

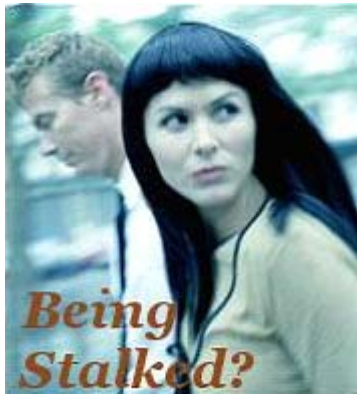


THE SHIELD GROUP, LLC

**A Private Investigation
and
Security Consulting Firm**

**Indiana License PI-20800405
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Love Me Not



In today's complex society, we have seen an increase in stalking and harassment against both men and women. A stalker can be someone who is unknown to the victim or someone, such as an ex-boyfriend or ex-spouse, who cannot accept the change in his status. Stalking or harassment can be extremely disruptive to the victim's life and can cause tremendous stress for the victim, the victim's family and others.

Many stalkers remain in the shadows posing no actual physical threat to the victim, merely creating an unknown non-threatening environment. However, one can never know whether the stalker will escalate to a more overt, physically dangerous level.

What is Stalking ?

Unwanted pursuit. This is probably the best term to define stalking. There are many different behaviors that can be called stalking, but all share two common features: they involve actions not wanted by the victim and they threaten or cause fear to the victim. New ways of stalking emerge frequently and no list can encompass them all, but stalking often includes:

- Following or surveillance
- Inappropriate approaches and confrontations
- Appearing at a place of work or residence
- Unwanted telephone calls or letters
- Threats to the individual, to family or to friends
- Unwanted or threatening gifts
- Unwanted messages or e-mail
- Damage to property



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- Physical assault
- Sexual assault

Warning Signs

There is no single list of warning signs that will tell you if you are a victim of a stalker. You are the expert. If you are in a relationship that is concerning you, or if you are in the process of ending a relationship, some warning signs to watch for include:

- Frequent loss of temper
- Abuse of alcohol and/or drugs
- Extreme jealousy
- Expects you to spend all of your time with him or inform him of your whereabouts
- Following
- Threats
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Statements regarding suicide or suicidal thoughts if you leave
- Damage or destruction to your property
- Puts you down in front of your family or friends
- Makes your family or friends feel scared or uneasy
- Talks about violence or is fascinated with themes of violence
- Refuses to accept "no" for an answer
- Isolates you from your friends and/or family or attempts to alienate those close to you

Facts

According to a United States Department of Justice study (Tjaden, 1997) one out of every twelve American women and one out of forty-five men have been stalked during their lifetimes. Each year more than one million women, and more than 370,000 men become victims of stalking. Women are the primary victims of stalking. Men are the primary perpetrators.

A vast majority of victims know their stalkers. Only twenty-six percent of female victims and thirty-six percent of male victims were stalked by strangers. The study also determined that women are most likely to be stalked by their intimates, husbands, ex-husbands, boyfriends and ex-boyfriends. In all, fifty-nine percent of female victims reported being stalked by an intimate.

The study found that there is a strong link between stalking and other forms of intimate violence. Many of those stalked by an intimate were physically assaulted or sexually assaulted.

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Refuse To Be A Victim

As unfortunate as it may be, when a celebrity or someone famous is stalked there is often much publicity and an abundance of law enforcement support. But it must be remembered that it is not only stars that are stalked. Anyone can be the target of a stalker, and unless you have a star on the Hollywood "Walk of Fame" chances are that the police will not do much more than file a report when initially contacted.

Stalking is one of the greatest mental strains and physical dangers that someone can face. Stalkers find out where you live and work, discover what kind of car you drive, and learn your daily routine. They determine the identities of your family members and friends, your hobbies and activities, your favorite places to shop and eat, and so on, in order to follow your every movement. With this information they track you, appearing at your home, at work or school, the grocery store or movie theater ... anywhere. The stalker is obsessed, and the situation may persist for months or even years. And if the stalker happens to be an ex-lover or ex-spouse, the situation can become even more exasperating since they already possess personal and intimate details about your habits, likes and routines. Whether the stalker is a person who cannot let go, or is just being abusive out of spite and revenge, the end result is the same – frustration, fear and a feeling of utter helplessness.



