

When people talk about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), or domestic violence, they are referring to coercive and controlling actions used by one person to gain power and maintain control over the other in a relationship. In this brochure we are exploring the Power and Control Wheel* and the ways in which Intimidation is used. There are many ways to intimidate – with looks, gestures, tone of voice, or physical posture.

The goal of intimidation is to put the immediate threat of physical harm into the equation. Abusers will often hold intimidating postures well after the victim has backed down, maintaining a real sense of power over the victim.

Intimidation is also used to provoke the victim. If the victim acts first, the batter can use that as justification for an assault. Sometimes that first act leads to the victim being arrested. Many times the victim is blamed by others and the abuser for “starting the fight.”

* The Power and Control Wheel was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project Duluth, MN

Facts on the basis of a healthy relationship:

Many people don't recognize controlling behavior as abusive – because of socialization, we might think it's normal. It also can be difficult to recognize because it escalates over time, making it hard to see how bad things have become.

It's a pattern of behaviors that makes you feel crazy or trapped. Many people state that they walk on egg shells, or sense trouble coming, or have changed their whole way of being in reaction to their abusive partner.

Conflict in relationships is normal, but when the belief is that someone has to win, be in charge, or “wear the pants” then it may be an abusive relationship.

For more information or help call:

[Insert your local contact info]

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USING INTIMIDATION



**What does it look like in
abusive and controlling
relationships?**



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Katy and Gerald have been together for 15 years and have a 13-year-old son, David. Katy works as a lab tech at Indian Health Service. Gerald is a popular artist and singer. He uses this against Katy because she grew up in the city and is “non-traditional.”

Abusers will often use their knowledge of culture, language and ceremonial practices to define who is traditional and who is not. They hold this over other people’s heads as a means of gaining power and maintaining power.

Gerald would often get into Katy’s face during arguments. She would try and walk away, but he maneuvered himself to be screaming inches away from her face.

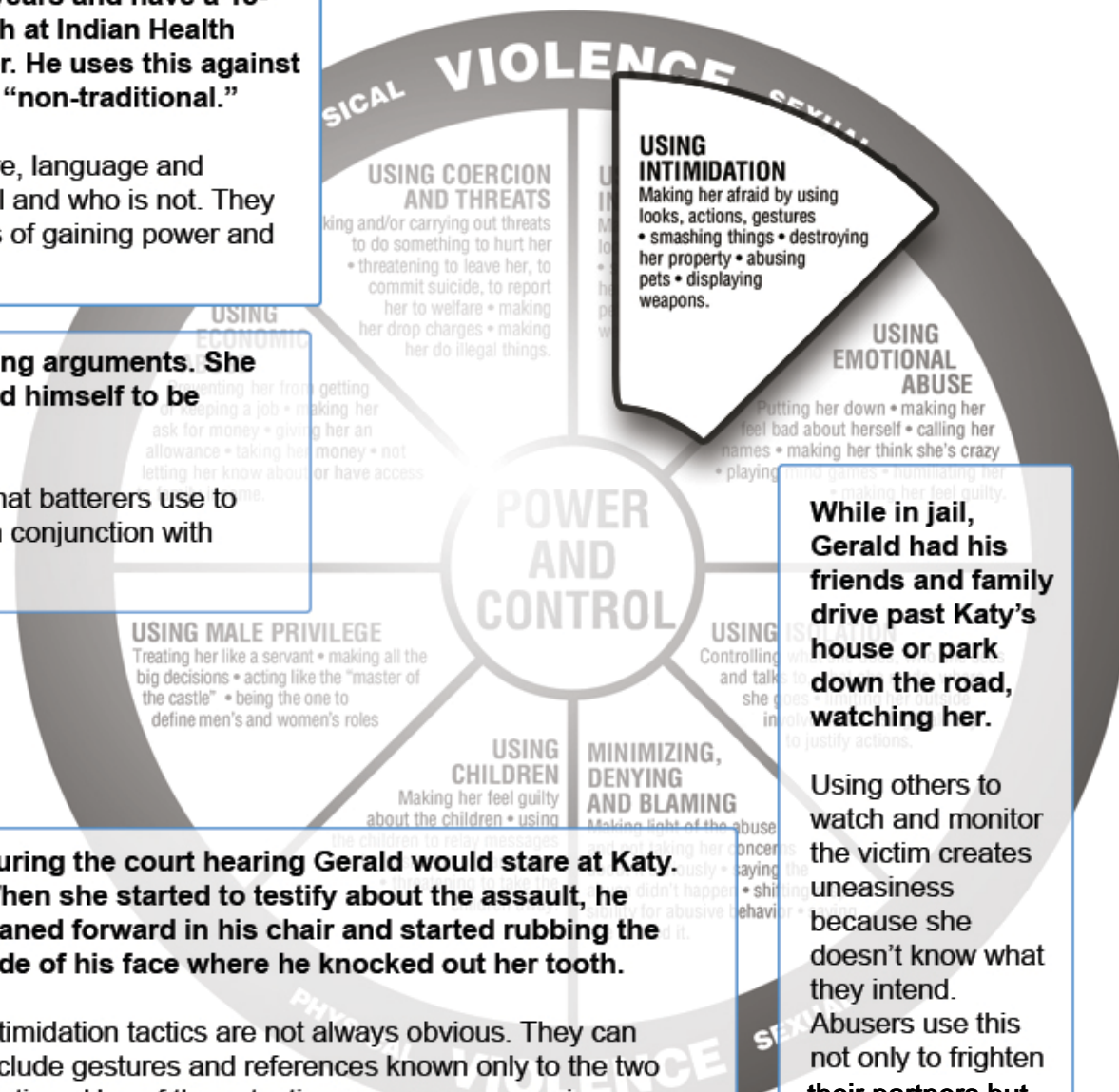
Coercive control includes a number of tactics that batterers use to dominate. Intimidation is almost always used in conjunction with emotional abuse and threats.

During one argument Katy got tired of Gerald being in her face and she pushed him away. He punched her in the face and knocked out a tooth. At the clinic the next day a co-worker convinced her to report the assault.

When intimidation tactics are not getting the results an abuser wants, they often escalate to physical assault. After an assault intimidation tactics also carry the threat of physical violence. This makes intimidation a more powerful means of control.

During the court hearing Gerald would stare at Katy. When she started to testify about the assault, he leaned forward in his chair and started rubbing the side of his face where he knocked out her tooth.

Intimidation tactics are not always obvious. They can include gestures and references known only to the two parties. Use of these tactics are very common in courtrooms in an attempt to shut the witness down.



While in jail, Gerald had his friends and family drive past Katy's house or park down the road, watching her.

Using others to watch and monitor the victim creates uneasiness because she doesn't know what they intend. Abusers use this not only to frighten their partners but to stalk them also.