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 explore the "Using Coercion and Threats" segment of the Power and Control Wheel. *

The use of coercion and threats is probably the first tool we learn to gain power over another; it is used so often we are numb to using it ourselves or experiencing it. Parents use it to get kids to do chores or homework: "If you don't clean your room you will be grounded!" Teachers use it to get compliance: "If you keep disrupting the class you will go to the principal's office!" Employers use it: "If you can't do the job then I will find someone who can!"

In abusive relationships you feel like you are "talked into" doing things you don't want to do, and if you outright disagree you may be threatened. Sometimes a threat can be there without anything being said – a tone of voice, a look, a gesture – and because of a past assault you know you cannot object.

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

FACTS ABOUT ABUSIVE AND CONTROLLING RELATIONSHIPS:

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]

Supported by grant 2015-TA-AX-K028 awarded by the USDOJ, Office on Violence Against Women. oopinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are MSH-TA's and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the USDOJ, Office on Violence Against Women.

USING COERCION AND THREATS



What does it look like in abusive and controlling relationships?



Mending the Sacred Hoop mshoop.org Jennifer is 40 years old and has been with Dennis for 16 years. Dennis is controlling, but Jennifer has thought of this as a just "a guy thing", though there have been several assaults over the last five years.

It's very common to view certain behaviors as "what men do" or "what women do." In controlling relationships, what starts out as minor conflict can escalate into abuse when tactics like coercion and threats are not getting the results the abuser wants

Jennifer is being called to testify in court against Dennis. He tells her that if he gets convicted he'll lose his job and they will lose everything.

In dealing with controlling relationships, choosing what to prioritize is a challenge. Survival needs tend to trump safety needs, and while someone looking in may see it as obvious to hold the batterer accountable, the priority for her and her children may be different.

USING COERCION AND THREATS

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her
• threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

ENCE

USING INTIMIDATION Making her afraid by looks, actions, gestu • smashing things • of her property • abusin pets • displaying weapons.

REN

guilty

using

sades

ss her

ake the

away.

OL

play

If Jennifer doesn't do what Dennis wants he'll start getting loud, get into her face, and make punching gestures to make her flinch. She usually gives in.

The use of threats increases when the abuser is not getting what they want. Their behavior escalates, and in order to coerce the other to do what they want, They can use physical violence – assault.

- making har feet quilty

Dennis and Jennifer are regular drug users and drinkers. She thinks they should sober up, or at least cut back. He says she's just being uptight and listening to all that "sobriety" crap – she needs to loosen up.

Abusers see any change in life as a threat to them, even if it's a positive one, because it's not their choice. They want to control the environment around them.

Jennifer got a protection order and kicked Dennis out of the home.

After a week he started calling all the time – apologizing, crying about missing her

and the kids, and saying he should just kill himself because he ruined everything.

Suicide is a huge issue in Native communities, one that we have been educated to take seriously, yet batterers often use it as a tool to get back into the home and get protection orders dropped.

Calling the police and reporting the suicide threat can get him to appropriate care.