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### **Are You Living With An Abuser?**

Classic characteristics of an abuser are:

- \* Extreme Jealousy
- \* Controlling behavior
- \* Unpredictable behavior
- \* Unrealistic Expectations
- \* Isolates the victim
- \* Blames others
- \* Minimizes or denies abuse
- \* Cruelty to children or animals
- \* Uses force during sex
- \* Verbally Abusive
- \* Sudden mood swings
- \* Past history of battering
- \* Threats of violence
- \* Breaks or strikes objects

The abuser also often will be remorseful and will beg for forgiveness. The next day, you will receive cards and gifts and promises that it never will happen again. But it will. It usually will escalate too. It will not go away without professional help for the abuser. Remember it is not your fault that it happens, but it is your fault if you continue to let it happen.

Mary G. Commander, Attorney & Mediator has been handling Family Law cases in Virginia since 1981.