There are many kinds of abusive/violent relationships, which involve individuals of many different backgrounds (e.g. gender, race, age, economic status, sexual orientation, religion, etc.).

Most women who come to Harbour House have been in abusive/violent relationships with intimate partners (e.g. husbands, boyfreinds, girlfriends, etc.). It is also possible to be in an abusive/violent relationship with other individuals, such as family members, friends, landlords, employers, etc.

The following are some of the signs of being in an abusive/violent relationship with an intimate partner (e.g. husband, boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.), but may also apply to other kinds of relationships:

1) You got very serious about your relationship very quickly. For example, your partner told you they loved you very quickly and/or you moved in together or got engaged very quickly and/or you were pressured into a serious commitment very quickly.

2) Your partner has a tendency to come on very strongly and may be extremely charming and/or a 'smooth talker'.

3) Your partner is extremely jealous.

4) Your partner isolates you from your support systems. For example, they want you all to themselves and they try to keep you away from your family and/or friends and/or outside activities.

5) Your partner attempts to control what you wear, what you do and/or who you see.

6) Your partner is abusive towards other people (especially their mother or sisters if your partner is male).

7) Your partner blames others for their own misbehavior or failures (e.g. someone else is always to blame).

8) Your partner abuses drugs or alcohol.

9) Your partner has unrealistic expectations. For example, they expect you to meet all of their needs and to be the "perfect" partner and/or mother if there are children involved.

10) Your partner is overly sensitive. For example, your partner acts 'hurt' when they are not getting their own way, takes offense when others disagree with their opinion and/or gets very upset at small inconveniences that are just a normal part of life.

11) Your partner has been/is cruel to animals.
12) Your partner has been/is abusive towards children.

13) Your partner has hit either another partner or you in the past.

14) Your partner has threatened violence - even if it wasn't a 'serious' threat?

15) Your partner calls you names, puts you down and/or curses at you.

16) Your partner is extremely moody. For example, they switch quickly from being very nice to exploding in anger.

17) If your partner is a male, they believe women are inferior to men and should obey them.

18) Your partner intimidates you or others. For example, they use threatening body language, punch walls and/or break objects.

19) Your partner holds you against your will to keep you from walking away or leaving the room.

20) Your partner was abused by a parent or someone they trusted. **

21) Your partner grew up in a home where an adult was abused by another adult. **

** Please Note: Numbers 20 & 21 on this list do not necessarily indicate a person will be abusive. The majority of children who grow up in abusive homes choose not to be abusive as adults. However, these children still have a higher likelihood than other children of growing up to be involved in abusive relationships. These factors should be considered with other factors.