

7 Common Warning Signs of a Toxic Relationship

A toxic relationship can suck the life right out of you. Some people have a long history of getting themselves into toxic relationships and staying far too long.

What exactly is a toxic relationship? Here's one explanation from the book **Toxic People** (1995) by Dr. Lillian Glass:



“Any relationship between people who don’t support each other, where there’s conflict and one seeks to undermine the other, where there’s competition, where there’s disrespect and a lack of cohesiveness.”

Does that sound like any of your past or present relationships?

Consider these commonalities found in toxic relationships:

1. **Controlling behavior.** Toxic relationships often have an element of control. **Does your partner always have to have everything their way?**
 - Does she insist or demand on going with you when you spend time with your friends, go to the store?
 - Does she always need to be the center of attention?
 - Does she refuse to accept blame even when it’s obviously her fault?
 - Does your partner limit whom you’re allowed to see or when?
2. **Distrust.** Demanding to know where you are and with whom is a prime example of mistrust. Are you really going to spend time with your mother? She might just

drive by to see if you're telling the truth.

- Does your partner doubt everything you say? Is your word never good enough?
 - Does your partner track your location with a phone app?
 - Does she demand FaceTime calls or pictures when you reach your destination?
 - Does your partner quiz you to try to catch you in a lie?
 - Do you have to justify yourself all of the time?
3. **Justifying your partner's behavior.** Do you have to explain away your partner's behavior to your friends and family, even though you know deep down there's no justification for the way your partner acts? **Is your partner rude and disrespectful to you in front of your friends and family?**
4. **Physical or verbal abuse.** Any abuse is unacceptable. If your partner is abusing you in any way, respect yourself enough to leave the relationship. This is especially true for men. Abuse is abuse.
5. **Passive-aggressive behavior.** Does your partner change the plans last minute? Does she forget to complete simple, but critical tasks while you are away? Does she find fault in everything you do? Do you receive a lot of excuses from your partner in general?
6. **Lying.** This needs little explanation. Does your partner lie to you? Do you find yourself telling lies just to keep the peace? Do you lie in order to avoid spending time with your partner?
7. **There's a relationship scorecard.** Are you reminded on a regular basis about how you're not pulling your own weight? Are past mistakes mentioned regularly?
- Are you told that you have to wash the dishes because your partner took out the trash? Are you told this even though you're swamped with work, and she's just watching TV?

Most people in toxic relationships know their relationships aren't ideal, but they justify and rationalize their doubts away. Many of them would rather be in a poor relationship than no relationship at all.

An emotionally healthy person views being alone as better than being in a negative relationship. A healthy relationship can be challenging to find, but it's not an impossibility.

If you're in a toxic relationship, extract yourself from it or seek professional relationship counseling. You'll be relieved to be moving on from the current relationship routines.