to drink and shouldn't be driving. She pleads for Sam not to make her get in the car and not to drive it, but there is no stopping Sam. Sam throws Ciara into the car where she hits her head on the dashboard. Sam gets in the car and starts driving too fast. Ciara does not feel safe. She screams for Sam to slow down, but Sam will not. Sam keeps driving faster and faster, taunting Ciara and asking "Are you scared yet?" Ciara was screaming and crying, terrified Sam would get them into an accident.
  - It's not until they are a few blocks from the residence hall that Sam slows down and explains in a calm voice that Ciara needed to understand what it felt like to be scared, because that's how Sam feels every time Ciara talks to another person. Sam apologizes while holding her and strokes her hair, reminding her what an important lesson it is for her to learn. Ciara remains quiet, too scared to speak.
  - Sam finally lets her get out of the car, where she wanders into the residence hall. Jordan is the first to see her, tears and makeup streaming down her face, looking scared and alone. Ciara doesn't say anything at first—she doesn't know why, but she is afraid to tell anyone what happened. She doesn't think Jordan would understand, or maybe she's worried she or Sam might be judged. Ciara just shrugs, wipes her tears and says it was just a silly argument. Jordan can't make eye contact with Ciara, but knows something serious is happening here. She just doesn't know what to do or say to Ciara.

SMALL GROUP: 5 minutes

- Within your same small group, discuss the following:
  - What is your reaction to this part of Ciara and Sam's story?
  - How does this make you feel about Sam? About Ciara? About their relationship?
  - How might you feel if you were Jordan in this situation? How might you react?

ASK: 2 minutes

- Who heard something you would like to share?

SHARE: 5 minutes

- Being a good friend to someone in an abusive relationship can be incredibly difficult. As we've talked about today, it can feel impossible to understand her decisions or her emotions. Trying to support a friend who is experiencing something this scary can be a heavy burden to bear, and can often leave friends feeling helpless or scared.
- Know that if we ever find ourselves feeling like Jordan in our story, it's normal to feel those things. However, there are ways that we can help a friend who is experiencing dating abuse, even if she doesn't ever tell you what is really going on.
  - Listen! Above all else, our friends need our judgment-free support. Giving this kind of support in such a difficult situation can be a struggle for friends who just want to see someone they care about healthy and safe, but it is important for her to feel safe speaking to us without fear of judgment.
  - Trust your instincts! If you think your friend is in an unhealthy situation, trust your gut and think about asking your friend to have an honest conversation with you about her relationship, or going to talk to someone in the counseling center about what you've observed.
  - Patience! While it might make perfect sense to us that our friend immediately removes herself from an abusive situation, this is unrealistic. It may also be unrealistic to expect our friend tell us everything right away, or even that she'll tell us anything. Be patient with her and continue to remind her of your support.
  - Write it down! Start documenting what you notice about your friend and her relationship—physical changes in appearance or bruises, comments about abuse or alluding to abuse, etc. Anything we can write down about what we've observed, when and where may be helpful if she is ever interested in pressing charges or taking legal action.
  - Don't involve yourself! No matter how frustrated, angry or confused we may get, and no matter what kind of relationship we may have with your friend's abuser, we should not attempt to contact the abuser about the relationship or the abuse. We never know how unsafe the situation is—we could put ourselves in a dangerous situation or make things even worse for our friend.
  - Make a plan! We can help our friend by offering to be part of her safety plan. We can encourage her to establish a safe word she can text if she feels she's in danger, or keep a packed overnight bag with us in case she needs to immediately get out of a dangerous situation. Our friends need to create their own safety plans—we can offer to be a part of it, and to help her create it though.
  - Take care of you! When our friends are in trouble and we want to help, we can often internalize their pain and sacrifice ourselves to be helpful to them. We should remember to keep ourselves safe, and to talk to someone we trust, like a parent or a counselor, if things become too stressful.

**Facilitator Note:** Pass out handouts that list the types of abuse and ways to help a friend.

PAIR SHARE: 2-5 minutes

- Find a new partner and discuss with her the following questions:
  - Which of these guidelines for supporting a friend who is experiencing dating abuse makes most sense to you? Which seems as though it could be easy to do?
  - Which of these guidelines seems as though it would be difficult for you to follow? Is there anything on this list that you would have a difficult time doing for your friend?
  - Why is it important to follow these guidelines?

