



Netflix's second season of *You* includes plenty of twists, turns and instances of stalking! This discussion guide is intended to start conversations about relationships, trust, stalking, and media portrayals of stalking.

1A. How would you describe *You* to a potential viewer? The Netflix menu has its own short description. **Write one or two sentences that briefly describe the show overall (both seasons) without any spoilers.** Then we'll compare it to the Netflix promotional text.

Note to Facilitator: Consider what words come up in multiple responses and, perhaps, write them down – especially words that describe Joe as dangerous. For example, “stalker,” “thriller,” “scary.”

1B. The Netflix description of the series, *You*, reads: “a 21st century love story about an obsessive, yet brilliant twentysomething named Joe (Badgley) who uses the hyper connectivity of today’s technology to make the woman of his dreams fall in love with him.”

How does this compare to your proposed description?

• **Follow up questions:**

- Is this a “love story”? If so, for whom?
- Is Joe’s behavior motivated by love? Does it matter?
- Is “obsessive, yet brilliant” an accurate description for Joe?
- Is anything missing from this description?

Sample answers:

- “Love story” begs the question “for who”? It’s more of a nightmare/horror movie for most of the women that Joe encounters.
- Joe’s behaviors may or may not always be motivated by love. Entitlement, revenge, control and anger also motivate Joe.
- Regardless of Joe’s motivations, intent is different than impact. The impact is that he controls, violates and even kills those around him.
- “Obsessive, yet brilliant” is a flattering description for Joe. It makes him sound like a tortured genius, not a violent criminal.
- Words like “stalking,” “thriller,” “violent” and “dark” might be more accurate to describe the show.

2. Delilah initially distrusts Joe. In Episode 2, she tells him, “Well, let me give you the gift of honesty. You act nice because you’re not. And I may not know what kind of bad you are, but I got my radar the hard way. So stay...away from me and my sister, okay?”

Do you think there is such a thing as “radar” for bad people? Have you ever had an instinct about somebody that turned out to be correct or false? How should we react to these gut feelings?

Sample answers:

- *Many people have the experience of being instinctively uncomfortable or suspicious of an individual.*
- *You cannot always tell who is “good” or “bad” from a first impression. Many abusers and stalkers are manipulative and charm their victims.*
- *It can be challenging to balance the desire to give people a chance/the benefit of the doubt with negative gut feelings.*
- *It’s important to trust your instincts. If you are uncomfortable with someone, there may well be a good reason. Delilah’s past experiences with men inform her reaction to Joe, and it turns out, she’s right.*
- *You don’t need to be as direct/cruel as Delilah, but may consider limiting your interactions with that person.*

3. In episode 4, Love remarks that Joe can see her apartment from his place. He thinks to himself, “All the better to spy on you. Not that I’ve needed to, since I trust you completely.”

What is the relationship between trust and spying? Do you ever “need” to spy on someone?

Follow Up Questions:

- If you don’t trust someone, is it okay to spy on them?
- When does researching a potential or new dating partner cross the line?

Sample answers:

- *Trust is essential to a healthy relationship. When you don’t trust someone, it is important to examine why and how you want to proceed. It may mean a conversation with that person, setting boundaries and/or even ending the relationship.*
- *Stalking/spying is a deep violation of someone’s privacy and boundaries.*
- *Stalking involves repeated behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. If someone is tracking, watching, waiting for, monitoring and researching a person and that person would be scared if/when they find out, that’s stalking – a crime.*
- *Looking someone up on social media is not typically scary, therefore, not typically stalking – unless that information is used to further follow, find, and/or scare that person.*

4. Candace is often dishonest and manipulative in her pursuit of Joe. She is also a victim of stalking, assault, and attempted homicide who was told by police that she has no evidence and no one will believe her.

