

## TSDLYB - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ABUSIVE BEHAVIORS

**Controlling Behavior** - A batterer may try to control all aspects of the victim's life - their finances, how much time they spend with their family and friends, who they talk to or receives phone calls from, where they go and with whom, what they wear, etc. A batterer may explain these behaviors as concern for their safety and well-being but the real intent is to exert a maximum degree of control over their life.

**Unrealistic Expectations** - A batterer may expect his/her partner to meet all of their needs at the time and in the matter they want them to be met; he/she may expect their partner to solve problems which are outside of their control such as problems at work, in their social relationships, problems with finances, etc.

**Jealousy** - The batterer questions the victim about who she/he talks to, accuses them of flirting and having affairs with other men/women, accuses them of dressing provocatively in order to attract men/women, is suspicious of male/female business acquaintances, searches her/his personal belongings for signs of assignations, etc. The batterer may equate this behavior with their love for the victim.

**Blames Others for Problems** - A batterer may blame others for his/her shortcomings. They may blame the victim for everything that goes wrong in their environment. They refuse to take responsibility for any negative or unpleasant events in his/her life.

**Use of Children** - A batterer may threaten to harm or take away the children. They may threaten to report the victim to authorities for child neglect and abuse though he/she knows this to be untrue. They may expect behavior of children beyond their capacity to perform and punish them when they are unable to meet these unrealistic expectations. For example, whipping a two year old child for wetting their underpants.

**Threats of Violence** - These are threats of physical force, injury or even death which are designed to frighten, intimidate and control the partner. The victim believes, generally due to previous experience, that the batterer is capable of carrying out these threats.

**Use of Force During an Argument** - The batterer may hold down his/her partner, physically restrain them from leaving, push or shove, tell them that if they leave they will find and hurt or kill them.

**Destructive Acts** - A perpetrator will frequently use actual or threatened assault to property or pets in an effort to control the victim in domestic violence. Often the aggressor will threaten to hit or kill the family pet, knock holes in walls, break the car window, or destroy the victims clothing. **Cruelty to Animals** - A batterer may kick, throw, beat or hurt the family pet. **Breaking or striking objects** - The batterer may break household items, punch holes in the walls, throw household items or kick doors to scare the victim.

**Domestic Exploitation** - An unbalanced division of household labor is established exclusively on the woman's gender - she is forced to cook, clean, care for the children, serve the male and his friends. The victim, almost always a woman, will be expected to be totally subservient. For instance, a batterer may see women as inferior to men, responsible for all menial tasks, stupid and unable to be a whole person without the relationship.

**Economic Manipulation** - The abuser totally controls every aspect of the family's finances. The victim's financial stability is threatened in an effort to control them.

**Emotional/Psychological or Verbal Abuse** - This behavior of an abuser can best be described as withdrawing or withholding emotional support or subjecting the victim to scathing verbal abuse. Behaviors include sulking, crying, withdrawing into silence, leaving, arguing, shouting, and insulting comments. A batterer may say things that are intended to be cruel and hurtful, will curse or degrade their partner, or put down their accomplishments.

**Immigration** - One method of gaining power over the relationship in an immigrant family is for the abuser to threaten to report his/her victim to immigration. In a too often repeated scenario, the abuser assists their partner to come to the United States, and then keeps her/his paperwork thus preventing their escape. Migration from one country to another seems to foster isolation that breeds more domestic violence no matter where a person lives. A battered immigrant victim may not understand that she/he can personally tell their story to the police, or that a judge will believe them.

**Physical Battery** - This abusive behavior takes the form of physical acts such as hitting, kicking, spitting, slapping, cutting, stabbing, shooting, banging of another person's head against the floor or walls, pushing or shoving the victim into walls, out of windows, or out of cars. These acts may be carried out with the intent to murder the victim.

**Sexual Manipulation/Abuse** - Sexual manipulation or abuse consists of a wide range of conduct that may include sex when the victim does not want sex, coerced sex by threat, physically forced sex, or sexual assault accompanied by violence. The victim may be forced to have sex with a third party or to perform prostitution. This also includes restraining partners against their will during sex; acting out sexual fantasies in which the partner is helpless; forcing sex when the partner is asleep; or demanding sex when the partner is sick or tired. They may show little concern for his/her partner's wishes and may use sulking, anger or threats to manipulate compliance.

**Social Isolation** - The deliberate separation of the woman/man from their family and friends. It involves controlling where they go, to whom they speak, and what they do. The isolation from friends and family, coupled with a victim's shame for the beatings encourages them to remain isolated; as a result women/men fleeing violence may lack a network of friends and family upon whom to rely for housing. Acts of isolation often begin with the abuser stating that they want to spend time with the victim; abuser calls the victim frequently to ask what she/he is doing, who they are with, etc.

This progresses to complaints about the inadequacies of friends and family with demands to stay away from them. This stage is frequently accompanied by threats of physical harm to the victim if they leave the house unescorted by the abuser.

A batterer may isolate their victim by severing or totally controlling their ties to outside support and resources. The batterer may restrict the victim's relationships with friends and family, accusing them of being "trouble-makers". They may block the victim's access to their automobile, take away car keys, restrict use of the home telephone, confiscate cell phones, open and read mail, control access to the computer, read all e-mails, etc. They may prevent her/him from going to work, attending outside meetings or attending church.

**Abuse of Spiritual Beliefs** - Often takes the form of attacks by the abuser on the victim's religious beliefs and practices. The abuse may involve the abuser making demeaning comments on the victim's long held sacred beliefs which provide some comfort to her/him. Abuse can also take a form in which the abuser deliberately misinterprets scriptures and biblical passages to convince women/men that the Bible directs them to unconditionally submit to the abusive will of their batterer.

**Stalking** - To stalk is to persistently act in a threatening manner, to menace, to pursue by tracking stealthily, a prey or quarry. This predatory behavior is used by an abuser to either frighten or control his/her victim, or to locate and either physically harm or murder his/her victim. This behavior is engaged in by the abuser who has been asked not to call the victim, not to return to the residence, not to visit the victim's workplace, school or church, not to follow the victim in his/her vehicle or on foot - in sum, to refrain from any contact with the victim. This request may come from the victim, her/his family or some legal procedure.

The abuser chooses to not only ignore the "no contact" order but decides to take every conceivable step to contact the victim or keep close tabs on their whereabouts. Some other acts of stalkers include entering the residence when the victim is not at home and leave evidence of their visit. The stalker may leave menacing voicemails. Often the stalking escalates to where the abuser physically injures or kills the victim. Stalking behavior usually begins after the victim leaves the batterer. In many states, including California, stalking has now been classified as a specific crime.

*All of these behaviors are designed to intimidate and control the victim. Confronted with these behaviors a batterer may deny that they have occurred or blame the victim for making him/her act in a negative manner. Women can be batterers as well but statistics confirm that most are male.*

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*Created by Lucinda F. Boyd 2011*