



# The Monthly InStAllment

UHS Health Promotion Office, 110 Anderson Tower, 3-5775



October 2007



## Am I in An Unhealthy Relationship?

- Does my partner have big mood swings, angry one minute, sweet and apologetic the next?
- Do I have the urge to 'rescue' my partner when he or she gets into trouble?
- Do I often agree with my partner because I'm afraid of his or her angry response if I were to disagree?
- Do I find myself apologizing frequently for my partner's actions?
- Has my partner ever hit, kicked, shoved, or thrown something at me?
- Do I make plans and decisions about activities & friends according to what my partner wants?
- Do I drink heavily or abuse drugs?
- Have I ever been abused, or seen one of my parents or siblings abused?
- Does my partner ever treat me badly or embarrass me in front of others?
- Do I ever agree to have sex, even if I don't want to?
- Does my partner frequently become jealous & possessive, and accuse me of flirting or cheating?
- Does my partner ever threaten to harm him or herself if we ever broke up?
- Does my partner regularly check up on my whereabouts, or make me check in?
- Does my partner ever follow me without my knowledge or permission?
- Does my partner isolate me from my friends and/or family?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, consider seeking help. See "Resources for Students" (on right).

## Relationship

### Intrusive Contact\* (Stalking)

A recent survey of college students showed that 30% of them had experienced intrusive contact after ending a relationship. In the study, males and females were equally likely to initiate intrusive contact after breaking up, showing that males and females can both be the target of intrusive contact.

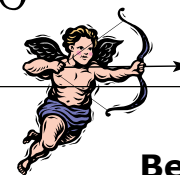
Intrusive contact occurs when someone (often an ex boyfriend or girlfriend) intentionally contacts or tries to contact you when you have asked that there be *no* contact. The form of the contact may vary widely, and can include:

- Insisting on talking with you when you do not want to talk.
- Making a scene outside your room or residence.
- Phoning, texting, or emailing repeatedly.
- Phoning at inappropriate times; phoning and then hanging up.
- Following you around.
- Waiting to meet you outside school, work, or other activity.

Many people who are targeted with intrusive contact believe that they have done something wrong or handled the relationship or the breakup badly. It is important to know that you are **not** responsible for being victimized. But you can take action to stop it.

### Taking Action

1. Set clear & specific limits with your ex regarding what type of contact, if any, you are willing to have. Communicate this directly, or in a note.
2. YOU must also follow these limits! If you say "no phone calls," then you can not call your ex – not even once. If you break the limits, this will encourage your ex to do the same. Do not negotiate. Negotiating prolongs contact with your ex and will encourage him/her to keep trying to negotiate in order to maintain contact.
3. If your ex refuses to comply, you will need to minimize contact to feel safe and to help your ex let go of the relationship. You will likely need the support of family and friends, so it is wise to talk with them about how they can help you. To minimize contact, you will need to:
  - Screen your phone calls. Have a cell phone and emergency numbers handy at all times.
  - Have friends with you as much as possible.
  - Vary your patterns of travel and activities. Lock doors and windows.



### 5 Steps to a Better Relationship\*\*

1. Be aware of what you and your partner want for yourselves and what you want from the relationship. Then communicate this clearly to each other.
2. Realize that your partner will not be able to meet all your needs. Some of these needs will have to be met outside of the relationship.
3. Where differences exist in your expectations, needs, or opinions, try to work honestly and sincerely to negotiate and compromise.
4. Do not demand that a partner change to meet all your expectations. Work to accept the differences between your ideal mate and the real person you are dating.
5. Try to see each other's point of view. This does not mean that you must always agree, but that you can understand and respect each other's differences, points of view, and separate needs. Seek professional "coaching" early rather than waiting until the situation becomes critical (see below).

### Couples Therapy at UCC

Any students considering themselves "coupled" can be seen together at UCC. Couples therapy allows you to gain a better understanding of and improve your relationship, address difficulties and explore ways to change, and in some cases, to help couples end a relationship in a healthy and satisfying way for both partners.

### Resources for Students

**UR Security:** x13 (#413 from ATT/Cingular or Verizon cell phone)  
**Dean of Students Office:** 275-4085  
**University Intercessor:** 275-9125  
**University Health Service:** 275-2662  
**University Counseling Center:** 275-2361

\*The Relationship Project, Jeffrey Haugard, PhD, Cornell University  
<http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/HD/stalking>

\*\* UT Counseling & Mental Health Center, Univ. of Texas at Austin