


**IS YOUR  
RELATIONSHIP  
BASED ON  
POWER  
AND  
CONTROL**

A photograph of a sunset over a field. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow across the sky and the field. The sky is filled with scattered clouds, and the field in the foreground is a mix of green and golden grass. A white rectangular text box is centered in the lower half of the image.

**Abuse can take many forms and is never acceptable.  
You or someone you know may be a victim or survivor of  
sexual, physical, emotional, financial or digital abuse.  
Here are some definitions of abuse and resources available.**

**Information, unless otherwise noted, is from**

**[www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)**

**If your life is in danger**

**Call 911**

## **Is your relationship based on power and control?**

Physical and sexual assaults, or threats to commit them, are the most apparent forms of domestic violence and are usually the actions that allow others to become aware of the problem. However, regular use of other abusive behaviors by the batterer, when reinforced by one or more acts of physical violence, make up a larger system of abuse. Although physical assaults may occur only once or occasionally, they instill threat of future violent attacks and allow the abuser to take control of the individual's life and circumstances.

The Power & Control diagram on the right is a particularly helpful tool in understanding the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviors, which are used by a batterer to establish and maintain control over their partner. Very often, one or more violent incidents are accompanied by an array of these other types of abuse. They are less easily identified, yet firmly establish a pattern of intimidation and control in the relationship.

# Power and Control Diagram

## THREATS AND COERCION:

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

## INTIMIDATION:

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

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

- putting you down
- making you feel bad about yourself
- calling you names
- making you think you're crazy
- playing mind games
- humiliating you
- making you feel guilty

## MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING:

- making light of the abuse and not taking your concerns about it seriously
- saying the abuse didn't happen
- shifting responsibility for abusive behavior or saying you caused it

## ISOLATION:

- controlling what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read, where you go
- limiting your outside involvement
- using jealousy to justify actions.



## 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

## MALE PRIVILEGE:

- treating you 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 roles

## 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 family income



## Physical Abuse

**You may be experiencing physical abuse if your partner has done or repeatedly does any of the following tactics of abuse:**

- Pulling your hair, punching, slapping, kicking, biting or choking you
- Forbidding you from eating or sleeping
- Hurting you with weapons
- Preventing you from calling the police or seeking medical attention
- Harming your children
- Abandoning you in unfamiliar places
- Driving recklessly or dangerously when you are in the car with them
- Forcing you to use drugs or alcohol (especially if you've had a substance abuse problem in the past)



## Emotional and Verbal Abuse

**You may be in an emotionally/verbally abusive relationship if you partner exerts control through:**

- Calling you names, insulting you or continually criticizing you
- Refusing to trust you and acting jealous or possessive
- Trying to isolate you from family or friends
- Monitoring where you go, who you call and who you spend time with
- Demanding to know where you are every minute
- Trapping you in your home or preventing you from leaving
- Using weapons to threaten to hurt you
- Punishing you by withholding affection
- Threatening to hurt you, the children, your family or your pets
- Damaging your property when they're angry (throwing objects, punching walls, kicking doors, etc.)
- Humiliating you in any way
- Blaming you for the abuse
- Gaslighting
- Accusing you of cheating and being often jealous of your outside relationships
- Serially cheating on you and then blaming you for his or her behavior
- Cheating on you intentionally to hurt you and then threatening to cheat again
- Cheating to prove that they are more desired, worthy, etc. than you are
- Attempting to control your appearance: what you wear, how much/little makeup you wear, etc.
- Telling you that you will never find anyone better, or that you are lucky to be with a person like them





# Sexual Abuse and Coercion

## **Sexual Abuse**

**Sexually Abusive methods of retaining power and control include an abusive partner:**

- Forcing you to dress in a sexual way
- Insulting you in sexual ways or calls you sexual names
- Forcing or manipulating you into to having sex or performing sexual acts
- Holding you down during sex
- Demanding sex when you're sick, tired or after hurting you
- Hurting you with weapons or objects during sex
- Involving other people in sexual activities with you against your will
- Ignoring your feelings regarding sex
- Forcing you to watch pornography
- Purposefully trying to pass on a sexually transmitted disease to you

## **Sexual Coercion**

**Sexual Coercion lies on the 'continuum' of sexually aggressive behavior. It can vary from being egged on and persuaded, to being forced to have contact. It can be verbal and emotional, in the form of statements that make you feel pressure, guilt, or shame. You can also be made to feel forced through more subtle actions.**

**For example, an abusive partner:**

- Making you feel like you owe them — ex. Because you're in a relationship, because you've had sex before, because they spent money on you or bought you a gift
- Giving you drugs and alcohol to "loosen up" your inhibitions
- Playing on the fact that you're in a relationship, saying things such as: "Sex is the way to prove your love for me," "If I don't get sex from you I'll get it some where else"
- Reacting negatively with sadness, anger or resentment if you say no or don't immediately agree to something
- Continuing to pressure you after you say no
- Making you feel threatened or afraid of what might happen if you say no
- Trying to normalize their sexual expectations: ex. "I need it, I'm a man"

**Even if your partner isn't forcing you to do sexual acts against your will, being made to feel obligated is coercion in itself. Dating someone, being in a relationship, or being married never means that you owe your partner intimacy of any kind.**



# Digital Abuse

**Digital abuse is the use of technologies such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behavior is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated online. You may be experiencing digital abuse if your partner:**

