



Characteristics of the Abuser

Abusive people have the following characteristics:

- They are irritable, angry, explosive, hostile, and intolerant.
- They blame you for the abuse and the problems in the relationship.
- They are moody and unpredictable.
- They don't accept your feelings and perceptions.
- They don't believe you have rights.
- They are unable to be empathetic.
- They withdraw from the relationship.
- They are jealous, suspicious, and possessive.
- They are competitive and critical.
- They are punishing.
- They expect their demands to be met without question. They feel entitled to special treatment and to be physically, sexually, and/or emotionally taken care of by you according to their dictates. If you don't do it right, harsh criticism or abuse is given out because the abuser believes you deserve it.
- They are sarcastic and caustic.
- They are non-communicative and unwilling to talk about the problems to reach an understanding.
- They don't care that the abuse hurts you.

What Causes An Abuser to Abuse?

Some, but not all, abusers were abused as children. Many saw their parent, typically their mothers, abused by their fathers or other men. Others have cultural or religious beliefs that foster the belief that women and children should obey their husbands and fathers and that they don't deserve equal treatment because the man is superior as the head of the house. Women are also abusive and men that are abused by their partners have a great deal of shame admitting it.

People who are diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder and substance abuse are often abusive especially in their intimate relationships. Abusers often have poor impulse control and are explosive and angry. The assumption is that difficulty controlling the anger is the main cause of the abuse. Interestingly, abusive people often have no difficulty controlling their anger in other relationships and in the workplace.

The main reason abusers abuse it that they have a faulty belief system.

- They see the abuse as justified. They believe they have a right to control other people especially those that they are in intimate relationships with.
- They feel entitled to special treatment and to be physically, sexually, and emotionally taken care of by the abused according to their dictates. If the abused doesn't do it right, they deserve harsh criticism or abuse. They see the abused as more of a servant than equal partner. And, the abuser's desires are always more important than the abused's desires.
- They feel superior to the abused and do not see the abused as a person who deserves respect and who is entitled to be a person with rights.
- They believe they have a right to control the abused. In intimate relationships, they are also possessive and jealous.
- They blame the abused for the abuse.

Can an Abuser Change?

It isn't easy to change abusive patterns. In order to do so, the abuser needs to be deeply committed to change. Professional help will most likely be needed because the abuser needs to understand all the factors that contribute to the abusive patterns, including the beliefs that drive the abusive behavior.

Abusers don't like the abused getting strong or setting boundaries, so when you begin to detach, take care of yourself, and set boundaries, the abuse will often escalate to get the abused to back down.