The danger from a stalker is not always obvious. While a stalker certainly represents an annoyance, there is much more at risk than just your convenience or privacy. In extreme cases your safety may be threatened, and your loved ones also share in the danger. A stalker develops an extreme obsession, so even if you are married or otherwise attached, the stalker is not deterred and your partner also faces danger since the stalker may try to eliminate those people you are intimate with, seeing them as obstacles to their desired relationship with you.

If you are the target of a stalker it is in your best interests to take immediate action. Depending upon the situation, several courses of action are possible. These include filing police reports and pursuing the matter using the legal and criminal justice system, or addressing the matter from a security and personal protection perspective. Regardless of the approach selected, each requires that the stalker be identified, evidence be obtained of their activity, and that they be directly confronted to bring the harassment to an end.

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Most states have enacted stalker laws, and in many situations – but not necessarily all – contacting law enforcement and filing a police report is the appropriate first step in addressing a stalker or harassment problem. However the sad reality is that these laws are only useful if the stalker is identified, sufficient evidence that can stand up in a court of law against them is collected, and they are arrested and prosecuted. Stalkers who focus their energy on harassing a victim are often hard to catch since they usually leave very little tangible evidence and are often quite skilled at avoiding the police.

Experience has demonstrated that the only way to stop a stalker or someone intent on harassing their victim using stalker-like tactics is for someone who understands the stalker's objectives, psychological motivation and the methods that they are using in order to confront, confound and counter them. At The Shield Group we call this Stalking the Stalker. There are several essential elements to this process:

- The Identity of the stalker must be positively ascertained. In the event that the stalker is a stranger, their identity will not be known and whether they selected their victim at random or based on some trigger response that may never be understood. In many instances a person may suspect, but not necessarily know for sure the identity of the person responsible for the harassment they are suffering. In some instances the person causing the concern is an ex-lover or ex-spouse – or sometimes a friend of the Ex who is either working on that person's behalf or who is acting on their own. Positively identifying the person responsible for the stalking is a critical first step in the process.
- A preponderance of evidence must be collected in order to confront the stalker. This evidence can take many forms, and often depends upon the methods the offender is using to harass his or her victim, and it must be tangible, relevant and admissible in a court of law in the event it is required for criminal arrest and prosecution – even if that is not the primary approach to be taken. Stalkers are not dumb – thus the evidence collected must be *Prima Facie* – meaning that the evidence must stand on its own merits and not be circumstantial so that it can withstand cross-examination and challenge. In many situations it is not necessary to involve the police and go to court to stop a stalker in his or her tracks. But in all situations, having solid, irrefutable evidence that they can be confronted with to make your problem go away is absolutely necessary.
- Developing the appropriate psychological profile, understanding what motivates them, and ascertaining the intended objective of a stalker is critical to monitoring their behavior and movements. Does the stalker suffer from a mental disease? Is the person who is

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fixated on you someone that you smiled at in the store or perhaps dated only once? Is the person who is causing you anguish an ex-lover who cannot accept rejection and has decided that if he cannot have you no one else can either? Are you being harassed by an ex-spouse who is trying to make your life miserable out of revenge? Perhaps the stalking and harassment taking place is a planned activity by your soon-to-be ex-spouse intended to gather evidence against YOU in support of their divorce petition of child custody, support or maintenance. Motives of a Stranger-Stalker are different from those of an Intimate-Stalker, and understanding these differences, and the underlying motive and stalker's objective, are critical to solving your harassment problem.

- Your personal security must be maintained throughout the ordeal. This is an absolute. In fact, during any investigation or security initiative, your security should be enhanced in order to ensure your protection and the protection of those close to you.
- And when all else fails, every effort must be made to assure that law enforcement authorities respond quickly and appropriately to your situation as required.

While the police do not necessarily have the time, resources or expertise to collect the necessary evidence to put an end to the dangerous games that people play – The Shield Group has successfully helped many individuals just like yourself in achieving the security, safety and peace of mind they deserve.

If you are being stalked by a stranger, or harassed by an ex-lover or ex-spouse, The Shield Group can help.

Refuse to be a victim.

To arrange a free and confidential consultation, contact our offices at 877-480-5529.

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