

# Intimate Partner Violence

Gender-based institutionalized system of over-lapping continuous violent tactics used to maintain power & control



**IPV/Battering:** the purposeful use of a system of multiple, continuous tactics to maintain power and control over another. This intentional violence results from and is supported by unnatural, misogynistic, sexist societal and cultural belief systems. IPV/Battering is a crime against individuals, families and communities.

## Intimate Partner Violence/Battering is:

- an institutionalized
- system
- of over-lapping
- continuous
- purposeful
- violent tactics
- used to maintain power & control



Intimate partner violence (IPV)/battering include many tactics that are used to maintain power and control without the exertion that physical and sexual violence require – and often with less threat of law enforcement involvement because, though potentially lethal, many tactics are not necessarily against the law. Many (not all) of the tactics are described below.

**NOTE:** Be clear that IPV/battering is different from "dysfunctional" or "unhealthy relationships." Unlike IPV/battering, in dysfunctional or unhealthy relationships there is equal power and control, both can act on their decisions, and though hurtful things are said and done, neither person is in fear for their life. Couples counseling and other similar mental health interventions may be helpful and appropriate. A key distinction is that in IPV/battering at some point, one person – the victim – is in **constant fear for their life**.

Physical and sexual violence are the "enforcers" of IPV/battering. Physical and sexual violence only has to happen once to understand that a certain look or gesture means: "I beat you and/or raped you once. I will do it again." Individually, batterers may use tactics differently. Often many tactics are being used all at once. Please remember to be very careful if you are leaving. Do not warn the aggressor you are leaving because batterers will often increase their violence to maintain control. Get help from a domestic violence program, law enforcement and/or trusted family and friends to stay safe and get the support you deserve.

**NOTE:** IPV/battering is more than a mental health issue. Though battering of males by females happens, IPV is primarily gender based. In approximately 95% of IPV/battering, the victims are female, the offenders/abusers are male (U.S. Dept. of Justice, BJS, National Crime Victimization Survey). IPV/battering also happens within Two Spirit/LGBTQ relationships. It is serial, violent crime. Violence against women and domestic violence is rooted in mainstream culture. It is not natural. Before colonization, violence against women and domestic violence were extremely rare within indigenous cultures.

## **TACTICS:**

### **Male Privilege**

It is the permission-giver for all violence against women and general disrespect of ALL women.

- Is trusted and is seen as more credible than women.
- Experiences fewer barriers. More access to money, jobs, etc.
- Gets to do what he wants, when he wants.
- Allows for the expectation that women should be accommodating
- Feeling of entitlement to make big decisions alone expecting women to “make it happen.”
- His/men’s ways is the right way and more valuable than women’s
- Makes men roles superior and women roles inferior.
- No consequences for bad behavior.
- Feeling of entitlement to monopolize conversations and discussions.
- Feeling of entitlement to interrupt and/or ignore women.

### **Coercion and Threats**

- Makes/carries out threats to do harm to the victim, the children or family and friends.
- Threatens to kill the victim, the children, family or friends.
- Threatens to take the children, either legally or by kidnapping.
- Threatens to commit suicide.
- Threatens to report the non-offending parent to welfare.
- Makes the victim do illegal things in order to blackmail.

### **Intimidation**

- Causes fear by using aggressive looks, actions or gestures.
- Smashes things, put holes in walls, and destroys property.
- Kills or threatens to kill the pets.
- Displays weapons.
- Reminds her/him how they have or can hurt the victim.
- Verbal threats
- Stalking, including sitting at the victim’s place of work, school, etc.

### **Isolation**

- Controls what the person does, sees, talk to and/or read.
- Limits outside involvement by taking away the car, ensuring the children are always with the non-offending parent, limiting access to money, etc.
- Destroys personal belongings (clothing, etc.).
- Public humiliation.
- Constantly questions (interrogation).
- Takes the phone.
- Constant surveillance.
- Forces her/him to give up supportive relationships and outside connections.

### **Minimizes, Lies and Blames**

- Minimizes the violence
- Ignores and belittles victim’s concerns.
- Says the violence didn’t happen.
- Says the victim caused/deserved/provoked the abuse.
- Shifts responsibility for the violence:

- “She made me do it.”
- “I didn’t hit her hard.”
- “She should have just shut up.”
- “It was her own fault.”
- “I had to teach her a lesson.”
- “I was drunk.”
- “I was abused as a child; I can’t help it.”

