



One night Tracy's boyfriend saw her talking — harmlessly, she says — with some other guys. In a fit of jealousy,

Friends on the dorm floor heard her scream and took her to the health center. She wound up with a concussion, more frustrated and scared than ever.

"I just couldn't press charges . . ." Her voice trails off. She talked to him the next day "I knew I had to do it. But he didn't remember it. He denied the whole thing."

Hartford says that nine of 10 people who have abuse problems deny that they do. For them, violence meets their needs. It's a way to get what they want.

Naturally, different people are abusive for different reasons. But certain traits might signal a tendency toward violence. Chances are, someone who's been violent in a previous relationship will do it again, Hartford says. Some people have a hard time handling frustration and stress. Other indicators that a person might be abusive are:

- a tendency to be violent toward anyone
- excessive jealousy
- immaturity
- low self-esteem
- a strong desire to know what the partner is doing at all times.

Marcee Metzger coordinates the UNL Housing office's interpersonal violence project. She's responsible for counseling, training and educating residents, student assistants and resident directors. She spends most of her time counseling students who are victims of violence.

About 70 students have come to her this school year as victims of abuse, primarily involving acquaintance rape. Others have been battered, raped, sexually harassed or victims of incest.

Violence in dating is a hidden problem that nobody wants to talk about, Metzger says.

Society sees domestic violence as a woman's problem, but in reality women are the victims of a man's problem, she says.

About 15 to 20 percent of students at UNL who are in "committed" relationships experience incidents of battery, Metzger says. The dynamics are the same as in a marriage, she says. And research shows that physical abuse during courtship is almost a guarantee of spouse abuse.

Metzger estimates that 1 or 2 percent of the students who are victimized report the assaults to the authorities.

"They'd rather just forget it," she says.

When Tracy went to the health center, the staff told her