

Power and Control

An African-American survivor of domestic violence who is deep in thought about power and control.

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors used to gain or maintain power and control. At The Hotline, our frame of reference for describing abuse is the **Power and Control Wheel** created by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, MN. The Power and Control Wheel diagram below assumes she/her pronouns for survivors and he/him pronouns for partners. However, the abusive behavior it details can happen to people of any gender or sexuality.

Moreover, the wheel diagram serves as tactics abusive partners use to keep survivors in a relationship. The inside of the wheel makes up subtle, continual behaviors over time, while the outer ring represents physical and sexual violence. Thus, abusive actions like those depicted in the outer ring reinforce the regular use of other, more subtle methods found in the inner ring.

