

# POWER AND CONTROL



Power and controlling behaviours are used by an abusive person to gain and/or maintain control over another person. Abusers are commonly motivated by devaluation, envy, personal gain, personal gratification, psychological projection, or the enjoyment of exercising power and control over another person.

The Power and Control Wheel is **a tool that helps explain the different ways an abusive partner can use power and control to manipulate a relationship.** It is characterised by the pattern of actions that an individual uses to intentionally control or dominate his intimate partner. That is why the words “power and control” are in the centre of the wheel.

A perpetrator of domestic violence systematically uses threats, intimidation, and coercion to instil fear in his partner. These behaviours are the spokes of the wheel. Physical and sexual violence holds it all together—this violence is the rim of the wheel.

## Does anyone use these power and control behaviours toward you?

### Using coercion and threats

- making and/or carrying out threats to do something to
- hurting her
- threatening to leave her, commit suicide, to report her welfare
- making her drop charges
- making her do illegal things

### Using intimidation

- making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures
- smashing things
- destroying her property
- abusing pets
- displaying weapons

### Using emotional abuse

- putting her down
- making her feel bad about herself
- calling her names
- making her think she's crazy
- playing mind games
- humiliating her
- making her feel guilty

### Using isolation

- controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes
- limiting her outside involvement
- using jealousy to justify actions

### Minimising, denying, blaming

- making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns seriously
- saying the abuse didn't happen
- shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour
- saying she caused it

### Using children

- making her feel guilty about the children
- using the children to relay messages
- using visitation to harass her
- threatening to take the children away

### Using male privilege

- treating her like a servant
- making all the big decisions
- acting like the 'master of the castle'
- being the one to define men's and women's role

### 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 having access to family income

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**DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS**  
 202 East Superior Street  
 Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
 218-722-2781  
[www.theduluthmodel.org](http://www.theduluthmodel.org)

**IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, PHONE 000 AND ASK FOR THE POLICE AND/OR AN AMBULANCE**

**1800RESPECT** is the 24-hour national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service. Call 1800 737 732.

**LIFELINE** is a non-profit organisation that provides free, 24-hour telephone crisis support service in Australia. Call 13 11 14.

Call **GOT YOUR BACK SISTA** on **02 4989 2777** during business hours to book an appointment with our Support Team or receive information and advice.

If someone who has a close personal relationship with you, makes you feel afraid, powerless or unsafe, or uses any of the power and controlling behaviours listed in the power and control wheel, this a sign you may be experiencing domestic and family violence.

All individuals have the right to be free from violence. If you are experiencing abuse it is not your fault, it is the abuser who is responsible. Domestic and family violence is a crime.

*\*Since the early 1980s, Duluth—a small community in northern Minnesota—has been an innovator of ways to hold abusers accountable and keep victims safe. The "Duluth Model" is an ever-evolving way of thinking about how a community works together to end domestic violence. The wheel was created by the Domestic Abuser Intervention Programs as part of "The Duluth Model", which focuses on training and education that teaches how communities can work together to shift blame to abusers and better support survivors.*