

The 9 Grooming Tactics

Definition: When a person, whether male or female, plays with someone's feelings in order to gain control of the other person, that process is called grooming. The groomer wants to prepare the person (victim) for some type of behavior that will benefit the groomer's selfish goals or personal gain. Emotional grooming can be used to seduce or con people into sexual activity.

1. **Flattery**—insincere compliments that are phony and overdone; these are always meant to get something in return; they are NOT the same as a compliment or praise.
2. **Bribery**—excessive gift giving, etc. to make someone feel obligated to another; groomers use the gift given to demand favors in return; gifts should be freely given with no expectations.
3. **Status**—the groomer uses popularity, money, possessions, etc. to get the victim to do what the groomer wants.
4. **Jealousy and possessiveness**—these are normal emotions that everyone feels at some time; groomers use them to control and manipulate a person; also the groomer isolates the victim as this is very important; the groomer treats the victim as an "object" rather than as a person to respect and love; examples include: telling another how to dress, where to go, how to talk, what to like.
5. **Insecurity**—another normal emotion; it can be used two ways by groomers...
 - a. Play on the neediness of their victim; the groomer may exaggerate the victim's flaws in order to control and keep him/her dependent on the groomer; a groomer will use insecurity to manipulate.
 - b. Groomer may act insecure to seek the comfort and reassurance of the victim; examples: "You are so great. I don't deserve your friendship."; "If you leave me, I don't know what I will do without you." "If you break up with me, I will kill myself!"
6. **Accusations**—the groomer says the victim did things in order to scare, threaten, control and manipulate; often the accusations are said so others can hear in order to embarrass, humiliate, and intimidate the victim; false or unjust finger pointing.
7. **Intimidation**—scare tactics that can be a word, look, a stance that are meant to frighten, threaten, intimidate the victim into doing exactly what the groomer wants; can be verbal or nonverbal, physical or emotional; this is related to bullying behavior.
8. **Anger**—this is another normal emotion, when handled correctly; it is only a grooming tactic when used to control others; making the victim feel afraid of being hurt.
9. **Control**—this is the goal of the groomer—to gain power or dominance in the relationship; the groomer wants the victim to feel powerless and helpless.



Relationship Red Flag/ Warning Inventory

Darken the circle for each statement that applies:

- I am pulling away from my friends.
- My friends think I am obsessed with this person.
- My attitude towards my future plans and goals are changing.
- I can't stand to be away from this person.
- There is a lot of possessiveness in this person.
- I can't stand to see this person talking to another guy or girl.
- We are always doing what he/she wants to do.
- We can't seem to keep our hands off each other.
- All I can concentrate on is how this person looks and dresses.
- I am not myself with this person.
- This romance started very quickly.
- I think this person is perfect.
- I have unresolved conflict with this person, but it doesn't matter.
- We seem to be very serious with each other.
- We are frequently alone and physical with one another.
- This person frequently embarrasses me or makes fun of me in front of others.
- This person makes me feel there is no way out of this relationship.
- This person uses intimidation to make me do what they want.
- This person seldom takes responsibility for their actions and blames others for problems.
- This person seems to have a short fuse and gets angered easily.
- When I am around this person, I often feel guilty or inadequate.
- This person usually takes charge.
- At times this person is extremely charming and tells me how much he/she loves me but other times this person is demeaning and disrespectful.
- Most of my family and friends disapprove of this person.
- I don't get along with this person's family or friends.