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Love On The Rocks



In the 1980 movie “The Jazz Singer” Neil Diamond sings a soulful and poignant song named “Love On The Rocks” that describes a relationship broken and the turbulent emotional consequences that result from the realization that the love has ended.

As painful as it may be, the truth is some relationships were never meant to last. The ex-lover or ex-spouse may have been possessive or perhaps physically or emotionally abusive. Those who work to escape these type relationships are more fortunate than others who choose to stay and suffer the pain and consequences.

Unfortunately, some individuals refuse to accept that a relationship has ended when they are told diplomatically that it is over, and they continue to pursue and contact the other person using a variety of means, including phone calls, mailing letters, electronic mail and showing up at places where they know the object of their attention visits. These individuals have a difficult time letting go and accepting “No” for an answer, spending an inordinate amount of time focusing their attention on the person who they feel has rejected them.

Individuals responsible for this type of harassment or behavior are commonly called Stalkers. Though the definition formerly went to people who watched over and pursued strangers, the term “Intimate Stalker” is now used to describe those who have an obsession with someone they know or once had a relationship with.

Often times Intimate Stalking behavior patterns can closely mirror those common in many domestic violence cases. The pattern is usually triggered when the ex-spouse or ex-lover’s advances toward their victim are rebuffed. They become increasingly frustrated as they seek to continue or re-establish a personal relationship contrary to the wishes of the victim.



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The Intimate Stalker may attempt to woo their victim back into a relationship by sending flowers, candy, love letters and e-mail messages in an attempt to "prove their love." The sad fact is, however, that when the victim spurns their unwelcome advances, the stalker often turns to intimidation. Such attempts at intimidation often begin in the form of an unjustified, jealous and inappropriate intrusion into the victim's life. Over time these contacts become more numerous and more intrusive until such collective conduct becomes a persistent pattern of harassment. These intrusions take many forms, often including surveillance and following of the victim, harassing telephone calls, stealing of mail, vandalism of the victims' automobile, breaking and entering into the residence, computer hacking, telephone wiretaps and the planting of hidden cameras and hidden microphones in the victims home, auto and office. Many times harassing behavior escalates to threatening behavior. Such threats may be direct or indirect and communicated explicitly or implicitly by the stalker's conduct. Unfortunately, cases that reach this level of seriousness too often end in violence and occasionally murder.

In many situations Intimate Stalkers, unable to re-establish a relationship of power and control over their victims, turn to violence as a means of reasserting their domination over the victim. In some cases, offenders are even willing to kill their victims and themselves in a last, desperate attempt to assert their domination over the victim. The evolution of the Intimate Stalker's thought pattern progresses from: "If I can just prove to you how much I love you," - - - to one of "I can make you love me," - - - and finally to "If I can't have you, nobody else will."

While this progression in behavior is common, no stalking case is completely predictable. Some stalkers never escalate past the first stage, while others jump from the first to the last stage with little warning. Still others regress to previous stages before advancing to the next. It is not uncommon to see stalkers intersperse episodes of threats and violence with flowers and love letters.

The unfortunate truth is that your abusive Ex is likely to cope with the pain and humiliation of separation by spreading lies, distortions, and half-truths about you to family, friends and who ever will listen, and by proffering self-justifying interpretations of the events leading to the break-up. By targeting those closest to you – your family, your children, your boss, your colleagues and co-workers, your neighbors, and your friends – you're Ex hopes to achieve two equally unrealistic goals:





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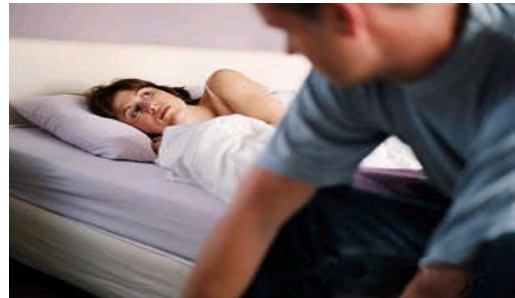
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- To socially isolate you and force you to run back to his waiting and “loving” arms.
- To communicate to you that he still “loves” you, is still interested in you, and that no matter what has happened, you and he are inseparable. He magnanimously is willing to forgive all the “horrible things” you did to him and revive the relationship, which after all, had its good moments.

How To Cope With Delusional, Paranoid and Dangerous Stalkers

It may be difficult, but you need to turn off your emotions. Abusers prey on other people’s empathy, pity, altruism, nostalgia, and tendency to lend a helping hand. Some stalkers “punish” themselves - drink to excess, commit offences and get caught, abuse drugs, have accidents, fall prey to scams - in order to force their victims to pity them and get in touch.

The only viable coping strategy is to ignore your abusive Ex. You should take all necessary precautions to protect yourself and your family, including alerting law enforcement agencies to any misbehavior, violence or harassment you may be facing. File police charges and obtain restraining orders when necessary, and always avoid gratuitous interactions.



When stalking is occurring, it is important that you never collude or collaborate in your Ex’s fantasies and delusions. You cannot buy his mercy or his goodwill – he has none. Do not support his notions, even indirectly, that he is brilliant, perfect, irresistibly handsome, destined for great things, entitled, powerful, wealthy, the center of attention, etc. Abusers act on these misperceptions and try to coerce you into becoming an integral part of their charades.

