

Spotting Red Flags for Your Mentorees

As marriage mentors, you are on the front lines. You are likely to be among the first people to know when and if a couple needs serious help that goes beyond marriage mentoring.

We have provided a list of questions to help you determine whether one of your mentorees is dealing with an issue that needs professional intervention. Mental health professionals can be of great value in helping hurting couples find the healing comfort of the Holy Spirit.

If you answer 'yes' to any of these red flag issues, it's time to refer.

Is one of your mentorees...

- painfully silent for long periods and withdrawn socially (even with his or her spouse)?
- quitting a job for no rational reason or making other sudden unexplainable decisions?
- obsessed with exercise and diet to the point that you think she (rarely does this occur in males) might have an eating disorder?
- practicing any form of self-mutilation in the form of cuts or burns?
- showing an excessive fear of a particular family member, other relative, or family friend?
- having serious problems with sleep, such as insomnia, repeated wakefulness at night, frequent nightmares, or sleeping too much?

Does one of your mentorees...

- have long periods of feeling worthless, helpless, guilty, or lethargic? Does he or she suffer from depression?
- blow up with anger? Is he or she a threat to someone's physical well-being, especially the fiancée or spouse and children?
- report hearing voices that others do not hear? Does he or she hallucinate or is he or she out of touch with reality?
- have morbid thoughts, talk about death a lot? Is he or she suicidal?
- drive while drinking? Do you suspect a problem with excessive drinking or drug use?
- experience relatively brief periods of intense anxiety? Does he or she suffer from panic attacks?

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of every possible issue that may require professional help, but it covers the most common issues.