

# An Empowerment Model for Victims with Disabilities

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# Duluth Power and Control Wheel

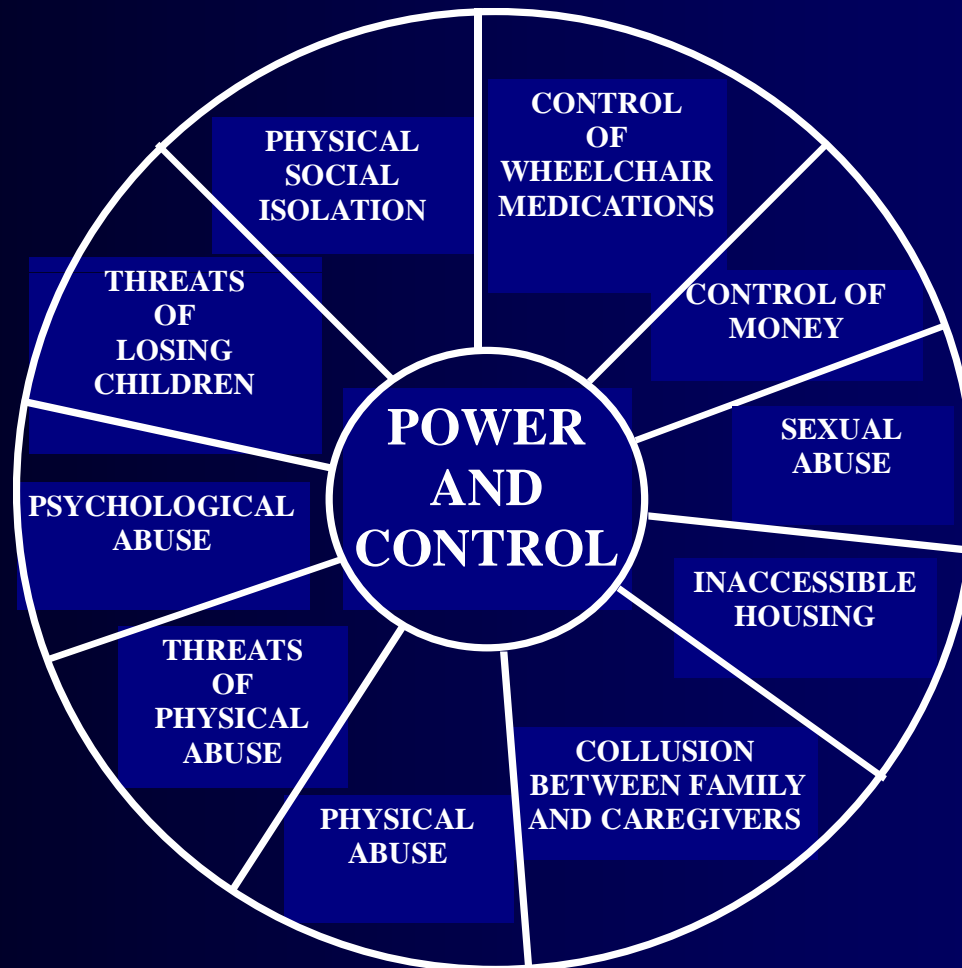


DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT

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# Barrier Free Living Model

## POWER AND CONTROL



## High levels of dependence fit into the cycle of Power and Control

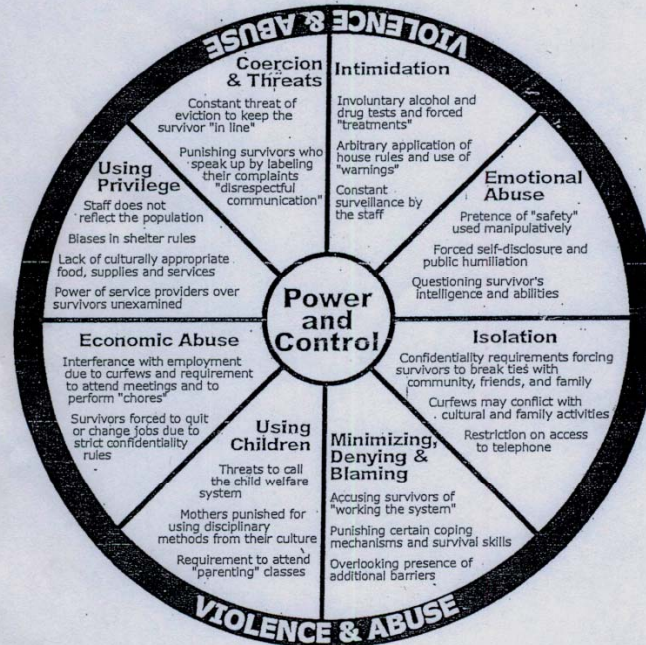
- Withholding of SSI Checks
- Restricting access to transportation
- Withholding wheelchairs and medications
- Refusal to assist with personal needs
- Restricting access to friends

# Who will abuse?

- 98% are in some care giving capacity for the victim
- While in 32 percent of cases, abusers were family members or acquaintances, 44 percent had a relationship with the victim specifically related to the person's disability (such as residential care staff, transportation providers and personal care attendants).
