

Warning Signs

These are signs that domestic trouble could turn lethal, although violence can happen without warning:

Partner leaves or batterer discovers partner wants to leave.

Batterer threatens suicide or to harm the partner.

Weapons are present or accessible.

Police have been called before.

Batterer exhibits stalking behavior.

Batterer threatens people who've helped the victim.

Batterer takes the partner hostage or threatens to do so.

Batterer kills or harms pets.

Alcohol or drugs are used.

Do not believe the batterer when he says, "It won't happen again. I don't know what got into me. It's all your fault." Do not wait until the violence escalates (**see Ayanna Lachay Taylor**). Get help and get out of the situation. Batterers kill. They kill in front of children, relatives, neighbors and employers. There is a great possibility the children you are trying to protect by staying in an abusive situation will be the child who will discover your body or be the child who will see you murdered by your boyfriend or husband or be the child who is murdered with you. Remember angry men murder entire families. They will murder their wife and their children at the drop of a hat (**see Mr. Purnell Cauley of Texas**). Plain, ordinary decent acting men have murdered their family's time and time again (**see Mr. Michael Kendall of Connecticut and Capt. John D. Doty of Georgia**). If you believe you are being stalked, prosecutors and police say you should:

Keep a log or diary of the harassment. Write down the date, times and incident. Stalking requires a pattern involving more than one incident. Save letters or recordings left on phone answering machines. Such material can be used as evidence. Call police and file a report for any stalking activity. Be sure to tell investigators exactly what happened and whether it has happened before. Police unfamiliar with the stalking law may not ask about previous incidents.

Below are several questions developed by people in the field of family violence. Please read them carefully. If you can identify these patterns in

your life then you are in an abusive relationship. You should give great consideration to question 17 because most abusers when threatening to kill themselves and their mate often carry out this threat. Husbands and boyfriends making such threats murdered many of the women discussed in this book.

1. Do you continually monitor your wife's time and make her account for every minute, when she runs errands, visits friends, commutes to work etc?
2. Do you ever accuse her of having affairs with other men or act suspicious of her?
3. Are you ever rude to your wife's friends?
4. Do you ever discourage her from starting friendships with other women?
5. Are you ever critical of things such as her cooking or appearance?
6. Do you demand a strict account of how your wife spends money?
7. Do your moods change radically from very calm to very angry, or vice versa?
8. Are you disturbed by your wife's working or by the thought of her working?
9. Do you become angry more easily when you drink?
10. Do you pressure your wife for sex much more often than she likes?
11. Do you become angry if your wife does not want to go along with your request for sex?
12. Do you and your wife quarrel much over financial matters?
13. Do you quarrel much about having children or raising them?
14. Do you ever strike your wife with your hands or feet?
15. Do you ever strike her with objects?
16. Do you ever threaten her with an object or weapon?
17. Have you ever threatened to kill either her or yourself?*
18. Do you ever give your wife visible injuries, such as welts, bruises, cuts etc?
19. Has your wife ever had to treat any injuries from your violence with first aid?
20. Has she ever had to seek professional aid for any injury at a medical clinic or hospital?
21. Do you ever hurt your wife sexually or make her have intercourse against her will?
22. Are you ever violent toward children?
23. Are you ever violent toward other people outside your home and family?

24. Do you throw objects or break things when you are angry?
25. Have you ever been in trouble with the police?
26. Has your wife ever called the police or tried to call them because she felt she or members of your family were in danger?

Source: adapted from the "CSR Abuse Index" in "The Family Secret" by William A. Staccy and Anson Shupe, Beacon Press.