

DANGER SIGNS IN A RELATIONSHIP

(from the book, *When Good Things Become Addictions* by Grant Martin)

1. **Verbal put-downs.** Supermacho, caustic, sarcastic humor directed at partner, strong opposition to equality of male and female. Failure to listen to your feelings and needs, or share his or her own feelings with any kind of depth.
2. **Uncontrolled anger.** Sudden flare-ups, major disagreements over minor issues. Avoidance of resolution. Refusal to compromise. Frequent fights followed by remorse and making up, only to have the same cycle repeat. Driving habits can be very revealing – high-risk maneuvers, horn honking, verbal or physical threats, speeding, intense body language, severe braking and acceleration.
3. **Physical abuse.** Any type of hitting, threats, or aggressive gestures directed toward you or anybody else.
4. **Disrespect toward parents.** Particularly a female toward her father and a male toward his mother. Is there history of abuse? Likelihood of being an abuser is quite high if the person has been abused. Highly critical parents can leave scars.
5. **Chronic lateness.** If consistently and persistently late, there is a reason. May be rebellion, passive anger, or pure arrogance – a way of showing that his/her needs are more important than yours. Can even be the result of hidden hostility – may get a kick out of seeing you wait.
6. **Irresponsible behavior.** Lack of reliability, doesn't keep promises. How does he/she treat other friends? You may seem an exception during the courting phase, but it probably won't last. Problems with loyalty, two-facedness, failure to keep confidences. Do you hear others report things your partner has said or done that you don't want to believe? Is he/she very disorganized, a poor manager of time, an undisciplined little child? Tendency is to think you can rescue and change him/her into someone else. Don't. It won't happen.
7. **Selfishness.** Self-serving behavior. Eating and buying habits. How do they spend their money? Any evidence of ability to give to others without any strings attached?
8. **Jealousy.** Lots of questions about your use of time, demanding accountability of everything you do. Frequent phone calls questioning your whereabouts. Reluctance to allow you to spend some time with friends.
9. **High dependence.** Strong need to either be needed, or to be taken care of. Low self-worth. Makes statements about inability to survive without you. Unable to make decisions apart from your assistance, accompanied by anger and blame if you don't help, or if your advice doesn't work out.