

Relationship Violence

Relationships exist on a [spectrum](#), from healthy to unhealthy to abusive -- and everywhere in between. It can be hard to determine where your relationship falls, especially if you haven't dated a lot. Explore this section to learn the basics of dating, healthy relationships and drawing the line before abuse starts.

Is My Relationship Healthy?

In a [healthy relationship](#):

- Your partner respects you and your individuality.
- You are both open and honest.
- Your partner supports you and your choices even when they disagree with you.
- Both of you have equal say and respected boundaries.
- Your partner understands that you need to study or hang out with friends or family.
- You can communicate your feelings without being afraid of negative consequences.
- Both of you feel safe being open and honest.

A good partner is not excessively jealous and does not make you feel guilty when you spend time with family and friends. A good partner also compliments you, encourages you to achieve your goals and does not resent your accomplishments.

My Partner Doesn't Physically Hurt Me

Just because there is no [physical abuse](#) in your relationship doesn't mean it's healthy. It's not healthy if your partner:

- Is inconsiderate, disrespectful or distrustful.
- Doesn't communicate their feelings.
- Tries to emotionally or financially control you by placing your money in their banking account.
- Keeps you from getting a job or gets you fired.
- Humiliates you on Facebook or in front of your friends.
- Threatens to out you to your family.

So, Is My Relationship Unhealthy?

Everybody deserves to be in a healthy relationship free from violence. Drawing the line between unhealthy and abusive can be hard. If you think your relationship is going in the wrong direction, check out the [warning signs of abuse](#).

Remember, there are many [types of abuse](#) and while you may think some of them are normal -- they are not. Even though teen and 20-something relationships may be different from adult ones, young people do experience the same types of physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse that adults do. You should take violence in your relationship seriously.

If you think are in an abusive relationship, you're probably feeling confused about what to do. You may fear what your partner will do if you leave or how your friends and family will react when you tell them. If you are financially or physically dependent on your partner, leaving may feel impossible. You may also think that the police and other adults won't take you seriously.

These are all understandable reasons to feel nervous about leaving your partner, but staying in the abusive relationship isn't your only option. Learn more about your [options](#) for staying safe.

Is This Abuse?

Dating abuse is a pattern of destructive behaviors used to exert power and control over a dating partner. While we define dating violence as a pattern, that doesn't mean the first instance of abuse is not dating violence. It just recognizes that dating violence usually involves a series of abusive behaviors over a course of time.

Warning Signs of Abuse

Because relationships exist on a [spectrum](#), it can be hard to tell when a behavior crosses the line from healthy to unhealthy or even abusive. Use these warning signs of abuse to see if your relationship is going in the wrong direction:

- Checking your cell phone or email without permission
- Constantly putting you down
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Explosive temper
- Isolating you from family or friends
- Making false accusations
- Mood swings
- Physically hurting you in any way
- Possessiveness
- Telling you what to do
- Repeatedly pressuring you to have sex

Based on original content from Love is Respect. You can find more information at <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>.