ASK: 2 minutes

- Who heard something you would like to share?

## Conclusion

SHARE: 2 minutes

- Being the friend of someone who is affected by dating abuse or is in an abusive relationship can be a very difficult situation to be in. Remember that it's normal to feel overwhelmed, helpless or confused. Perhaps more importantly, remember that you, just like your friend, are not alone in this!

ACTIVITY: 5 minutes

- Find your small group, and take a few moments to brainstorm people, places, offices or resources you can use to find support as the friend of someone being harmed by dating abuse. Think about what and who is available to you both on campus and off.

ASK: 2 minutes

- Let's have each group share with the large group the list they came up with.

**Facilitator Note:** Write the suggestions offered by the groups onto the flip chart paper.

SHARE: 3 minutes

- Thank you for thinking so thoroughly and creatively about people and places that can support us and someone we love in an abusive environment. It is important to remember that we are not alone!
  - The counseling center on our campus is an important place to start. These trained professionals have experience with college dating violence and will be able to listen and support us, and provide us with resources that could be helpful to our friend.
  - There are hotlines available for us to call or chat with online if we're in search of an experienced listening ear, support and advice. These hotlines and chat services are able to help those who are targets of abuse or friends of those in abusive situations. Check your handout for those websites and phone numbers.
  - The internet is full of websites created by nonprofit organizations specifically designed to help and support victims of abuse. These sites often include blogs we can read, quizzes we can take to help us understand if we're doing the right thing for our friend and resources we can read or even give to someone experiencing dating violence. Look at your handout for those websites.
  - The campus security or public police might also be a resource for you to explore. Remember that without knowing the full extent of the abuse or without proof of the abuse, it will be difficult to bring about any legal action. Explore the above resources first to determine when or if there is a best time to talk to law enforcement.

SHARE: 2 minutes

- Thank you for participating in today's program. Each and every one of us deserves to be in relationships and friendships that make us feel good, safe and supported. No one ever deserves to be abused, and it is never okay. Remember to utilize your resources and speak to someone in the counseling center or through one of the hotlines listed on your handout if you or someone you know is experiencing dating abuse. And remember that we are always here for one another!

**Facilitator Note:** Pass out handouts with the list of hotlines at the bottom.

# Types of Abuse

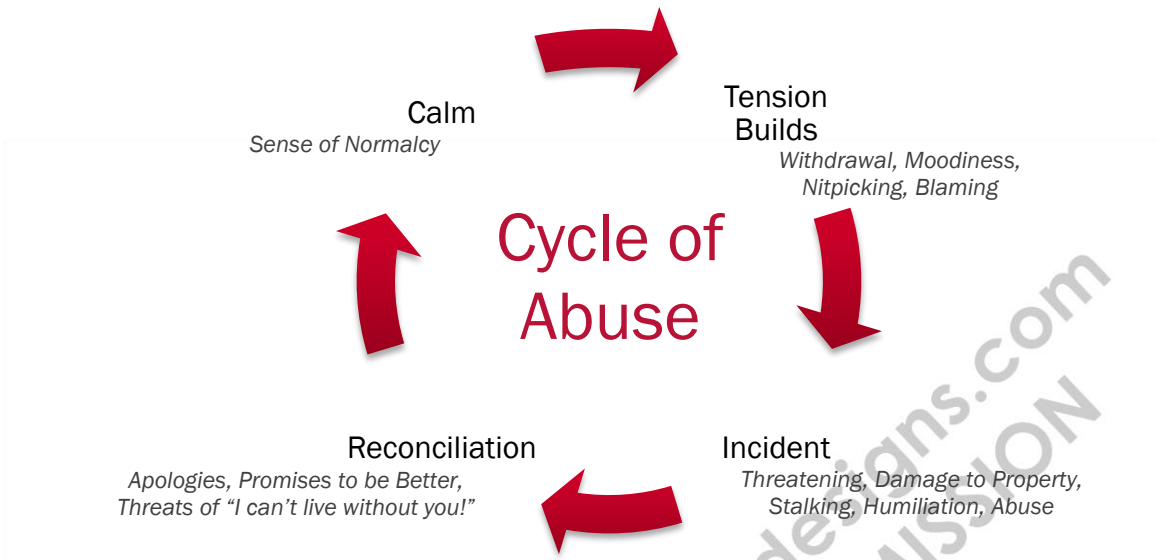
Abuse is a pattern of destructive behaviors used to exert power and control over someone else, like an unhealthy dating partner or hazing a new member. Abuse can come in many forms, all of which are used for power and control, none of which are ever acceptable or appropriate:

- Emotional or verbal abuse (using intimidation, insults, threats, manipulation or put downs)
- Stalking (following and controlling you)
- Financial abuse (controlling your finances, likely to keep you from leaving)
- Physical abuse (kicking, pushing, scratching, hitting, biting, shoving, wrestling, etc.)
- Sexual abuse (manipulating or forcing you into sexual situations of any kind or threatening to do so)
- Digital abuse (controlling your social media, saying inappropriate things to you or about you on social media, cell phone or email control, etc.)

## How to Help a Friend

- **Listen!** Above all else, our friends need our judgment-free support. Giving this kind of support in such a difficult situation can be a struggle for friends who just want to see someone they care about healthy and safe, but it is important for her to feel safe speaking to us without fear of judgment.
- **Trust your instincts!** If you think your friend is in an unhealthy situation, trust your gut and think about asking your friend to have an honest conversation with you about her relationship, or going to talk to someone in the counseling center about what you've observed.
- **Patience!** While it might make perfect sense to us that our friend immediately removes herself from an abusive situation, this is unrealistic. It may also be unrealistic to expect our friend tell us everything right away, or even that she'll tell us anything. Be patient with her and continue to remind her of your support.
- **Write it down!** Start documenting what you notice about your friend and her relationship—physical changes in appearance or bruises, comments about abuse or alluding to abuse, etc. Anything we can write down about what we've observed, when and where may be helpful if she is ever interested in pressing charges or taking legal action.
- **Don't involve yourself!** No matter how frustrated, angry or confused we may get, and no matter what kind of relationship we may have with your friend's abuser, we should not attempt to contact the abuser about the relationship or the abuse. We never know how unsafe the situation is—we could put ourselves in a dangerous situation or make things even worse for our friend.
- **Make a plan!** We can help our friend by offering to be part of her safety plan. We can encourage her to establish a safe word she can text if she feels she's in danger, or keep a packed overnight bag with us in case she needs to immediately get out of a dangerous situation. Our friends need to create their own safety plans—we can offer to be a part of it, and to help her create it though.
- **Take care of you!** When our friends are in trouble and we want to help, we can often internalize their pain and sacrifice ourselves to be helpful to them. We should remember to keep ourselves safe, and to talk to someone we trust, like a parent or a counselor, if things become too stressful.

# The Cycle and Signs of Abuse



## Am I In An Abusive Relationship?

Does your partner...

- Have a short temper?
- Act very jealous?
- Exaggerate fights?
- Tell or suggest what you should wear?
- Try to limit who you talk to?
- Make you tell him/her where you are going and who you are with?
- Tell you when you have to be home?
- Put you down?
- Take up most of your time?
- Hurt you physically or throw things at you?
- Get angry when you disagree with them?
- Pressure you to engage in sexual activity that you feel uncomfortable with?
- Make you feel like you can't say no to sexual activity?
- Embarrass you in front of others?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions you might want to consider talking to someone you trust about your relationship.

If you feel you are in danger please check out [LovelsRespect.org](http://LovelsRespect.org) or call the one of the hotlines listed below:

[LovelsRespect.org](http://LovelsRespect.org) National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline  
1.866.331.9474 or Text "loveis" to 77054

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](http://NationalDomesticViolenceHotline.org) (USA)  
1.800.799.SAFE (7233)

[Violence Unsilenced](http://ViolenceUnsilenced.org) (Canada)  
1.800.363.9010

[National Sexual Assault Hotline](http://NationalSexualAssaultHotline.org) (USA)  
1.800.656.HOPE(4673)