Abuse is a criminal offence and, by definition, abusers are criminals: they lack empathy and compassion, have deficient social skills, disregard laws, norms, contracts, and morals. You can’t negotiate with your abusive Ex and you cannot strike a bargain with him. You cannot reform, cure, or recondition him. He is a threat to you, to your property, and to your dear ones. It is important that you realize and accept this fact, and that you treat him as such.

The most dangerous class of abuser is the paranoid-delusional. If your Ex is one of these, he is likely to:



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- Believe that you still love him (perhaps suffering from Erotomania), and interpret everything you do or say – even to third parties – as “hidden messages” addressed to him and professing your undying devotion.
- Confuse the physical with the emotional, thus regarding sex as “proof” of your love, therefore increasing your chances of assault or rape.
- Blame the failure of the relationship on you or on others – such as social workers, your attorney, your friends, your family and your children.
- Be very envious of your newfound autonomy and try to sabotage it by reasserting his control over you. Common examples we have often seen in the protection of our clients includes breaking and entering into your house, leaving intrusive messages on your answering machine or voice mail at home or at work, bugging your house or automobile and taping your telephone, following you and monitoring your residence and personal activities.
- Develop persecutory delusions, perceiving slights and insults where none actually exist or are intended. He will become convinced that he is the center of a conspiracy to deny him (and you) happiness, to humiliate him, punish him, delude him, impoverish him, confine him physically or intellectually, censor him, impose on his time, force him to action (or to inaction), frighten him, coerce him, surround and besiege him, change his mind, part with his values, and thus victimize him.
- Seek to “remove” the obstacles to a “happy” and long relationship – sometimes by resorting to violence, such as kidnapping or even murder of the sources he perceives as the primary point of frustration.
- Harm you – and sometimes himself – in a fit of delusional indignation, interpreted in his mind as a way to punish you, if he feels that no renewed relationship is possible

The paranoid’s conduct is unpredictable and there is no “typical scenario,” however experience has demonstrated that you can minimize the danger to yourself and to your household by taking some simple steps.

If at all possible, put as much physical distance as you can between yourself and your Ex-Significant Other. Change your address, your phone number, your e-mail accounts and your cell phone number. Unfortunately in extreme cases a victim must also consider enrolling the children in a new school, find a new job, get new credit cards and open a new bank account. Never inform your paranoid Ex about your whereabouts and your new life. As difficult as it may



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be, in extreme cases you may have to make painful sacrifices, such as minimizing contact with your family and friends in order to break the cycle of stalking.

Even with all these precautions, there is a chance that your abusive Ex may still find you, become furious that you have fled, and become more enraged at your newfound freedom and personal autonomy. In these situations violence increases and can become more likely. At this point, unless deterred, paranoid former spouses tend to become harmful and even lethal.

Erotomantic Stalking can last many years and you need to be prepared to never let your guard down, even if you haven't heard from him. Stalkers do leave traces. They tend, for instance, to "scout" the territory before they make their move. A typical stalker invades his or her victim's privacy a few times long before the crucial and injurious encounter occurs. Some questions you should always ask:



- Has my computer been tampered with?
- Is someone else also downloading my e-mail?
- Has anyone been to my house while I have been at work or away?
- Do you hear unusual sounds or clicking when you are on the telephone? Does the quality of your telephone calls suddenly seem different?
- Does your Ex suddenly begin appearing at places "by coincidence" where you happen to also be?
- Are there any signs of breaking and entering into my home? Any missing items?
- Is my mail being delivered erratically? Are the post marked dates more than a few days old, or do the envelopes appear to be opened and then re-sealed suggesting someone has been intercepting and reading your mail?
- Are you receiving mysterious phone calls that abruptly disconnect when you pick up the phone?
- Do you notice any unusual patterns, strange events or any weird occurrences such as someone driving by your house every morning and evening? Is there a new "gardener" or maintenance man working down the street or at a neighbor's house?

Investigative Services * Security Consulting * Personal Protection * Electronic Eavesdropping "Bug" Sweeps

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- Is someone making inquiries at work or in the neighborhood about you and your family?

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 ex-lovers and ex-spouses who have become a stalker problem. However the sad reality is that these laws are only useful if evidence can be obtained that will stand up in a court of law. Ex-lovers and Ex-spouses who focus their energy on harassing their former partner 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.

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 some people play – The Shield Group has successfully helped many individuals just like you 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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Quick Reference Guide

- Be sure to maintain as much contact with your abuser as the courts, counselors, mediators, guardians, or law enforcement official's mandate.
- Do not contravene the decisions of the system. Work from the inside to change judgments, evaluations, or rulings - but NEVER rebel against them or ignore them. You will only turn the system against you and your interests.
- With the exception of the minimum mandated by the courts - decline any and all gratuitous contact.
- Do not respond to his pleading, romantic, nostalgic, flattering, or threatening messages.
- Return all gifts he sends you.
- Refuse him entry to your premises. Do not even respond to the intercom.
- Do not talk to him on the phone. Hang up the minute you hear his voice while making clear to him, in a single, polite but firm, sentence, that you are determined not to talk to him.
- Do not answer his letters.
- Do not visit him on special occasions, or in emergencies.
- Do not respond to questions, requests, or pleas sent to you via a third party.
- Disconnect from third parties whom you know are spying on you at his behest.
- Do not discuss him with your children.
- Do not gossip about him.
- Do not ask him for anything, even if you are in dire need.
- When you must meet him, do not discuss your personal affairs - or his.
- Relegate any inevitable contact with him - when and where possible - to professionals: Your lawyer and your accountant.