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Put downs and name calling.
- Makes the victim feel crazy, always wrong or stupid.
- Belittles feelings, opinions, and reactions.
- Plays mind games.
- Humiliates and criticizes. Example: A male batterer may tell the victim she is a bad mother, wife, or woman.
- Makes the victim feel guilty for the batterer’s feelings and behavior.
- Blames the victim for their violence.
- Stops the individual from doing what she/he needs to or wants to do.
- Tells the victim how to dress, look or act.
- Ignores and neglects the victim.

### **Abusing Children**

- Convinces the children that the violence is the non-offending parents’ fault, that parent is stupid/sick/bad and that the children need a father even if he’s violent.
- Uses the children to relay “mind game” messages.
- Uses visitation and custody to harass or do violence.
- Threatens to take the children far away.
- Believes that children are property
- Convinces the victim they will lose custody of the child(ren) if she/he leaves. Does not pay child support (if living in separate households); children may live in poverty.

### **Economic Abuse**

- Prevents the victim from working or takes the victim’s money if they do work.
- Makes the victim ask for money or gives an allowance.
- 
- Doesn’t let her/him know about or have access to family income.
- Makes her/him prove how she/he spent money.
- Doesn’t pay child support.
- Spends money on his/her non-necessities.
- Makes her/him work; he/she doesn’t.

### **Ritual Abuse**

- Makes prayers against her.
- Defines spirituality as masculine.
- Stops her from practicing her ways.
- Uses spiritual ways as a threat.
- Say “God doesn’t allow divorce.”
- Say menstruation time makes her “dirty.”

- Says things like “Native women don’t sweat with men, don’t sit at drums”.
- Says a women’s participation in ceremonies is to support men only.
- Misinterprets Traditions or the Bible to justify violence/abuse.

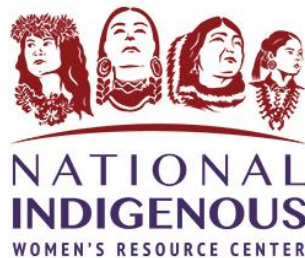
### **Cultural Abuse**

- Competes over “Indianness.”
- Misinterprets culture to prove male superiority and female submission.
- Uses relatives to execute violence.
- Says “real” Native women don’t wear make-up, wear slacks, talk or be independent.
- Denies the spiritual power and role of women.
- Distorting the old-time practice of having more than one wife to justify having affairs, or multiple, simultaneous relationships.
- Participates in ceremonies, then batters the partner, abuses the children.

