



Is my relationship toxic?

If you need help now

If you are in immediate danger or cannot keep yourself safe, call the emergency number for the country you are in now. If possible, ask someone you trust to stay with you or make the call.

Country you are in	Emergency – call now	Crisis / someone to talk to
Germany	112 medical · 110 police Source	0800 1110111 Source
Austria	144 medical · 133 police Source	142 Source
Switzerland	144 medical · 117 police Source	143 Source
USA	911 Source	988 Source
UK	999 Source	116 123 Source
Spain	112 Source	024 Source
Portugal	112 Source	1411 Source
Brazil	192 SAMU · 190 Polícia Source	188 Source

The crisis phone lines in the table operate around the clock; you may have to wait. They are not emergency dispatch services. Use the emergency number for immediate danger. Services differ: DE, AT, CH, UK and BR offer emotional support; US 988 supports mental health crises; ES 024 and PT 1411 focus on suicide risk. Numbers apply in the country listed.

CH: 143 offers German/French/Italian. English: **0800 143 000**, daily 6–11 pm Swiss time ([source](#)). Support is free; phone-provider charges may apply. Germany's TelefonSeelsorge operates in German. This PDF's language does not guarantee support in that language.

This free information sheet does not diagnose you and does not replace professional medical, mental health or specialist support. It is not an emergency service. No purchase or email address is required. Contacts and sources checked **11 October 2026**. Next review: 11 November 2026. Support for relationship abuse: page 4.

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Taking your experience seriously

There may be good moments. You may also notice that you often feel tense, make yourself smaller or fear the next reaction. Both can be true. You do not need a perfect label for your relationship before you seek support.

“Toxic” is an everyday word here, not a diagnosis. This sheet does not assess you or the other person. It helps you look at specific situations.

Questions that may help you reflect

- Can I say no without fearing threats, humiliation or punishment?
- Can I access my money, my phone and people who matter to me?
- Are my boundaries around affection and sex respected?
- Is my daily life shaped by control, intimidation or repeated put-downs?
- Am I free to disagree or cancel a plan?

This is not a test. There is no score or threshold that makes your experience count. A single assault also deserves support. Having no visible injuries does not automatically mean a situation is safe. Control over money, social contact or sex is among the warning signs described by specialist services. [Specialist source](#)

Disagreements and different needs happen. You do not have to accept fear, coercion or humiliation as the price of closeness. An apology does not oblige you to reconcile or stay.

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A next step you can choose

You do not have to explain the whole relationship or make a final decision today. If it is safe, you could tell someone you trust: "Something in my relationship is frightening me. Could you listen without deciding for me?"

A specialist service can explore options with you: a confidential conversation, protection for you and children, somewhere safer to stay or local support. Contacts are on page 4. It is okay to say: "I don't know whether this counts as abuse."

If you fear the other person's reaction, you do not have to show them this sheet or start a confrontation. Leaving can increase risk; where possible, plan with specialist support. Confrontation or joint counselling is not a condition of receiving help. [Safety planning](#)

Only if writing is safe for you

You can simply think about these questions instead:

- What happened, without needing to excuse it or give it a label?
- What would make the next day a little safer?
- Which person or specialist service might help?

You do not need to keep a record if it could be discovered. Your safety comes first. If you cannot leave now, or do not want to leave yet, you still deserve support.

Abuse is not your fault. Responsibility belongs to the person using abuse. You do not have to "communicate better" to deserve safety.

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Support for relationship abuse

In immediate danger, use the emergency numbers on page 1. These services offer advice and help you find support. You can contact them even if you are unsure how to describe what is happening.

Country	Phone	Service and hours	Source
DE	116 016	women; 24/7	DE-G
DE	0800 1239900	men; Mon–Thu 8am–8pm, Fri 8am–3pm	DE-M
AT	0800 222 555	women; 24/7	AT-G
CH	142	victim support; 24/7	CH-G
US	1-800-799-7233	relationship abuse; 24/7	US-G
England	0808 2000 247	women; 24/7	UK-E
Wales	0808 80 10 800	domestic / sexual abuse; 24/7	UK-W
Scotland	0800 027 1234	domestic abuse / forced marriage; 24/7	UK-S2
Northern Ireland	0808 802 1414	age 18+; 24/7	UK-I
ES	016	violence against women; 24/7 Information	ES-G
PT	800 202 148	domestic abuse; 24/7	PT-G
BR	180	violence against women; 24/7	BR-G

Times are local to the service. ES: legal advice operates daily 8am–10pm; 24/7 refers to information and immediate psychosocial support. CH 142 is not an emergency number. Additional support for men in Austria: **0800 400 777**, 24/7 crisis counselling ([source](#)).

If calling does not work for you: US – text **START to 88788** ([provider](#)); PT – text **3060** ([CIG](#)); ES – WhatsApp **600 000 016**, which does not accept voice calls ([ministry](#)). US message and data charges may apply. Written services do not replace emergency calls.

If someone monitors your activity, use a safer device if possible. Downloads, call logs and browsing activity may remain visible. A “quick exit” button does not erase these traces. Save this sheet only if it is safe for you.

Contacts and linked sources checked **11 October 2026**. Details may change. VSJ does not provide individual crisis counselling; comments and messages are not emergency contacts.