

# KNOW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## #KnowDVJFS: Ben

When I first met David, it was amazing. After our 1st date, he told me that I was the best thing that had ever happened to him. For our 2nd date, he surprised me with reservations at the hottest new restaurant in town and gave me an expensive present. By the time we had been together a month, we were going away to the Grove Park Inn for a long weekend. I could not believe how lucky I was. David loved to call me “his person” which at first, sounded so romantic. As time went on, he reminded me of all of the gifts, trips and special treatment, whenever I disagreed with anything he said. He would say “my person would understand me better that.” One thing that did bother me early on was that David is very critical of others. At first, I thought he was funny, with his sharp humor and remarks. But he can be really mean, especially when he talks about his exes and members of his own family. Now, I feel like I can never say anything that’s on my mind. I’m worried that he’ll get mad, turn it around and make whatever I say my fault, or talk about me like he does his family.



**What Red Flags do you identify in Bens’s story?**

**What actions would you take if you were Ben’s family member?**

(Answers on back.)

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### Red Flags

**Love Bombing:** Showers you with attention and affection early on; makes you feel special, loved, and appreciated; lowers your defenses and makes you feel closer to the person than you really are.

**Owning You:** Doesn't see you as a person, instead sees you as a possession. Early on, says you are "theirs" or claims you are their boyfriend or girlfriend very early, sometimes before the first date.

**Disrespecting Others:** May make derogatory comments about others, call others names, tell you they dated someone "crazy" in the past, or lack close relationships with others. May appear charming, but is disrespectful when you pay attention to how they talk about others.

**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.

### What actions could you take if you were Ben's family member?

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

Keep the conversation friendly. It's important for Ben not to feel judged.

Do not place the blame on Ben. It is NOT his fault his partner is acting this way.

Allow Ben to make his own decisions; you can't make him decide anything and you can't change his mind.

