

## Handout 17.1: Characteristics of Abusive Partners

Client Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the questions below in relation to a current or former intimate partner who was physically or emotionally abusive toward you. Unless otherwise indicated, respond based on whether he has ever exhibited the behavior, whether in the past or at present. If you need more space, you may use an extra sheet of blank paper.

### 1. Has he disregarded and violated the rights of others?

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Did he start disregarding the rights of others before his fifteenth birthday? (Examples include aggression toward people and animals, destruction of property, deceitfulness or theft, or serious violation of rules.)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples in which he disregarded and violated the rights of others before his fifteenth birthday.

---

---

---

---

### 2. Has he done things that are grounds for arrest, whether he was arrested or not? (Examples include illegal drug use, theft, or assault of anyone, including family members.)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of things he did that would be grounds for arrest.

---

---

---

---

If you didn't describe acts where he threatened to kill you, seriously harm you, or physically hurt you, or made you engage in sexual behavior against your will, please describe examples of this kind of behavior.

---

---

---

---

3. Has he been deceitful, as indicated by lying, use of aliases, or conning others for personal profit or pleasure?

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of lying, use of aliases, or conning others for personal profit or pleasure.

---

---

---

---

4. Is he impulsive or does he fail to plan ahead? (For example, does he do things on the spur of the moment without consideration of the consequences to himself or others?)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of his impulsiveness or failure to plan ahead.

---

---

---

---

5. **Is he irritable and aggressive, as indicated by physical fights or assaults?** (This includes beating you or your children.)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of physical fights or assaults.

---

---

---

---

6. **Has he displayed a reckless disregard for his own safety or the safety of others?** (Examples include drunk driving, repeatedly speeding, multiple accidents, or neglect of a child that puts the child in danger.)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of ways he displayed a reckless disregard for his own safety or the safety of others.

---

---

---

---

7. **Is he or was he consistently irresponsible, as indicated by failure to maintain consistent employment or honor financial obligations?** (Examples include repeated absences from work not explained by illness, extended unemployment even when jobs were available, defaulting on debts, or failing to provide child support.)

Never      Seldom      Occasionally      Often      Almost always      Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of his failure to maintain consistent work behavior or honor financial obligations.

---

---

8. **Has he displayed a lack of remorse, as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another?** (Examples include blaming the victim, minimizing the consequences of his actions, or failure to make amends.)

Never

Seldom

Occasionally

Often

Almost  
always

Don't know

If at least seldom: Please describe specific examples of his being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or stolen from another.

---

---

---

---

This handout is in the public domain. Readers may copy, distribute, or use as they see fit.