

KNOW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

#KnowDVJFS: Molly

At first, my new boyfriend was so nice to my friends. He charmed them, paid for fancy dinners, and even started coming to services on Friday nights with my whole family. However, as we grew closer, he stopped inviting my friends to hang out with us. On Friday nights, he said we should spend the time “one-on-one” and got angry when I said I wanted to have Shabbat dinner with my family. At first, I was flattered because he wanted to spend all of his time with me. Now, I feel so distant from my friends- they do not call and invite me out as much because I always say no. My boyfriend told me that my family is controlling and it is better if I become more “independent” anyway.



What Red Flags do you identify in Molly's story?

What actions would you take if you were Molly's friend?

(Answers on back.)

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Red Flags

Moving the Goal Post: In the beginning, generally doting, kind, and affectionate; often mirrors your values and goals. Over time, changes opinions and values.

Isolating You: At the beginning, may compliment your friends and family and want to spend time with them. Over time, pulls away from your loved ones and encourages you to pull away.

Blaming Everyone Else: Often blames others for their actions, and takes responsibility only when manipulating someone. Abusers tell victims the abuse is the victim's fault or that the victim "made" them do it.

Pushing Boundaries: Breaks your boundaries, initially in small, subtle ways. For example, leaves dirty dishes in the sink after you've asked them to put them in the dishwasher. Over time, encroaches more and more on your boundaries.

What actions could you take if you were Molly's friend?

Calmly start a conversation on a positive note about how much you love and care about Molly; ask open-ended questions about how things are going.

Be supportive and do more listening than talking.

Focus on unhealthy behaviors rather than her partner as a person (avoid insulting her boyfriend). Share how you might feel if you experienced them and why you are concerned. Be specific, for example: "I noticed that you spend most of your time with your BF and have not been going to services or Shabbat dinner with your family, which you have told me before means a lot to you."

Allow your friend to make their own decisions, you can't make her decide anything and you can't change her mind.

Expect more conversations in the future, this is a process.