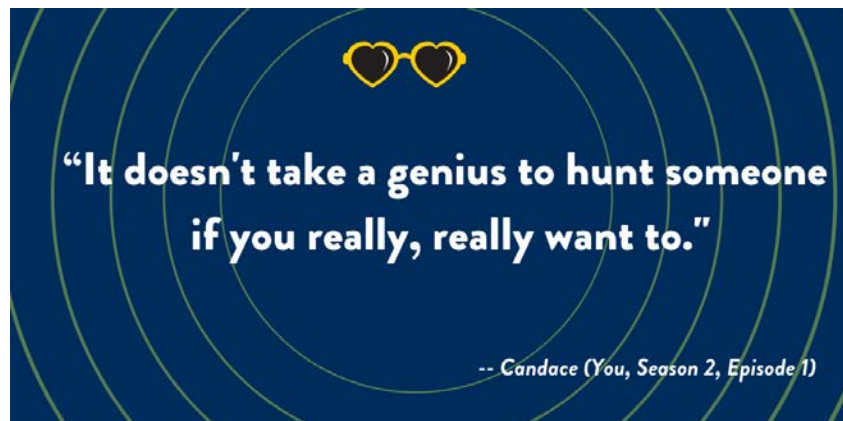
Why do you think that Candace acts the way she does? Is her behavior justified?

Follow Up Questions:

- What might this story look like from Candace’s perspective?
- What are Candace’s options to pursue justice?
- How might a victim’s likeability impact their access to services? Should victims have to be “nice” to get help?

Sample answers:

- *Candace is traumatized and has become vigilant and pro-active to try to protect herself and prove what Joe did.*
- *While Candace’s choices can be judged as dangerous, manipulative, and/or dishonest, she is taking matters into her own hands because the system has failed her.*
- *There is sometimes this vision of a “perfect victim” – an attractive, quiet, sad, and sweet woman who “does everything right.” When victims act differently, they are often disliked, dismissed and/or blamed for what happened.*



While *You* is fictional and sensationalized, Season 2 includes many stalking tactics that actual stalking offenders utilize to find, watch and scare their victims. Many characters this season engage in stalking behaviors.

What stalking behaviors did you notice in season 2 of *You*?

Behavior	<i>You</i> Example	Real Life
Using public records/data to locate a victim.	When Joe wants to find where Henderson lives, finding the house is “surprisingly easy.” Joe does a quick online search to find Henny’s real name (Josh Bunter), then searches the voting records in LA for the address.	Public data is available and searchable online, and many free or low-cost services make it easy to find a person’s current address, phone number, place of employment, email and/or names of relatives. This data comes from public records that are difficult to opt out of, like voting registration and property records.
Using family friendly spyware to monitor a victim.	When Joe buys Ellie a new phone, he installs “some family-friendly spyware on the new phone...Crazy the lengths parents have to go to keep an eye on their kids these days.”	Spyware and GPS tracking devices are increasingly marketed towards parents to monitor their children’s devices and locations. Software features range from tracking the location to seeing everything that the child does on the phone, including messages, phone calls and browsing history. If a stalker has physical access to a victim’s phone, they can easily install this kind of spyware. Some spyware can also be installed remotely.
Victim realizing their phone is being monitored and using the device strategically.	Ellie tells her friend that she knows there’s spyware on her phone. She thinks that her sister, Delilah, installed it. When her friend asks if she’s going to confront her sister,	Spyware can be very difficult to find, but victims may realize that it has been installed (often with the help of police and/or a victim advocate). Uninstalling the spyware and/or confronting the stalker can escalate the stalker’s behavior. Some victims choose to continue using monitored devices strategically to

	Ellie says, “obviously not. It’s way more useful if she thinks it’s still working.” Ellie sends wholesome, safe messages with her phone to make it look like there’s nothing to worry about.	trick/satisfy the stalker while using a safer device for their more authentic communications.
Showing up at the victim’s home, meeting the neighbors.	Candace goes to Joe’s apartment building and tells his superintendent that she left her earrings there. When Joe comes home, Ellie tells him that a redhead came by.	Stalkers often show up at locations the victim frequents and may go out of their way to meet a victim’s friends, co-workers, neighbors and others. Having someone like a neighbor mention that the stalker came by and/or asked about the victim can be very threatening and show that the stalker is able to get into the victim’s life, home and social circles.
Stalking an ex’s new partner.	Love dates Milo while she and Joe are broken up. Joe researches Milo online and follows him on his jog through the park.	About half of stalking cases involve stalking an ex-partner. Many stalkers target their ex as well as their ex’s new partner. Some even try to sabotage the new relationship.
Using a nanny cam to monitor the home.	Joe set up a nanny cam in his own apartment, which is how he catches Delilah going in and taking his keys.	Cameras often play a role in stalking cases. Cameras are increasingly available in smart devices (like doorbells, security systems and TVs) and may help victims catch stalkers who enter their homes as well as record evidence. At the same time, stalkers may set up small cameras to record victims without their consent.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2017-TA-AX-K074 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this program are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

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