- Abusers typically abuse as many as 70 people before ever getting caught. (Valenti-Hein & Schwartz, 1995).

# Shelter Model Power and Control

## Abusive Power and Control within the Domestic Violence Shelter



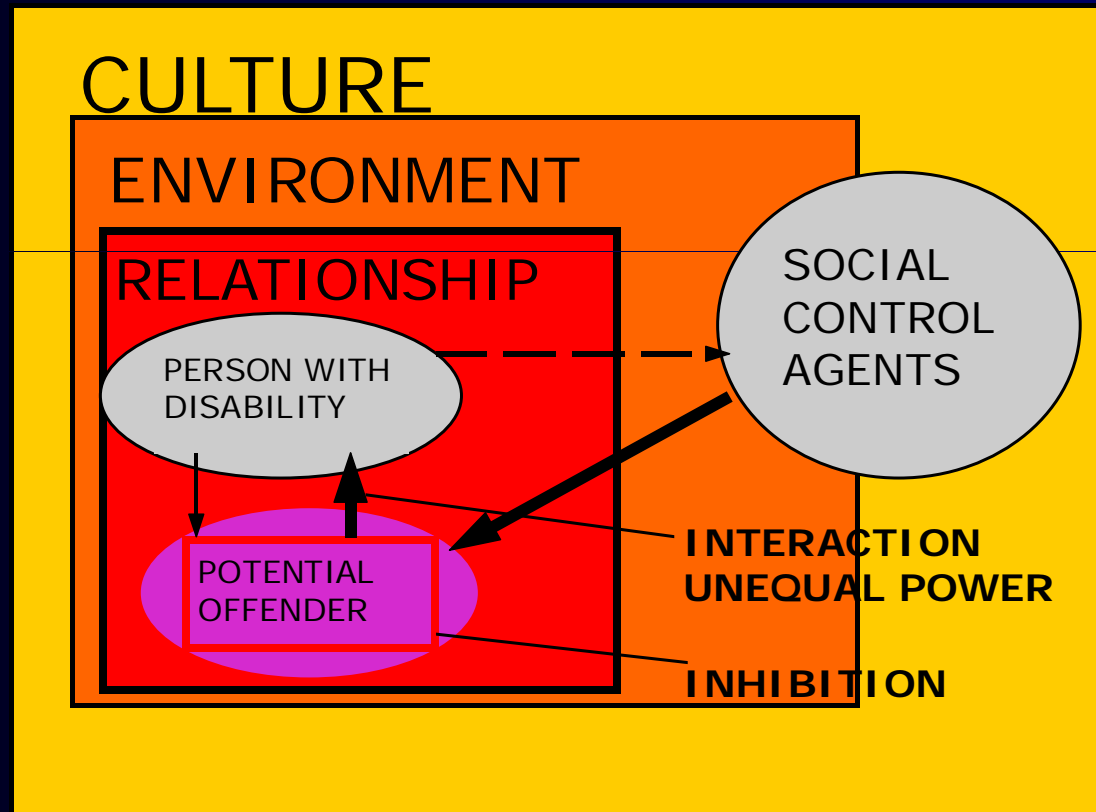
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This "power and control wheel" was created by Emi Koyama and Lauren Martin to illustrate how domestic violence shelters may inadvertently abuse power and control over survivors who seek services from them. In no way is this meant to discount the fact that advocates have been doing, and continue to do, extremely important and life-saving work. Rather, it is meant to incite discussion as to what we still need to work on in our empowerment-based and social change advocacy. Please contact Survivor Project at (503) 288-3191 or [info@survivorproject.org](mailto:info@survivorproject.org) if you are interested in distributing this wheel.