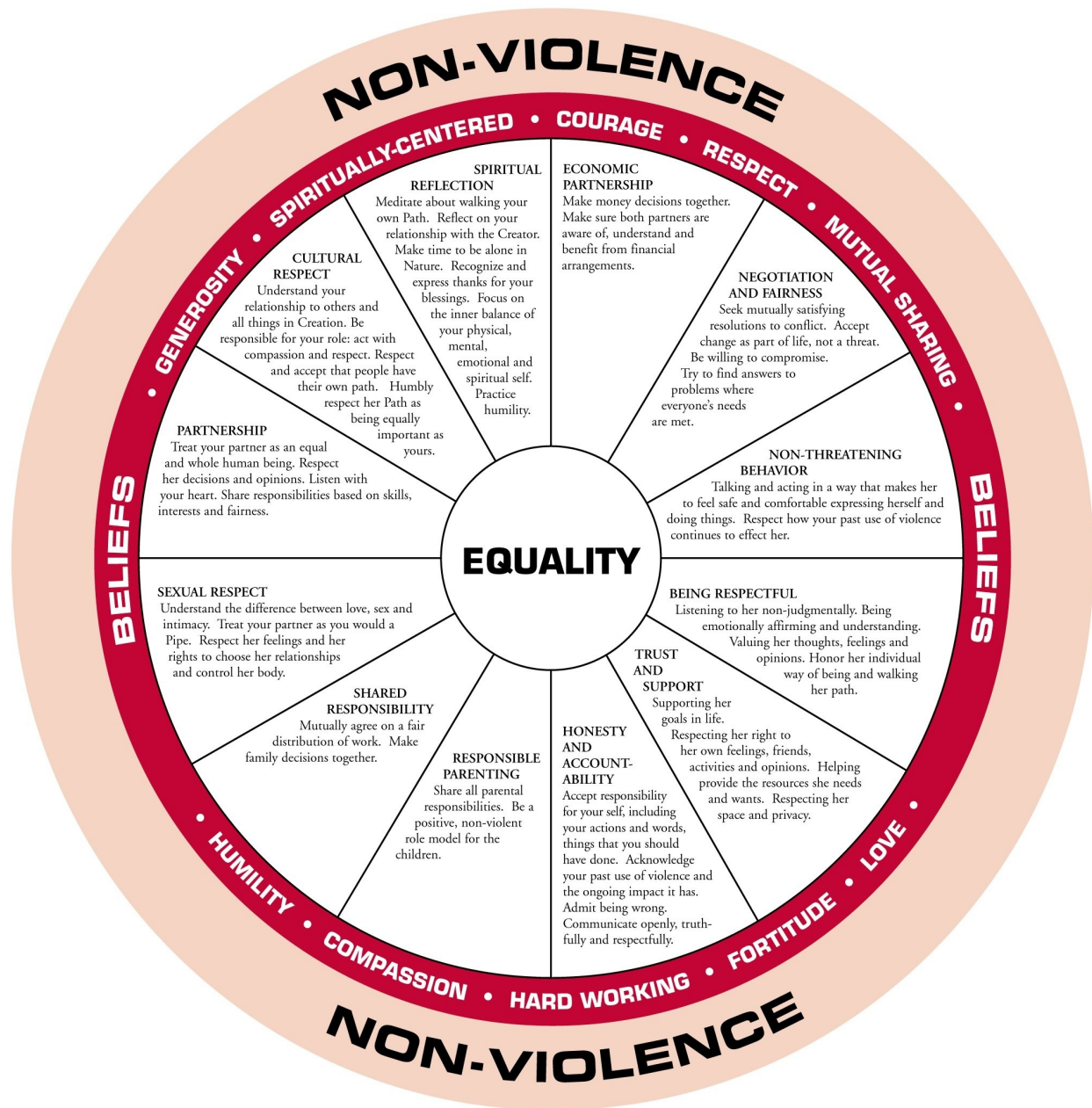
### **Collusion**

- Any act that discounts, condones, supports or ignores any of the tactics that batterers use to maintain power and control over their partner.
- Makes the abuser/batterer more powerful by reinforcing use of abusive and violent tactics.
- Increases violence against the victim, their children, family and friends.

Revised by NIWRC 2021; original from Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women



# NATURAL LIFE SUPPORTING POWER

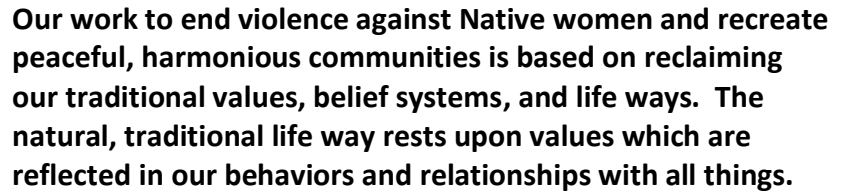


**EQUALITY**  
is natural life-supporting power  
that is grounded in spirituality, requires  
non-violence and is based on character.

Produced by Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women.  
Adapted from materials created by Domestic Abuse Intervention Project of Duluth model.



**NATURAL LIFE  
SUPPORTING POWER**



These values are expressed in the manner in which we behave and relate to others. The following are brief descriptions of how these values can be shown. Challenge yourself to find

Accept responsibility for yourself, including your actions, words, and things that you should have done. Acknowledge your past use of violence and its continuing impact on your partner. Admit when you are wrong. Communicate openly, truthfully, and respectfully.

**Responsible Parenting:**

Share all parental responsibilities. Be a positive, non-violent role model. Nurture your children. Do not expect special acknowledgement for taking care of your children – parents don't "baby-sit" their own children. Acknowledge that being an "absent parent" is neglect and is not an excuse for not providing financial, emotional, and other types of support in the best way you can. Parenting is difficult. Get support and words of wisdom from your relatives when needed.

**Shared Responsibility:**

Mutually agree on a fair distribution of housework and family responsibilities. Make family decisions together. Do your share without being reminded. If needed, seek help to learn how to complete task(s) that you are unfamiliar with doing.

**Economic Partnership:**

Make financial decisions together. Make sure both partners are aware of, understand, have access to, and benefit from financial arrangements.

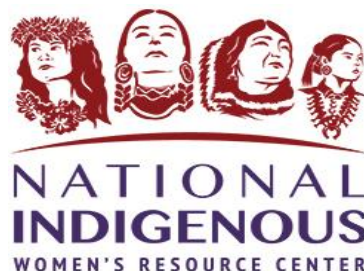
**Negotiation and Fairness:**

Seek mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict. Accept change as part of life, not a threat. Be willing to compromise. Try to find answers to problems where everyone's needs are met.

