

### Definition of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partner.

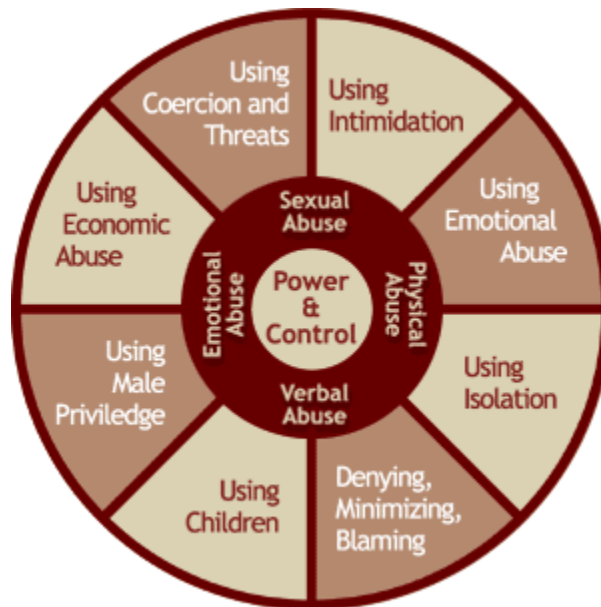
### Domestic violence is:

- A pattern of behaviors including a variety of tactics – some physically injurious and some not, some criminal and some not – carried out in multiple, sometimes daily episodes.
- A combination of physical force and terror used by the perpetrator that causes physical and psychological harm to the victim and children.
- A pattern of purposeful behavior, directed at achieving compliance from or control over the victim.
- Behaviors perpetrated by adults or adolescents against their intimate partner in current or former dating, married, or cohabiting relationships.

Abusive relationships are based on the mistaken belief that one person has the right to control another person. When the abusive partner feels that the actions described in the spokes of the Power & Control Wheel are no longer effective, he/she resorts to physical and/or sexual violence. The relationship is based on the exercise of power to gain and maintain control.

### Power & Control in Domestic Violence

When one person in a relationship repeatedly scares, hurts or puts down the other person, it is abuse. The Power & Control Wheel lists examples of each form of abuse. Remember, abuse is much more than slapping or grabbing someone.



### Using Intimidation

- Making you afraid by using looks, actions, or gestures
- Smashing things
- Destroying property
- Abusing pets
- Displaying dangerous weapons

### *Using Emotional Abuse*

- Putting you down
- Making you feel bad about yourself
- Calling you names
- Making you feel guilty
- Making you think you are crazy
- Playing mind games
- Humiliating you

### *Using Isolation*

- Controlling what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read and where you go
- Limiting your outside involvement
- Using jealousy to justify actions

### *Denying, Minimizing, Blaming*

- Making light of the abuse and not taking your concerns about it seriously
- Shifting responsibility for abusive behavior to other people or circumstances
- Saying the abuse didn't happen
- Saying you caused the abuse

### *Using Children*

- Making you feel guilty about the children
- Using the children to relay messages
- Using visitation to harass you
- Threatening to take the children away

### *Using Male Privilege*

- Making all the big decisions
- Acting like the "Master of the Castle"
- Being the one to define men's and women's roles
- Treating you like a servant

### *Using Economic Abuse*

- Preventing you from getting or keeping a job
- Making you ask for money
- Giving you an allowance
- Taking your money
- Not letting you know about or have access to the family income

### *Using Coercion and Threats*

- Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt you
- Threatening to "out" you
- Threatening to leave you, to commit suicide, to report you to welfare or INS authorities
- Making you do illegal things

### **Cycle of Violence**

Abusive relationships are often characterized by a repeated cycle that takes place. The cycle is a three part cycle that may take place over a period of days, weeks or even months. The cycle includes the tension building phase, the violent episode phase and finally the honeymoon phase.



During the tension building phase there is usually a break down in communication and stress and tension build. Often victims liken this phase to the feeling of walking on eggshells. This phase can last anywhere from hours, to days, to weeks, to months.

The violent episode phase follows the tension building phase. During the violent episode the victim is assaulted physically, emotionally or sexually. This phase is also described as the acute battering stage.

The honeymoon phase completes the cycle of violence. This phase generally follows the violent episode and is characterized by apologies by the batterer, tears and promises to change, and gifts of flowers or candy. At this point the batterer returns to being the person the victim fell in love with. It is this particular phase of the cycle that keeps victims involved in the cycle of violence. The victim often feels pulled to give the batterer another chance and may accept the promises and gifts as a sincere apology or as true remorse. However, this phase also lasts only a few days to a few months until the tension begins to build again. As the tension again begins to mount, the cycle begins to repeat itself.