# Dependency-Stress Model

- Children with Disabilities are more dependent on their caregivers
- Increased dependency increases demands on caregiver
- Increased demands lead to increased stress
- Caregivers abuse their children because they can't cope with increased stress

# Multifactorial Model





## People with Disabilities stay in Dangerous conditions significantly longer

- 11.3 years vs. 7.1 years in situations of physical abuse
- 8.3 years vs. 4.1 years in situations of sexual abuse (Baylor University Study)

# The Traumatic Experience

- Overwhelming senses
- Overwhelming Sense of Meaning
- Overwhelming Defenses
- Disempowerment

# The Dynamics of Trauma

- “Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder”
  - History of subjugation
  - Alteration of Affect Regulation
  - Alteration of Consciousness
  - Alteration of Self Perception
  - Alteration in Perception of Perpetrator
  - Alteration in relation to others
  - Alterations in systems of meaning

# The Major Symptoms of PTSD

- *Re-experiencing*
- *Numbing*
- *Arousal*

# Self Injury is also a product of Domestic Violence

- Gives victims a sense of control over their bodies
- The physical pain causes the bodies endorphins to block out the psychological pain

# How to respond

- Pay attention, Listen carefully
- Believe what she says, even if her behavior is not what you would expect it to be
- Stay Calm
- Don't display anger toward perpetrator

# How to Respond

- Don't say "what a terrible thing s/he did to you"
  - The perpetrator may have forced the victim to do it to someone else
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Be Sympathetic

# Barrier Free Living's Model

- Addressing Immediate Needs
- Addressing the Trauma
- Capacity Building



# A Critical Part of the Work is Attitudinal

- Ownership that the people who come to us for help are the primary actors in their life story
- Ownership of the staff's role as supporting actors in that story
- Theresa's Story

# Addressing Trauma

- Establishing Trust
  - Worker as Caregiver
- Psychoeducation
  - Worker as Teacher
- Psychotherapy
  - Worker as Midwife

# Healing of Memories

- Barrier Free Living collaborates with the Institute for Healing of Memories in Cape Town, South Africa
- BFL has adapted their workshop program, developed to help victims of Apartheid heal, to assist victims of domestic violence in their journey of healing.

# Our Habilitation Model

- Money Management
- Time Management
- Travel Training
- Shopping and Cooking Skills; Nutrition Education
- Health Care Management; Home Care Management
- Advocacy with support systems
- Stress Management

# Positive Parenting Intervention

- Orientation to Childhood Development
- Positive Discipline Techniques
- Negotiating Skills
- Building Strong Parent-Child Relationships
- Establishing Boundaries
- Managing Daily Frustrations
- Increasing a child's self esteem
- Creating/Maintaining Family Traditions

# Helper Therapy

- Moving from being a recipient of help to a giver of help is a transformative experience.
  - Self Image
  - Empowerment

# Concepts of Interdependent Living

- No one lives independently
- Those who believe they do negotiate their dependencies over a larger group of people
- Reciprocity is a key part of Interdependence
  - I'm dependent on others
  - Others are dependent on me

“We're all lovers and we're all destroyers. We're all frightened and at the same time we all want terribly to trust. This is part of our struggle. We have to help what is most beautiful to emerge in us and to divert the powers of darkness and violence. I learn to be able to say, "This is my fragility. I must learn about it and use it in a constructive way.”

Jean Vanier, Founder of the L'Arche Communities