**Non-Threatening Behavior:**

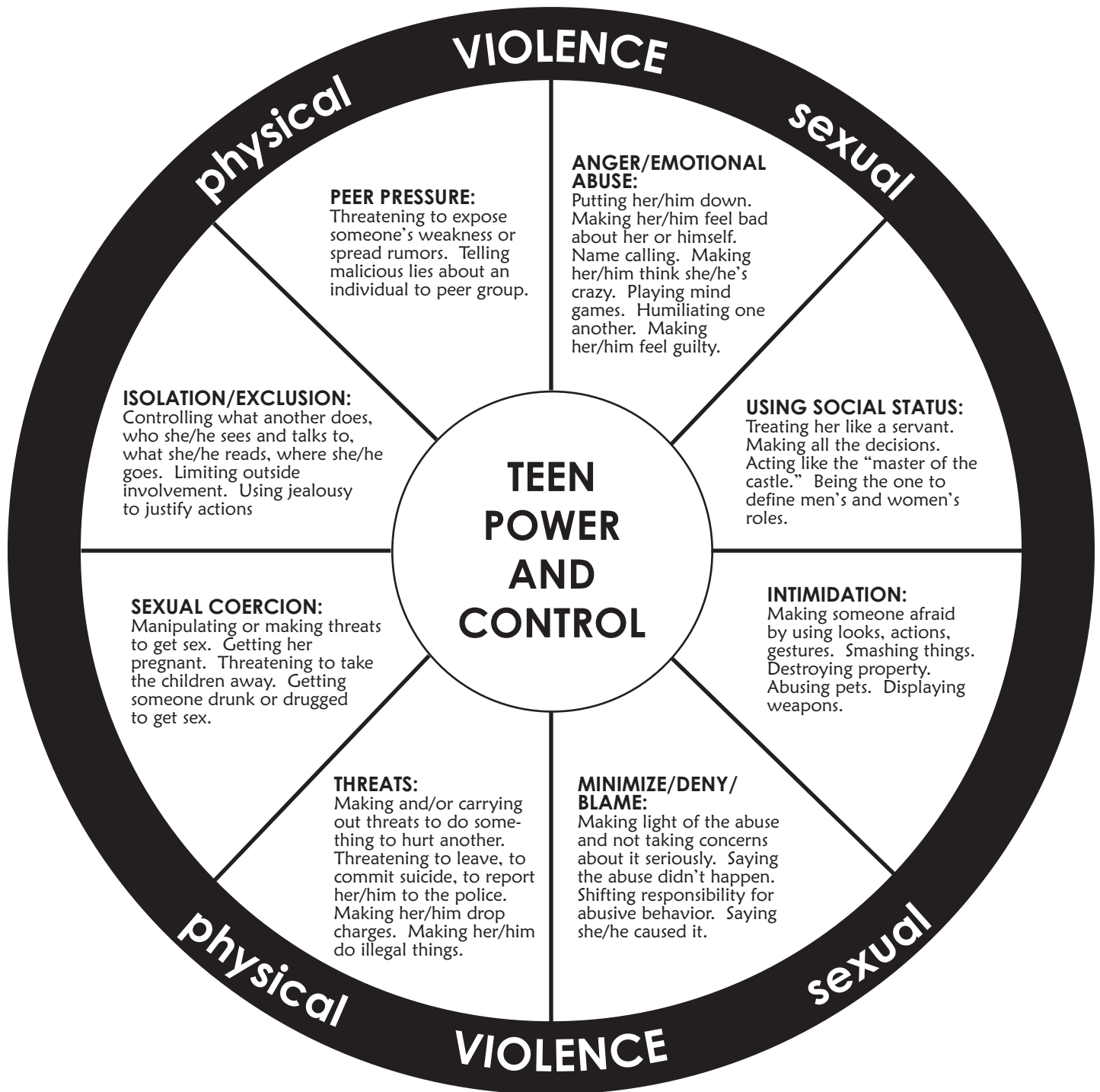
Talk and act in a way that makes her to feel safe and comfortable to express herself and do things. Respect how your past use of violence continues to affect her.

Adapted from Sacred Circle, National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women





# TEEN POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL



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# EQUALITY WHEEL FOR TEENS