- Tells you who you can or can't be friends with on Facebook and other sites.
- Sends you negative, insulting or even threatening emails, Facebook messages, tweets, DMs or other messages online.
- Uses sites like Facebook, Twitter, foursquare and others to keep constant tabs on you.
- Puts you down in their status updates.
- Sends you unwanted, explicit pictures and demands you send some in return.
- Pressures you to send explicit videos.
- Steals or insists on being given your passwords.
- Constantly texts you and makes you feel like you can't be separated from your phone for fear that you will be punished.
- Looks through your phone frequently, checks up on your pictures, texts and outgoing calls.
- Tags you unkindly in pictures on Instagram, Tumblr, etc.
- Uses any kind of technology (such spyware or GPS in a car or on a phone) to monitor you

**You never deserve to be mistreated, online or off. Remember:**

- Your partner should respect your relationship boundaries.
- It is ok to turn off your phone. You have the right to be alone and spend time with friends and family without your partner getting angry.
- You do not have to text any pictures or statements that you are uncomfortable sending, especially nude or partially nude photos, known as "sexting."
- You lose control of any electronic message once your partner receives it. They may forward it, so don't send anything you fear could be seen by others.
- You do not have to share your passwords with anyone.
- Know your privacy settings. Social networks such as Facebook allow the user to control how their information is shared and who has access to it. These are often customizable and are found in the privacy section of the site. Remember, registering for some applications (apps) require you to change your privacy settings.
- Be mindful when using check-ins like Facebook Places and foursquare. Letting an abusive partner know where you are could be dangerous. Also, always ask your friends if it's ok for you to check them in. You never know if they are trying to keep their location secret.
- You have the right to feel comfortable and safe in your relationship online.

**Safety Alert:** Computer use can be monitored and is impossible to completely clear. If you are afraid your internet usage might be monitored, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or TTY 1-800-787-3224.



## Economic / Financial Abuse

**Economic or financial abuse is when an abusive partner extends their power and control into the area of finances. This abuse can take different forms, including an abusive partner:**

- Giving an allowance and closely watching how you spend it or demanding receipts for purchases
- Placing your paycheck in their bank account and denying you access to it
- Preventing you from viewing or having access to bank accounts
- Forbidding you to work or limiting the hours that you can work
- Maxing out credit cards in your name without permission or not paying the bills on credit cards, which could ruin your credit score
- Stealing money from you or your family and friends
- Using funds from children's savings accounts without your permission
- Living in your home but refusing to work or contribute to the household
- Making you give them your tax returns or confiscating joint tax returns
- Refusing to give you money to pay for necessities/shared expenses like food, clothing, transportation, or medical care and medicine

## Resources for Sexual Harrassment

### **FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

**Midwest Center for Trauma  
and Emotional Healing**

[mwtraumacenter.com](http://mwtraumacenter.com)

**Equal Rights Advocates Hotline**

1-800-839-4372

**Tubman Chrysalis Center:  
Women's Advocacy in Minneapolis**

612-825-0000 • [www.tubman.org](http://www.tubman.org)

**Equal Opportunity Employment  
Commission**

[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

**9 to 5: National Association  
of Working Women**  
1-800-522-0925 • [www.9to5.org](http://www.9to5.org)

### **LEARN MORE ABOUT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

**Workplace Fairness Commission**

[workplacefairness.org](http://workplacefairness.org)

**AAUW: Know Your Rights At Work**

[www.aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources](http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources)

[/know-your-rights-at-work/workplace-sexual-harassment/](http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources/know-your-rights-at-work/workplace-sexual-harassment/)

**TEDxTalk: The Power of Us: How We Stop Sexual Harassment  
by Dr. Marianne Cooper**

[youtube.com/watch?v=ye4Y\\_VpvCko](https://youtube.com/watch?v=ye4Y_VpvCko)

# Resources

Every person's journey is unique. To find resources appropriate for you or your loved ones, call one of the hotline's below to determine which resources are the best fit for your needs. If you are not in the Twin Cities, the National Sexual Assault Hotline can connect you to someone locally. Call 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) and enter your zip code.

## CORNERSTONE

Safe families. Empowered survivors. Strong children/youth. Founded in 1983, Cornerstone's mission is to create communities where individuals and families are safe and children thrive. We serve victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking and general crime. Cornerstone has programs and services designed especially for you to help you come to terms with what you have experienced.

**Crisis Hotline:** 1-866-223-1111

**Website:** [www.cornerstonemn.org](http://www.cornerstonemn.org)

### Programs and Services for Adults

Everyone's journey is different. When you're ready, Cornerstone provides: safety planning, emergency shelter, individual advocacy, legal advocacy, housing resources, clinical therapy, parenting support, support groups.

### Programs and Services for Youth

Violence at home or in your relationship is unhealthy not just for adults, but kids too. It can be confusing and make you feel a range of emotions. Remember, the violence is not your fault. You are not alone.

### Online Support Groups (Physical and Sexual Violence)

Cornerstone offers a variety of accessible groups—some with regularly scheduled, ongoing meetings and others offered on a limited schedule. Current support and educational groups include: Seasoned Survivors, Open Support Group, Concerned Persons Group, Anger Awareness, Domestic Violence Basics, Personal Empowerment Training.

Call 952-884-0376 for specific information, meeting times and locations. To attend any of these groups, we require an initial intake interview.

## NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

Call to be connected with a trained staff member from a sexual assault service provider in your area.

**Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

## ALEXANDRA HOUSE

**24-Hour Helpline:** 763-780-2330

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE CENTER

**24-Hour Crisis Line:** 612-871-5111



**OUR LADY  
OF GRACE**  
CATHOLIC CHURCH