

## Questions

1. Do you recognise any of these caution signs in your relationship?

- If so, which ones?

*If you do recognise these caution signs in your relationship,  
we recommend you talk about the situation as soon  
as possible with a mentor, counsellor or pastor.*




(Notes)

**Note:** If any of these caution signs are present in your relationship and you are engaging in any sexual activity, it is imperative that you end it immediately. The premature bond this type of intimacy creates will make it extremely difficult for you to make needed changes in your relationship or to break it off.

# Red Flags in Relationships

Any relationship will have its difficulties, but sometimes those difficulties are indicators of deep-rooted problems that, if not addressed quickly, will begin to poison your relationship. If you can identify with any of the following caution signs, we recommend you take the initiative to talk about the situation with a pastor, counsellor or mentor.

## 16 RED FLAGS OF RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES<sup>1</sup>

-  1. You have a general uneasy feeling that there is something wrong in your relationship with your date.
-  2. You find yourself arguing often with your date.
-  3. Your date seems irrationally jealous whenever you interact with someone of the opposite sex.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted by permission from Bob Phillips, *How Can I Be Sure: A Pre-Marriage Inventory* (Eugene, Ore; Harvest Publishers Inc., 1978)

**4.** You avoid discussing certain subjects because you are afraid of your date's reactions.

**5.** Your date finds it extremely difficult to express emotions, or is prone to extreme emotions (such as out-of-control anger or exaggerated fear) or swinging back and forth between emotional extremes (such as being very happy one minute, then suddenly exhibiting extreme sadness the next).

**6.** Your date displays controlling behaviour. This means more than wanting to be in charge - it means your date seems to want to control every aspect of your life: your appearance, your lifestyle, your interactions with friends or family, etc. Your date seems to manipulate you into doing what he or she wants.

**7.** You are continuing your relationship out of fear - fear of hurting your date or fear of what he or she might do if you end the relationship.

**8.** Your date does not treat you with respect. He or she constantly criticises you or talks sarcastically to you.

**9.** Your date is unable to hold down a job, doesn't take personal responsibility for losing a job, or he or she frequently borrows money from you or friends.

**10.** Your date often talks about imagined aches and pains, going from doctor to doctor until he or she finds someone who will agree that he or she is seriously ill.

**11.** Your date is unable to resolve conflict. He or she cannot deal with constructive criticism, never admits a mistake and never asks for forgiveness.

**12.** Your date is overly dependent on parents for finances, decision-making or emotional security.

**13.** Your date shows patterns of dishonesty, rationalising questionable behaviour or twisting words to his or her benefit.

**14.** Your date exhibits patterns of physical, emotional or sexual abuse toward you or others. If he or she has ever threatened to hit you or actually struck you, this is a warning sign of future abuse. If he or she puts you down or continually criticises you, this is a sign of emotional abusiveness.

**15.** Your date displays signs of drug or alcohol abuse: unexplained absences or missed dates, frequent car accidents, the smell of alcohol or strong odour of mouthwash, erratic behaviour or emotional swings, physical signs such as red eyes, unkempt look, unexplained nervousness etc.

**16.** Your date displayed a sudden, dramatic change in lifestyle as you begin dating. (He or she may be changing just to win you and will revert back to old habits after marriage).