

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ABUSER

- May have grown up in a violent family
- May have felt unloved as a child
- Usually is a male who believes in the patriarchal model (his word is law) and believes that the “ideal” woman should share his views
- May have married too young and feels trapped
- May have had few good experiences with persons of the opposite sex
- May have low self-esteem and a negative self-image, regardless of income, educational level or achievement
- May feel harassed and frustrated by spouse, job or both
- May have unrealistic expectations and makes continuous demands of partner
- Fails to relate on an intimate basis (communicate and understand feeling, establish trust)
- Is often consumed by jealousy
- May have affairs
- May display addictive behaviors (alcohol, drugs, overeating, gambling)
- Put blame on spouse and accepts little responsibility for own behavior
- Communicates and acts in a power-and-control style
- Uses violence as a problem-solving method and tension release
- May not feel responsible or remorse, minimizes or denies the abuse
- May be mystified that the law should object; sees spouse as a possession
- If in counseling, is primarily interested in keeping partner in the relationship, not in changing self
- May end counseling as soon as partner returns or a new relationship is established
- Without therapy, will repeat the violence since there is no basic change in attitude and behavior.